



Sudan University of Science and Technology
College of Graduate Studies
College of Languages



**Investigating Difficulties Encountered by
Students of English Language Department at
Sudan University of Science and Technology in
Tertiary Level in Using English Prepositions**
تقصي الصعوبات التي تواجه طلاب قسم اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة
السودان للعلوم والتكنولوجيا في استخدام الظروف في اللغة
الانجليزية

A thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for Requirement of M.A
Degree in English Language (Linguistics)

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Quranic Verse

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قال تعالى:

(وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ)

سورة الروم (الآية 22)

Preface

(And of His signs are the creation of the heaven and earth and the diversity of your languages and your colours. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge)

Quran verse [22:30]

Dedication

To my parents, wife, daughters, and my dear brothers and sisters.

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the difficulties encountered by students of English Language Department at Sudan University of Science and Technology in tertiary level in using English prepositions. The study adopted the descriptive analytical method. Two instruments were used for data collection which were teachers' questionnaire and students' test. The sample of the study composed of 20 teachers and 30 students drawingly exclusively from Sudan University of Science and Technology, College of Languages, Department of English Language, third year students. The data were analyzed by the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) which provided percentage results for teachers' questionnaire and students' test. The present study came up with findings that tertiary students are poor in using English prepositions due to the nature of English prepositions, there is insufficient specialized materials in the College of Languages, Department of English Language for practicing and interference of mother tongue. Based on the findings, researcher presented some recommendations focused on prepositions in English syllabuses intensively and university students should be encouraged by teachers to do more practice in English prepositions, in addition to that, teachers should raise the awareness of the importance of English prepositions, with some suggestions for further studies.

Abstract

(Arabic Version)

هدفت هذه الدراسة لتقصي الصعوبات التي تواجه طلاب الجامعة في استخدام الظروف في اللغة الانجليزية. تبنت هذه الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، حيث استخدمت الدراسة أداتين هما الاستبيان لأساتذة اللغة الانجليزية والاختبار لطلاب السنة الثالثة في قسم اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة السودان للعلوم والتكنولوجيا، كلية اللغات، قسم اللغة الانجليزية. ضمت عينة الدراسة 30 طالباً و20 معلماً. استخدم برنامج التحليل الإحصائي للعلوم الاجتماعية في تحليل البيانات حيث كانت النتائج في شكل نسبة مئوية لاستبانة الأساتذة واختبار الطلاب. توصلت الدراسة إلى نتائج بأن طلاب الجامعة ضعفاء في استخدام الظروف في اللغة الانجليزية نظراً لطبيعة الظروف في اللغة الانجليزية، وعدم تغطية المنهج الجامعي للظروف في كلية اللغات قسم اللغة الانجليزية وممارستها بالإضافة إلى تداخل لغة الأم على الطلاب. وعلى ضوء النتائج وصى الباحث ببعض التوصيات بالتركيز على الظروف في منهج اللغة الانجليزية بطريقة مكثفة وتشجيع الأساتذة للطلاب لمزيد من ممارسة الظروف، بالإضافة إلى رفع مستوى الوعي بأهمية الظروف مع وجود بعض المقترحات لدراسات مستقبلية في هذا الإطار.

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CHAPER ONE

Introduction

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.0 Overview

Preposition is a word governing and usually preceding, a noun or pronoun and expressing a relation to another word or element in the clause. Prepositions are existed in both Arabic and English languages. Therefore, the Arabic learners of English might use the literally translation to Arabic or English to understand and apply the prepositions which may result in making syntactic and semantic errors.

Prepositions also are words which are used to link nouns, pronouns and phrase to other words in a sentence. The word or phrase that the prepositions introduce is called the object of the prepositions. Prepositions are important because they work to connect various part of sentence. Prepositions tell us where something is in relation to something else or how something are relation to something else or how thing are related in space – in, on, and to, with, over, under, into and beside. Other show physical connections or possession between nouns or pronouns and another word such as of, until, by. Some refer to relationships in time, while, during, after, until, before, since. As stated by A. J. Thomas & A. V. Marinet (1986: 94), there are six types of common prepositions can be used, preposition of time, preposition of place, preposition of direction, preposition of agent, preposition of instrument and prepositional phrase.

Prepositions are nowadays becoming the most difficult for EFL learners in using English preposition they face challenge in terms of communication, translation and applying rules in written text, this refer to mother tongue interference and overgeneralization while they practicing. Using of prepositions can give different

meanings according to different linguistic context. University students should know different types of prepositions and how to use them properly in different context so as to give appropriate meaning.

1.1 Statement of the Study Problem

Prepositions are a challenging area of English language in both learning and teaching, because they are problematic for university EFL learners in terms of usage.

Prepositions create some difficulties for university EFL learners due to nature of preposition's structure in English and the interference of mother tongue. For example Arabic speakers say I studied all courses at university by English instead of I studied all courses at university in English, don't play by fire instead of with fire.

This study attempts to investigate these problems and difficulties which face university students in using prepositions. The correct usage of prepositions is one of the serious difficulties faced by university EFL learners of English especially, those who learn English as foreign language (EFL). These problems are shown by the fact that, many universities EFL learners fail to decide which prepositions should follow a certain verb.

1.2 Questions of the Study

In this study, the following questions have been raised:

- 1- To what extent are university students' poor in using prepositions efficiently?
- 2- To what extent can university students at college of languages understand prepositions?

3- To what extent are teachers at university level aware of students' weakness in using English prepositions?

1.3 Hypotheses of the study

In considering the questions of the study, these hypotheses can be stated as follow:

1- University students are poor in using prepositions efficiently.

2- University students at college of languages cannot understand prepositions in writing.

3- University teachers of English are aware of some of students' weakness in using English preposition.

1.4 Objectives of the study

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1- To investigate whether students are able to use prepositions efficiently.

2- To find out whether students at the College of Languages are not able to understand prepositions.

3- To examine whether the university teachers of English are aware of some students' weaknesses in using prepositions.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study arises from the necessity in helping university students with prepositions to avoid confusion in usage.

This study will be beneficial to both university students and teachers of English language. The result of this study will be implemented to promote the university

students performance to use prepositions properly as well as to build vocabulary and enrich their writing and speaking.

This study is valuable in building university students confidence in dealing with prepositions, and provides them with tool to help and enable them to make the meaning more comprehensible.

The significance of studying university learners errors makes immediate contribution to the task of language teaching. Thus, the importance of this study stems from the significance of English prepositions as well as errors analysis studies.

This study will be beneficial to university EFL learners especially students of translation, providing them with tips to avoid using literal translation.

1.6 Methodology of the Study

The researcher will use descriptive analytical method, in investigating difficulties encountered by university students in using English prepositions on the written performance. The researcher will employ questionnaire as a tool for data collection which will be administrated to university teachers and test for students of English language at Sudan University of science and Technology, college of languages. The sample will be taken randomly for both male and female students of third year at Sudan University of Science and Technology (Sust) (30) of students will be taken randomly which consist of students of third year and the tool which will use to collect relevant data in this study are questionnaire for 20 English university teachers and test for students.

