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Investigating Difficulties Encountered by Undergraduate Students in Using English Prepositions

**(A case Study of First year Students of English at SUST– College of
Languages)**

تقصى الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلاب الجامعة في استخدام حروف الجر في اللغة الانجليزية

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial for the Requirements of MA
Degree in English Language (Applied Linguistics)**

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2019

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my parents and to the rest of my family members
and colleagues as well.

Acknowledgements

All praise and great thanks are due to Allah the Almighty who bestowed me with patience, perseverance and the means to make this study. First of all, my sincere gratitude and appreciation are due to Dr. Montasir Hassan Mubarak Supervisor for his tireless efforts, guidance, great support and encouragement throughout the stages of this study.

Special praise is reserved to Dr. Al Sadig Osman Mohammed and Dr. Hilary Marino Pitia for their endless support; they kept guiding me for the benefit of this academic work.

Abstract

This study aimed at investigating difficulties encountered by undergraduate students in using English prepositions. The researcher has adopted descriptive analytical method. Two instruments have been used for collecting data relevant to the study, namely questionnaire to teachers of English at some Sudanese Universities and diagnostic test to the first year students of English at Sudan University of Science and Technology, College of Languages. The study sample of questionnaire comprises (30) teachers whereas the sample of diagnostic test consists of (40) students. The researcher applied SPSS program to analyze and verify the hypotheses. The results have shown that some teachers do not give sufficient practice in classroom to clarify prepositions for students. Moreover, increasing the awareness of using prepositions can positively help students to develop their language competence. The study has recommended that teachers should give students chances for oral participation on using prepositions productively. Furthermore, Teachers should provide practice for students on how to use prepositions. Students should be exposed to realia (e.g. film audiovisual etc) focusing on prepositions. Some suggestions are also proposed for further studies.

Abstract

(Arabic Version)

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تقصي الصعوبات يواجهها طلاب الجامعة في استخدام حروف الجر في اللغة الإنجليزية. وقد اتبع الباحث المنهج التحليل الوصفي ، وتم استخدام اثنين من الادوات لجمع البيانات المتعلقة بالدراسة ، المتمثلة في استبيان صمم خصيصاً لأساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية في بعض الجامعات السودانية وايضاً واختبار شفهي لطلاب السنة الاولى بكلية اللغات جامعة السودان العلوم التكنولوجيا. قد تم اختيار عينه (30) بالنسبة لأداء الدراسة الأولى وعينه (40) طالبا للاختبار الشفي. وطبق الباحث برامج الحزم الاحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية لتحليل وتأكيذ الفرضيات . واتضح جلياً من خلال نتائج الدراسة ان بعض الاساتذة لايعطون الطلاب تدريبات كافية في داخل الفصل لتوضيح حروف الجر.بالإضافة الى ذلك زيادة وعي الطلاب في استخدام حروف الجر يساعد في كفاءتهم اللغوية. وقدمت الدراسة عددا من التوصيات اهمها: على الاساتذة اعطاء الطلاب صانحة للمشاركة شفهيًا حول استخدام حروف الجر . على الاساتذة تنويد الطلاب بتدريبات عن كيفية استخدام حروف الجر.يجب علي الطلاب تعريضهم لانشطة ومصادر سمعية ومرئية على حروف الجر. وايضا قدمت بعض المقترحات للدارسات المستقبلية.

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CHAPTER ONE
INRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE

INRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This introductory chapter is an overview of the research. It first specifies the researcher's motivation in conducting the research. It includes the background of the study, the statement of the study problem, objectives of study, the questions of the study, the hypotheses of the study, significance of the study, research methodology, and limits of the study and organization of the study.

1.1 Context of the Study

Prepositions are most difficult for English Language Learners to master due to the sheer number of them in the English language and their polysemous nature. Several analyses of the linguistic output of ELLs have displayed those prepositional errors of substitution, omission, and addition account for the majority of syntactic errors. Since prepositions present such an immense challenge for language learners, it is vital that teachers develop effective instructional methods. In this study, we will analyze the traditional method of teaching prepositions, and evaluate alternative methods.

Learning a language necessarily means learning the grammar of that language. Learning grammar must begin with a working knowledge of its components, meaning learning about the parts of speech and how they fit together into sentences. In the process, students are enabled to distinguish a preposition from an adverb or a phrase from a clause. This way, the students will be guided in expressing their thoughts and ideas in writing or in oral form not only correctly but with variety, elegance and efficiency.

English prepositions are difficult for any EFL learner because he/she usually relates them to his/her own mother tongue prepositional system. The difficulty is also caused by the difference in number, meaning and usage of the prepositions in the mother tongue and in the EFL.

In learning English prepositions, Arab students try to relate them to the smaller number of Arabic ones and to the Arabic prepositional system. Although Arabic and English prepositions have some characteristics in common, they differ in both number and usage.

It is a fact that not every Arabic preposition has a definite English equivalent and vice-versa. On the other hand, not every English or Arabic preposition has a definite usage and meaning, indicating only time or space or following a certain word. Another factor to be considered is the textbooks and methods used by teachers who are not familiar with the predictable errors the students will make or with the causes behind them.

This study focuses on the use of prepositions of time which is a problem among many Saudi learners and identifies the errors committed in the use of prepositions of time, the reasons why the students commit such errors and in the process suggests steps by which both teachers and students will find it easy to use prepositions of time without fear of committing errors.

In order to identify what educational methods are most effective, it is significant to first grasp what makes learning prepositions so difficult; this challenge can be related to many factors. First, prepositions are generally polysemous. Polysemy is “a semantic characteristic of words that have multiple meanings” (Koffi, 2010, p. 299).

Basically, the majority of prepositions in English have a variety of meanings depending on context. Thus, learners often become frustrated when trying to determine prepositional meanings and when trying to use them appropriately (Koffi, 2010, p. 299).

Lam (2009) points out, prepositions can be difficult to recognize, particularly in oral speech, because they typically contain very few syllables. Many English prepositions are monosyllabic, such as *on*, *for*, or *to*. As a result, language learners may not be able to recognize prepositions in rapid, naturally occurring speech. Moreover, the use of prepositions in context varies greatly from one language to another, often causing negative syntactic transfer.

1.2 Statement of Study Problem

As a Sudanese English teacher who has been teaching English for long time, at the various institutions of learning. The researcher has noticed that our Sudanese learners who try to learn English as a foreign language always encounter a lot of problems when using prepositions in written contexts, particularly prepositions' of place and time. Additionally, they tend to mix up the use of the English prepositions with the Arabic ones. In tertiary level , it has observed that, this vary problem has been recurring, and this has prompted the researcher to urgently tackle this problem once and for all. However, these are the kind of questions raised in this study (Problems and Common mistakes on Prepositions of place *at*, *in*, and *on*).

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study sets out to achieve the following objectives:

- 1- It is an attempt to investigate whether undergraduate students have difficulties in using English prepositions.
- 2-It is an attempt to diagnose the causes of students' problem in utilizing English prepositions.
- 3-It is an attempt to high light how the teachers of English can increase students' knowledge in using appropriate prepositions.

1.4 Questions of the Study

This study sets out to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do undergraduate students have difficulties in using English prepositions?
2. What are the causes of students' problem in utilizing correct prepositions?
3. How can teachers increase students' knowledge in using prepositions?

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

This study sets out to test the following hypotheses:

1. Undergraduate students have some difficulties in using English prepositions.
2. There are the causes of students' problem in utilizing correct prepositions.
3. Teachers can positively increase students' knowledge in using prepositions.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The importance of this study stems from its attempt to bring up new insight into issue pertaining to the investigate difficulties encountered by students in using English prepositions. This study will cover the area of linguistics. It tackles the language problematic area that many language users face when it comes to construction of correct English sentences. This study will be also great significant for learners who is study English in general and prepositions in particular. It will help teachers of English at home and abroad regarding the appropriate techniques for teaching prepositions. Also this study will help the curriculum designers to take the right decisions with regards to promoting the students in using prepositions.

1.7 Limits of the Study

This study is limited to investigate the difficulties encountered by students in using English prepositions. It hoped that will tentatively cover the academic year from (2018-2019). It was conducted at Sudan University of Science and Technology, College of Languages, and study sample was exclusively drawn from first year students of English at SUST- College of Languages.

1.8 Methodology of the Study

The researcher has adopted the descriptive analytical method as well as quantitative method. Questionnaire and diagnostic test are used as primary tools for data collection. A questionnaire was distributed to teachers of English language at Sudan University of Science and Technology (SUST) in checking their point of view in terms of this issue. Oral diagnostic test was given to first year students of English at SUST- College of Languages

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter one is known as the introduction of the study. It includes background of the study, the problem of the study, the objectives of the study, the questions of the study, the hypotheses of the study, significance of the study, research methodology, and limits of the study and organization of study. Chapter two is about literature review and previous studies. Chapter three is the research methodology, which includes research design, population of the study, instruments of the study, validity and reliability, and data collection procedure. Chapter four is about data analysis and interpretation. Chapter five is the final chapter of the study which includes summary of the main findings, conclusion, recommendation and suggestion for further studies.

