



Sudan University of Science and Technology



College of Graduate studies

**Investigating Difficulties Encountering MA Students of
Linguistics in Using Prepositions in a Written Text**

**تقصي الصعوبات التي تواجه طلاب ماجستير اللغويات في استخدام حروف الجر
في النص المكتوب**

A thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment Requirement of MA Degree in English
Language (Applied Linguistics)

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الإستهلال

قال تعالى:

(و العصر * إن الإنسان لفي خسر * إلا الذين آمنوا و عملوا الصالحات * و تواصلوا بالحق * و تواصلوا بالصبر)

صدق الله العظيم

سورة العصر

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my beloved parents

ACKNOLEDGMENTS

The greatest praise is due to Allah the almighty for the enormous graces he bestowed to me to achieve this research then my enormous noun to all those who supported me or stood behind me especially: Dr Hillary Marino Pitia my supervisor for the remarkable guidance, advice and patience. I am greatly indebted to staff of College of Language who were very cooperative and supportive to me especially Dr. Abd allah Yassin Abdallah and Dr. Areeg Osman. Sincere thanks are also due to all my colleagues in Batch 4, Linguistics and my colleagues at B. A. in University of Gezira, Faculty of education Rufa'a, English Language, Batch 29.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating the problems that MA students of linguistics batch 7 are encountered by using and understanding prepositions. The researcher adopted a descriptive analytical method, which followed a quantitative analysis. A test was used as a tool for data collection, the sample of the study consists of 30 students drawn from MA programme in Linguistics, Sudan University of Science and Technology, Graduate Studies. The data were analyzed by using the statistical program SPSS which provides percentage results for the test. The study comes out with the results that MA students of linguistics face problems in using prepositions, MA students of linguistics fail to use suitable prepositions to fill in the blanks which make the context not cohesive and MA students of linguistics are poor in identification different types of prepositions. At the end of the study the researcher presented some recommendations. These recommendations focus on paying attention to the use prepositions when designing syllabuses, students should do more practice in using prepositions.

المستخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة لتقصي المشكلات التي تواجه طلاب مرحلة الماجستير في اللغويات التطبيقية استخدام وفهم حروف الجر (الدفعة السادسة لغويات) . استخدم الباحث المنهج الوصفي التحليلي كما استخدم الاختبار كاداة لجمع البيانات و شملت العينة 30 دارساً مقيدا ببرنامج ماجستير اللغويات بجامعة السودان للعلوم والتكنولوجيا كلية الدراسات العليا، استخدم برنامج التحليل الاحصائي لتحليل البيانات حيث كانت النتائج في شكل نسبة مئوية . من أهم النتائج التي توصل إليها الباحث، أن طلاب ماجستير اللغويات يواجهون مشاكل في استخدام حروف الجر كما انهم فشلوا في استخدام حروف الجر المناسبة ما جعل النص غير متماسك، طلاب ماجستير اللغويات ليس لهم دراية بانواع حروف الجر. ختاماً أوصي الباحث بضرورة الاهتمام بحروف الجر عند إعداد المناهج، إعطاء الطلاب مزيداً من التطبيقات حول استخدام حروف الجر.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

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1.0 Overview

Prepositions are considered one of the important parts of speech in English Language, they link nouns, pronouns or phrases to other part of sentence. They are words in English used for compressing meaning into a few words (Hussein.2012). The correct use of prepositions is one of the most serious problems faced by learners of English Language even MA students faced it. Prepositions often represent problems to foreign students, MA students in general and in Sudan University Science and Technology especially applied linguistics students, they face problems in using prepositions and can't use them correctly, they are poor in identifying different types of prepositions. Prepositions are short words such as (in, on and at) that usually stand in front of nouns and general verbs but some students can't use them correctly in written text, some prepositions consist of two words such as (into, onto or according to) and other prepositions consist of three words such as (in front of and as well as). The use of prepositions in context varies greatly from language to other, preposition often causes negative syntactic transfer, and same prepositions can carry different meaning in different language because they have different meaning and different uses. The researcher noticed that MA students of linguistics at Sudan University of Science and Technology have problems in using and understanding prepositions. So this study is intended to investigate these problems among MA students in order to come up with some recommendations and some solutions based on to final findings and results.

1.1 Statement of the Study:

Prepositions are an overlapping area of English Language learning because it's a problematic for learners in terms of using and understanding, they create problems for those whom English Language is their major. Even for MA students pursuing their degree in Linguistics, tended to mix up prepositions. MA students of linguistics at Sudan University Science and Technology are facing huge difficulties in using prepositions. It is viewed that the most of them fail to decide which preposition should follow a certain adjectives or verbs. Additionally, MA students of linguistics did not know the common types of prepositions and their usage.

1.2 Objectives of the study:

This study aims at

- (1) Identifying the difficulties encountered by MA students of linguistics in using and understanding prepositions.
- (2) Highlighting different types of prepositions in order to help MA students of linguistics to know them.
- (3) Examining the effects of the misuse of prepositions on the students' writing performance.

1.3 Significance of the study:

The significance of this study stems from the fact that the prepositions are important in English Language. It is impossible to construct a sentence without using one of them .So this study sheds more lights on the kinds of prepositions , definitions of prepositions and their role in a written text which in turn contributes to avoiding confusion. This study is valuable in building students confidence in dealing with prepositions and provide them with tools to help and enable them

make the meaningful choice when using prepositions, it will benefit both learners and teachers of English Language as well as curriculum designer.