1.7 Limits of the Study

This study is limited to investigate difficulties encountered by university students in using and understanding prepositions students of third year department of English, College of Languages in the academic year 2018- 2019 at Sudan University of Science & technology.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review and Previous Studies

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Literature Review and Previous Studies

2.0 Introduction:

This chapter consists of two parts: part one reviews the literature relevant to the research topic such as definition of preposition, types of preposition, position of preposition, prepositions and prepositional adverbs, and prepositional phrase ...etc. therefore, prepositions are considered one of the most difficult aspect of English grammar of language for non-native speakers to master English language. While part two discusses the previous studies related to the research topic, which include four studies.

2.1 Definitions of Preposition:

According to Walker (1982: 123), preposition is a word that shows a relationship between a noun or pronoun and other part of sentence. Also Cowan (1983: 281) considered preposition as a group of word that point out relationship between the object of preposition and some other words in the sentence. The words indicated the important function of preposition in the sentence: such as they use nouns and pronouns to make phrase, and they combine these phrase to the rest of sentence. The writer illustrated by mentioning that the functions such as indicators of time, place, cause, manner, agency association, or other relationships. In addition to, usually preposition occur in phrase that function as adverbs or adjective. Other definition of preposition which denoted by Wren & Martin (1999: 106) are considered a preposition as a word place before a noun or pronoun to show it what relation the person or thing denoted by its position. Another definition is stated by Kim Ballard (2001: 42) preposition is used to show the relationship between two elements, although again this is a notional definition which is not grammatically watertight.

2.2. Types of Preposition:

There are many types of preposition adopted in English language as stated by A. J. Thomson & A. V. Martinet (1986: 94) as follow:

2.2.1 Preposition that Denoting Time and Date:

Preposition, Time and Date: at, on, by, before, in

at, on

at a time:

at dawn at six at midnight at 4:30

at an age:

at sixteen / at the age of sixteen

She got married at seventeen.

on a day / date:

on Monday on 4 June on Christmas Day **at** night.

at Christmas, at Easter (the period, not the day only)

on morning / afternoon / evening / night of a certain date:

we arrived on the morning of the sixth.

by, before

by a time / date / period = at that time or before / not later than that date.

at often implies 'before that time / date:

the train starts at 6.10 so you had better be at the station by 6.00.

before can be preposition, conjunction or adverb:

before signing this (preposition)

before you sign this (conjunction)

on time, in time, in good time

on time = at the time arranged, not before, not after:

the 8.15 train started on time (it started at 8.15)

in time / in time for + noun = not late; **in good time (for)** = with a comfortable margin:

Passengers should be in time for their train.

on arrival, on arriving, on reaching, on getting to

on arrival / on arriving,

on checking, she found that some of the party did not know the way.

On hearing / hearing that the plane had been diverted, they left the airport.

at the beginning / end, in the beginning / end, at first / at last, at the beginning (of)

at the end (of) = at the beginning / end :

At the beginning of a book there is often a table of contents.

At the end there may be an index.

In the beginning / at first = in the early stages. it implies that later on there was a change:

In the beginning / at first we used hand tools. Later we had machines.

In the end / at last = eventually after some time:

At first he opposed the marriage, but in the end he gave his consent.

Time: from, since, for, during

from, since and for

- from is normally used with to or till / until.

most people work from nine to five.

from can also be used of place:

where do you come from?

- **since** is used for time, never for place, and means from that time to the time referred to. it is often used with present perfect or past perfect tense.

he has been here since Monday. (from Monday till now)

he wondered where Ann was. he had not seen her since their quarrel.

since can also be an adverb:

he left school in 1983. I haven't seen him since.

since can also be a conjunction of time:

he has worked for us ever since he left school.

it is two years since I last saw Tom =

I last saw Tom two years ago / I haven't seen Tom for two years.

- **for** is used of period of time: for six years, for two months, for ever:

Bake it for two hours.

He travelled in the desert for six months.

for + a period of time can be used with a present perfect tense or past perfect tense for an action which extends up to the time of speaking:

He has worked here for a year (He began working here a year ago and still works here.)

for used in this way is replaceable by since with the point in time when the action began:

during and for:

during is used with known periods of time, i.e. periods known by name, such as Christmas, Easter or periods which have been already defined:

- during the Middle Ages during 1941

- during the summer (of that year)

- during his childhood

- during my holidays

The action can either last the whole period or occur at some time within the period:

It rained all Monday but stopped raining during the night. (at some point of time)

- He was ill for a week, and during that week he ate nothing.

For (indicating purpose) may be used before known periods:

I went there / I hire a car / I rented a house

for my holidays / for the summer. Ibid (1986: 95)

For has various other uses:

He asked for £5. I paid £1 for it.

I bought one for Tom.

For can also be a conjunction and introduce a clause.

Time: to, till/until, after, afterwards (adverb)

to and **till/until**

To can be used of time and place; till/until of time only.

We can use from to or from till/until:

They worked from five to ten/from five till to ten. (at five to ten would mean 'at 9.55')

But if we have no **from** we use till/until, not to:

Let's start now and work till dark. (to would not be possible here.)

till/until is often used with a negative verb to emphasize lateness:

- We didn't get home at till 2 a.m.

- He usually pays me on Friday but last week he didn't pay me till the following Monday.

till/until is very often used as a conjunction of time:

We'll stay here till it stops raining.

Go on till you come to the level crossing.

Ibid (1986: 96)

But not that if 'you come to' is omitted, the till must be replaced by to:

Go on to the level crossing.

After and **afterwards** (adverb)

after (preposition) must be followed by a noun, pronoun or gerund:

Don't bathe immediately after a meal/after eating.

Don't have a meal and bathe immediately after it.

If we don't wish to use a noun/pronoun or gerund, we cannot use **after**, but must use **afterwards** (= after that) or then:

Don't have a meal and bathe immediately afterwards.

They bathed and afterwards played games/played games afterwards or they bathed and then played games.

Afterwards can be used at either end of the clause and can be modified by **soon**, immediately, **not long** etc:

Soon afterwards we got a letter.

We got a letter not long afterwards.

After can also be used as a conjunction:

After he had turned the piano it sounded quite different.

Michael Swan & Catherine Walter (2001: 254) mentioned that, we use **at** with clock times as follow:

I'll see you at 4.15.

The plane leaves at six.

Call me at lunch time.

We use **on** with days, dates and expressions like Monday morning and Friday afternoon.

We get up late on Sundays.

The meeting's on June 23rd.

I'm always sleep on Monday mornings.

I had to work on Christmas Day.

We say in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening:

She was born at 6.16 in the morning.

I work best in the evening.

We use **in** with weeks, seasons, months, years and centuries.

We are going to Denmark in the first week of May.

I always get unhappy in the winter.