Summary of the Chapter

This introductory chapter was concerned with presentation of statement of the problem, objectives of the study, questions of the study, hypotheses of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, methodology of the study, definition of study terms and outline of the research.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS
STUDIES

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

Part one: Theoretical Background

2.0 Introduction

This chapter consist of two parts discusses the related literature review on investigating the difficulties faced students in learning English prepositions. It is called chapter two which is divided into two parts; the first part is called theoretical background and the second part is called previous studies.

2.1 The Concept of Prepositions

Prepositions are notoriously difficult for English Language Learners to master due to the sheer number of them in the English language and their polysemous nature. Numerous analyses of the linguistic output of ELLs have revealed that prepositional errors of substitution, omission, and addition account for the majority of syntactic errors. Since prepositions present such an immense challenge for language learners, it is vital that teachers develop effective instructional methods. In this study, we will analyze the traditional method of teaching prepositions, and evaluate alternative methods.

In order to determine what pedagogical methods are most effective, it is important to first understand what makes learning prepositions so difficult; this challenge can be attributed to several factors. First, prepositions are generally polysemous. Polysemy is “a semantic characteristic of words that have multiple meanings” (Koffi, 2010, p. 299).

Essentially, the majority of prepositions in English have a variety of meanings depending on context. Thus, learners often become frustrated when trying to determine prepositional meanings and when trying to use them appropriately (Koffi, 2010, p. 299).

Second, as Lam (2009) points out, prepositions can be difficult to recognize, particularly in oral speech, because they typically contain very few syllables. Many English prepositions are monosyllabic, such as *on*, *for*, or *to*. As a result, language learners may not be able to recognize prepositions in rapid, naturally occurring speech. Moreover, the use of prepositions in context varies greatly from one language to another, often causing negative syntactic transfer. The same prepositions can carry vastly different meanings in various languages. For instance, a native speaker of Spanish would have difficulties translating the preposition *por* into English, since it can be “expressed in English by the prepositions *for*, *through*, *by*, and *during*”. Therefore, learners cannot depend on prepositional knowledge from their first language. If learners do make “assumptions of semantic equivalence between the first and second languages”, it often results in prepositional errors.

Lastly, the sheer number of prepositions in the English language also contributes to their difficulty. English has 60 to 70 prepositions; a higher number than most other languages (Koffi, 2010: 297).

2.2 The Definition of Prepositions

According to Sinclair (1991) states that preposition is a word which opens up the possibilities of saying more about a thing or an action. prepositions help us to indicate the place where an action occurs, the place where someone or something is, the place where they are going to or coming from, or direction they are moving in. This usually involves

using a prepositional phrase as an adjunct, consisting of preposition and its object which is nearly always a noun group.

The name preposition means" place before". Thus prepositions usually precede another word or words, especially a noun or noun phrase.

Chalker(1984), affirms that" there are important expectations to this rule, but prepositions are always closely linked syntactically to another word- and this is one way in which they differ from adverbs".

Most prepositions are single words, although there are some that consist of more than one word, such as *out of* and *in between*.

2.2.1 Simple/One word Prepositions.

Sinclair (1991) proposes the following list of common one-word prepositions which are used to talk about place or destination:

about	Between	Over
above	Beyond	Past
across	in by	Within
along	Down	Round
among	From	Through
around	Inside	throughout
at	Into	To
before	Near	Towards
behind	Off	Under
below	On	underneath
beneath	Opposite	Up
Beside	Outside	Over

2.2.2Compound Prepositions

Furthermore, Sinclair (1991) presents another list of prepositions which consists of more than one word and those words are used to talk about a place or destination:

ahead of	in front of
all over	near to
away from	next to
close by	on top of
close to	out of
In between	

2.3 Types of prepositions

According to Chalker (1984), „A major use of prepositions is to relate things or people in various ways in place and time. Many of them apply to both place and time, with very similar meanings“. Some of these place/time prepositions lead their meaning to figurative uses, even though some possess other meanings as well.

Nevertheless, and taking into account that prepositions indicate the different relations which are found between things mentioned in a sentence, they are usually classified into the categories of place, time, direction, for introducing objects and for spatial relationships.

Berry and Brizee (2010) propose the following charts to describe both uses and meanings of prepositions:

2.3. 1Prepositions of place

To express notions of place, English uses the following prepositions: to talk about the point itself: *in*, to express something contained: *inside*, to talk about the surface: *on*, to talk about a general vicinity, *at*.

To express notions of an object being higher than a point, English uses the following prepositions: *over, above*.

To express notions of an object being lower than a point, English uses the following prepositions: *under, underneath, beneath, below*.

To express notions of an object being close to a point, English uses the following prepositions: *near, by, next to, between, among, opposite*.

2.3.2 Prepositions of Time

On, at, in indicate one point in time.

To express extended time, English uses the following prepositions: *since, for, by, from—to, from-until, during, (with)in*

2.3.3 Prepositions of Direction

The basic preposition of a direction is "to."

TO: signifies orientation toward a goal. When the goal is physical, such as a destination, "to" implies movement in the direction of the goal.

The other two prepositions of direction are compounds formed by adding "to" to the corresponding prepositions of location.

The preposition of location determines the meaning of the preposition of direction.

ON + TO = onto: signifies movement toward a surface

IN + TO = into: signifies movement toward the interior of a volume

("To" is part of the directional preposition toward, and the two mean about the same thing.)

With many verbs of motion, "on" and "in" have a directional meaning and can be used along with "onto" and "into".

2.3.4 Prepositions to Introduce Objects of Verbs

English uses the following prepositions to introduce objects of the following verbs.

At: glance, laugh, look, rejoice, smile, stare.

Of: *approve, consist, smell*

Of (or about): *dream, think*

For: *call, hope, look, wait, watch, wish*

2.3.5 Prepositions of Spatial Relationship

Above in or to a higher position than something else

Across from one side to the other of something with clear limits, such as an area of land, a road or river

Against next to and touching or being supported by something

Ahead of in front

Along from one part of a road, river, etc. to another

Among in the middle of or surrounded by other things.

Around in a position or direction surrounding, or in a direction going along the edge of or from one part to another (of).

Behind at the back (of).

Below at the back (of).

Beneath in or to a lower position than, under.

Beside at the side of, next to.

Between in or into the space which separates two places, people or objects.

From to be born, got from, or made in a particular place.

In front of the part of a building, object or person's body which faces forward or which is most often seen or used.

Inside in or into a room, building, container, or something similar.

Near not far away in distance.

Off used with actions in which something is removed or removes itself from another thing.

Out of used to show movement away from the inside of a place or container.

Through from one end or side of something to the other.

Toward in the direction of, or closer to someone or something.

Under in or to a position below or lower than something else, often so that one thing covers the other.

Within inside or further than an area or period of time.

2.4 Prepositions Errors

According to Burt.et al (1982), states that there different types of errors students can make when producing sentences. The following

classification is used as a reference for identifying errors in the use of prepositions.

2.4.1 Misuse

Misuse errors are characterized by incorrect presence of an item in an utterance, it means, when an element inside a sentence is wrongly substituted for another one from the same category. For this study, **misuse** refers to the case when within a sentence any preposition is used of the correct one.

2.4.2 Omission

Omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. In other words, an omission error is made when within a sentence the producer leaves out an element necessary for its correct understanding. In this work, **omission** refers to the case when the writer does not include the preposition that is necessary for the correct interpretation of the sentence.

2.4.3 Addition

Addition errors are the opposite of omission errors. They are characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. In this document, addition refers to the case when the writer includes a preposition that should not be present in a sentence.

Prepositions are grammatical words or function words that mainly contribute to the grammatical structure of the sentence (Thornbury, 2002). Most of the common English prepositions, such as at, in, and for, are simple, that is, consist of one word, whereas other prepositions, consisting of more than one word, such as along with, away from, out of, are called complex prepositions (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1989). Klammer et al. (2004) has listed 60 simple prepositions and 39 complex prepositions in analyzing English Grammar.

In the English Language, prepositions are presented in three dimensions, namely, the form, meaning and use.

Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999) review the phrase structure rule for a prepositional phrase to make several observations about the form of prepositions. It is stated, also, one of the greatest learning challenges presented by prepositions is their meaning, for instance, the problem with giving an abstract definition to ESL/EFL students is that the definition is often more difficult to comprehend and apply than the form itself. Additionally, there are issues of use as well concerning prepositions. There appear to be instances where more than one preposition with the same meaning is acceptable in a given context, for example, in a time period: It happened in/during 1998.

Kosur, (2008), states that a preposition is a relationship word that expresses a connection to place, time, possession, accompaniment or comparison. However, most prepositions have several different functions. Byrd and Benson (2001) define prepositions are often used to create adverbial modifiers to give information about place or time.

