

# Spatial Meanings of English "In" and Croatian "U"

---

**Grabar, Heidi**

**Undergraduate thesis / Završni rad**

**2023**

*Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj:* **University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences / Sveučilište u Rijeci, Filozofski fakultet**

*Permanent link / Trajna poveznica:* <https://um.nsk.hr/um:nbn:hr:186:127455>

*Rights / Prava:* [In copyright](#) / [Zaštićeno autorskim pravom.](#)

*Download date / Datum preuzimanja:* **2024-05-18**



*Repository / Repozitorij:*

[Repository of the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences - FHSSRI Repository](#)



Sveučilište u Rijeci

Filozofski fakultet

Ime i prezime studenta/ice: Heidi Grabar

## **Spatial Meanings of English 'In' and Croatian 'U'**

(Završni rad)

Rijeka, 2023.

Sveučilište u Rijeci  
Filozofski fakultet  
Odsjek za anglistiku

Ime i prezime studenta/ice: Heidi Grabar  
JMBAG: 0009088900

**Spatial Meanings of English 'In' and Croatian 'U'**  
(Završni rad)

Naziv studijskog programa i smjera: Preddiplomski sveučilišni studij Engleski jezik i književnost i Pedagogija

Mentor: Dr. sc. Anita Memišević

Rijeka, rujan 2023.

UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

**Spatial Meanings of English 'In' and Croatian 'U'**  
(Undergraduate thesis)

Heidi Grabar

Supervisor: Dr.sc. Anita Memišević

Rijeka, September 2023

## Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Prepositions <i>in</i> and <i>u</i> .....	7
2.1 Preposition <i>in</i> .....	7
2.2 Preposition <i>u</i> .....	11
2.3 Corpus-based analysis .....	14
• English-to-Croatian translations.....	14
• Croatian-to-English translations.....	18
3. Conclusion.....	22
4. Reference list.....	23

# 1. Introduction

There are numerous research articles on the topic of prepositions (e.g., Fillmore 1982<sup>1</sup>; Lakoff 2004<sup>2</sup>; Lindstromberg 2010<sup>3</sup>; Tyler and Evans 2003<sup>4</sup> and others). More specifically, the English preposition *in* has been previously studied and analysed (e.g., Fillmore 1982; Langacker 1986<sup>5</sup>; Talmy 2005<sup>6</sup>; Tyler and Evans 2003 etc.), but not as much in a crosslinguistic manner with its Croatian counterpart *u*. Therefore, the aim of this B.A. thesis is to explore the English preposition *in* with its Croatian counterpart *u*, more specifically their relation in the context of spatial meanings. We will try to analyse and explain the senses and uses of this preposition in both languages. The thesis will consist of analysing sentences from English and Croatian online corpora and their translations to understand how the prepositions function in a crosslinguistic context.

Before starting the analysis, it is important to define the meaning of the term 'spatial'. It has numerous definitions such as "relating to the position, area, and size of things" (Cambridge dictionary), "of, relating to, or involved in the perception of relationships (as of objects) in space" (Merriam-Webster dictionary), "to describe things relating to areas" (Collins dictionary) etc. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that 'spatial' represents 'relating to' an object in terms of the location of the object itself so spatial language consists of "words that help people explain where objects are in space" (Exploring cognition).

Prepositions are the focal point of this B.A. thesis, so it is crucial to define them. They too have various ways of being defined such as "a word that is used before a noun, a noun phrase, or a pronoun, connecting it to another word" (Cambridge dictionary), "a function word that typically combines with a noun phrase to form a phrase which usually expresses a modification or predication" (Merriam-Webster dictionary), "a word or group of words used before a noun or pronoun to relate it grammatically or semantically to some other constituent of a sentence"

---

<sup>1</sup> Fillmore, C. J. (1982). Frame Semantics. In *Linguistics in the Morning Calm* (pp. 111-137). Seoul: Hanshin Publishing Company.

<sup>2</sup> Lakoff, G. (2004). *The ALL NEW Don't Think of an Elephant!: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*. White River Junction: Chelsea Green Publishing.

<sup>3</sup> Lindstromberg, S. (2010). *English prepositions explained*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

<sup>4</sup> Tyler, A. and Evans, V. (2003). *The semantics of English prepositions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Langacker, R. W. (1986). An Introduction to Cognitive Grammar. *Cognitive Science*, 10, 1-40.