1.4 Questions of the study:

This study sets out to answer the following questions

- 1/ To what extent do MA students of linguistics face problems in using and understanding prepositions?
- 2/ To what extent are MA students of linguistics poor in identifying different types of prepositions?
- 3/ To what extent can the misuse of the prepositions affect the cohesion of a written text?

1.5 Hypotheses of the study:

This study sets out to test the following hypotheses

- (1) MA students of linguistics do face great problems in using and understanding prepositions.
- (2) MA students of linguistics are poor in identifying different types of prepositions.
- (3) The misuse of prepositions can affect the cohesion of a written text.

1.6 Limits of the study

This study will be limited to investigate the problems facing MA students of linguistics in using and understanding prepositions at Sudan University of Science and Technology .The research will be conducted in the academic year 2016/2017.

1.7 Methodology of the study

In this study the researcher uses the descriptive and analytical method, also the researcher will adopt a test as a tool for collecting data. It will be administrated for MA degree students of Applied Linguistics at Sudan University of Science and Technology batch seven.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

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LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

2.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the review of literature related to the research topic such as definitions of preposition, types or classification of the prepositions and the role of prepositions in a written text.

2.1 Definitions of preposition:

A preposition is a word that shows a relationship between a noun or pronoun and the other part of sentence. A preposition expresses a relationship between one part of sentence and other word, that word is called the object of the preposition. Prepositions are words usually follow by a noun, noun phrase, personal pronoun or the object of the preposition .The object of the preposition and the unit of preposition is called prepositional phrase. Norman C.S. (1983) said a preposition normally precedes noun or pronoun, it is possible in preposition informal English to move the preposition to the end of the sentence (A.J Thomson.91) mention it, for example (To whom were you talking? It or who were you talking to?). Preposition as term, seems to be simple and easy to understand but in fact it is really difficult to define.

Broadly defined, a preposition is a word that shows the relationship between noun, pronoun and some other elements in the sentence. The definition provides the meaning of preposition on the whole, but the definition of preposition is more complicated. In more precise way.

According to Wishon, E. and Burks, M. 1980, prepositions are always followed by nouns or pronouns. They are connective words what shows the relationship

between nouns following them and one of the basic elements subject, verb, object or complement. Beare, K. 2009 offers a clear and specific definition of preposition by saying that (In English grammar, a preposition is a word employed with noun or pronoun to form a phrase or a preposition phrase. Preposition phrases express meaning closely related to the meaning expressed by adverbs and adjectives: where, when, and how preposition phrases can also express a sense of why or how .e.g. He is in the jail how this preposition phrase provides sense of location, a sense of where something is located.

2.2 classification of prepositions

Celce, M.L. 1999 classified the prepositions on the basis of syllabus, prepositions can be classified into simple prepositions **in, on and at** like and complex prepositions **instead of, between and as far as**. Prepositions have been called the biggest little words in English. They are usually quite short and insignificants looking but they have very important functions. There are various ways to classify English preposition into categories. As Frank, K. (1972) classifies prepositions in terms of semantics into two: main categories namely the preposition that indicates physical relationship and the preposition that indicates other semantic relationship. The prepositions that indicates physical relationship fall into three subcategories: temporal prepositions, spatial prepositions and directional preposition.

2.2.1 Temporal prepositions are divided into three types according to the point of each.

The first type of **temporal preposition** is that indicates one point of time: the type of temporal preposition includes six prepositions

- (1) **On**: this preposition is used to show a day of the week, a day of the month and a date, for example, I met her on Friday.

(2) **At**: the preposition at is used with a part of day, an hour of the day and age, for example, She let to school of the age of 14.

(3) **Since**: this preposition can be used as an objection of time and introduce other types of clause, for example, It has been two years since I saw you.

(4) **By** this preposition is used to express the meaning of no later than at any time up to this point, for example, I can see her by Sunday, Ahmed comes to school by bus.

(5) **For** this preposition is used to give the meaning of how much time, for example, I waited for two hours.

(6) **In** this preposition is used to indicate a particular month, year part of day and season for example, I was born in 1989.

The second type of temporal preposition is the preposition that **indicates extended time**. This type of temporal preposition refers to extending time starting at one point and ending at another.

The prepositions in this type include:

(1) **Since**: this preposition refers to the beginning point.

If it is used with the present perfect tense the end point is now, for example, I haven't seen him since Monday.

(2) **During**: this preposition gives a block of time, usually thought of as undivided, for example, I can see you during this week.

(3) **In** the preposition in gives a quantity of time before which something will happen, for example, I can see you in an hour from now.

The third type of temporal preposition is the preposition that **indicates sequence of time**: The preposition included

1-**before** this preposition means earlier than a particular event or action, For example, I saw her a few days before she died.

2-**After**: The preposition after, indicates the event follows the time given in the after phrase, for example, I go swimming every day after work.

3- **In front of** this preposition uses to indicate for something in front, for examples, People were standing in front of the theatre waiting to go in, Our house is in front of police station.

2.2.2The second category of the preposition that indicates physical relationship is **spatial preposition (place prepositions)**.

Spatial preposition include: **Place and position** they are described as follows.

(1)**In** this preposition indicates the area of something included for example: Put your coat in the closet.

(2)**Inside** is used to emphasize the containment for example: There were Dogs inside the house.

(3)**At** a preposition refers to a place smaller than city or town, for example, He lives at Sunna Bonang 11 Semarang.

(4)**On** this preposition indicates the surface of something, for example, Put the dishes on the table.