Many of the words described as prepositions can also be used as other parts of speech. Whether or not a word is a preposition depends on how it is used in a sentence.

Biber et. al (2000) highlights the overlap issue between prepositions and other word classes such as noun, adjective and adverb in *The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (LGSWE).

On the other hand, English prepositions do not have a neat set of rules governing their use. These rules are often complex, and may not be able to ensure accuracy. The nature and complexity of prepositions have consequently led to problems with prepositions for ESL teachers and learners (Wahlen, 2001).

2.5 The Errors in Using Prepositions of Place

Many studies have been done to examine the use of prepositions by second language learners. However, the present study has focused on errors particularly in the use of prepositions of place, of time and of direction.

Habash (1982) has investigated the occurrence of students' errors in the use of English prepositions and tested the relationship between the students' achievement in the English language at school and their achievement in the diagnostic test. The researcher found that the errors with spatial prepositions were more frequent than those with temporal prepositions.

According to Lindstromberg (1998), confirms that prepositions are traditionally classified into three categories: prepositions of place, of direction (or motion or movement) and of time. These prepositions pose a challenge to the learners as well as teachers of English because of the uniqueness of the problem involved. The learners face difficulties in the proper usage of prepositions in sentences, and therefore, land in trouble. Besides that, each of these prepositions has various meanings and usages that make the learning process equally difficult.

Reef (2000) observed the errors in the use of place prepositions and attempted to find out whether such errors were tied to poor teaching or the interference of the first language. The researcher undertook this study to find the level of competence among students in the use of the four types of prepositions namely, position/destination, relative, passage, and orientation. The results revealed that students could not clearly differentiate the four types of the prepositions and they faced difficulties in using the prepositions of position/ destination than the other types.

Inability of the students to distinguish the semantic content of these prepositions and poor teaching methods employed by Kim (2001) examined the errors in the use of English prepositions in the written work of Upper Secondary Malay students. The aim of the study was to identify the prepositional errors and to find out the causes for the occurrence of these errors. The researcher applied nine concepts of prepositions which pose the most of the difficulties for students namely, prepositions of place, time, direction, manner-agent, cause-purpose, similarity, association, verb-preposition, and -preposition. A diagnostic test was administered to these students to elicit the data. In the test, they were required to write an essay and fill the blanks of a Cloze text and sentences with the correct prepositions. The result of the study showed that the students made a number of errors in using the prepositions of place, time and direction due to wrong selections. The researcher suggested that the method of teaching English prepositions could play a vital role in facilitating the learning of prepositions.

Rumiyati (2008) maintains that the Indonesian learners of English often find difficulties and make errors in the use of English prepositions. The main purpose of her study was to identify and classify the preposition error types. The results showed that preposition of place, time, manner, direction, purpose, measurement, similarity, capacity and association were considered difficult for the students and mastery of using prepositions were still poor. It further showed that students find remarkably more difficulties in the use of prepositions of direction (91.35%) than the other types. The researcher suggested that prepositions need more attention on teaching and learning English.

Ahmad (2011) attempted the learning problems and analyzed the errors in the use of articles and prepositions. The instrument used in the study was the essays written by 8th class students in their annual examination. The

findings of the study showed that the secondary school students faced difficulties in learning prepositions of time and were confused while using prepositions in their writings. The studies on prepositions mentioned above showed that many studies have been done on prepositions from different perspectives. However, in the case of second language learners of English, particularly undergraduate students in Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu, India, no research has been carried out on the topic of prepositions of place, time and direction. It is the hope that the present study provides insights for further research.

2.6 Traditional Approach

The traditional method of teaching prepositions is through explicit grammar instruction. Students focus on learning prepositions individually within context, with no further expansion. This approach assumes that there is no predictability in the use of prepositions, and that they must simply be learned context by context.

Lam's (2009) study revealed that students who were taught using this traditional method had little confidence in their ability to properly use prepositions, and had minimal retention rates. As Lam (2009) elaborates, "trying to remember a list of individual, unrelated uses is hardly conducive to increasing learners' understanding of how the prepositions are actually used and why the same preposition can express a wide range of meanings" (p. 3). Thus, it is apparent that language instructors must explore more explanatory methods of teaching prepositions.

2.7 The Collocation Approach

One alternative to the traditional method of teaching prepositions is to use collocations. Rather than teaching prepositions individually, students can be taught using "chunks," or words that often occur together. Throughout various studies, the terms "chunk," "formulaic sequence," "word co

occurrence (WCO),” and “collocation” are used interchangeably. In the case of prepositions, many of these “chunks” are phrasal verbs. For example, instead of teaching on as a single entity, students can be taught the phrasal verbs to rely on, to wait on, to walk on, to work on, or to pick on. In addition to phrasal verbs, prepositional phrases can also be taught as formulaic sequences, such as on time, on schedule, on...screen, or on...leg (Mueller, 2011, p.484).

This method is advantageous for several reasons. First, research has shown that learners of all ages are sensitive to the frequencies of linguistic input. Frequency-based learning is built upon the idea that humans naturally process groups of words as a single unit. Children, for example, often express phrases as single words, such as *alotta* instead of a lot of or *gimme* instead of give me. Secondly, chunk-learning is thought to be a precursor step to linguistic pattern analysis (Mueller, 2011, pp. 480-481).

According to Mueller (2011), demonstrates that “such associative learning is necessary to account for the acquisition of irregular forms and rigidly fixed idioms” (p. 481). Researchers believe that such forms may be stored as chunks initially, but after repeated exposure, they are more closely analyzed by the learner.

Third, teaching prepositions through collocations easily allows for the use of corpora and concordancing lines. Koosha and Jafarpour (2006) conducted a study with adult Iranian EFL learners using data-driven learning (DDL). Data-driven learning is a technique that “emphasizes the collocational properties of language through concordancing lines” (p. 194). Furthermore, “concordancing” can be defined as “a method of analyzing language by studying structures and lexical patterns found in digital databases” (p. 195). The learners who used concordancing lines

in language corpora were exposed to more authentic input and more opportunities to notice and become aware of grammatical patterns. This method forced the students to become pro-active participants in their learning of prepositions.

According to Koosha and Jafarpour (2006), claim that “DDL promotes creativity and self-discovery learning” (p. 196). In the study, the experimental group of 100 learners who studied prepositions through DDL performed significantly higher than the 100 learners in the control group. The control group also studied prepositions through the use of collocations, but were explicitly taught patterns from conventional textbooks rather than implicitly discovering those patterns like the learners in the experimental group. Therefore, using collocations to teach prepositions is best coupled with the use of authentic data which can be found in language corpora. The aforementioned study used the Brown Corpus Online and searched using the Web Concordancer (p. 200).

Lindstromberg (1996), reports that teaching prepositions through the use of collocations is not without its share of criticism. For example, states that the collocationist view avoids “any unifying insight about relations among different uses of a particular word” and leads to an “uneconomical use of learners’ time both in and out of the classroom” (p. 235). He suggests that teachers use a semantically-based approach which utilizes a prototype theory of linguistics.

Similarly, Lam (2009) advocates for a semantic approach using cognitive linguistics to create a “general schema” or “semantic map” when teaching prepositions (pp. 2-3).

2.8 The Prototype Approach

Both Lindstromberg (1996) and Lam (2009) argue that teaching prepositions in an explanatory, semantically-based manner allows for

deeper learning, increased learner confidence, and longer rates of retention. Both of their studies are based on Lakoff's prototype theory. This theory claims that prepositions have multiple meanings, but one meaning is thought to be the most dominant, or prototypical. In the case of prepositions, the spatial, physical meaning is considered to be the prototype. For example, the preposition *on* has multiple meanings, but the prototypical definition is "contact of an object with a line of surface". The prototype theory contends that the polysemous nature of prepositions can be explained through analysis of the prototypical meaning; all non-prototypical meanings are thought to be related to the prototype, often through metaphorical extension (p. 228).

Lindstromberg (1996) explains again at the preposition *on*, non-prototypical meanings like *come on* can be understood by extending the prototypical meaning. This means that teachers must first teach the prototypical meaning, often through the use of Total Physical Response (TPR), and only then begin to branch out to more abstract meanings. To extend the semantic mapping even further, comparison and contrast to other prepositions can be useful. For example, explained the concept of *come on* by contrasting it with *come back* (p. 230). Not only do semantic-based approaches unify various meanings of each preposition, but they also provide connections between prepositions that are otherwise considered only individually.

