

## Unit 2

## Oral Communication

### Structure:

- 2.1 Introduction
  - Objectives
- 2.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Oral Communication
- 2.3 One-to-One Oral Communication
  - Face to Face Communication
  - Communication through Telephone
- 2.4 Summary
- 2.5 Terminal Questions
- 2.6 Answers

### 2.1 Introduction

Nidhi was gushing with enthusiasm when she was discussing with me the new layout she had planned and designed for her magazine. She was the subeditor of the upcoming youth magazine. Previously the entire management had come to a consensus about changing the existing layout for better marketing reasons. She was well prepared with her power point presentation regarding the layout she had designed. She presented her idea to a gamut of professionals in the field. The entire top management was awe-struck at the effectiveness of the presentation and the passion with which Nidhi presented her design. They decided to go ahead with the changes suggested by her.

What do the two situations convey to you? In both instances, you can observe there are two things happening. Nidhi initially talks to an individual, me, in this case, on a personal one to one basis and that too very informally. Next, she addresses a group. Talking to groups is a different ball game altogether. But one thing is common to both – talking to an individual informally or addressing an audience. Both fall under the category of face to face communication.

In this unit, we are going to discuss about Oral Communication. Oral communication can occur between individuals or before large audiences as in a meeting. It can be formal or informal and it can be planned or casual. Very often oral presentations are accompanied by some visual aids to

support and clarify what is being stated. We will learn some basic principles of Oral Presentations and Visual Aids used in oral presentations.

**Objectives :**

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the merits and demerits of oral communication
- use some polite expressions/phrases in appropriate contexts, while making effective one-to-one communication

**2.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Oral Communication**

When you ask your father for permission to visit your friend's house, he could say yes or no. In oral communication there is a possibility of immediate response. This makes speedy interaction and immediate feedback possible. This is the biggest advantage of oral communication.

Another advantage is that the speaker can observe the listener's reaction to what is being stated. For instance, if someone comes to you on the date of your exam results and tells you that you have passed, your reaction to the message will show that you are happy. Similarly, if someone tells you that your friend fell down, when he was doing his practical and had an injury, you will be shocked and the person who gave you the message will notice your shock.

How would you feel if your favourite cinema star saw you somewhere and spoke to you voluntarily? Yes, you would be happy! And you would also feel very important, wouldn't you? Oral communication can therefore give a feeling of importance.

The disadvantage of oral communication is that it does not always save time. It is not possible for the Prime Minister to speak to the people at Red Fort every day. It will cost a lot in terms of money, time, and other important resources. People have to meet each other all the time to communicate orally. This is impossible.

**Improving oral communication**

Speaking to friends and family members is easy because you know them. But when you are asked to go and speak to a total stranger you may hesitate. It is even worse when you have to address in a seminar or present a project in front of your higher authorities in the office. You should pay a

little attention to your oral skills because learning to speak well will improve your personal and professional life considerably. You should remember that even if the listener cannot see you (in telephone conversation), it is easy to deduce your personality with the help of the quality of your voice – its tone will indicate your age, sex, intelligence, if you are stressed, if you are confident or not; even your geographical origin is distinguished by noting the accent you use while speaking.

**Self Assessment Questions**

1. What is the main advantage of Oral communication?
2. Why should we pay attention to learn oral skills?
3. What helps the listener deduce the personality of the speaker in a telephone conversation?
4. How is the geographical origin of the speaker understood in oral communication?

**2.3 One-to One Oral Communication**

In your day to day dealings, you have to interact with people on a one to one basis. It is central to developing positive working relationship. There are two ways in which we communicate orally:

- i) Face to face and ii) Telephonic conversation

**2.3.1 Face to face communication**

This may normally take place in any place, in any part of the day; in a lab, when you are talking to your attendant, or in the college campus when you direct a newcomer to his desired destination. When you have a face-to-face conversation with someone, you're near them, and you can see them. You can also listen to them and speak to them – by actually looking at them (their facial expressions and gestures) as well as their surroundings. When you have a face to face conversation with somebody, you don't need to spell out everything in words. Many of things you want to communicate to them would be clear to them, from the situational context.

