

Prepositions in Arabic and English

Prepositions are used to show circumstance. They have major functions in both languages. Basically, there are meanings:

- Point
- Area
- Surface
- Volume

Consider the following:

1. He is standing at the door. (هو واقف عند الباب)

In this example, the preposition (at) gives the meaning of point, so does the Arabic preposition.

2. She lives in Canada. (هي تسكن في كندا)

In this example, the preposition (in) gives the meaning of area. This is the same with the Arabic preposition.

Consider the difference between the following:

- a. She sat on the grass. (جلس على الحشائش)
- b. She sat in the grass. (جلس داخل الحشيش)

In the first example, the meaning of (on) is to show surface, but in the second the meaning is volume because there are three dimensions entailed: length, width and depth. It means that the grass is long and the person is hiding inside the grass.