Lam's (2009) study showed that learning prepositions is not only difficult for English language learners, but for Spanish language learners as well. Her study compared two experimental groups with one control group in learning the prepositions *por* and *para*. The experimental groups were taught using a cognitive linguistic approach based upon the prototype theory whereas the control group was taught individual uses of each preposition. Such a cognitive linguistic approach "allows teachers to

point out the relationships between different uses of a preposition and describe patterns of meaning extension, as opposed to telling learners to Simply memorize each use as an individual item. In this way, learners will hopefully be more aware of the expressive range of a preposition”. All three groups were given a pre-test, an immediate post-test, and a delayed post-test. The results revealed that the learners in the experimental groups were more accurate in their use of *por* and *para* than the control group in both post-tests. This suggests that teaching prepositions using a semantically-based approach has a positive effect on both immediate knowledge and the retention of that knowledge. Finally, Lam’s (2009) study showed that learners in the experimental groups were more confident in their answers, suggesting that they had a deeper understanding of the prepositions and how they are used (p. 11).

Part Two: Previous studies

Y.G. Harto Pramono (2005), handled the study that explores the types of prepositions and the common picture types used to teach these prepositions found in English textbooks commonly used in primary schools. The results showed that the types of pictures may be problematic for presenting spatial relations due to an ambiguity the pictures may create and so as may affect the understanding and use of prepositions. Ideally all accompanying pictures should play an active and effective role in supporting learning.

According to Blom (2006) emphasizes the difficulties that students have when learning English prepositions. She talked about the analysis she made with two courses of ninth-grade Swedish students trying to find out if students performed better when they were given answers to choose from or when they had to produce the preposition by themselves. She found nine prepositions that are particularly frequent in errors: **to, in, at, of, for, about, on, by, and with**. Her study proved that learners resorted to Swedish when they did not know the correct answer. This strategy results in positive or negative transfer depending on the similarities of the languages. Prepositions used in Swedish sometimes have two or more equivalents in English, which also contributes to the complexity of the matter.

On the other hand, some researchers have been concentrated on the use of software for analyzing English preposition errors made by EFL learners, as was the case of Chodorow, Tetreault, and Han (2007) that described a methodology for creating software that detects English preposition errors and found it performed with high precision (84%). They tested their own software with writing samples from EFL students and found that the most common prepositions that learners used

incorrectly were **in** (21.4%) to (20.8) and **of** (16.6%). Next, they ranked the common preposition "confusions", the common mistakes made for each preposition. The top ten most common confusions were in cases where no preposition is licensed (the writer used and extraneous preposition). The most common offenses were actually extraneous errors. Sugunya Ruangiaroon (2015) states that perceptual assimilation model (PAM) to account for how Thai learners acquire English prepositions in prepositional phrases and propose the ranking order of English preposition acquisition into three different categories. The ranking is as follows: Category A is a one-to-one semantic mapping between English and Thai prepositions, therefore ranked first suggesting that they would be the easiest to be acquired. Category B is a one-to-many semantic mapping between English and Thai prepositions. Acquisition of Category B should be more difficult than Category A because one English preposition can have more than one correspondence in Thai. Category C is one-to-null mapping between English and Thai prepositions. A preposition that exists in one language can be null in another language. Category C would rank the lowest in terms of acquisition. The participants consisted of 20 graduate students in the MA program at a university in Bangkok. They were placed into medium (8-10) and low (6-7) proficiency levels of English by a placement test called the Language and Instructor System (ELLIS) administered via computer. The two tests used in this study were a grammatical judgment test for English prepositions and a writing test. The two tests were exactly parallel in each item. The correlation between their awareness in spotting incorrect prepositions and the ability to use correct ones were measured using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The results were consistent with the ranking proposed here. It showed that L2 Thai

acquirers of English prepositions were able to judge grammatical and ungrammatical sentences correctly with respect to the ranking $A \gg B \gg C$. However, no significant difference of the correlation between perception and production in all categories was found. The results further revealed that both medium and low proficient participants were able to perceive and produce dependent prepositions more accurately than independent prepositions.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the following methods of the study, description of sample and the instruments, validity, reliability and data analysis procedures. The study adopted the descriptive analytical method. Two instruments are used as primary tools for data collecting methods in this study (questionnaire to teachers of English, diagnostic test to first year students of English at SUST, College of Languages).

3.1 Method of the Study

The researcher adopted descriptive analytical method. Two instruments have been used to collect the information of this study. Namely, questionnaire has given to teachers of English language and diagnostic test which was distributed to first year students of English at SUST, College of Languages.

3.2 Population and Sample of the Study

The populations of this study were first year students of English at SUST and teachers of English languages. A questionnaire was distributed to the teachers from both sexes. This questionnaire includes a covering page which introduces the topic of research identifies the researcher. It uses likert 5- point scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree). A questionnaire is designed based on the questions of the study. The questions of the study were turn to statements that provide suggested answers from the teachers at university level were supposed to select the options which correspond to their responses. Diagnostic test was contains four questions. The items correspond directly to the hypotheses of the study. It is conducted to first year students of English at

SUST, College of Languages. The answers of the responses are treated statistically for the purpose of findings.

3.3 Tools of Data Collection

The tools of study were questionnaire and diagnostic test. A questionnaire was given to (30) teachers of English language and diagnostic test which was distributed to (40) first year students of English at SUST, College of Languages.

3.4 Procedures of the Study

The researcher followed the following procedures in order to conduct this study. Initially, teachers from some of the Sudanese educational institutes were asked to respond to the questionnaire so as to glean their positive ideas about the use of affixes learning strategy. Students of English at SUST-College of Languages were asked to respond to the diagnostic test. The obtained data from the questionnaire will be analyzed using the SPSS and Alpha Cronbach's program specifically with percentile.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of the Study

The questionnaire and diagnostic test were judged by three Ph.D. holding referees who were specialists in the study field of English. Some of the referees made some amendments, and others recommended that the questionnaire is reasonable in terms of items. In this case, the researcher will revise all amendments, and some of typing mistakes on his questionnaire were corrected.

Reliability refers to the reliability of any test, to obtaining the same results if the same measurement will use more than one time under the same conditions. In addition, the reliability means when a certain test was applied on a number of individuals and the marks of every one were counted; then the same test applied another time on the same group and the same marks were obtained; then we can describe this test as reliable.

In addition, reliability is defined as the degree of the accuracy of the data that the test measures.

Statistical Reliability of the Questionnaire:

	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
	0.79	12

Statistical Reliability of the Diagnostic Test:

	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Questions
	0.75	3

Summary of the chapter

This chapter has discussed the research methodology and the research tools adopted for data collection. The chapter has provided a detailed description of all the steps and procedures followed in each tools, including population, sample, validity and reliability of each instruments.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND
DISCUSSION

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of the data collected through the questionnaire which was given to 30 respondents who represent the teachers' community in Sudanese Universities and diagnostic test which was distributed to first year students of English at SUST – College of Languages.

4.1 The Responses to the Questionnaire

The responses to the questionnaire of the 30 teachers were tabulated and computed. The following is an analytical interpretation and discussion of the findings regarding different points related to the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

Each item in the questionnaire is analyzed statistically and discussed. The following tables will support the discussion.

4.2 Analysis of the Questionnaire

The researcher distributed the questionnaire on determined study sample (30), and constructed the required tables for collected data. This step consists transformation of the qualitative (nominal) variables (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree) to quantitative variables (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) respectively, also the graphical representations were used for this purpose.

Statement No.(1): Students are not interested in using English prepositions.

Table No (4.1) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(1)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	13	43.4	43.3
Agree	14	46.7	46.7
Neutral	1	3.3	3.3
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3
strongly disagree	1	3.3	3.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0

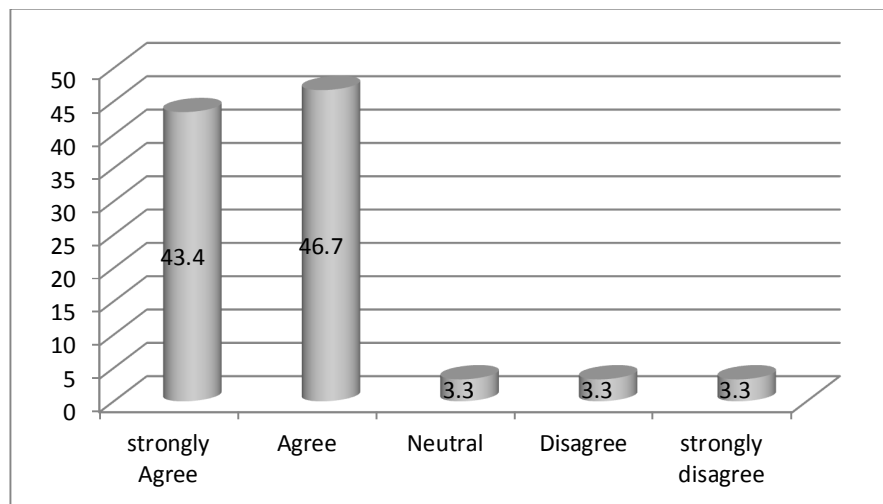


Figure No (4.1) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(1)

With reference to table (4.1) and figure (4.1) regarding the statement "Students are not interested in using English prepositions". It's clear that participants' responses to strongly agree is 43.4%, agree turned out to be 46.7% neutral is 3.3%, disagree is 3.3%, whereas strongly disagree is only 3.3%. This demonstrates that students should be well- trained in developing the utilization of English prepositions.