<sup>6</sup> Talmy, L. (2005). The Fundamental System of Spatial Schemas in Language. In B. Hampe (Ed.), *From perception to meaning: Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics* (pp. 199-234). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

(Collins dictionary) and so on. It is important to note that prepositions are a closed class of words, but this does not mean they cannot change the semantics of an utterance. Moreover, Clark (1968: 421) explains that “dictionaries typically define a preposition in terms of other prepositions which can substitute for it in various contexts” so what the preposition “denotes” is not defined. Prepositions and their meanings should be treated “as a system of relations” (Clark, 1968: 421). Therefore, Wishon and Burks (1980: 285, as cited in Al Yaari and Almaflehi, 2013) define prepositions as "connective words that show the relationship between the nouns following them and one of the basic sentence elements: subject, verb, object, or complement.”

## 2. Prepositions *in* and *u*

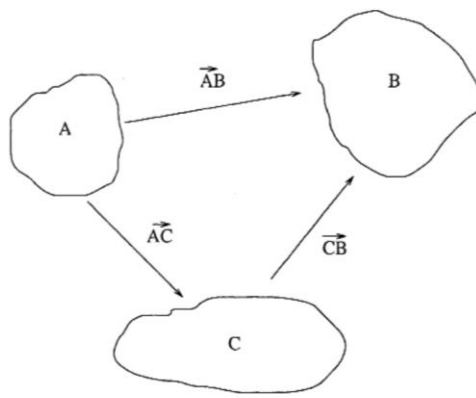
### 2.1 Preposition *in*

We can now move on to describing prepositions *in* and *u*. *In* is one of many spatial prepositions in the English language. According to Brala (2013), it is used to for expressing:

1. Locational i.e., answers the question ‘where?’
2. Metaphoric
3. A state or condition
4. Time
5. Manner, means or relation
6. A degree or measure
7. Reach
8. A cause or purpose
9. Phrases

This paper will focus on some of the previously mentioned uses of the preposition such as locational and metaphoric use. According to Coventry and Garrod (2004), spatial prepositions can be divided into locative/relational prepositions and directional prepositions. Describing the position of an object with regard to another is a locative or relational preposition. It is important to introduce the concept of a cognitive map such as the one John O’Keefe (1996) used to showcase that places, directions and distances are all elements which create spatial relationships.





MAP =

PLACES	A	B	C
DIRECTIONS	$\angle AB$	$\angle AC$	$\angle CB$
DISTANCES	$ AB $	$ AC $	$ CB $

Figure 1. Cognitive map showcasing the spatial relationships between places, directions, and distances<sup>7</sup>.

According to O’Keefe (1996: 281), “in an uninflected language such as English, many of spatial relations described in spatial sentences are conveyed by prepositions.” To further explain the spatial meaning of preposition *in* specifically, there is a so-called trajector (TR)-landmark (LM) configuration in semantics which helps to illustrate the examples or scenes of utterances (Tyler and Evans, 2003). Šarić (2006: 2) defines a trajector (TR) as being “contained within another, the landmark (LM)” which relate to one’s embodied experience when using prepositions. Embodiment is a notion that “human experience of the world is mediated by the kinds of bodies we have, and hence is in large measure determined by the nature of the bodies which mediate how we experience the world” (Tyler and Evans, 2003: 23). Retz-Schmidt (1988: 96) explains that “the speaker’s location can serve as the point of view.” This leads to the concept of containers and containment. In the English language, speakers frequently use *in* to linguistically express these notions. The following sentences are some of the examples of containment:

1a) I washed the dishes *in* the kitchen.

1b) I found a bag of chips *in* the cupboard.

In sentences 1a) and 1b), the containment is physical, meaning an object is contained within another material object. Additionally, spatial meanings of the preposition *in* can refer, not only

<sup>7</sup> O’Keefe, J. (1996). *Language and Space*. Cambridge: MIT Press. Page 279.

to three-dimensional objects, but to two-dimensional ones as well. Šarić (2006) describes an image schema involving an LM as a two-dimensional object with the following example: “A painting in a golden frame” (Šarić, 2006: 12). The focus is placed on the LM because the entire TR cannot be seen. Nevertheless, the LM still serves as a border within which the TR is located (Šarić, 2006). On the other hand, it is possible to have situations which are not contained by a physical object. For instance:

1c) Anna is *in* love.

1d) His grandfather lived *in* difficult times.