Higher or lower than a point

The prepositions included in this type:

(1) **Over**: this preposition is felt to be generally higher than a point, for example,

The plane is over the mountains.

(2) **Above:** the preposition **above** is felt to be directly higher than the point, for example, He lives on the floor above us.

Neighboring the point

The prepositions included this types

(1) **Near:** this preposition has the most general meaning of neighboring a point, for example, I live near the university.

(2) **Besides** – for example: He sat beside his two sons.

(3) **Between** the preposition ` between, generally involves two.

For example: Suzan is sitting between Sara and Fatima.

(4) **Among:** This preposition for example: Mona is the best among the pupils.

2.2.3 The third category of the prepositions that indicates physical relationship is **direction preposition**, direction prepositions usually show the direction and where the movement would go.

From – toward: From refers to the place where the movement starts and toward refers to the place where the movement stops for example:

My father walks from home to his office.

Into – out of (outside): into expresses the direction to the inside for example:

The teacher is walking out of the classroom.

Up and down: up expresses the notion or direction from a lower position to higher one, while down in contrast with up in term of vertical direction, for example, He climbed up 1 down the stairs.

2.3 English prepositions rule

A/ There is one very simple rule about prepositions and unlike most these rules have no explanations, prepositions are followed by nouns but it never followed by verbs, nouns such as noun, pronoun, proper noun and gerund

B/ A sentence shouldn't end in a prepositions, however, there are several factors to consider, if you cannot find an alternative sentence without prepositions, you have a choice whether to restructure your sentence or to leave a prepositions at the end of it, for example, She is a person I cannot cope with, She is a person with whom I cannot cope.

Either can be used or not, there are no hard and fast rules on this subject (David, C. 2005).

2.4 According to Keane, L. (1991)

There are also three more **types of prepositions**.

The prepositions that usually used to show **subject** are: **on** and **about** for example: I just bought a book on Biology.

Omission prepositions are usually used to show omission are: **except** and **but** for examples: No one except Helen saw time table schedule, I dislike Mango but I like Apple.

Similarities: the prepositions that usually used to show similarities are: **as** and **like**, for examples, He looks like his father, Ali as A lion.

According to Lindstromberg 1997 the meaning of preposition can be classified into:

(1) Literal meaning, (2) depictable meaning, (3) none depict able meaning.

First **literal meanings** of preposition refers to physical word, for example,

(On) A dog sat on the chair.

In this example it explains the location of the dog with respect to the chair.

Secondly, the **depictable meaning** of preposition is a meaning which is used in a sentence and be able to explain clearly through picture, for example,

She stood **up** and walked **to** the window.

Finally **nonedepict** able meaning of preposition is a meaning that cannot be represented by picture, for example, John died fighting **for** his country.

Modern linguists classified prepositions as follows:

Prefer to classify preposition as structure words rather than as part of speech.

According to **Michael 1999** there are five types of prepositions

Simple preposition the most frequently used preposition in English are those which are the simplest in form such as:

at ,but, by after, on, off, of, in, over, since, though, until, under, and with.

Double preposition: a double preposition is a preposition which is used when a simple preposition cannot adequately convey a given meaning, so it's combined with another preposition such as

Into, onto – from off, from with, from under, from among and over against.

Compound preposition is formed by combining words into compounds to show relations which the simple or primary preposition cannot express, it can be formed from a noun and adjective, and adverb which is combined with (**be, in and on**) for example **before, behind, between, beside, across, along, and without.**

Participial preposition is derived from verb usually from the present or past participle forms of the verb.

Many of these retain much of their original meaning for example: pending – during – accepting and considering.

Prepositional phrase: a preposition phrase consists of two or more words written separately but used as adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions, for example, because of, according to and in regard to.

Although the explanation above seems to give a definite classification of prepositions, but prepositions are essentially just synthetic reflexes that have no real meaning of their own, only taking on meaning in the context of a large syntactic pattern.

According to **Walker, B.L. 1982** prepositions must have an object, the object a noun or pronoun.

Preposition + object = prepositional phrase

Usually when the object of the preposition is a pronoun, the prepositional phrase will be only two words the preposition and an object.

Prepositional phrase used as an adjective does the same thing as an adjective for, example,

The middle girl is Jane. (adjective)

The girl in the middle is Jane. (prepositional phrase)

The **prepositional phrase** used as an adjective also the phrase tells which one, what kind or how many?, notice that adjective comes before the noun but the prepositional phrase comes after noun.

According to **Eastwood, J. 2002** prepositions combine with verbs to form the **prepositional verbs** such as (believe in, look into, insist on, cope with, consist of, feel like, hint at and hope for) for example, We believe in Allah.

Thomason, A.J. and Martin 2001 there are great many other **verbs** which can be followed by **prepositions** such as

Apologize for	live in
Apply to / for	long for
Ask for/about	object to
Attend to	occur to
Bag for	persist on
Believe in	prefer
Beware of	prepare for
Blame for	punch for
Charge with	refer to
Comply with	rely on
Consist of	succeed in
Deal in	suspect of
Depend on	think of / about
Fight with/ for	wait for
Fine for	hope for
Examples	

Do you **believe in** Ghosts?

They were **charged with** receiving stolen goods.

You have not **complied with** the regulations.

For a weak she **lived in** bananas and milk.

It never **occurred to** me to insure the house.

They **persisted in** defying the law.

When argument failed he **restored to** threats.