Statement No.(2): The textbook does not contain enough practice on prepositions.

Table No (4.2) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents’ Answers of item No.(2)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	11	36.7	36.7
Agree	16	53.4	53.3
Neutral	1	3.3	3.3
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3
strongly disagree	1	3.3	3.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0

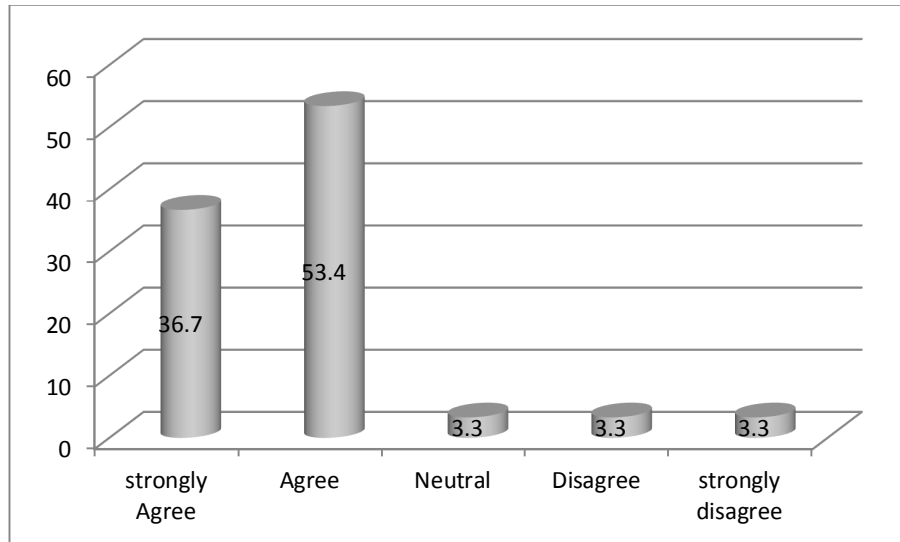


Figure No (4.2) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents’ Answers of item No.(2)

With reference to table (4.2) and figure (4.2) concerning the statement "The textbook does not contain enough practice on prepositions". It's clear that participants' responses to strongly agree is 36.7%, agree turned out to be 53.4% neutral is 3.3%, disagree is 3.3%, whereas strongly disagree is only 3.3%. This demonstrates that students should be well-trained in developing the usage of English prepositions.

Statement No.(3): Some teachers do not give sufficient practice in classroom to clarify prepositions for students.

Table No (4.3) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents’ Answers of item No.(3)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	3	10.0	10.0
Agree	22	73.4	73.3
Neutral	3	10.0	10.0
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3
strongly disagree	1	3.3	3.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0

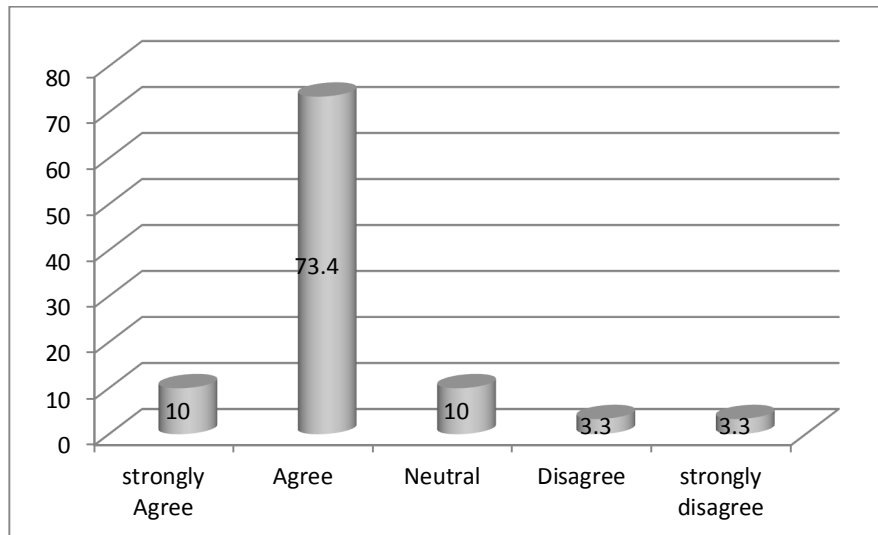


Table No (4.3) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents’ Answers of item No.(3)

With regard to table (4.3) and figure (4.3) concerning the statement "Some teachers do not give sufficient practice in classroom to clarify prepositions for students." It's observed that participants' responses to strongly agree is 10.0%, agree turned out to be 73.4%, neutral is 10.0%, disagree is 3.3%, while strongly disagree is only 3.3%. This justifies the idea that, teachers should encourage students to enhance English prepositions.

Statement No.(4): Teachers do not develop the uses of physical movement to demonstrate prepositions.

Table No (4.4) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents’ Answers of item No.(4)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	6	20.0	20.0
Agree	14	46.7	46.7
Neutral	4	13.3	13.3
Disagree	2	6.7	6.7
strongly disagree	4	13.3	13.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0

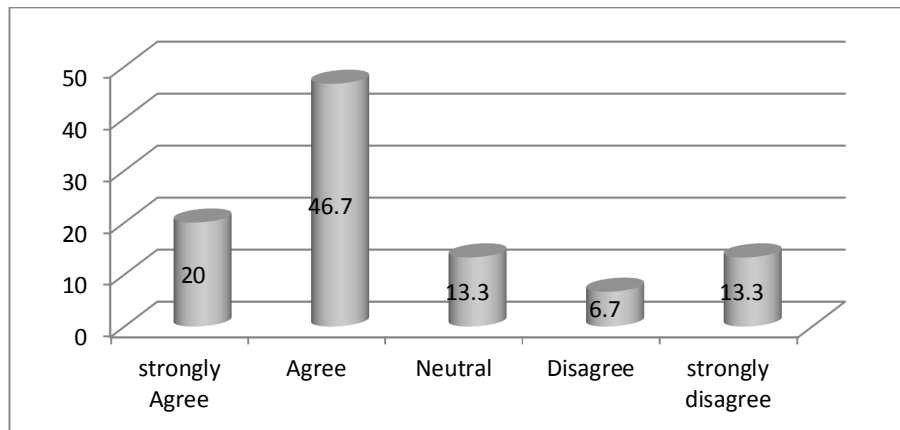


Figure No (4.4) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents’ Answers of item No.(4)

With regard to table (4.4) and figure (4.4) focusing on the statement "Teachers do not develop the uses of physical movement to demonstrate prepositions". It's noticed that participants' responses to strongly agree is 20%, agree turned out to be 46.4%, neutral is 13.3%, disagree is 6.7%, whereas strongly disagree is only 13.3%. This strengthens the view of that; teachers should develop students in using English prepositions.

Statement No.(5): Teachers do not shed light on grammar when they teach students.

Table No (4.5)The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents’ Answers of item No.(5)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	13	43.3	43.3
Agree	8	26.7	26.7
Neutral	5	16.7	16.7
Disagree	3	10.0	10.0
strongly disagree	1	3.3	3.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0

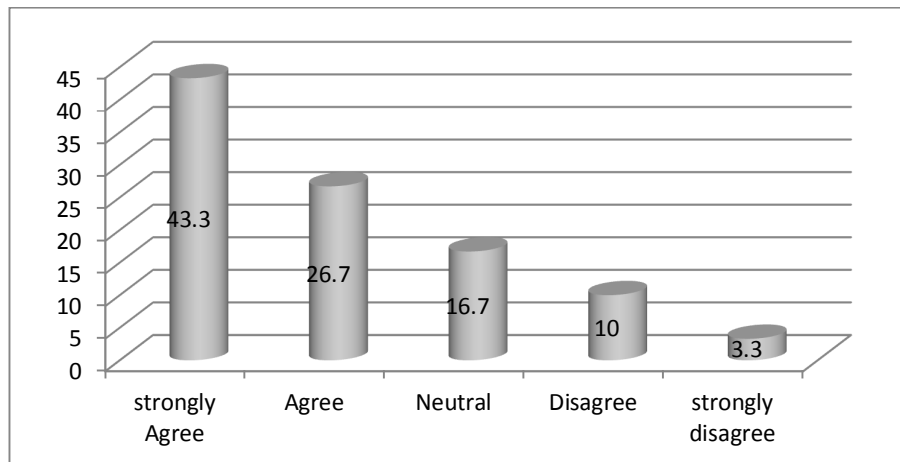


Figure No (4.5) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents’ Answers of item No.(5)

With reference to table (4.5) and figure (4.5) concentrating on the statement "Teachers do not shed light on grammar when they teach students." It's clear that participants' responses to strongly agree is 43.3%, agree turned out to be 26.7%, neutral is 16.7%, disagree is 10.0%, whereas strongly disagree is only 3.3%. This indicates that applying English grammar should help students to write prepositions correctly.