Love and time do not have a defined limit or physical borders, but *in* is still used as an antecedent. This is due to the relation between two or more entities. In example 1c), there is relation of a person (Anna) and an emotion i.e., one’s emotional state (love). There is correlation between states and location since *in* is a mediator between them. Example 1d) showcases the relation between a person (his grandfather) and an event-sequence (difficult times) which has defined boundaries. Tyler and Evans (2013) explain that the LM influences the TR since it serves as a container. ‘Difficult times’ might not be a ‘physical’ container, but it still serves as an entity which surrounds the TR. Relating to embodiment and physical borders is the concept of bounded landmarks. They are conceptualized as three-dimensional objects, meaning they possesses an interior, a boundary, and an exterior, which result in containment (Tyler and Evans, 2013) as shown in figures 2 and 3 below.

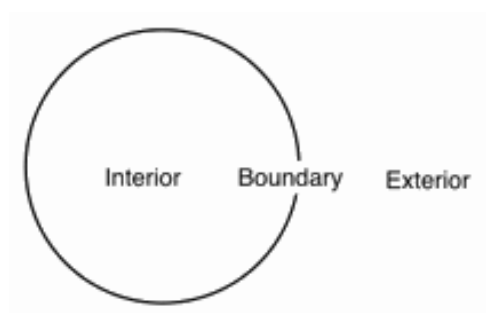


Figure 2. Concept of containment<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Available at <https://www.lexiconbranding.com/media-1/why-do-all-car-logos-look-the-same>

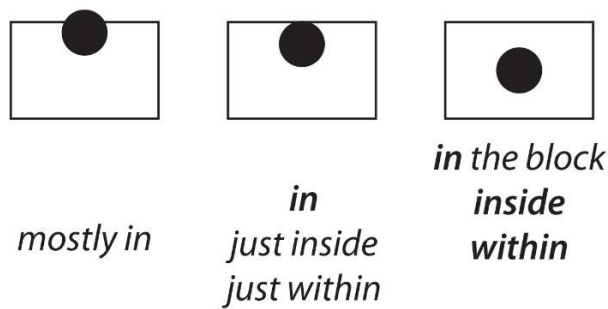


Figure 3. Image schema of *in*<sup>9</sup>

Moving on from containment, it is important to note spatial scenes. Tyler and Evans (2013: 28) define them as involving “entities in the world being related to each other in certain recurring ways.” Their focus is on people’s conceptualization of their world and surroundings. The relationship between a piece of clothing (being the LM) and the person who wears it (being the TR) is one of the examples by Tyler and Evans (2013) to explain the concept. A spatial scene or a proto-scene in the mentioned example is understood as the TR (person) is not fully confined by the LM (piece of clothing). For instance:

1e) The girl *in* the colourful shirt...

The last part of the theoretical background is about the preposition *in* and its relatives: *inside*, *within* and *in(to)*. According to Lindstromberg (2010), *within* has a similar meaning to *inside* but has a less emphatic tone and is “almost always used with abstract Landmarks and with Landmarks of time” (Lindstromberg, 2010: 75-76). *In(to)* has a range of uses in which “states, conditions, circumstances, actions, moods (etc.) are spaces” (Lindstromberg, 2010: 77) while “segments of language are containers” (Lindstromberg, 2010: 77). Both *in* and *into* can be used when the LM is envisioned as having a boundary and an interior which leads to the creation of a mental image of the entry into that limited, interior space. Nevertheless, these two prepositions differ from each other as well. By using *in*, “the focus is on the result (enclosure) and off the movement that led up to enclosure (e.g., We were *in* the car)” (Lindstromberg, 2010: 32) whilst *into* is dynamic and places focus on movement (e.g., We got *into* the car).

---

<sup>9</sup> Lindstromberg, 2010: 72

## 2.2 Preposition *u*

In the Croatian language, prepositions are divided into primary and secondary prepositions. Primary prepositions are shorter than the secondary ones in form as they consist solely of one linguistic unit (Matovac, 2013). Preposition *u* is classified as belonging to this category. On the other hand, secondary prepositions consist of simple prepositions, complex prepositions, and prepositional phrases (Matas Ivanković, 2009). A single word makes up a simple preposition (e.g., *krajem*) while complex ones are formed by combining two words, e.g., *poviše* (*po* + *više*). Prepositional phrases are constructed by combining two or more words which are written separately. For instance, *na kraju*, *u smjeru*, *polazeći od* etc.

Unlike the English language, Croatian has grammatical cases, more specifically seven of them. With that, preposition *u* is mostly used with the locative case which expresses location. We will deal with this notion further on in the paper. The notion of containment in Croatian is similar, if not identical, to the one in English. The following examples will demonstrate the previous statement by using the TR-LM configuration:

2a) Olovka je *u* pernici.

2b) The pen is *in* the pencil case.

3a) Pas je *u* kući.

3b) The dog is *in* the house.