Prepositions used with adjectives

According to Thomason, A.J. 2001 certain adjective used as a prepositions can be followed by preposition + noun/ gerund, for example, (verb+ prepositions).

Some of these prepositions are given below and the other can be found consulting a good dictionary, which after any adjective will give the preposition that can be used with certain adjectives such as **about, at, to, for, in, of, on, to** which is used with certain adjectives.

Absorbed in	involve in
According to	keen on
Accustomed to	liable for/to
Anxious for	owning for/to
Ashamed to	pleased with
Aware of	prepared of
Bad at/for	ready for

Confident of	scared of
Due to/ for	responsible to/ for
Exposed to	sorry for/ about
Fit for	succesful in
Front of	suspicious of
Frightened of/at	tired of
Good at/ for	used to
Interested in	terrified of

For examples: He was **absorbed in** his book, she is **afraid /scared/frightened of** dark, and He is **bad at/good at** Chess. Running is **bad/good for** you, they are **very keen on** Golf, I am **sorry for** your husband, the management is not **responsible for** articles left in customs car and I am **sorry about** that.

According to **Norman Coe, Mark Harrison and Ken Paterson**, (2006) Oxford Practice Grammar. They explained the prepositions of place and movement, then Norman Coe explained the prepositions of time.

2.5 Prepositions of place and movement

In, on and **at** are used to talk about place, for example,

We use the preposition **in** with enclosed place countries, towns and contents, for example, In Sudan, in my pocket.

We use the preposition **on** with we surfaces (walls, lines, paths, and coats), for example, on the grass .On the third floor. On the line.

We use the preposition **at** with point, for example, at the bus station, at school and at work.

Into, onto and **to** are used to talk about movement prepositions, for example,

We move the chair into the class, the car ran onto the stage and they walked to the next town.

Other prepositions of movement **across, along, up, down, past, through**, for example, they ran across the field to the rode, The children walked along the road to the other town, He walked up the hill and ran down the other side, The bus went past the bus stop without stopping and The train goes through three towns.

Prepositions of time in, on and at according to Norman Coe (1983)

He said we use **in** with parts of day, month, seasons, and year, for example, In the afternoon, in the morning, In Summer, in Winter, in 2006 and in 1999.

The preposition **on** is used with days and dates, for example, On Sunday, on Friday, on her birthday. On ninth of April, on the First of March. On the Third of May.

Also there are some words can replace **in, on** and **an** such as **this, next, and, last**, for example, I am going home this April. She left to London last weekend.

2.6 Other uses of prepositions according to Norman Coe (1983)

We use the preposition **at** with these phrases such as:

At first, at last, at moment, at the weekend, at once, for example, He will be back at the beginning of the next week, at first I did not believe what was saying and we are busy at this moment.

We use the preposition **by** with means of transport such as by car, by ship, by plane and by train, for example, Ali goes to by bus, Mona goes home by car.

Also we can use **by** some phrases such as by chance, by accident and by mistake, for example, You can pay by your credit card and all these products were made by hand.

We use the preposition **for** in these phrases such as, for example, for sale, forever and for instance, for example, I would like to her forever. This mobile phone for sale and I will love forever.

We use the preposition **in** with these phrases such as in advance, in general, in future, in love, in my opinion, in control and in fashion, for instance, you are decided to book a table in advance, I cannot talk in this moment and I am in hurry and In general she has good life.

We use the preposition **on** with these phrases on business, on holiday, on a trip, on television, on a computer and on the phone, for example, I am going away on holiday and all these work is done on computer He will come on Sunday.

We use the preposition **in** to describe what some body is wearing, for example, I went to the interview in my new suit, Jane is woman in the red dress and it was sunny today and every one in summer clothes.

2.7 According to John Eastwood (1985)

He classified the prepositions as follow **Prepositions of place in, on, in to, on to, over, above**, for instance:

There are some people in the café. The bus at station, there is a picture over the door. There is T.V on table. The bird over the tree. The cars are going into the bridge. **Position and movement prepositions across, at, to, in, on, into, and**

onto, for example, There was a barrier across the road. We were at café. They went to the garden. We are sitting in office. She stood on the balcony. The gone into the river and Peter slept onto the over

Prepositions of time (in, on and at) we use the preposition **in** with longer period for example: In the next few days, in summer holiday in spring, in autumn and in March and in May

Also we use the preposition **in** with the parts of day as in the morning, in the evening.

We use the preposition **on** with the single day and date, such as, they play tennis on Friday, The match will be on August and He will travel on next Monday

We use the preposition **at** with particular time such as

See you at home, the lecture will start at half past seven and He will meet you at breakfast time.

We prefer to use the prepositions **in front of** and **behind** more than **before** and **after**, for example, there is a statue in front of the museum, not before the museum and the car behind us ran into the back of us, not the car after use.

We use the preposition **before** to means earlier and **after** to means later in time but also we use before and after talk about what order things come in for example: J comes before K and K comes after J.

We also use **after** to talk about someone following or chasing such as:

The thief ran across the road with the policemen after him.

We use the prepositions **for** and **since** with period of time to say how long something continues for example: Rachel plays computer games for hours, not during hours, I once stayed at that hotel for a week.

We use the prepositions **for** and **since** with present perfect to say how long something has continued or when it started, for example, Girls have worked here for ten year, We haven't been to the theatre for month and The parker has been living here since1985.

We use the prepositions **till** and **until** to say when something finished, for example, Jim will be working in Germany till/until next April, we sat in the pub till/until closing time.