Statement No.(6): Increasing the awareness of using prepositions can develop students' competence.

Table No (4.6) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(6)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	7	23.3	23.3
Agree	14	46.7	46.7
Neutral	5	16.7	16.7
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3
strongly disagree	3	10.0	10.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0

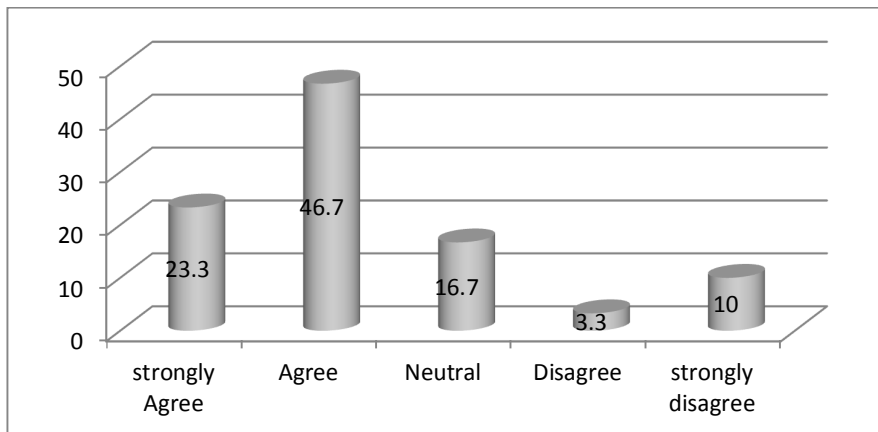


Fig (4. 6) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(6)

Concerning the table (4.6) and figure (4.6) referring to the statement "Increasing the awareness of using prepositions can develop students' competence". It's illustrated that participants' responses to strongly agree is 23.3%, agree turned out to be 46.7%, neutral is 16.7%, disagree is 3.3%, whereas strongly disagree is only 10 %. This demonstrates that students should be directed by their teachers to practice English prepositions.

Statement No.(7): Teachers should prescribe more texts that deal with prepositions.

Table No (4.7) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(7)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	10	33.4	33.3
Agree	17	56.7	56.7
Neutral	1	3.3	3.3
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3
strongly disagree	1	3.3	3.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0

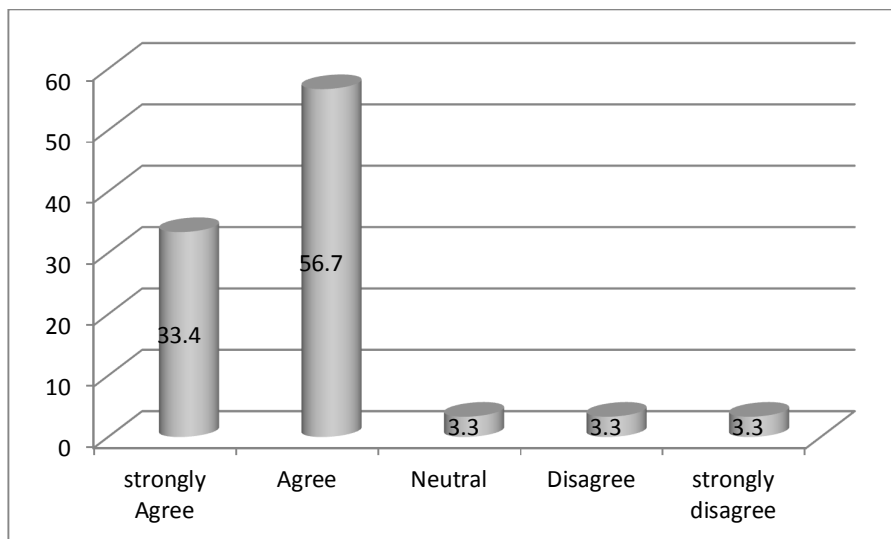


Fig (4. 7) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(7)

With regard to the table (4.7) and figure (4.7) referring to the statement "Teachers should prescribe more texts that deal with prepositions ". It's showed that participants' responses to strongly agree is 33.4%, agree turned out to be 56. 7%, neutral is 3.3%, disagree is 3.3%, whereas strongly disagree is only 3.3%. This proves that teachers should develop students in using English prepositions.

Statement No. (8): Teachers should provide practice for students on how to use prepositions.

Table No (4.8) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(8)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	5	16.7	16.7
Agree	18	60.0	60.0
Neutral	4	13.3	13.3
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3
strongly disagree	2	6.7	6.7
Total	30	100.0	100.0

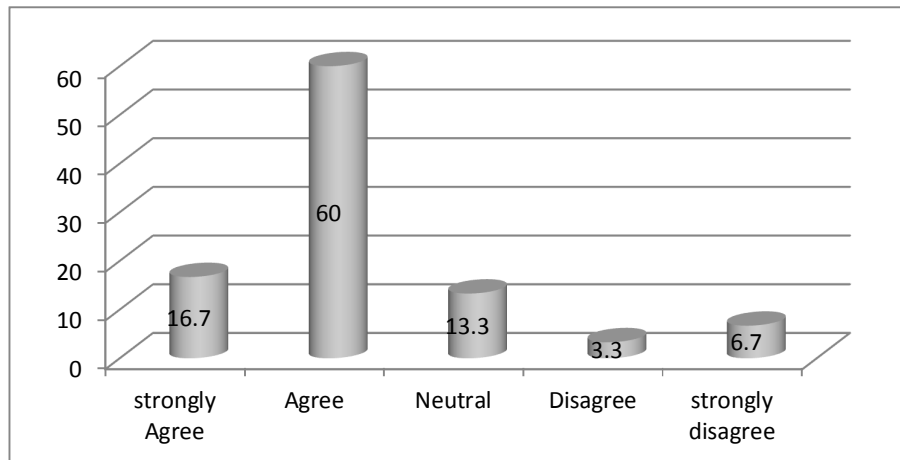


Fig (4. 8) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(8)

Regarding to the table (4.8) and figure (4.8) relating to the statement "Teachers should provide practice for students on how to use prepositions ". It is clear that participants' responses to strongly agree is 16.7%, agree turned out to be 60.0%, neutral is 13.3%, disagree is 3.3%, while strongly disagree is only 6.3%. This illustrates that teachers should encourage students to practice English prepositions correctly.

Statement No.(9): Teachers should give students chances for oral participation on using prepositions productively.

Table No (4.9) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(9)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	1	3.3	3.3
Agree	18	60.0	60.0
Neutral	8	26.7	26.7
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3
strongly disagree	2	6.7	6.7
Total	30	100.0	100.0

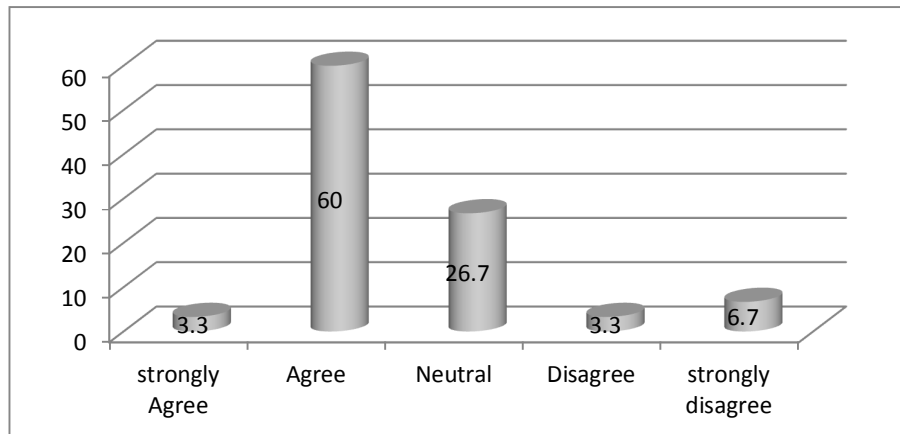


Fig (4. 9) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(9)

With regard to the table (4.9) and figure (4.9) relating to the statement "Teachers should give students chances for oral participation on using prepositions productively ". It is obvious that participants' responses to strongly agree is 3.3%, agree turned out to be 60.0%, neutral 26.7%, disagree is 3.3%, while strongly disagree is only 6.3%. This emphasizes that students should be well- developed by using prepositions in oral performance.

Statement No.(10): Prepositions should be taught intensively by teachers.