Shakespeare died in 1616.

There were terrible wars in the 17 century.

2.2.2 Prepositions of Travel and Movement: from, to, at, in, by, on, onto, into, off, out, out of

A. J. Thomson & A. V. Martinet (1986: 96) stated that, we travel from our starting place **to** our destination:

- They flew/drove cycled/walked from Paris to Rome.
- When are you coming back to England?
- We also send/post letters etc to people and place. (but see note on home below).

Arrive at/in, get to, reach (without preposition).

We arrive in a town or country, at or in a village, at any other destination:

They arrived in Spain/in Madrid.

I arrived **at** the hotel/at the airport/at the bridge/at the crossroads.

Get to can be with any destination, and so can reach:

He got to station just in time for his train.

I want to get to Berlin before dark.

They reached the top of the mountain before sunrise.

Get in (in = adverb) can mean 'arrive at a destination'. It is chiefly used of trains:

What time does the train get in? (reach the terminus/our station). Note also get there/back (there, back are adverbs).

Home

We can use a verb of motion etc. + home without a preposition:

It took us an hour to get home.

They went home by bus.

But if **home** is immediately preceded by a word or phrase a preposition is necessary:

- She returned to her parents' home.

We can be/live stay/work etc. at home, at + ... + home or in + ... + home. But **in** cannot be followed directly by **home**:

You can do this sort of work at home or at/in your own home.

2.2.3 Preposition of Transport: **by, on, get in/into/on/onto. off/out of**

According to A. J. Thomson & A. V. Martinet (1986: 97), we can travel **by** car (but **in** the /my/Tom's car), **by** bus / train / plane / helicopter / horsecraft etc. and by sea / air. We can also travel by a certain route, or by a certain place (through via is more usually):

We went by the M4. We went via Reading.

We can walk or go **on** foot. We can cycle or go **on** a bicycle or by bicycle. We can ride or go **on** horseback.

-We get **into** a public or private vehicle, or get in (adverb).

- We get **on/onto** a public vehicle, or get **on** (adverb).

But we go **on** board a boat (=embark).

- We get **on/onto** a horse/camel/bicycle.

- We get **out of** a public or private vehicle, or get out (adverb).

We get off a public vehicle, a horse, bicycle, etc., or get off (adverb).

- **Get in/into out/out of** can also be used of buildings, institutions and countries instead of **go/come/return** etc.

When there is some difficulty in entering or leaving in out there are used as adverbs.

I've lost my keys! How are we going to get into the flat /to get in? (adverbs).

The house is on fire! We had better get out! (adverb).

It's difficult to get into a university nowadays.

2.2.4 Preposition of Giving Directions: at, into, to, etc.

As explained by A. J. Thomson & A. V. Martinet (1986: 98), along, **on** (prepositional adverbs) and till (conjunction):

- Go along the stand till you see the Savoy **on** your right.
- The bus stop is just round the corner.
- Turn right/left at the post office /at the second traffic lights.

Go **on** (adverb) past the post office.

Turn right/left into fleet street.

- Take the first/second etc. Turning on/to the right or on/to your right.
- Go **on** (adverb) to the end of the road. (till could not be used here).
- You will find the bank on your left halfway down the street.

When you come out of the station you will find the bank opposite you/in front of you.

Get out (of the bus) at the tube station and walk on (adverb) till you come to a pub.

Get off (the bus) and walk back (adverb) till you come to some traffic lights.

Be careful not to confuse **to** and **till**.

2.2.5 Prepositions of Place: in and on

Michael Swan & Catherine Walter (2001: 258) mentioned that, we use **in** with 3 dimensional spaces like boxes, rooms, towns, or countries.

Example:

Where's Joe?

in the kitchen.

There's nothing in the fridge.

Ann is in Poland.

People are in clothes.

- We use on with 2 dimensional surfaces like floors, tables, walls, or ceilings.

Why are all those papers on the floor?

The church has wonderful painting on the ceiling.

She had photos of all her family on the wall. That sweater looks good on you.

From ... to, until and by:

- We use until or till (informal) to say when an action or situation ends.

Example:

We played football until 5 o'clock.

I'll be in London till Thursday.

It was a great party. We danced until six o'clock in the morning.

- We can give the beginning and end of an action or situation with from ... to/until/till.

Example:

I worked from 8.00 to 6.00 yesterday.

We'll be away from July 16 until/till August.

He read the paper from 7.30 to 8.00.

For, during, and while:

As explained by Michael Swan & Catherine Walter (2001: 257), for + period tells you how long, during tells you when.

Example:

I slept for 20 minutes during the lesson.

The journey lasted for three days.

There was a rainstorm during the night.

During is a preposition: We use during + noun

While is a conjunction: We use while + subject + verb

Example:

They got into the house during the night.

He got ill during the journey.

They got into the house while I was asleep.

He got ill while he was travelling.

2.3 Position of Prepositions:

As stated by A. J. Thomson & A. V. Martinet (1986: 91), prepositions are words normally placed before nouns or pronouns. Prepositions can also be followed by verbs but, except after *but* and *except*, the verb must be in the gerund form:

He is talking of emigrating.

They succeeded in escaping.

The students have two main problems with prepositions. He has to know (a) whether in any construction a preposition is required or not, and (b) which preposition to use when one is required.

The first problem can be especially troublesome to a European student, who may find that a certain construction in his own language requires a preposition, whereas a similar one in English does not, and vice versa: e.g. in most European languages purpose is expressed by a preposition + infinitive; in English it is expressed by the infinitive only:

I came here to study.

The students should note also that many words used mainly as prepositions can also be used as conjunctions and adverbs. Where this is the case it will be pointed out in the following paragraphs:

- Alternative Position of Preposition:

Prepositions normally precede nouns or pronouns. In two constructions, however, it is possible in informal English to move the preposition to the end of the sentence:

In questions beginning with a preposition + *whom/which/what/whose/where*:

To whom were you talking? (formal)

Who were you talking to? (informal)

In which drawer does he keep it? (formal)

Which drawer does he keep it in? (informal)

Similarly in relative clauses, a preposition placed before whom/which can be moved to the end of the sentence. The relative pronoun is then often omitted:

The people with whom I was travelling. (formal)

The people I was travelling with. (informal)

The company from which I hire my TV set. (formal)

The company I hire my TV set from. (informal)

2.4 Prepositions Used with Adjectives and Participles:

Thomson & Martinet (2001: 100) explained that, certain adjectives and past participles used as adjectives can be followed by a preposition + noun/gerund. Usually particular adjectives and participles require particular prepositions. Some of these are given below; others can be found by consulting a good dictionary, which after any adjective will give the prepositions that can be used with certain adjectives and participles:

absorbed in	involved in
according to	keen on
accustomed to	liable for/to
afraid of	nervous of
anxious for/about	owing to
ashamed of	pleased with
aware of	prepared for
bad at/for	proud of
confident of	responsible for/to
due to/for	scared of
exposed to	sorry for/about
fit for	successful in
fond of	suspicious of
frightened of/at	terrified of

good at/for tired of

interested in used to

He was absorbed in his book.