The trajectors (olovka-pen and pas-dog) are fully contained within the landmarks (pernica-pencil case and kuća-house). This does not always have to be the case, but boundaries are what define the space so an object can be more easily placed within a certain space. In examples 2 and 3, the boundaries are clear, but what about the following examples?

4a) Stablo raste *u* vrtu.

4b) A tree is growing *in* the garden.

It is possible to visualize the garden i.e., the space although there is no specific information about the size of it. Nevertheless, it is still possible to form boundaries in one's mind during the cognitive process. Šarić (2006: 3) used a bird as an example:

5a) “Ptica leti *u* vrtu.”

5b) “The bird is flying *in* the garden.”

In this instance, *in* would be used if the bird was flying at a low altitude, but if it flies higher, other prepositions would be used such as *over* or *above*. Due to the abstract boundary, which is construed, the garden gains imaginary dimensions by which a person can decide which preposition to use accordingly.

The Croatian Language Portal (*Hrvatski jezični portal*) lists the uses of preposition *u* depending on the case it is used with. The first one is *u* + locative case. In this context, it refers to the notion of containment and boundaries. For instance:

6a) Stan se nalazi *u* centru grada.

6b) The flat is *in* the city centre.

These sentences exemplify the previously mentioned notions. However, the use of *u* with other cases is different. The second use of *u* is with the accusative case.

7a) Idem *u* grad.

7b) I am going *to* the city.

8a) Ubola sam se *u* prst.

8b) I stabbed my finger. (No preposition)

9a) Idem *u* ribolov.

9b) I am going fishing. (No preposition)

It is used to express the notion of going in a certain direction i.e., to a specific point (7a), performing an action on an object or its part (8a) and taking part in some activity (9a) (*Hrvatski jezični portal*). The key observation in these translations is the crosslinguistic context. Although all three sentences (e.g., 7a, 8a, and 9a) in Croatian contain the preposition *u*, none of their English translations do. In example 7b, preposition *u* becomes *to* for expressing direction i.e., the goal. Sentences 8b and 9b omit the use of prepositions. In example 8b, possessive determiner *my* is used to denote the relation with the object while in example 9b, the gerund noun (fishing) is used to denote an activity being executed by the subject. The final use that is listed is *u* + genitive case.

10a) U Hrvatskoj nemamo još taj program, ali razvit će se i *u* nas.

10b) We don't have that program in Croatia yet, but it will develop *in* our country as well.

11a) On je jedinac *u* majke.

11b) He is his mother's only child.

In example 10, the purpose of the preposition is to express someone or something being characteristically part of someone or something. Examples 11a and 11b demonstrate the change from the preposition *u* in Croatian to a possessive determiner in an adjectival function in the English language. To conclude this theoretical background of Croatian preposition *u*, it is important to note that only examples 6a, 7a and 10a contain a preposition used in the spatial sense.

## 2.3 Corpus-based analysis

As explained in the introduction, this B.A. thesis will focus on a corpus-based analysis of prepositions *in* and *u*. Therefore, the following sentences were extracted from online English and Croatian corpora after which they were translated. The first part deals with English-to-Croatian sentences while the second part has Croatian-to-English translations. Although some sentences contain the preposition *in/u* in other senses, only the spatial prepositions and their use will be analysed as that is the focus of this paper. Therefore, the spatial prepositions are bolded in the original sentences.

- English-to-Croatian translations

The following English sentences were taken from the Corpus of Contemporary American English and the classification of the spatial preposition *in* was the result of the corpus analysis:

### 1. *Geographical relations*

- 1.1 Take mountain top strip mining **in** Afghanistan.

Uzmite kao primjer planinsko rudarenje *u* Afganistanu.

- 1.2 But that message found its way to top Pillsbury executives **in** Minneapolis.

Ali ta je poruka našla put do najviših rukovoditelja Pillsburyja *u* Minneapolisu.

- 1.3 My son's **in** town just for a while.

Moj je sin *u* gradu samo nakratko.

- 1.4 I still currently reside **in** Illinois and spend plenty of time **in** the South throughout the year.

Još uvijek živim *u* Illinoisu i provodim dosta vremena *na* jugu tijekom godine.

Preposition *in* is used for expressing geographical relations, such as countries or cities, and is translated as *u*. Although they are not directly visible, as one cannot see for instance an entire country, the cognitive aspect does include geographical locations as being limited. The same can be said for towns, such as in example 1.3. For more general geographical directions, such as *in the South*, preposition *in* is translated using the Croatian preposition *na* whose literal translation is *on*. Another example of this geographic relation concerns mountains or hills in which *u* is used:

- 1.5 They hide **in** mountains seeking riches.