Table No (4.10) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(10)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	1	3.3	3.3
Agree	14	46.7	46.7
Neutral	8	26.7	26.7
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3
strongly disagree	6	20	20
Total	30	100.0	100.0

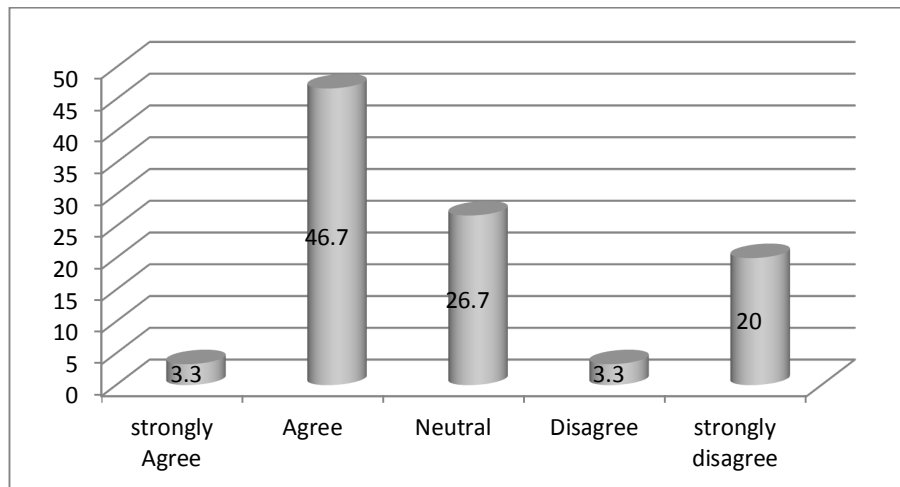


Fig (4. 10) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(10)

With regard to the table (4.10) and figure (4.10) relating to the statement "Prepositions should be taught intensively by teachers ". It is obvious that participants' responses to strongly agree are 3.3%, agree turned out to be 46.7%, neutral is 26.7%, disagree is 3.3%, while strongly disagree is only 20%. This emphasizes that teachers should teach students to practice English prepositions.

Statement No. (11): Students should be exposed to realia (e.g. film audiovisual etc) focusing on prepositions.

Table No (4.11) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(11)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	5	16.7	16.7
Agree	14	46.7	46.7
Neutral	6	20.0	20.0
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3
strongly disagree	4	13.3	13.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0

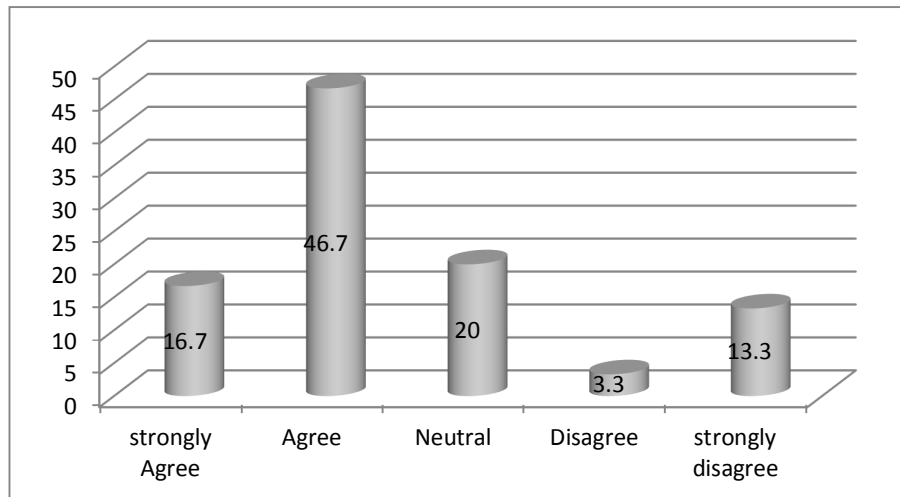


Fig (4. 11) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(11)

With referring to the table (4.11) and figure (4.11) relating to the statement " Students should be exposed to realia (e.g. film audiovisual etc) focusing on prepositions". It is obvious that participants' responses to strongly agree is 16.7%, agree turned out to be 46.7%, neutral is 20.0%, disagree is 3.3%, meanwhile strongly disagree is only 13.3%. This shows that use of realia help students to develop English prepositions.

Statement No.(12): Teaching English prepositions should be taught in context by their instructors.

Table No (4.12) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(12)

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
strongly Agree	6	20.0	20.0
Agree	11	36.7	36.7
Neutral	8	26.7	26.7
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3
strongly disagree	4	13.3	13.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0

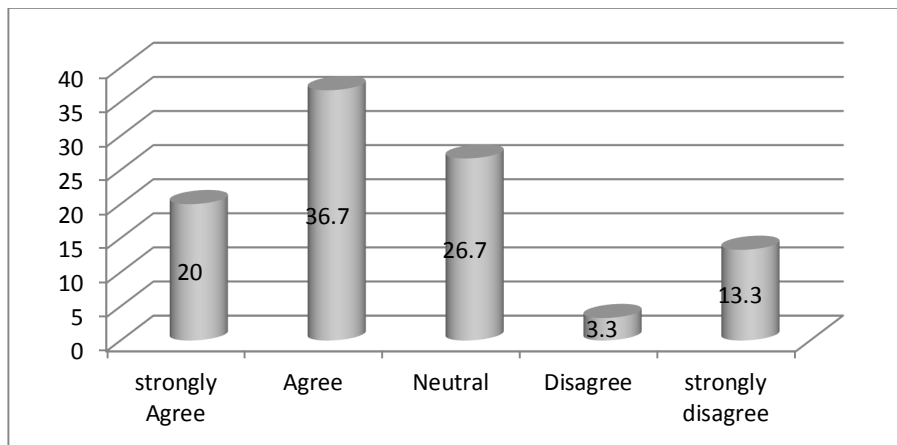


Fig (4. 12) Fig (4. 11) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of item No.(12)

With referring to the table (4.12) and figure (4.12) relating to the statement "Teaching English prepositions should be taught in context by their instructors." It is obvious that participants' responses to strongly agree is 20.0%, agree turned out to be 36.7%%, neutral is 26.7%, disagree is 33.3%, meanwhile strongly disagree is only 13.3%. This indicates that students should be encouraged in learning prepositions in context.

Table No.(4.13)**Chi-Square Test Results for Respondents' Answers of the Items**

No.	Statement	mean	SD	Chi square	p-value
1	Students are not interested in using English prepositions.	2.5	1.3	24	0.00
2	The textbook does not contain enough practice on prepositions.	3.5	0.6	24	0.00
3	Some teachers do not give sufficient practice in classroom to clarify prepositions for students.	2.6	2.4	13	0.00
4	Teachers do not develop the uses of physical movement to demonstrate prepositions.	2.4	0.8	25	0.03
5	Teachers do not shed light on grammar when they teach students.	3.3	0.6	21	0.00
6	Increasing learners' awareness of using prepositions can play great role in developing their competence.	2.3	1.0	14	0.00
7	Teachers should prescribe more texts that deal with prepositions.	2.5	0.6	16	0.00
8	Teachers should provide practice for students on how to use prepositions.	2.4	0.8	24	0.001
9	Teachers should give students chances for oral participation on using prepositions productively.	4.3	0.7	21	0.008
10	Prepositions should be taught intensively by teachers.	4.2	2.4	34	0.00
11	Students should be exposed to realia (e.g. film audiovisual etc) focusing on prepositions.	3.5	0.7	21	0.00
12	Teaching English prepositions should be taught in context by their instructors.	2.0	1.7	32	0.00

Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the No (1) question was (24) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4)

and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement “Students are not interested in using English prepositions.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents’ answers in the No (2) question was (24) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement “The textbook does not contain enough practice on prepositions.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents’ answers in the No (3) question was (13) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement " Some teachers do not give sufficient practice in classroom to clarify prepositions for students.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents’ answers in the No (4) question was (25) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement “Teachers do not develop the uses of physical movement to demonstrate prepositions.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the No (5) question was (21) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "Teachers do not shed light on grammar when they teach students.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the No (6) question was (14) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement" Increasing learners' awareness of using prepositions can play great role in developing their competence."

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the No (7) question was (16) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "Teachers should prescribe more texts that deal with prepositions.

- The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the No (8) question was (24) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%)

among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement “Teachers should provide practice for students on how to use prepositions.

- The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents’ answers in the No (9) question was (21) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement “Teachers should give students chances for oral participation on using prepositions productively.
- The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents’ answers in the No (10) question was (34) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement “Prepositions should be taught intensively by teachers.
- The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents’ answers in the No (11) question was (21) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement “Students should be exposed to realia (e.g. film audiovisual etc) focusing on prepositions.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents’ answers in the No (2) question was (32) which is

greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (7.13). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement " Teaching English prepositions should be taught in context by their instructors."

4.3 Diagnostic Test

Table No (4. 14) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondent's Answers of question number (1)

Answers	Frequencies	Percentage
Correct	14	35
Wrong	26	65
Total	40	100

Regarding to the above table shows that there are (14) students in the study sample with percentage (35%) have the correct answer to the question, there are (26) respondents with percentage (65 %) have the wrong answer. This indicates that students be well- trained in using prepositions.