**Asking the way:** Apart from our topic of interest, in the case mentioned above; we meet many people in our day to day life – people from different cultural background, with different accents. It would be very difficult to comprehend most of the expressions and words spoken. But we need to

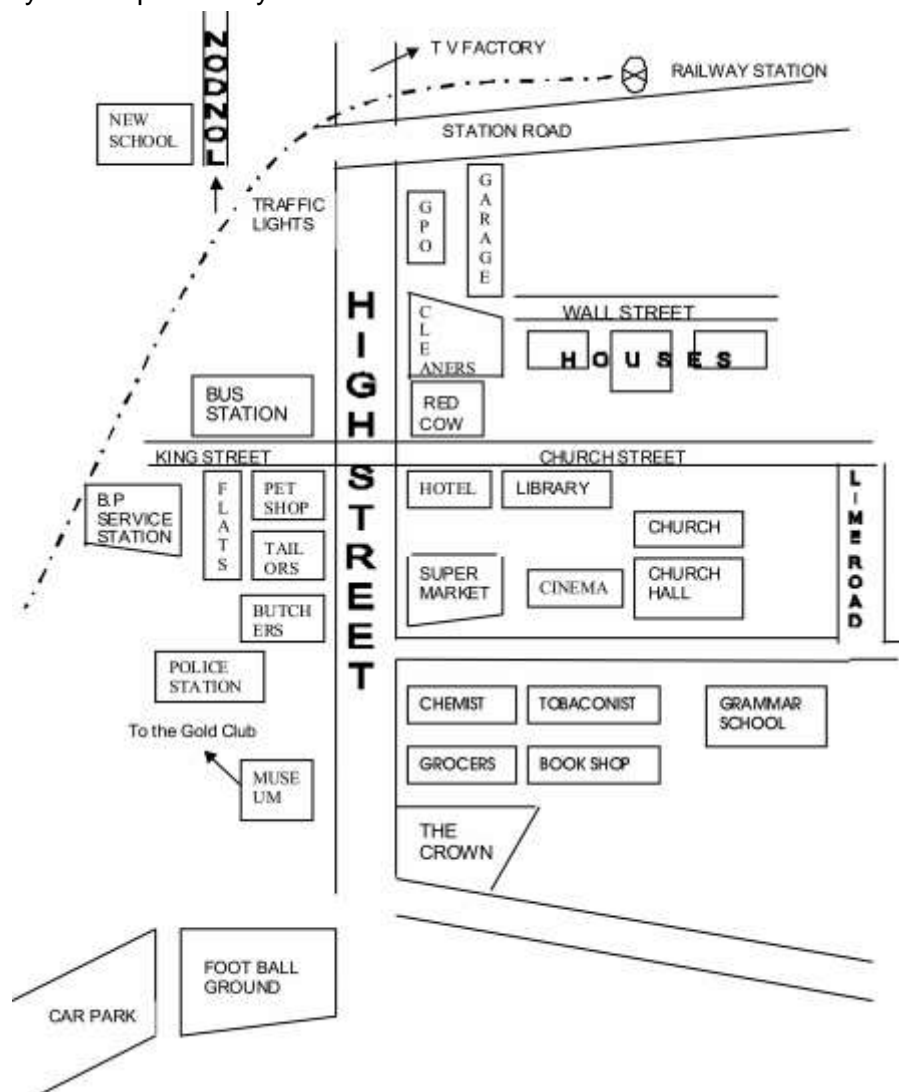
develop certain skills of acquiring this technique for finding out the necessary information/enquiry by asking relevant questions.

For examples of **asking the way or direction and giving directions**, let's go through the following table of expressions.

<b>(i) Tourist:</b> Excuse me, <u>can</u> you tell me where GANDHI street is, please? (attention, asking for information)	(ii) Excuse me, please <u>could</u> you tell me the way to the station?	(iii) Excuse me, but I'm trying to find the Town Hall...	(iv) Excuse me, please could you tell me how to get to the Town Centre?
<b>You:</b> Take the second on the left. And then ask again (giving Information)	Turn round and turn left at the traffic lights.	Take the third on the right and go straight on.	First right, second left. You can't miss it.
<b>Tourist:</b> Is it far? (additional information)	Will it take me a long time to get there?	Should I take a bus?	Is it too far to walk?
<b>You:</b> No, its only about five minutes walk (responding).	No, it's no distance at all!	No, you can walk it in under five minutes.	No, its only a couple of hundred meters.
<b>Tourist:</b> Thanks a lot! (gratitude)	Thank you.	Thank you very much.	Thanks, very much.
<b>You:</b> Not at all. (responding)	That's O K.	That's quite alright.	It's my pleasure.