She is afraid/frightened/scared of the dark.

According to Tom, he is bad/good at chess.(a bad/good player)

Running is bad/good for you. (unhealthy/healthy)

They are very keen on golf.

Drivers exceeding the speed limit are liable to a fine.

The management is not responsible for articles left in customers' cars.

I'm sorry for your husband.

2.5 Prepositions and Prepositional Adverbs:

Simple Prepositions:

As pointed out by Geoffrey Leech and Jan Svartvik (1975: 368) prepositions are very frequent words like at, for and by that are placed before a noun phrase to form a prepositional phrase. The most common English prepositions are simple they consist of one word. Here are the most common simple prepositions:

about	above	after
along	around	at
before	below	beside
between	by	down
for	from	in

In the following examples, the brackets [] enclose prepositional phrase:

Do you know anything more definite [**about** her]

Temperatures hardly rose [**above** freezing] [**for** three months]

Complex Prepositions:

There are also prepositions consisting of more than one word, so-called complex prepositions. Here are some two-word prepositions:

along with	as for	away from
because of	due to	except for
instead of	out of	outside of
preliminary to	together with	up to

Prepositional Adverbs: A police car just went **past**.

A prepositional adverb is an adverb which behaves like a preposition with the complement omitted.

I walked **past the entrance**. [**past** = preposition]

I got a quick look at their faces. [**past** = prepositional adverb]
as we went **past**.

2.6 Prepositional Phrase:

Referring to Geoffrey Leech & Jan Svartvik (1994: 366) described that, a prepositional phrase is consist of a preposition followed by a prepositional complement. The complement is usually a noun phrase, but can also be another element:

- Preposition + a noun phrase.

As usual, Ann's bright smile greeted me at the breakfast table.

- Preposition + a wh-clause:

She came from what she called 'a small farm' of two hundred acres.

- Preposition + an-ing clause:

Warren tried to shake off his fears by looking at the sky.

- Preposition + an adverb:

You can see the lake from here.

John Eastwood (1994: 287) defined that, the prepositional phrase functions as an adverbial.

They walked **towards** the **setting sun**.

On Saturday there's going to be a disco.

It sometimes comes after a noun.

The disco **on Saturday** has been cancelled.

Almost **at** the end right in front of me halfway up the hill all over the floor just off the motorway directly after your lesson.

- In some clauses a preposition goes at the end.

Wh-question: who did you go to the party with?

Infinitive clause: I've got a tape for you to listen to.

Passive: war reporters sometimes get shot at.

Relative clause: that's the article I told you about.

- Some prepositions can also be adverbs.

Preposition: I waited for Max **outside** the bank.

We haven't seen Julia **since** last summer.

There was no lift. We had to walk **up** the stairs.

Adverb: max went into the bank and I waited **outside**.

We saw Julia last summer, but we haven't seen her **since**.

There was no lift. We had to walk **up**.

A verb + adverb like up, get in is a phrasal verb.

- Some prepositions of time can also be conjunctions.

Preposition: we must be ready **before** their arrival.

Conjunction: we must be ready **before** they arrive.

2.7 Preposition + Noun:

According to Stuart Redman (2004: 34), there are many expressions formed by a preposition + noun, and sometimes a preposition is used with a particular meaning in a number of expressions, so they are very common.

A book by Stephen King, a film by Stephen Spielberg, a song by Elton John.

You can go for a walk, for a drive, for a run, for swim.

You can go in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening (but at night).

You can travel by car, by plane, by bus, by coach, by train, by taxi (but on foot).

I heard it on the radio; I saw it on the TV; I spoke to her on the phone (but I read it in the newspaper, in a magazine).

The man in the dark suit (= wearing the dark suit); the woman in the red dress.

The children are on holiday (= they are having a holiday).

In time or on time:

Sometimes two prepositions can be used with the same noun, but the meaning is different.

For example:

Lessons begin at 8:30 and I always arrive on time (= at 8:30).

Lessons begin at 8:30 and I always get there in time (= before 8:30; I'm not late).

In the end we went home (= finally, after a long period).

The two men are in business (= they are businessmen).

I'll see you in a moment (= very soon).

2.7.1 Preposition + Noun: (on holiday, in love, by mistake)

Hester Lott (2006: 122) mentioned that, **On + (the) + on holiday** (= away from work/school):

Noun **On purpose** (= deliberately)

Tom went **on holiday** last week.

Harry hit Jake **on purpose**.

On fire (= burning, usually accidentally).

Oh no! The Tom Hall is **on fire**!

On the phone (= talking to someone using a telephone).

Don't interrupt your sister when she's **on the phone**.

in + (a) + noun:

in cash (= with paper money or coins).

in love (= loving someone).

I prefer to pay for things **in cash**.

The song was about being **in love**.

in case (= because this may happen ...).

I'll take my coat **in case** it rains.

by + (the) + noun:

by + person's name (= a work of art created by ...).

My favorite painting is **by Monet**.

by myself, himself, etc. (= without another person, or without help from anyone).

Saima was sitting **by herself** in the park.

by mistake/accidence (= not a deliberately):

Ellen wrote the wrong name **by mistake**.

2.7.2 Other prepositions + noun:

For example (= as an example, e.g.).

I love Italian food; I love pizza, **for example**.

Out of date (= old finished, or not correct now):

The information he gave was **out of date**.

Up to date (= modern, or correct now):

The décor in the office is really **up to date**.

2.8 Verbs with Prepositions: Wait for me.

Michael Swan & Catherine Walter (2001: 136) pointed out that, we put a preposition (for, to, at, etc) before an object:

Wait for me! (not wait me!).

I listen to a lot of music (not I listen a lot of music).

You arrive at/in a place (not to).

The train arrives at Oxford station at 17:15.

You get into/out of a car; you get on/off a bus, train, plane or ship.

I got out of the taxi at Piccadilly Circus.

We got off the bus at Trafalgar Square.

Look after = watch and take care of; look for = try to find.

Could you look after the children this evening?

I'm looking for my glasses.

You pay a person or a bill; you pay for something that you buy.

Have you paid Joe? Yes, I paid his bill last week.

Can you pay for the drinks?

Some verbs have prepositions with them when relative pronouns are the object of these verbs, there are two possibilities:

Preposition before whom/which (very formal).

The woman smiled. I was looking at her. → The woman at whom I was looking smiled.

The flat was dirty. He lived in it. → The flat in which he lived was dirty.

Preposition after verbs (more informal; we can leave out who(m)/which/that.).

The woman (whom/that) I was looking at smiled.

The flat he lived in was dirty.

Pam is the friend she lives with.

A boy that, I went to school with.

The friend she lives with gave her a handbag.