Also we can use not with till /until when something is later than expected, for example, She didn't get up till/until half past ten and John doesn't get up till/until half past eight.

2.8 Other meanings for place prepositions

Prepositions of place can also have more abstract meanings, for example, I am really **into** modern jazz (interested in), Lan **from** Scotland (He is Scottish) and his show was **above** criticism (too good to be criticized), Hellen shows **beyond** criticism (too good to be criticized) and City **among** the most successful team in the country (one of).

2.9 Prepositions of adjacency or prepositions of proximity

Near, close and by prepositions

Near and close means not far from. For example: we live near to the hospital, means (**close to** the hospital), Jack lives close to Garden means (near to the Garden).

Near and close can be adverb:

The animals were very tame, they came quit **near /close**.

Nearby means not far away:

There is a post office near here **/nearby**.

The prepositions by means (at the side of) or very near, for example, we live by the market / very near, Come and site by me / near to me

2.10 The role of prepositions in written text

The essential requisite of essential successful written text is to employ the Language effectively in a given context, so it becomes necessary for English major students to know language system. In fact students find it difficult to learn the function words rather than content words. Function words such as preposition show the relationship between groups of words. The function and usage of preposition are perennial constraints for ESL learners. Though the students have learnt grammatical aspects for many years, they still struggle to employ preposition in English sentence. The inappropriate use of preposition generally affects the understanding of written text CM. Ponmani and Mekala. According to Collins, H. 1995, there outeen most frequent words of English language prepositions are more significant in language use as they belong at active parts of speech in English, also serve as essential discourse markers and basic components in producing written

text. Learners find that the prepositions are difficult to systemize due to their sheer number and polysemous nature. In English there are 100 prepositions attributed and multiple meanings. The meaning of preposition varies according to the context. The learners are not able to comprehend the contextual and syntactic meaning of preposition and use it in reliant place. Prepositions perform many function writing sentences, the function of preposition what the preposition does? For example: the function of adjective (pink) in the pink rose is to describe the noun rose. There are ten noun function of preposition, these functions are discussed in the following preposition.

Heads of preposition phrases:

Preposition first function as the head of preposition phrase, for example, the heads of noun phrase is noun, for examples, planes take off from her, our new neighbors across the hall became our best neighbor. The head of verb phrase are verbs, for examples, I was looking at the photo, somebody turned out the lights.

Modifiers of phrase:

Prepositions as modifiers and complements of noun phrase, adjectives phrases and adverb phrases, other words and phrases, for example, the prepositional phrase with blondss hair modifiers or describes the noun phrase with the little girl in the phrase (the little girl with blond hair).

Particles:

Preposition function as particle in phrasal verbs. Phrase verbs are verb consist of a verb and one or more preposition for example: phrasal verbs include wake up mean (to wake) to look up means (to consult) and pass out means (to faint).

Finally

Prepositions are important because they work to connect various part of sentence also they make a written text coherent.

2.11 The Previous studies:

In this section the researcher focuses on previous studies related to the research topic.

Study No. One

Aidaros, (2008) conducted a study entitled Error Analysis of the use of prepositions in English writing skill. This study aims to analyzing the of the use of some prepositions such as (among, between, beside, by and with) in writing skill as well as identifying the actual reasons behind those difficulties and finding the suitable solution for them. The study applied analytical and descriptive method, the study population includes teachers and students department of English Language at University of Shendi, Faculty of arts. The sample of the study includes 10 teachers and 28 students, the study tools are questionnaire and test. The researcher use the percentage for analyzing data and come up with the following results: these prepositions are problematic, students assume that prepositions are easy and prepositions aren't given enough efforts in teaching, also recommendations come out as follow: prepositions should be included in the syllabus of the university, teachers should give enough effort for teaching prepositions and students should be motivated and be aware of learning prepositions.

Study No. Two:

Ali, (2014) conducted a study entitled: Problems Facing Third year University Students in Using Prepositions. This study aims to evaluate university student abilities in using prepositions, it focuses on recognizing the underlying reason of the students' place and time prepositions errors .preposition with multiple

meaning, prepositions that often confused, and prepositions after particular words, and they also attempt to offer recommendations to overcome students' difficulties of missing prepositions. However, in order to achieve the research purpose, the tool of data collection is a test for students. The population of this study is: student of Sudan University of science and Technology. The sample of the study consists of 15 students from the third level of Sudan University of science and Technology. Specialized in English language faculty of Education. The study adopted a descriptive method to analyze the data. The findings revealed that the students encounter some difficulties in using prepositions often confused and prepositions of multiple meaning, they are also unable to distinguish between prepositions and prepositional adverb. The findings were discussed in light of the hypotheses and relevant literature. The study recommended the following, teachers should adopt effective and modern techniques in teaching preposition and punctuation, expand the space for preposition in the syllabus.

Study No. Three

Hassan, (2016) conducted a study entitled: Investigating EFL learners Problems of Using and Understanding Prepositions. This study aims to investigate the problems of using prepositions among EFL learners. The study adopted a descriptive methodology, which followed the quantitative analysis. One instrument was used for data collection which is questionnaire. The sample of study consists of 40 learners from Al Neelain University 4th years. The data was analyzed by using the statistical program (SPSS) which provides percentage result for questionnaire. The study comes out with results that the EFL learners are poor in using prepositions and some of these prepositions are troubles some adjective for them. Moreover there is a weakness of using prepositions. There are some causes behind the difficulties of using prepositions such as interference of the mother tongue and

prepositions are inadequately (insufficient) present in the syllabus . At the end of the study, the researcher presented some recommendations. These recommendations focuses on paying more attention for prepositions in designing syllabuses, learners should receive more practice in using preposition and raising learner's awareness of prepositions. Teachers should raise students' awareness of the importance of the prepositions in writing also teachers should adopt effective modern techniques in teaching prepositions.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER THREE

METHDOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.0 Introduction:

This chapter describes the method and techniques adopted, the population, the sample and the procedures of data analysis. In addition to the reliability and validity of the study.