### Giving Directions

Study the map carefully and fill in the blanks in the worksheet



Use the map to ask for and give directions.

You **are standing outside the Railway station.**

1. You: Excuse me, can you tell me the way to the T V factory?  
Stranger: Certainly! go along STATION ROAD turn right INTO High street, and the T V FACTORY is on the RIGHT. You can't miss it.
2. Tourist: Excuse me, can you tell me the way to the Police Station, Please?

You: \_\_\_\_\_! Go \_\_\_\_\_ Station Road, turn \_\_\_\_\_ High street and the Police station is \_\_\_\_\_. You can't \_\_\_\_\_ it!

3. You: Excuse me, can you tell me the way to the Bookshop please?

Local: \_\_\_\_\_! Go \_\_\_\_\_ Station \_\_\_\_\_ High Street. Go \_\_\_\_\_ High Street. \_\_\_\_\_ the third \_\_\_\_\_ your left. The bookshop is \_\_\_\_\_ left, just \_\_\_\_\_ the Grammar school.

4. Tourist: Excuse me, can you tell me if \_\_\_\_\_ is a hotel near here please?

You: Yes, there is. \_\_\_\_\_ not far really, Go \_\_\_\_\_ station road, take \_\_\_\_\_ on your left. \_\_\_\_\_ straight \_\_\_\_\_ High street until you come to the Bus station. The Hotel is \_\_\_\_\_ the corner \_\_\_\_\_ the Red cow. You \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Tall stranger: \_\_\_\_\_, can you tell me if \_\_\_\_\_ green grocer's \_\_\_\_\_.

Short local: \_\_\_\_\_ Station road \_\_\_\_\_ left \_\_\_\_\_ High Street. \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ come \_\_\_\_\_ the police station. The green grocer's is \_\_\_\_\_ the chemist, \_\_\_\_\_ crown.

Useful phases:

**beside, right down, just before, back, next to, between, opposite to, across, just along, past**

Change A's questions into more polite forms.

Example: A: where is the station?

B: (i) Can you tell me where the station is, please?

(ii) Could you tell me where the station is, please?

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1. A: How far is it to Delhi?               | B: _____ |
| 2. A: Where are the shops?                  | B: _____ |
| 3. A: Which direction is the motorway?      | B: _____ |
| 4. A: How long is it to the nearest garage? | B: _____ |
| 5. A: Which way is the desert?              | B: _____ |
| 6. A: Where is the restaurant?              | B: _____ |

### 2.3.2 Communication through telephone

This communication is possible while responding to calls, official or personal, asking or giving directions, etc. When you have a telephone conversation, the strongest point of oral communication, body language as well as expressions, is absent – and you've got to rely mainly on the actual words you use in order to convey your meaning. So, you cannot rely on the extra-linguistic expressions to add meaning to the words that you use. At the same time, you cannot be explicit during a telephonic conversation because you speak under the pressure of time and you can only express yourself by composing and speaking at the same time, just as you do when you have a face-to-face conversation. Therefore, this puts more emphasis not only on the words that we choose, but also, on how we use our voice or tone.

**There are two telephone situations: Receiving and Initiating calls.**

**Receiving an official call:** The way you handle a call creates a positive or negative impression, not only of you, but also your organization.

- a) Be prepared; have a pen, notepad... always make a note of the call
- b) Answer the phone as quickly as possible. "All calls must be answered within three rings."
- c) Give the call your full attention.
- d) Smile before you speak.
- e) As soon as you pick up the phone to answer a call, let the caller know that you've picked up the phone and that he has your attention. You can do this by saying "Hello". You can alternatively use the name of the organisation, where you are working, or your telephone number. Eg: • Hello, 3468953. • Tata Institute, Good morning.
- f) If the caller starts stating the purpose of his call without announcing his identity, you can ask him who he is before telling him anything or helping him – if you find it necessary to do so.
- g) Find out the caller's name and use it. This personalizes the communication.
- h) Use your skills to build and maintain rapport, listen actively and question effectively. If you have to transfer the call, explain why and what you are doing; to whom the call is being transferred.
- i) If you have to put the call on hold for any reason, explain why, and offer the caller the alternative to be called back.