Skrivaju se *u* planinama tražeći bogatstvo.

Šarić (2006) explains that the choice of a preposition depends on the semantics of the sentence and especially on the choice of the verb. The reason *in* and *u* can be used is because mountains and hills can be perceived as three-dimensional objects.

## 2. *Expressing placement within physical entities with boundaries*

2.1 Heat oil **in** large skillet over medium heat.

Zagrijte ulje *u* velikoj tavi na srednje jakoj vatri.

2.2 I grew up **in** this bedroom, now officially a guest bedroom it seems.

Odrastao sam *u* ovoj spavaćoj sobi, koja je sada službeno, čini se, spavaća soba za goste.

2.3 Seriously, he watches “in dismay” as Ana gets **in** the car with Christian Gray.

Ozbiljno, gleda "užasno" dok Ana ulazi *u* auto s Christianom Grayem.

All of the listed examples and their translations correspond to the *in – u* correlation. It is possible to conclude that in the use of expressing placement within physical entities with the sense of physical boundaries, English *in* can be translated using Croatian *u*.

2.4 She returned to the corner table she'd sat **in** last time she'd been there and devoured the pastry.

Vratila se za stol u kutu prostorije *za* kojim je sjedila zadnji put kad je bila tamo i pojela pecivo. (Literal translation: Vratila se za stol u kutu prostorije *u* kojem je sjedila zadnji put kad je bila tamo i pojela pecivo.)

Unlike the previous translations of *in*, the use of *in* in this context requires the Croatian preposition *za* which means ‘for’. If we analyse the literal translation, its meaning conveys the notion of sitting inside the table which, although grammatically correct, is not physically possible so the semantics of the sentence would be incorrect. Consequently, the Croatian *za* is the most suitable preposition for this translation.

## 3. *Expressing placement within abstract entities*

3.1 Rizzo III is a native Long Islander, where he works **in** academia.

Rizzo III je rođen na Long Islandu gdje također radi *u* akademskoj zajednici.



3.2 Kevin Sumlin walks off the field after a loss to LSU<sup>10</sup> **in** an NCAA<sup>11</sup> football game at Kyle Field on Thursday, Nov. 24.

Kevin Sumlin odlazi s terena nakon poraza od LSU-a *u* NCAA utakmici američkog nogometa na stadionu *Kyle Field* u četvrtak, 24. studenog.

3.3 The chart X is examining the long-term variation **in** individual sample results.

Grafikon X ispituje dugoročne varijacije *u* rezultatima pojedinačnih uzoraka.

3.4 India is a rising star **in** the fashion world.

Indija je zvijezda u usponu *u* svijetu mode.

These four examples include objects that are abstract entities which the speaker envisions. Therefore, academia, football game, sample results and the fashion world are understood as abstract spaces in which the subject is placed or located. In these contexts, every *in* is translated as *u*.

3.5 What could you possibly have had **in** mind?

Što ste uopće mogli imati *na* umu? (Literal translation: Što ste uopće mogli imati *u* umu?)

In this example, preposition *in* is not translated with preposition *u*, but rather preposition *na* whose literal translation into English would be *on*. This observation broadens the notion that native English speakers imagine an entity as being inside one's mind, which is ultimately within one's head. On the other hand, Croatian speakers visualize the same entity as being on top of one's mind.

3.6 The overuse of antibiotics **in** animals could lead to bacteria becoming resistant to them.

Pretjerana uporaba antibiotika *kod* životinja mogla bi dovesti do toga da bakterije postanu otporne na njih.

Pretjerana uporaba antibiotika *u* životinja mogla bi dovesti do toga da bakterije postanu otporne na njih.

There are two possible ways of translating the preposition *in* in this context. If it is translated as *kod*, the literal concept refers to being 'next to' the animals while *u* refers to the trajector (in this case the antibiotics) being inside the landmark (animals). The translation containing *u* is

---

<sup>10</sup> Louisiana State University

<sup>11</sup> National Collegiate Athletic Association

closer to the concept of the English preposition as it transfers the spatial conceptualization, but the translation with *kod* is not incorrect.

3.7 I had a couple of foreign students **in** my class **in** grade 12.

Imao/Imala sam nekoliko stranih učenika *u* 4. razredu srednje škole.

Imao/Imala sam nekoliko stranih učenika *u* razredu *tijekom* 4. razreda srednje škole.