3.1 The Methodology:

The researcher uses the descriptive analytical method to analyze data collected in order to answer the research questions. It adopts qualitative method in its design. This study investigates the problems facing MA students of linguistics at SUST in using and understanding prepositions.

3.2 Population of the Study:

The subject of this study involves both males and females of MA students of English Language (linguistics) at Sudan University of Science and Technology, College of Languages of academic year 2016– 2017.

3.3 Instrument:

Instruments of any study are tools which are used to collect data for the study, here the test is the only instrument used to collect data.

3.4 Sampling:

The students' sample of this study was selected randomly from the population, they represented 50 % from the whole learners' population .Students age approximately between 24 – 57 years old. The sample of the study consists of 30 students.

3.5 The Content of the test:

The test consists of three questions each question consists of ten items, which are designed to check whether the learners can use prepositions correctly or not.

3.6 Validity of the test

The first draft of the test has been given to the supervisor who made some modifications by adding and excluding. The test covered and expressed the hypotheses of the research and measure them properly.

3.7 Reliability of the test:

Reliability refers to whether the instrument can produce the same or similar results if it is conducted again under the same conditions, the test was calculated by a computer program called SPSS.

3.8 Procedure of Data Analysis:

The researcher has collected the data from the participants' responses then every single paper inserted into SPSS. Frequencies and Percentage have been calculated for each question. The researcher has used (Chi-square) value test to check the validity of hypotheses. The charts were provided for further demonstrations and explanations.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

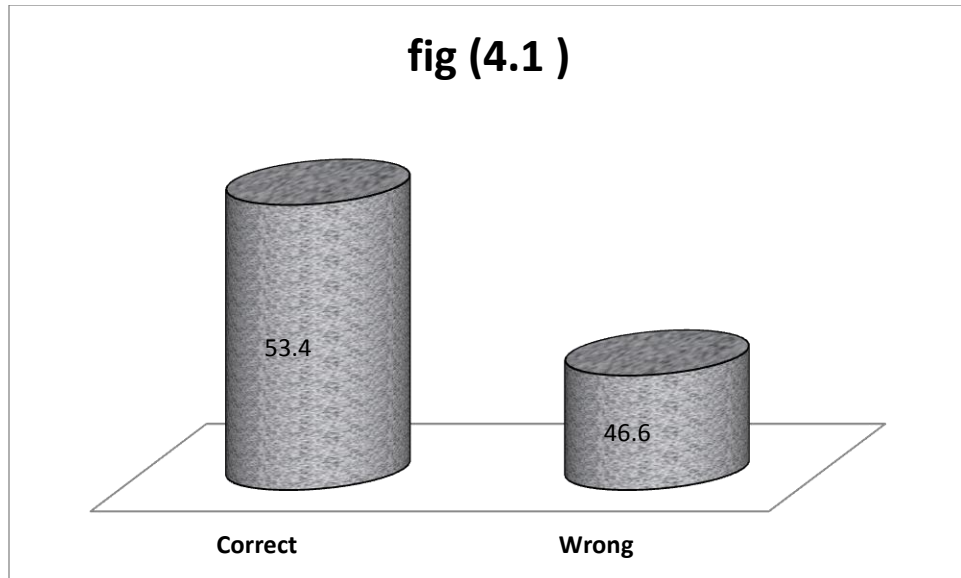
A group of 30 MA students drawn from Sudan University Science and Technology, applied linguistics batch 7 were tested on the uses and understanding of prepositions, they were chosen randomly 15 male and the other 15 were female the test was made of three questions each question has ten items.

4.1 Data Analysis and result discussion

The analysis of the test will be for the items of the questions to know whether the results will agree with the hypotheses assumed in chapter one or not.

Table No (4.1) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondent's Answers of question number (1) Correspondents with hypothesis one MA students face problems in using prepositions?

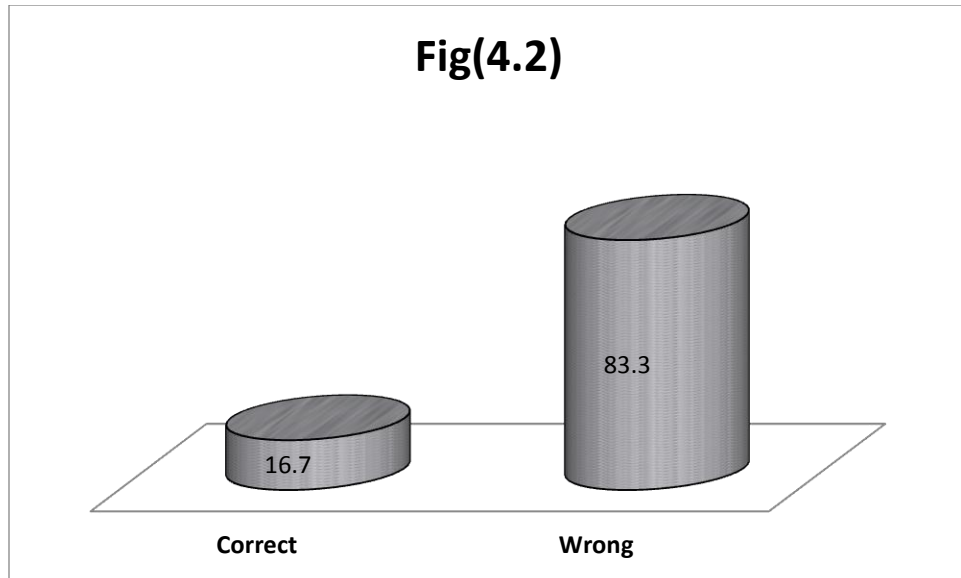
Answers	Frequencies	Percentage
Correct	16	53.4
Wrong	14	46.6
Total	30	100