- j) If you need to phone the caller back, agree when you'll do it- and make sure you do!
- k) When you end the call, summarize any action that has been agreed upon and check if the caller is happy with the outcome. It's courteous to thank them for calling.

**Initiating a call:** Whenever you dial a number and someone picks up the phone at the other end, you should follow these rules:

- a) Ask the person who picks up the phone at the other end , • Are you 3467983? / Mr. ---- or Is that 3467983?
- b) If he says it is the right number, it'd be a good idea to go ahead and ask him if it's really the place (office, house, etc.) that you want.  
Eg: • Is that the XYZ Co.? • Is that the News Desk?
- c) Then you should announce your identity. If the person on the other end has not recognized you, tell him who you are and where you're calling from – that is, the place, office etc. you're calling from.
- d) After announcing your identity, you can straightaway ask him if you could speak to the person whom you want – without asking him who he is. Of course, if you recognize his voice, and if he's the person you want to speak to, you can straight away launch into a conversation.
- e) If the person who picks up the phone at the other end voluntarily announces his identity, and if he's *not* the person you want to speak to, tell him you'd like to speak to the specific person – or ask him if you could speak to that person.
- f) Suppose you are told about the unavailability of the person you want, you can ask the person who has picked up the phone who he is – before you start telling him anything else.

Eg: • Who's this speaking? • May I know who is speaking, please?

But remember one thing: In general, nobody likes to tell you who they are if *you* don't tell them who you are first. So the best policy is to announce *your* identity first, before asking for the identity of the person at the other end.

- g) Once you get the person you want on the phone, and once you're sure that he's the person you want, you can state the purpose of your call. But don't just rush into explaining the purpose all of a sudden. Instead, start by preparing the ground – by telling him that you're now going to



state the purpose. For example, if you're calling him to tell him something about a meeting, you can begin by saying something like this:

- I'm calling you about tomorrow's meeting. Or it's about tomorrow's meeting.
- h) In the same way, before you speak to him about anything important, start by telling him that you're going to speak to him about a particular topic. In this way, you must always build an expectation in him about what you're going to say – before you actually say it. This step is very important if your telephone communication is to be really effective.
- i) Before you actually ring off, say something appropriate that'd indicate to the person at the other end that you're going to ring off. Depending on the context, word groups like the following would help you do this:
- Bye, then. • I'll get back to you soon. • Well, that's settled, then.
  - Thanks a lot. Goodbye. • Until tomorrow, then. Goodbye.
- j) Be prepared to take a message: Be thorough when you take a message. Include-
1. the caller's name
  2. the caller's phone number
  3. if offered, the caller's firm or department
  4. the date and time of message
  5. a message, if the caller chooses to leave one
  6. your name.
- Do not screen calls: If the required person is in, please forward the call immediately. Do not ask, "Who's calling?"
  - Use the caller's name: There is no sweeter music to a person's ear than the sound of their own name.
  - When placing a call, always allow a minute for the person required to answer (Ten rings is equivalent to one minute)
  - Take time for a good closing: Let the caller hang up first; then replace your handset gently.

**Self Assessment Question**

5. Refer to the following chart and identify whether the telephone call is formal or informal

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)
A: 777172	A: 396577	A: 6438657	A: 605040
B: Hello, Mohan here! Can I speak to Tulsi, please?	B: Hello. It's Sam speaking. May I have a word with Leela?	B: Hello, this is Surinder here. Is Simran there please?	B: Hello, my name is David Smith. Could I talk to Mary please?
A: Hold the line please	A: I'll just see if she is in.	A: Hang on a moment	A: I'll find out, If she's at home.
B: O K	B: Right	B: All right.	B: Right
A: Sorry, but she's out	A: I am afraid she's not here	A: I think she's gone shopping	A: Sorry, but she won't be back till Monday
B: Would you tell her I rang?	B: Could you take a message?	B: Would you ask her to call back?	B: Can you tell her to ring me when she gets back?
A: I'd be glad to!	A: Yes of course!	A: certainly!	A: With pleasure!