Although the English sentence contains spatial preposition *in* twice, its translations vary. In the first translation, *in (grade 12)* is translated as *u (4.razedu)* which refers to the senior year of high school. The second translation includes the use of *u* for referring to the class i.e., for translating *in (my class)*, but *in (grade 12)* is translated as *tijekom (4.razreda)*. *Tijekom* in Croatian stands for ‘during’. In this example, preposition *in* and its Croatian counterpart *tijekom* are used for referring to a temporal notion, rather than a spatial one.

- Croatian-to-English translations

The second part of the analysis is focused on the Croatian-to-English aspect of prepositions *u* and *in*. The Croatian sentences were taken from the Croatian Web Corpus (also known as HRWaC) and the analysis resulted in the following classification of the preposition *u*:

### 1. *Geographical relations*

1.1 Standardizirane testove polažete u ovlaštenim ispitnim centrima **u** Hrvatskoj.

You take standardized tests in authorized test centres *in* Croatia.

1.2 Ovogodišnja izložba Jesen **u** Lici održava se na Trgu Stjepana Radića.

This year's exhibition 'Autumn *in* Lika' is held at the Stjepan Radić Square.

1.3 Drugo je to državno prvenstvo u *kiteboardingu* održano **u** Splitu.

This is the second national kiteboarding championship held *in* Split.

Conveying geographical relations from Croatian to English is similar to the translation process of spatial prepositions *in* and *u* from English into the Croatian language. This is supported by the previous three examples (1.1, 1.2 and 1.3) in which *u* is translated with its English equivalent *in*.

1.4 Miševi su poznati po tome da se **u** našim krajevima uvlače svugdje.

Mice are known for crawling into everything *in* our region.

Although this example refers to a more general geographical notion, it is nevertheless translated with the English equivalent *in*. Thus, it is possible to relate this example with example 1.5.1 as part of the English corpus analysis due to the use of preposition *u* and *in* as equivalents for a more general geographic location.

1.5 Nalazila se u prizemlju zgrade **u** Ulici Matije Gupca 64.

She was on the ground floor of the building *at* 64 Matije Gupca Street. (Literal translation: She was on the ground floor of the building *in* 64 Matije Gupca Street.)

Since a street name is used i.e., a specific address, preposition *at* is used to convey the spatial meaning of *u*. If the speaker used the literal translation *in*, it would refer to the notion of being confined within the street itself which is semantically incorrect. If the spatial preposition referred to the street in general (e.g., *Matije Gupca Street*) and not its address, it would be

possible to use preposition *in* as well. In the Croatian language, a speaker may use *u* because it refers to the address. Hence, the speaker's embodiment consists of simultaneously being on the street and being surrounded by other objects, such as buildings.

## 2. *Expressing placement within physical entities with boundaries*

2.1 Za one koji ne vole zimu pogledajte slike **u** galeriji i uživajte u ljepoti Zapadnog Papuka.

For those who don't like winter, look at the photos *in* the gallery and enjoy the beauty of Western Papuk.

2.2 Standardizirane testove polazete **u** ovlaštenim ispitnim centrima u Hrvatskoj.

You take standardized tests *in* authorized test centres in Croatia.

2.3 Krećite se **u** grupama i držite se za rukice.

Move *in* groups and hold each other's hands.

All three examples and their translations (2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) correspond to the *u* – *in* correlation. It is possible to conclude that in the sense of expressing placement within physical entities with the sense of physical boundaries, Croatian *u* may be translated using English *in*. Unlike in the previous category (example 1.1), example 2.2 is used once again because the analysed preposition *u* refers to a building (*ispitni centri*), so it is possible to analyse the crosslinguistic relation of preposition *u* within physical entities with boundaries. On the other hand, example 1.1 refers to analysing geographical relations.

2.4 Osim na kina, s njom imam popust na ulaznice **u** kazalištima i muzejima, a i **u** brojnim dućanima.

In addition to going to the cinema, I have a discount on tickets *to* theatres and museums, as well as *in* many shops with this card.

In addition to going to the cinema, I have a discount on tickets *in* theatres and museums, as well as *in* many shops with this card.

This sentence can be translated in two different ways. Whilst the second preposition *u* is translated with its equivalent *in* in both sentences, the spatial meaning of the first preposition *u* is used differently and therefore translated accordingly. *U* in the first version of translation is conveyed with preposition *to* used to express direction. Thus, in the first English translation, the meaning refers to going to theatres and museums. On the other hand, the first *u* in the second

version of the sentence is translated with preposition *in*. It refers to the discount within the physical buildings of theatres and museums.

2.5 Nalazila se **u** prizemlju zgrade u Ulici Matije Gupca 64.

She was *on* the ground floor of the building at 64 Matije Gupca Street. (Literal translation: She was *in* the ground floor of the building at 64 Matije Gupca Street.)