from the above table No.(4.1) and figure No (4.1) it's shown that there are (16) students in the study's sample with percentage (53.4%) have the correct answer to the question " select the suitable preposition from (a . b or c) ". There are (14) students with percentage (46.6 %) have the wrong answer.

Table No (4.2) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondent's Answers of question number (2) Corresponds with hypothesis two MA students are poor in identifying different types of prepositions.

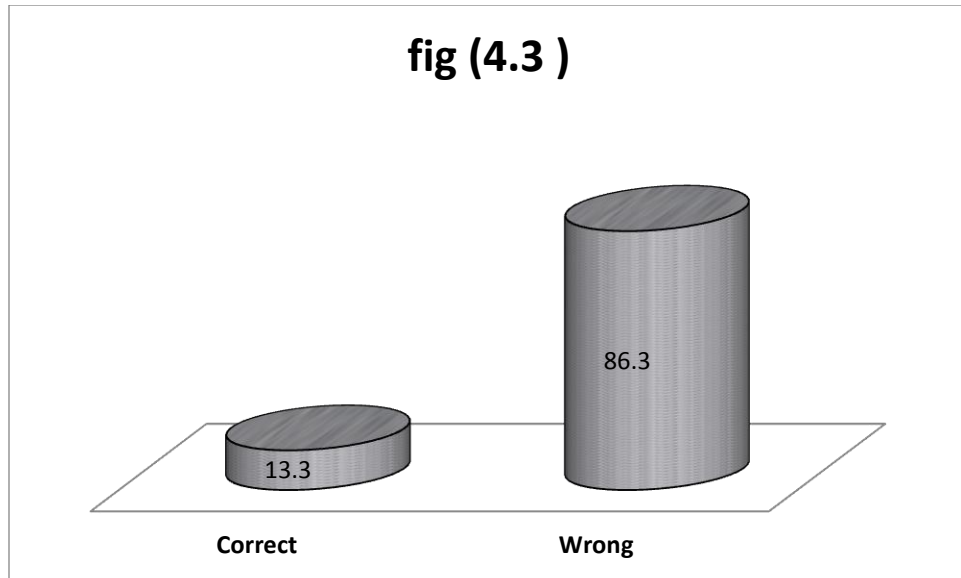
Answers	Frequencies	Percentage
Correct	5	16.7
Wrong	25	83.3
Total	30	100



from the above table No.(4.2) and figure No (4.2) it's shown that there are (5) students in the study's sample with percentage (16.7%) that who have the correct answer to the question " complete the following using prepositions of your own) ". There are (25) students with percentage (83.3 %) have the wrong answer.

Table No (4.3) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondent's Answers of question number (3) Corresponds with hypothesis three the misuse of the prepositions can affect the cohesion of a written text.

Answers	Frequencies	Percentage
Correct	4	13.3
Wrong	26	86.3
Total	30	100



from the above table No.(4.3) and figure No (4.3) it's shown that there are (4) students in the study's sample with percentage (13.3%) have the correct answer to the question " match A with B in C ". There are (26) students with percentage (86.3 %) have the wrong answer

Table No (4.4) The Frequency Distribution and decisions for the Respondent's Answers of all questions

Questions	Correct		Wrong		Decision
	<i>frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	Accept
Question 1	16	53.4	14	46.6	Accept
Question 2	5	16.7	25	83.3	Accept
Question 3	4	13.3	26	86.3	Accept

The table No. (4.4) it is shown the summary of the results. For the **Question 1** it's clear that the number of students who have the correct answers is greater than the number of wrong answers with percent (53.4%) but it's not enough to reject our first hypothesis of the study so it's accepted.

For the **Question 2** it's clear that the number of students have the wrong answers is greater than the number of students have the correct answers with percent (83.3%) so the second hypothesis of the study is accepted.

For the **Question 3** it's clear that the number of students have the wrong answers is greater than the number of students have the correct answers with percent (86.3%) so the third hypothesis of the study is accepted

Table (4. 5) one sample T-TEST for the questions of the study

Question s	N	mean	SD	t-value	DF	p-value
1	30	4.9	2.2	12.22	29	0.00
2	30	2.7	1.81	7.75	29	0.00
3	30	3.8	1.8	11.65	29	0.00
For all	30	11.33	4.00	15.51	29	0.00

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (1) was (12.22) which is greater than

the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (29) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.31). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. This means that our first hypothesis is accepted. And it's true that MA students have problems in using prepositions.

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (2) was (7.75) which is greater than the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (29) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.31). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. This means that our first hypothesis is accepted. And it's true that MA students are poor in identifying different types of prepositions.