2.9 Prepositional Rules:

There are two major rules regarding the use of preposition:

1- Preposition choice: certain prepositions must follow certain words, and the correct preposition must be used to make relationships between words in the sentences clear.

2- Prepositions placement: Prepositions must be followed by noun, and prepositions can only ever go on the end of the sentence in certain situations.

1- Preposition Choice:

Determining what preposition to use is not simple. This can be especially difficult when dealing with idioms (expression in the English language that requires the use of certain word, simply because that is the word we have chosen to use). Idiomatic expressions are expressions you just have to memorize, and when errors are made, they are almost always preposition errors.

Here are some examples of idioms, together with the correct prepositions:

1. Able *to*
2. Concerned *by*
3. Prohibited *from*
4. Capable *of*
5. Preoccupied *with*

Each of the italicized words is the only acceptable prepositions to follow these words. It would not be grammatically correct to say "able from" or preoccupied for".

2- Prepositions Placement:

Prepositions must always be followed by a noun or pronoun. That noun is called the object of the preposition. A verb can't be the object of preposition.

- The antenna was for the car. This is correct – the preposition for is followed by the noun "car".

- The antenna was for drive. This is not correct. The preposition for is followed by a verb "drive". Drive can't be the object of preposition.

This rule may seem confusing at first, because you may have seen words that look like verbs following the preposition to in sentences, for example:

- I like to dance or this rope is for jumping.

However, in these examples, the dance and jumping are not actually acting as verbs.

- In the first example, to dance is part of the infinitive, an infinitive is not a verb. An infinitive occurs when a verb is used as a noun, adjective, or adverbs. Here, to dance" is a thing that the person likes doing, not an action that they are doing. It is a verbal noun.

- In the second example, "jumping" is a gerund. Like an infinitive, a gerund is NOT a verb, but is instead of a noun, adjective or adverb. Here, "jumping" is a thing that the rope is for. No one in this sentence is doing the action of jumping.

Prepositions at the End of Sentences:

Because prepositions must be followed by a noun and have an object, they usually can't be used at the end of a sentence. For example, it is not correct to say:

- The table is where I put my books on.

However, there are certain circumstances where it is acceptable to end a sentence with a preposition. These exceptions exist when the preposition needs to be there, and if it wasn't, the meaning of the sentence would change.

In the above example, "the table is where I put my books on." the use of preposition "on" isn't necessary. We could take the "on" out of the sentence and the meaning would be the same. So, the use of the preposition was unnecessary and we don't need it. However, here s an example where it is perfectly acceptable to use preposition to end a sentence:

- "I turned the TV on."

If you removed the "on" from the end of this sentence, it would change the meaning. Instead of switching on the set, you would be saying that you turned the TV itself.

2.10 Verbs and Prepositions:

John Eastwood (2002: 302) mentioned that, a verb + preposition is called a 'prepositional verb'.

I was looking at the photo.

We didn't go into all the details.

Prepositions combine with verbs to form prepositional verbs, e.g. believe in, look into, insist on, hint at, see to, come from, look after, cope with, consist of, hope for, feel like.

The preposition always has an object such as:

- Believe in God.
- Look into the matter.
- Insist on absolute silence.

Referring to Thomson & Martinet (2001: 104), there are so many other verbs which can be followed by prepositions and some of these verbs are characterized below:

Apologize (to sb) for	live on (food/money)
Apply to sb/for sth	long for
Ask for/about	object to
Attend to	occur to
Beg for	persist in
Believe in	prefer sb/sth to sb/sth
Beware of	prepare for
Compare sth with	refer to
Comply with	rely on
Consist of	resort to
Deal in	succeed in
Depend on	suspect sb of
Dream of	think of/about

M. Hewings, (2002: 110) stated that, about uses of preposition (not on) after the verb argue, complain, fine out, joke, learn, protest, quarrel, read, tell, worry,

wonder, care, agree, and after nouns. After some other verbs and noun learner can use either about or on. These include advice, agree, decide, speak, talk, write.

Redman (2004: 32) showed that, some verb may be followed by different prepositions, and the meaning change:

- He threw the ball to me. (for me to catch it).
- He threw the ball at me. (in order to hit me: perhaps).

Referring to Murphy's (2010:266), verb + prepositions, about/for/of/after.

Examples:

- We talked about a lot of things at the meeting.
- We had a discussion about what we should do.
- Would you care for a cup of coffee? (= would you like?).
- Have a nice day. Take care of yourself! (= look after yourself).
- Alan is 85 and lives Alan. He needs somebody to look after him. (not look for).

2.11 Previous Studies:

Study One: was conducted by Rasha Elnour Hassan (2016) entitled: Investigating EFL Learners' Problems of Using and understanding Preposition.

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 a questionnaire. The sample of the study consisted of (40) learners from Alneelain University fourth year. The data were analyzed by using the statistical program (SPSS) which provides percentage results for the questionnaire. The study comes out with results that the EFL learners are poor in using prepositions and some of these prepositions are troublesome for them. Moreover, there is a weakness in using some of the prepositions. There are some causes behind the difficulties of using prepositions such as interference of mother tongue and prepositions are inadequately presented in the syllabus. At the end of the study the researcher

presented some recommendations. These recommendations focus on paying more attention for prepositions in designing syllabuses, in addition to that learners should receive more practice in using prepositions and raising learners' awareness of prepositions.

Study Two: related to research topic was edited by Mohammed Abaker Abdalla (2017) under the title: Investigating the Difficulties encountered by EFL Learners in Using Preposition.

This research aimed at investigating the difficulties that encounter University EFL Learners in Using English Prepositions Properly in their Study, at Sudan University of Science and Technology, College of Languages, Department of English, second year students. To investigate these difficulties the researcher uses experimental and descriptive analytical methods, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and the data of this study was collected randomly about (50) students, and (30) teachers. The researcher used a test for students and a questionnaire for teachers. The study concluded that, the majority of university EFL learners have errors in using English prepositions and preposition usage in fact creates some difficulties to university EFL learners, also the influence of L1 on L2; university EFL learners have led to weakness in using prepositions. Based on the above findings, the study recommended that, university teachers should use different methods for teaching English prepositions. Teachers should encourage their learners in using prepositions activities inside the class. University EFL learners should pay attention to use and understand the meaning of prepositions properly. Syllabus designers should design full syllabus for teaching English preposition at universities. Universities should device a system to evaluate the learners' performance.

Study Three: was submitted by Ghadah Almurshidi (2016) under title: Difficulties of UAE University Students in the Use of Preposition.

Prepositions are functional words that present the relationships between groups of words. EFL students find difficulty in using prepositions correctly in their writing tasks. The present study is an attempt to identify the errors made by UAE University students in the Engineering College in the use of prepositions. The participants of the study are (30) Arabic students attending UAE University aged between 18-23 years old. A test on English preposition was developed which contained thirty multiple choice questions, and distributed to the students. Errors have been pinpointed and results have been analyzed using discourse analysis. This study is expected to be valuable to EFL students, teachers and translators.