Example 2.5 is the same sentence as example 1.5 in the previous category. However, the focus of this analysis is the use of the primary *u* in the sentence. Unlike previous translations of the preposition *u*, in this case it is translated using the preposition *on*. The reason for not using *in* as the literal translation is due to the fact that it would convey the meaning of physically being inside the floor (in this case, the ground floor). Accordingly, an English speaker will perceive themselves as standing on the floor despite Croatian speakers referring to the entire room in which they are located.

### 3. *Expressing placement within abstract entities*

3.1 Ocijenjena je sa „vrlo perspektivna” **u** razredu štenaca (6 - 9 mjeseci).

She was rated “Very Promising” *in* the Puppy Class (6 - 9 months).

3.2 Izgleda da su mačke jednako sretne **u** društvu djece i sa starijim osobama.

Cats seem to be just as happy *in* the company of children as they are with the elderly.

3.3 **U** mladima je prisutan strah od budućnosti, **u** moru iskrivljenih vrijednosti i besmisla.

The fear of the future is present *in* young people, *in* a sea of distorted values and absurdity.

3.4 Na taj će se način osjećati manje ugrožena **u** novoj situaciji.

Thereby, she will feel less threatened *in* a new situation.

When dealing with abstract entities, the Croatian *u* may be translated as the English *in*. This is supported by the previously listed examples 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4. Speakers use the English equivalent *in* as a translation of the Croatian *u* even though this *u* does not refer to physical notions i.e., notions which may have boundaries, and which are contained.

3.5 Taj preokret se treba dogoditi i **u** nama samima.

This upheaval should also happen *within* us. (Literal translation: This upheaval should also happen *in* us.)

This example includes translating *u* with the English preposition *within*. As mentioned in the section 2.1, *within* is a grammatical relative of preposition *in*. Using *in* as the literal translation is incorrect because it would convey something happening in a person's body. *Within* refers to the abstract notion of something happening in one's body, but mostly something in the spiritual or emotional context.

3.6 Prijavite nasilje **u** obitelji jer tako možete spasiti nečiji život.

Report *domestic* violence because you can save someone's life.

Finally, another way of conveying spatial meaning is, not by using another spatial preposition, but rather by using an adjective such as *domestic* in this context. *U obitelji* refers to the violence happening within the familial circle so instead of explaining it, it is helpful to use adjectives which already exist for conveying the same notions.

### 3. Conclusion

After completing the analysis, one of the key observations is that the spatial preposition *in* in most cases corresponds to its Croatian equivalent *in*. However, this is not always the case. In this paper, 16 sentences were analysed from the English corpus and 16 sentences from the Croatian corpus. In 14 out of 16 sentences (87,5%), preposition *in* was translated with preposition *u*. Other spatial meanings were conveyed by using *na*, *kod*, *tijekom*, *za*. Furthermore, in 12 out of 16 sentences (75%), the preposition *u* was translated with the preposition *in*. Besides *in*, the following prepositions were used: *at*, *to*, *on*, *within* and an adjective form. The listed prepositions and the adjectival form (both Croatian and English) were used in the translations due to the context and structure of both the English and the Croatian sentences.

A specific formula does not exist when it comes to the use of prepositions, but rather depends on the noun that the preposition is associated with or the intended meaning. After the conducted analysis of the corpora, both similarities and differences were discovered between the spatial meanings of English *in* and Croatian *u*. Prepositions *in* and *u* are commonly used for conveying spatial meanings, mostly for subjects being within a physical object confined by boundaries, but they are also used for more abstract notions and to convey metaphoric meanings. It is important to consider the linguistic structures and context of the source and target language as well as the semantics of the utterances. Each language has its own set of syntactic rules as do in this case the English and Croatian language. Therefore, some translations of *in* and *u* require other prepositions besides those two. This analysis has shown that the spatial meanings of English *in* and Croatian *u* have a crosslinguistic correlation.

Taking into account the smaller scope of this analysis and this paper, a proposal for further research would be doing a corpus-based analysis at a higher level with larger corpora. Thus, further research may open an opportunity of analysing broader linguistic contexts (and hence more spatial meanings) in the crosslinguistic manner between the English preposition *in* and the Croatian preposition *u* as well as other English and Croatian prepositions.