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (3) was (7.75) which is greater than the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (29) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.31). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. this means that our third hypothesis is accepted. And it's true that the misuse of prepositions can affect cohesion of a written text.

Summary

The researcher designed test according to his hypotheses. The test consist of three questions each question has ten items, the researcher come up with the results that MA students face problems in using prepositions. MA students are poor in identifying different types of prepositions also MA students can't use the prepositions correctly in written text.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTIONS

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This study dealt with difficulties of using and understanding prepositions encountered by MA students of linguistics in Sudan University Science and Technology, with analysis and the evaluation these difficulties of English Language prepositions. Below there are findings, recommendations, suggestions for further studies and conclusion.

5.1 Findings

- 1/ MA students face difficulties when using prepositions.
- 2/MA students can't differentiate between different types of prepositions.
- 3/ MA students aren't able to use prepositions in a written text correctly which affect the text cohesion.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the main findings of the study the researcher recommends the following

- 1/ Teachers should apply new strategies and modern techniques for teaching prepositions.
- 2/ Teachers should introduce students to different types of prepositions through giving them more exercises.

3/ MA students should put into consideration the significance of the prepositions in connecting the sentence.

5.3 Suggestions for farther studies

The researcher suggests the following topics to be studied

1/ investigating the differences between Arabic and English Proportions.

2/ the effective methods of teaching prepositions.

5.4 Conclusions

The study is aimed to investigate the misuse of the prepositions in a written text among MA students of Linguistics in Sudan University Science and Technology batch 7, the researcher applied a test as an instrument to collect data in this study. The researcher comes out with the following findings MA students face problems in using prepositions, MA students are poor in identifying different types of prepositions and MA students aren't able to use prepositions in a written text correctly. Also there are some recommendations such as teachers should apply new techniques to teach prepositions, teachers should give students more practice to solve this problems, and MA students should put into consideration the need of the prepositions correctly in a written text to natural.

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APPENDICS

Sudan University Science and Technology

College of Graduate Studies

Diagnostic Test for MA Students in Applied Linguistics

Time Allowed: 30 mintes.

Answer all the questions:

Question One: Select the suitable preposition from (a, b, and c)

1-He climbedand.....the stair

a-up / down b-on / at c-down /up

2-Be carefulthe car is John and Mary'sit

A-in front of / behind b-beside / behind c-behind / in front of

3They are allhim also they are all.....her

A-round / near b -round /against c-round/ among

4-The horse jumpedand fell.....

a-down / over b- up/with c-over /down

5- Nobody does any work...course butend of it.

a-during / on b-during / at c-during / in

6-Jimmy will be working.....next April but he will come.....Summer holidays

A-in / on b-until / on c-until / in

7-Malala has played piano.....four years old and she has stopped it.....a year

a-for / to b-since / for c-at / since

8-Jimmy travelled Bus but he came backfoot

A-on / in b-with / in c-by / on

9-There is a beautiful old chairthat rug.....the door

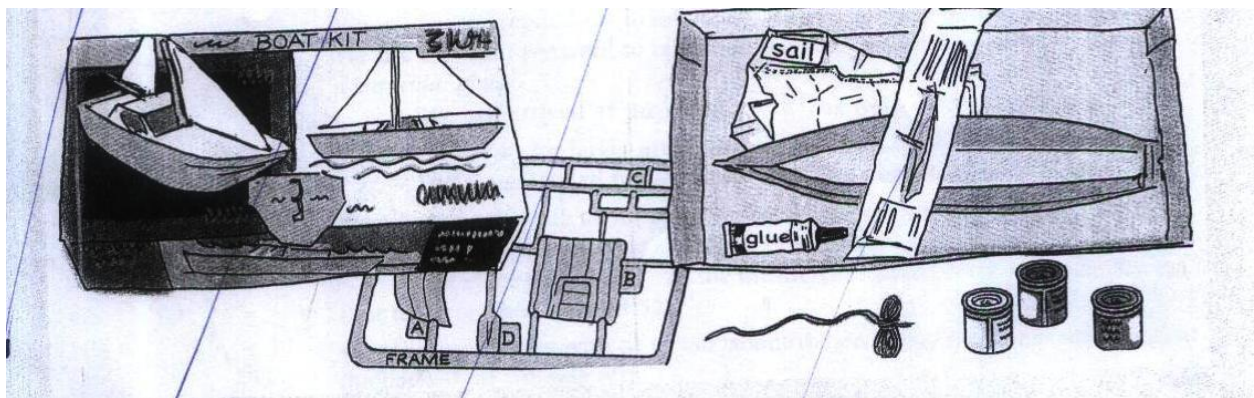
a-under / near b- under /among c-near / behind

10-She lookedthe stairs and He looked herthe glass

A-up / down b-up / through c-down /up

Question two: Complete the following using the prepositions of your own:

Take all the pieces of the box and lay them out.....the table, as showndiagram. Carefully, press the main sections (A, B, C and D)the frame. Put a small amount of glue....all the parts of marked G, put the glued edge of section Athe hole..... section B .Take the sail.....of the plastic bag. Put the strings through the holes the sail and do not put the boatthe water.



Question three

Match A with B in C

	A		B	C
1	Temporal preposition	a	Before	
2	Sequence preposition	b	During	
3	Double preposition	C	In	
4	Omission preposition	d	Across	
5	Similarities preposition	E	From	
6	Direction preposition	F	Near	
7	Spatial preposition	g	As	
8	Simple preposition	h	But	
9	Extended preposition	I	Onto	
10	Movement preposition	J	On	