Study Four: related to research topic was conducted by Js Sara Vanan (2016) entitled: The Use of English Prepositions: An Empirical Study.

This study examined the writing skill of students at the undergraduate level, with a special focus on the use of preposition of place, time and direction in English. The subject of the study comprised of (100) randomly selected undergraduate students of English literature from two Arts and Science Colleges located in Coimbatore city. The data elicitation instrument was a guided cloze test in which the subject were asked to fill the gaps using appropriate preposition of place, time and direction. To analyze the collected data, socio-linguistic and descriptive methods were used. The results indicated that the students found more difficulties in the use of prepositions of place and direction than the prepositions of time because of their mother tongue interference. The findings imply that teachers should pay more attention while teaching the prepositions of place, time and direction and provide sufficient explanations about them to the students in the classroom.

Previous Studies Comment:

In conclusion, the previous related studies have come out with a clear evidence that, EFL learners are poor in using prepositions due to many reasons such as

interference of mother tongue, ignorance of preposition in the way of teaching English language.

They also come out with recommendations for teachers to improve the process of teaching and raising awareness of prepositions among teachers and learners thoroughly. Thus, in contrast with the previous studies, the present study expect to add more points for university students not only to be aware of prepositions also enable them to make the meaning more comprehensible in addition to avoid making mistakes in using English prepositions.

2.12 Summary of the Chapter:

This chapter consists of conceptual framework, definitions of prepositions, types of prepositions, prepositions and prepositional adverbs and prepositional phrase, verbs and preposition, and preposition + noun. This in order to help students to distinguish between which kinds of preposition could be used in a certain place, time and part two which consists of the previous studies about prepositions that are related to the research topic. The next chapter is chapter three which will be devoted for methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

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Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will explain the methodology of the study. It will describe the methods and techniques adopted, the instrument, the population, the sample and the procedures of the data analysis. In addition to that reliability and validity of the study.

3.1 The Study Methodology

In this study an analytical descriptive method has been used to analyze the data collected in order to answer the research questions. It adopts quantitative in its design. This study investigates difficulties encountered by university students in using English prepositions on written performance.

3.2 Population of the Study

The subjects of this study involve both male and female university students of the third year majoring in English language at the department of English language, Sudan University of Science and Technology (sust) College of languages for academic year 2018 – 2019.

3.3 Sampling:

The sample of this study composed of (30) university students who were selected randomly for written test. All of them are Sudanese both male and female students. Also (20) teachers were selected to answer teachers' questionnaire.

3.4 Instrument

In this study the researcher uses teachers' questionnaire which consists of one hypothesis concerning whether university teachers are aware of some students' weaknesses in using prepositions. The other tool which is conducted to collect data is students' test. The test contains two questions, in question one, students are asked to fill in gaps using some preposition items, while the other question is for understanding where students are asked to choose the relevant meaning.

The questions are suitable and some changes are made to cope with students' level. The use of this test will lead to more valid and reliable results. Thus, the overall aim of this question is to check the subject's cognitive ability to deal with the context of preposition.

3.5 Validity of the Questionnaire

Validity refers to the factor that data collection should measure what it is supposed to measure. Best Kahan (1986). The validity of this test was proved. The objective of the questions are to test the subjects ability in using and understanding prepositions it was checked by five experts Ph.D holders in the same field.

3.6 Reliability of the Questionnaire

The reliability measure is analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). Validity and reliability are important aspects to the questionnaire; this ensures the quality of the instrument which is used throughout this study.

3.7 Statistical Reliability

Reliability refers to the reliability of any test, to obtain the same results if the same measurement is used 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. Here are some of the most used methods for calculating the reliability:

Alpha-Cranbach coefficient.

On the other hand, validity also is a measure used to identify the validity degree among the respondents according to their answers on certain criterion. The validity is counted by a number of methods, among them is the validity using the square root of the (reliability coefficient). The value of the reliability and the validity lies in the range between (0-1). The validity of the questionnaire is that the tool should measure the exact aim, which it has been designed for.

In this study the validity calculated by using the following equation:

$$\text{Validity} = \sqrt{\text{Reliability}}$$

The reliability coefficient was calculated for the measurement, which was used in the questionnaire using Alpha-Cronbach coefficient Equation as the following:

For calculating the validity and the reliability of the questionnaire from the above equation, the researcher distributed (20) questionnaires to respondents to calculate the reliability coefficient using the Alpha-Cronbach coefficient; the results have been showed in the following table:

	Reliability	Validity
Cranbach-alpha	085	0.94

It is noticed from the results of the above table that all reliability and validity coefficients for the sample individuals about each questionnaire's theme, for

overall questionnaire, are greater than (50%), some of them are nearest to one. This indicates to the high validity and reliability of the answers, so, the study questionnaire is valid and reliable, and that will give correct and acceptable statistical analysis.

3.8 Procedures of Data Analysis

According to the procedures adopted, the researcher used a questionnaire which is answered by (20) teachers at (SUST). Also a test is given to the students at Sudan University of Science and Technology, English language Department, third year students in 2018.

The students are not aware of the purpose of the test. The test tried to test students' ability to use prepositions appropriately. There are also some objective questions which provide the students with different opinions to choose the correct answer. The time allocated to the test is reasonably, sufficient for the students to fill in gaps as well as to choose the appropriate answers for the objective questions. The researcher scored choices of some preposition items particularly (in, of, at, on, with, for, by, ...) which are supposed to score the measuring. Then every single paper inserts into SPSS. Frequencies and percentage were calculated for each statement. The tables and charts in chapter four will provide further demonstrations and explanations.

3.9 Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter the researcher explained the methodology of the study. The tools and procedures used for conducting the study. The chapter provides full description of the population and sample selected. Moreover, it provides full descriptions of the validity and reliability of the study tools and procedures which are employed for conducting the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

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Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

4.0 Introduction:

In this chapter, the researcher analyzed the questionnaire and test display through SPSS programme, is used to be shown in forms of figures and tables, and also discussed the results of the analysis.

4.1 Analysis of the First Tool: teachers' Questionnaire:

After checking questionnaire reliability and validity, the researcher distributed the questionnaire on determined study sample (20), and constructed the required tables for collected data. This step shows how the quantitative (nominal) variables are expressed (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree) to quantitative variables (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) respectively, also the graphical representations were used for this purpose.