## 4. Reference list

- Al Yaari, S. and Almaflehi, N. (2013). The Problem of Translating the Prepositions at, in and on into Arabic: An Applied Linguistic Approach. *Journal for the Study of English Linguistics*, 1 (2), 256-273. Accessed 16 June 2023 at <http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/jsel.v1i2.4744>.
- Brala-Vukanović, M. (2013). *Perspectives on meaning*. Rijeka: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Rijeka, English Department.
- Clark, H. H. (1968). On the use and meaning of prepositions. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 7 (2), 421-431. Accessed 16 June 2023 at <https://web.stanford.edu/~clark/1960s/Clark,%20H.H.%20Meaning%20and%20use%20of%20prepositions%201968.pdf>
- Corpus of Contemporary American English. *English Corpora*. Accessed 24 May 2023 at <https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>
- Coventry, K. R. and Garrod, S. C. (2004). *Saying, seeing, and acting: The psychological semantics of spatial prepositions*. London: Psychology Press.
- HrWaC: Croatian Web Corpus. *Sketch Engine*. Accessed 24 May 2023 at [https://www.clarin.si/noske/all.cgi/first\\_form?corpname=hrwac;align=](https://www.clarin.si/noske/all.cgi/first_form?corpname=hrwac;align=)
- Lindstromberg, S. (2010). *English prepositions explained*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Matas Ivanković, I. (2009, October). Izražavanje prostornih značenja prijedložno-padežnim izrazima. *Zagreb School of Slavic Studies*. Accessed 22 March 2023 at <https://www.hrvatskiplus.org/article.php?id=1824&naslov=izrazavanje-prostornih-znacenja-prijedlozno-padeznim-izrazima>
- Matovac, D. (2013). *Semantika hrvatskih prijedloga* (Disertacija). Osijek: Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku, Filozofski fakultet. Accessed 22 March 2023 at <http://web.ffos.hr/download/Darko%20Matovac,%20Semantika%20hrvatskih%20prijedloga.%2011.%20listopada%202013..pdf>
- O'Keefe, J. (1996). The Spatial Prepositions in English, Vector Grammar, and the Cognitive Map Theory. In P. Bloom, M. F. Garrett, L. Nadel and M. A. Peterson (Ed.), *Language and Space* (pp. 277-316). Cambridge: MIT Press.



- Pérez Hernández, L. (2016, October). Car Logos: How Visual Identity Can Complement Brand Names. *Lexicon*. Accessed 5 July 2023 at <https://www.lexiconbranding.com/media-1/why-do-all-car-logos-look-the-same>
- Preposition. Collins dictionary. Accessed 20 March 2023 at <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/preposition>
- Preposition. Merriam-Webster dictionary. Accessed 20 March 2023 at <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/preposition>
- Retz-Schmidt, G. (1988). Various Views on Spatial Prepositions. *AI Magazine*, 9 (2), 95-105. Accessed 26 June 2023 at <https://doi.org/10.1609/aimag.v9i2.678>
- Spatial. Cambridge dictionary. Accessed 20 March 2023 at <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/spatial>
- Spatial. Collins dictionary. Accessed 20 March 2023 at <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/spatial>
- Spatial. Merriam-Webster dictionary. Accessed 20 March 2023 at <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/spatial>
- Šarić, Lj. (2006). A preliminary semantic analysis of the Croatian preposition u and its Slavic equivalents. *Jezikoslovlje*, 7 (1-2), 1-43. Accessed 22 March 2023 at <https://hrcak.srce.hr/30843>
- Tyler, A. and Evans, V. (2003). *The semantics of English prepositions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- U. Hrvatski jezični portal. Accessed 23 May 2023 at [https://hjp.znanje.hr/index.php?show=search\\_by\\_id&id=f19iWBN5](https://hjp.znanje.hr/index.php?show=search_by_id&id=f19iWBN5)
- What is spatial language?. *Exploring cognition*. Accessed 22 March 2023 at <https://exploringcognition.wordpress.com/spatial-language-abilities/>

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this B.A. paper is to explore the English preposition *in* with its Croatian counterpart *u*, more specifically their crosslinguistic relation in the context of spatial meanings. Hence, a corpus-based analysis was conducted. The first part of the analysis deals with English-to-Croatian sentences while the second part has Croatian-to-English translations. The paper consists of an introduction, main part, and conclusion. An overview of the theoretical background is given in the introduction by defining what spatial language is. The main part of the paper consists of examining previous research and literature on spatial meanings of English preposition *in* and Croatian *u* as well as analysing sentences which were taken from online corpora and later translated into Croatian and English. The Conclusion gives an overview of observations which resulted from the analysis and suggestions for further research.

**KEY WORDS:** *corpus-based analysis, prepositions, translation, translation equivalents, in, u*