**2.4 Summary**

In every area of work, communication stands a prime position. Most of the communication in our life is oral communication. This is because, we learn to speak first and then to write. While communicating with the people, polite phrases and expressions have to be used in their appropriate contexts. We have learnt the language that has to be used while giving orders to our subordinates or taking orders from our seniors; giving or asking for directions, which are the most common oral skills that an individual has to learn and use in a day to day life.

## 2.5 Terminal Questions

Pick out the most appropriate response to the questions from the given alternatives:

- i) How do you do?
  - (a) Hi there!
  - (b) How do you do?
  - (c) Fine, thanks.
- ii) How are you?
  - (a) Thank you, Well.
  - (b) Fine, thanks, and you ?
  - (c) I have a cold.
- iii) Excuse me, could you tell me the way to the station please?
  - (a) I don't know
  - (b) You'll have to ask someone else
  - (c) I'm afraid I'm a stranger here myself
- iv) Would you mind if I opened the window a little?
  - (a) I'd rather you didn't actually. It is quite cold.
  - (b) Yes, I would
  - (c) Please, don't!

## 2.6 Answers

### Self Assessment Questions

1. immediate feedback
2. because it will improve the personal and professional life
3. Quality /tone of the voice of the speaker
4. With the help of his accent
5. i) and ii) are informal ; iii) and iv) are formal

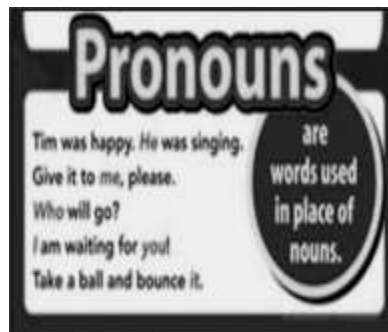
### Terminal Questions

- i) b    ii) b    iii) c    iv) a

**REMEDIAL ENGLISH**

**Pronoun** is used as a proxy to the proper noun to avoid repetition of the nouns.

*Suresh said that Suresh bought a new bike.*  
In this case repetition of the proper noun 'Suresh' becomes redundant. It could be replaced by the pronoun 'he.' *Suresh said that he bought a new bike.*



You may come across usage of pronouns that are quite confusing.

I hit myself with the ball.

I myself hit the ball.

Both the sentences have the pronoun 'myself' but they mean different. The first sentence uses reflexive pronoun, whereas the second sentence uses emphatic pronoun.

**Reflexive Pronouns:** Here the action reflects back on the noun. When the subject and object refer to the same person, reflexive pronoun is used.

I must blame myself for this.

Behave yourself.

He killed himself.

**Emphatic Pronouns:** They are used to emphasize the subject of the sentence.

I myself will take you there

You yourself are to be blamed

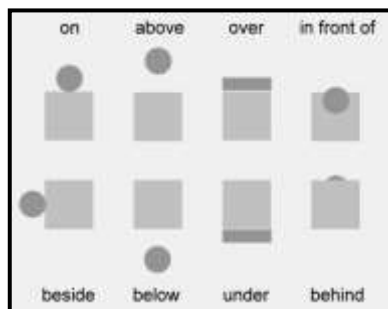
**Exercise 1: Pick out the Pronouns from the sentences given below:**

- i) I am afraid you may have to wait.
- ii) Lubna come in. She was quite good looking.
- iii) Have you been to Tokyo? Yes, it was very crowded.
- iv) It is good to go to bed early and rise early.
- v) One should be practical.
- vi) Her parents are in Singapore and so are mine.
- vii) She stretched herself flat on the sofa.
- viii) These are not mine but those are.
- ix) Someone should take up the responsibility.
- x) Ting and Tang are jealous of each other.

- xi) Look at the man in the car. He is the person who helped me in my difficulties.
- xii) Who is the woman at the gate?

### Prepositions

Prepositions are the words, which tell us about the relations of the nouns, pronouns, and adjectives in a sentence. Their position is before (pre) the noun. Hence, they are said to govern the noun. The noun, which follows is said to be the object of the preposition.