4.2 Statistical Instruments

In order to satisfy the study objectives and to test its hypotheses, the following statistical instruments were used:

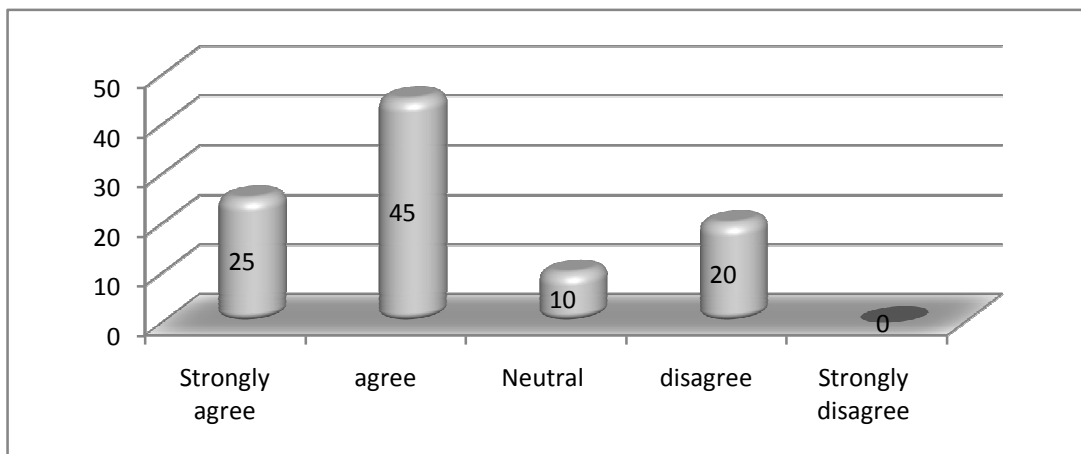
1. Graphical figures.
2. Frequency distribution.
3. Mean .
4. Non-parametric Chi-square test by using SPSS and EXSEL

Statement No.(1): University students are unable to identify the different type of preposition such as (time , place , and movement).

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

Valid	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	25
agree	9	45
Neutral	2	10
disagree	4	20
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	20	100

Figure No. (4.1)



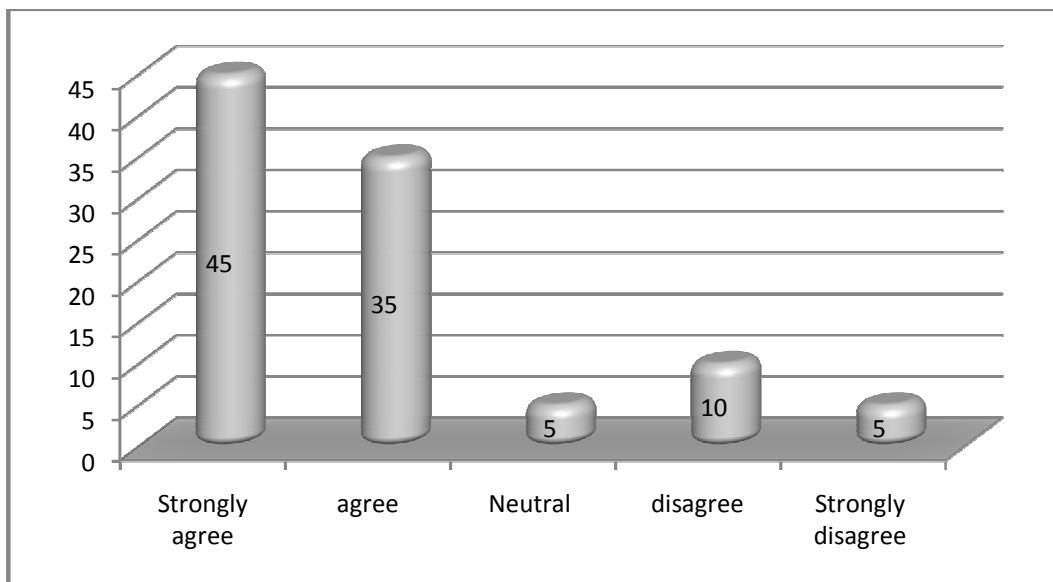
The above table No.(4.1) and figure No (4.1) shows that there are (5) teachers in the study's sample with percentage (25%) strongly agreed with that " University students are unable to identify the different type of preposition such as (time , place , and movement). There are (9) teachers with percentage (45.3%) agreed with that, and (2) teachers with percentage (10%) were not sure that, and (4) teachers with percentage (20.0%) disagreed, and (0) teachers with percentage (00.0%) strongly disagreed.

Statement No. (2): University students are not familiar with the function of prepositions

Table No (4.2) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of statement No.(2)

Valid	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	45
agree	7	35
Neutral	1	5
disagree	2	10
Strongly disagree	1	5
Total	20	100

Figure No. (4.2)



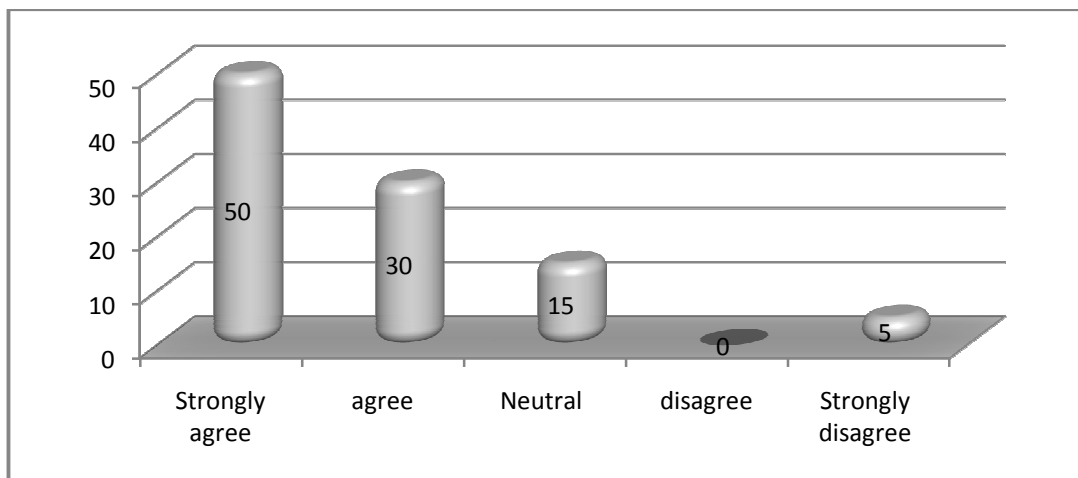
The above table No.(4.2) and figure No (4.2) shows that there are (9) teachers in the study's sample with percentage (45%) strongly agreed with that " University students are not familiar with the function of prepositions ". There are (7) teachers with percentage (35.0%) agreed with that, and (1) teacher with percentage (5%) were not sure that, and (2) teachers with percentage (10.0%) disagreed, and (1) teacher with percentage (5.0%) strongly disagreed.

Statement No.(3): University students tend to overuse one type of preposition e.g.(in) in the school , in the home , in Sunday.