Table No (4.15) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondent's Answers of question number (1)

Answers	Frequencies	Percentage
Correct	11	27.5
Wrong	29	72.5
Total	40	100

With the reference to the above table display that there are (11) students in the study sample with percentage (27.5%) have the correct answer to the question, there are (29) respondents with percentage (72.5 %) have the wrong answer. This demonstrates that students should be trained and developed in utilizing prepositions.

Table No (4.16) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondent's Answers of question number (1)

Answers	Frequencies	Percentage
Correct	10	25
Wrong	30	75
Total	40	100

According to the above table reveals that there are (10) students in the study sample with percentage (25%) have the correct answer to the question, there are (30) respondents with percentage (75 %) have the wrong answer. This proves that students should be trained and developed so as to overcome the difficulties in using prepositions.

Table No (4. 17) The Frequency Distribution and Decisions for the Respondent's Answers of all questions

Questions	Correct		Wrong		Decision
	frequency	Percentage	frequency	Percentage	
Question 1	14	35	26	65	Accept
Question 2	11	27.5	29	72.5	Accept
Question 3	10	25	30	75	Accept

Table (4.18) one sample T-TEST for the questions of the study

Question s	N	mean	SD	t-value	DF	p-value
1	40	3.6	0.2	12.6	39	0.00
2	40	2.7	1.81	7.4	39	0.00
3	40	3.4	2.44	8.12	39	0.00
For all	30	6.33	4.03	15.50	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 (12.6) which is greater than the tabulated value of T – TEST at the degree of freedom (39) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (2.34). This indicates that, there are no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. This means that our hypothesis is accepted.

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (1) was (7.4) 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 (2.34). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. This means that our hypothesis is accepted.

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the question No (3) was (8.12) 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 (2.34). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. This means that our hypothesis is accepted.

4.4 Discussion

This study has discussed the difficulties encountered by undergraduate students in using English prepositions. The first the statement ""Students are not interested in using English prepositions". It's clear that participants' responses to strongly agree is 43.4%, agree turned out to be 46.7% neutral is 3.3%, disagree is 3.3%, whereas strongly disagree is only 3.3%. This demonstrates that students should be well- trained in

developing the utilization of English prepositions. The second statement "The textbook does not contain enough practice on prepositions". It's clear that participants' responses to strongly agree is 36.7%, agree turned out to be 53.4% neutral is 3.3%, disagree is 3.3%, whereas strongly disagree is only 3.3%. This demonstrates that students should be well-trained in developing the usage of English prepositions. The third statement "Some teachers do not give sufficient practice in classroom to clarify prepositions for students." It's observed that participants' responses to strongly agree is 10.0%, agree turned out to be 73.4%, neutral is 10.0%, disagree is 3.3%, while strongly disagree is only 3.3%. This justifies the idea that, teachers should encourage students to enhance English prepositions. The fourth statement "Teachers do not develop the uses of physical movement to demonstrate prepositions". It's noticed that participants' responses to strongly agree is 20%, agree turned out to be 46.4%, neutral is 13.3%, disagree is 6.7%, whereas strongly disagree is only 13.3%. This strengthens the view of that; teachers should develop students in using English prepositions. The fifth statement "Teachers do not shed light on grammar when they teach students." It's clear that participants' responses to strongly agree is 43.3%, agree turned out to be 26.7%, neutral is 16.7%, disagree is 10.0%, whereas strongly disagree is only 13.3%. This indicates that applying English grammar should help students to write prepositions correctly.

Discussion according to the test, it is shown that there are (14) students in the study sample with percentage (35%) have the correct answer to the question, there are (26) respondents with percentage (65 %) have the wrong answer. This indicates that students be well- trained in using prepositions. With the reference to the above table display that there are (11) students in the study sample with percentage (27.5%) have the correct answer to the question, there are (29) respondents with

percentage (72.5 %) have the wrong answer. This demonstrates that students should be trained and developed in utilizing prepositions. According to the above table reveals that there are (10) students in the study sample with percentage (25%) have the correct answer to the question, there are (30) respondents with percentage (75 %) have the wrong answer. This proves that students should be trained and developed so as to overcome the difficulties in using prepositions.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has covered the data analysis of the study which is about the difficulties encountered by undergraduate students in using prepositions. This is done through a questionnaire to the teachers of English at some Sudanese Universities and diagnostic test to first year students at SUST-College of Languages. Moreover, it showed the data tabulated in figures and tables. Then, interpretations were made from the collected data. Finally, the researcher has discussed the results of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE
MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS,
RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGESSTIONS
FOR FURTHER STUDIES

CHAPTER FIVE

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGESSTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of main findings gained when applying the tools and conclusions. Moreover, a brief recommendations and suggestions were given at the end of the chapter.

5.1 Main Findings

The results of this study investigate the difficulties encountered by undergraduate students in using English prepositions.

Researcher has summarized following findings:

1. Undergraduate student have some difficulties in using English prepositions.
2. There are the causes of students problem in utilizing correct prepositions.
3. Teachers can positively increased students knowledge in using prepositions.

5.2 Conclusion

This study pointed out that, majority of teachers at educational level is unable to apply YouTube videos in their teaching .And the reasons for that are many and varied. We can concern the extent of progress a man had, has realized and is still realizing. According to Sinclair (1991) states that preposition is a word which opens up the possibilities of saying more about a thing or an action. prepositions help us to indicate the place where an action occurs, the place where someone or something is, the place where they are going to or coming from, or direction they are moving in.

This usually involves using a prepositional phrase as an adjunct, consisting of preposition and its object which is nearly always a noun group.

To sum up, taking into account that prepositions indicate the different relations which are found between things mentioned in a sentence, they are usually classified into the categories of place, time, direction, for introducing objects and for spatial relationships.

5.3 Recommendations

In the light of the results of the study, the followings are recommended:

1. Teachers should prescribe more texts that deal with prepositions.
2. Teachers should give students chances for oral participation on using prepositions productively.
3. Teachers should provide practice for students on how to use prepositions.
4. Students should be exposed to realia (e.g. film audiovisual etc) focusing on prepositions.
5. Teaching English prepositions should be taught in context by their instructors.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

English prepositions are still an inviting area in the field of English languages learning. Thus, the researcher would like to suggest teaching of prepositions should be modernized; teachers must adopt the appropriate techniques for teaching English prepositions. Thus, teacher should play a relatively more vital role in giving directions and teaching, students' improvements are mainly in the academic areas.

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APPENDICES

Appendix (A)
Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear / Teacher

This questionnaire is a part of MA study entitled “**Investigating Difficulties Encountered by Undergraduate Students in Using English Prepositions**”. It's designed to find out your honest views for this study. Please respond to all the statements below carefully and honestly. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be used for the purpose of this study. So, please put tick in front of your choice. Your assistance is highly appreciated.

NO	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Students are not interested in using English prepositions.					
2	The textbook does not contain enough practice on prepositions.					
3	Some teachers do not give sufficient practice in classroom to clarify prepositions for students.					
4	Teachers do not develop the uses of physical movement to demonstrate prepositions.					
5	Teachers do not shed light on grammar when they teach students.					

6	Increasing the awareness of using prepositions can positively help students to develop their language competence.					
7	Teachers should prescribe more texts that deal with prepositions.					
8	Teachers should provide practice for students on how to use prepositions.					
9	Teachers should give students chances for oral participation on using prepositions productively.					
10	Prepositions should be taught intensively by teachers.					
11	Students should be exposed to realia (e.g. film audiovisual etc) focusing on prepositions.					
12	Teaching English prepositions should be taught in context by their instructors.					

Appendix (B)

Sudan University of Science and Technology

College of Graduate Studies

Students Diagnostic Test:

Class:

Time Allowed: 2 hours

Name:

.....

Answer All Questions

Question One: Fill in the gap with suitable prepositions:

- 1- Fatima has been studying Sudan University of Science and Technology.
- 2- There was an interesting programme T.V. last night.
- 3- excuse me, we are looking sport centre.
- 4- The BBC will broadcast the news today, you can rely That.
- 5- I have not seen my mother ten years.

Question Two: Choose the suitable prepositions from the following list: **at, for, in, on**

- 1- We stayed in London ten days last January.
- 2- Do you believe life after death.
- 3- Would you like to go a walk.

4- We usually go to the market Fridays.

5- We had lunch John's restaurant.

Question Three:

Draw a circle around the suitable prepositions each of the following sentences:

1- John Brown is an English man but he lives (at, for, in, on) London.

2- The Touti Bridge is (at, for, in, on) the Blue Nile.

3- I have not seen her (at, for, in, on) ten years.

4- We went to the hospital (at, for, in, on) my friend's car.

5- He left his keys (at, for, in, on) the table.