### Relations Expressed by Prepositions

1. **Preposition of Time:** on, in, at, for, before, after, until, till, between, by, upto. E.g.: She was healthy **till** yesterday.
2. **Preposition of Place:** to, at, from, away, on, onto, of, in, into, out, upon, inside, within, by, over, above, on top of, behind, in front of, below, beneath, across, through, all over, throughout, between, among. E.g.: Where do you come **from**?
3. **Preposition of Method and Manner:** by, with. E.g.: The boys skipped going to school, **with** audacity.
4. **Preposition of Reason and Purpose:** with, of, for. E.g.: I rented a house **for** my holidays
5. **Preposition of Possession:** of, with, by. E.g.: The tomb **of** Akbar is in Sikandarabad.
6. **Preposition of Direction and Motions:** into, towards, up, round, across. E.g.: They climbed **into** the lorry.
7. **Preposition of Contrast:** despite. E.g.: **Despite** his mistakes, he is a sincere worker.

***Have these prepositions confused you? Check out their proper usage.***

- **beside, besides**

- a) The house is beside the river. (by the side of)
- b) Besides being good at Tennis, he is also an excellent player of Golf. (in addition to/moreover)

- **since, for**
  - a) He has been absent since Monday last. (point of time)
  - b) He was absent for four days. (length or period of time)
- **between, among**
  - a) I have to choose between the two pictures.(two persons/things)
  - b) This is the custom among the tribes. (more than two)
- **by, with**
  - a) He was killed by a servant. (doer of the action)
  - b) He was killed with a knife. (instrument of action)
- **in, at**

He lives at Juhu in Mumbai. ('at' - smaller area/ 'in'- bigger area)
- **in, into**
  - a) He is in bed (indicates rest or motion inside anything)
  - b) He fell into the well (motion towards the inside of anything)
- **on, upon**
  - a) He sat on a chair (things at rest)
  - b) He lives on his maternal uncle (denoting support)
  - c) I wrote books on philosophy (denoting concern)
  - d) He jumped upon the horse. (Things in motion)
- **in, within**
  - a) The loan will be repaid in a year. (end of a period of time)
  - b) The loan will be paid within a year (any time before the specified period.)
- **over, above**
  - a) They saw the peaks towering above them (higher)
  - b) We hung the picture over the fire place (vertically above)

**Exercise 2: Use the suitable preposition in the blanks:**

1. It is almost time. Hurry up! The train will leave \_\_\_\_\_ five minutes.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ the end of April, we go \_\_\_\_\_ holidays.
3. My father leaves me \_\_\_\_\_ school \_\_\_\_ his way to office \_\_\_\_\_ scooter.
4. Beautiful resorts are coming up \_\_\_\_\_ the sea.
5. You can hang grandfather's portrait \_\_\_\_\_ the shelves.

6. Do you mind taking your legs \_\_\_\_\_ the table.
7. When I saw my friend, I was walking \_\_\_\_\_ the road \_\_\_\_\_ my dog.
8. A beautiful butterfly flew \_\_\_\_\_ our window and landed \_\_\_\_\_ my bed.
9. Could you help me put this film \_\_\_\_\_ the camera?
10. Is that man \_\_\_\_\_ a beard a priest?
11. Please don't go away \_\_\_\_\_ telling me!
12. Who was this portrait painted \_\_\_\_\_ ?
13. Leaning \_\_\_\_\_ the big tree he was recalling \_\_\_\_\_ his mind, the pleasant memories \_\_\_\_\_ his college days.
14. The nose \_\_\_\_\_ an elephant is called the trunk.
15. Ramola walked \_\_\_\_\_ the tree \_\_\_\_\_ search of her lost ring.
16. We have been living \_\_\_\_\_ this street \_\_\_\_\_ three years.
17. There is a parcel \_\_\_\_\_ books \_\_\_\_\_ you. It is \_\_\_\_\_ the Oxford University Press.
18. Suman has been waiting \_\_\_\_\_ Arun \_\_\_\_\_ 10 o'clock. He wonders whether he is coming at all.

**Answers****Exercise 1:**

1. I; you
2. She
3. you; it
4. It
5. one
6. her mine
7. she; herself
8. these; mine
9. someone
10. each other
11. he; who; me
12. who

Exercise 2:

1. in
2. by; for
3. at; on; by
4. near
5. above
6. off
7. across; with
8. inside; on
9. into
10. with
11. without
12. for
13. against; from; of
14. of
15. around; in
16. in; for
17. of; for; from
18. for; since