Table No (4.3) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of statement No.(3)

Valid	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	50
agree	6	30
Neutral	3	15
disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	1	5
Total	20	100

Figure No. (4.3)



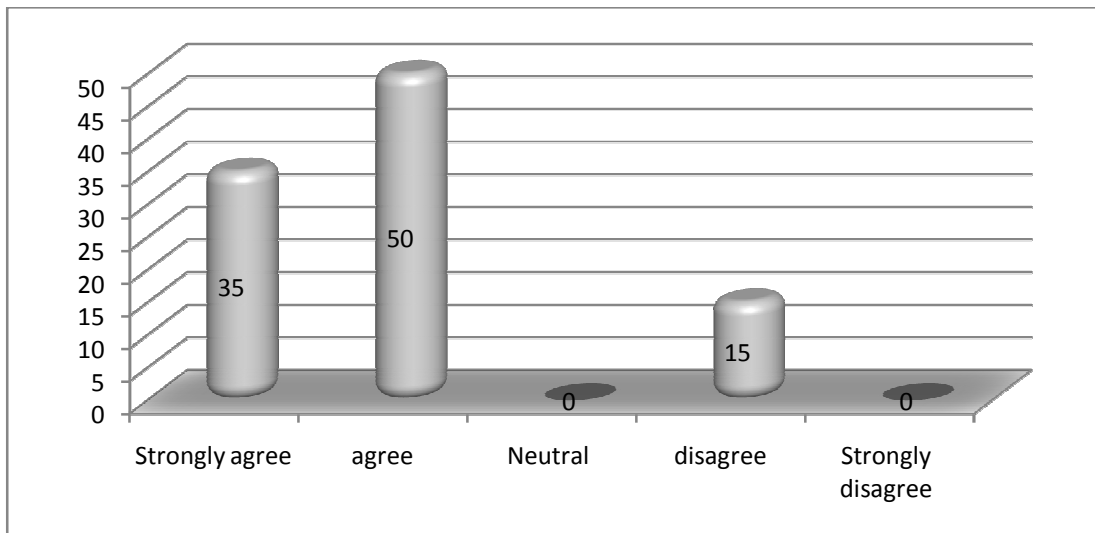
The above table No.(4.3) and figure No (4.3) shows that there are (10) teachers in the study's sample with percentage (50%) strongly agreed with that " University students tend to overuse one type of preposition e.g.(in) in the school , in the home, in Sunday." There are (6) teachers with percentage (30.0%) agreed with that, and (3) teachers with percentage (15%) were not sure that, and (0) teachers with percentage (0.0%) disagreed, and (1) teacher with percentage (5.0%) strongly disagreed.

Statement No. (4): Teaching techniques can develop university students in using prepositions efficiently .

Table No (4.4) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of statement No.(4)

Valid	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	7	35
agree	10	50
Neutral	0	0
disagree	3	15
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	20	100

Figure No. (4.4)



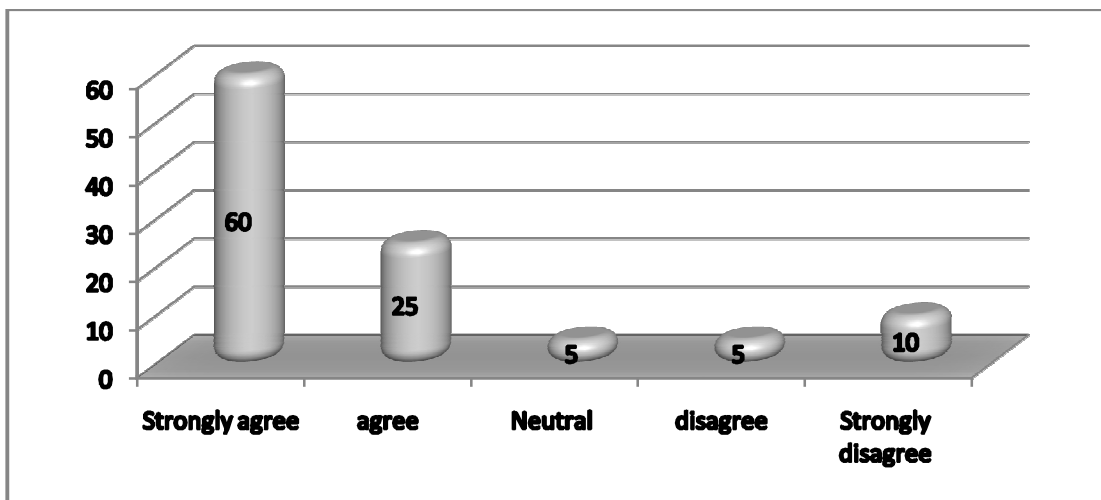
The above table No.(4.4) and figure No (4.4) shows that there are (7) teachers in the study's sample with percentage (35%) strongly agreed with that " Teaching techniques can develop university students in using prepositions efficiently ". There are (10) teachers with percentage (50.0%) agreed with that, and (0) teachers with percentage (0%) were not sure that, and (3) teachers with percentage (15.0%) disagreed, and (0) teachers with percentage (0.0%) strongly disagreed.

Statement No.(5): Syllabus designers can help university students in learning English prepositions properly .

Table No (4.5) The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of statement No.(5)

Valid	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	60
agree	5	25
Neutral	1	5
disagree	1	5
Strongly disagree	2	10
Total	20	100

Figure No. (4.5)



The above table No.(4.5) and figure No (4.5) shows that there are (12) teachers in the study's sample with percentage (60%) strongly agreed with that " Syllabus designers can help university students in learning English prepositions properly".

There are (5) teachers with percentage (25.0%) agreed with that, and (1) teacher with percentage (5%) were not sure that, and (1) teacher with percentage (5.0%) disagreed, and (2) teachers with percentage (10.0%) strongly disagreed.

4.3 Test of the Study's Hypotheses:

To answer the study questions and check its hypotheses, the mean and standard deviation will be computed for each question from the questionnaire that shows the opinions of the study respondents about the problems .To do that, we will give five degrees for each answer "strongly agree", four degrees for each answer "agree", three degrees for each answer "neutral", two degrees with each answer "disagree", and one degree for each answer with "strongly disagree ". This means, in accordance with the statistical analysis requirements, transformation of nominal variables to quantitative variables. After that, we will use the non-parametric chi-square test to know if there are statistical differences among the respondents' answers about the hypotheses questions.

Hypothesis three: University teachers of English are aware of some of students' weakness in using English preposition.

(4.6) Chi –square test for the hypothesis of the study

Nom	Statement	mean	SD	Chi square	p-value
1	University students are unable to identify the different type of preposition such as (time, place, and movement.	2.7	4.1	22	0.000
2	University students are not familiar with the function of prepositions	2.6	0.5	19	0.000
3	University student tend to overuse one type of prepositions e.g.(in) in the school , in the home , in Sunday.	2.5	0.9	31	0.000
4	Teaching techniques can develop university students in using English prepositions efficiently.	2.9	1.6	22	0.000
5	Syllabus designers can help university students in learning English preposition properly.	2.8	2.1	27	0.000

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the statement No (1) was (22) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, and also the calculated mean is(2.8) which is greater than the hypothesized mean (2.3) which support the respondents who agreed with the statement "University students are unable to identify the different types of preposition such as (time , place , and movement).

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the statement No (2) was (19) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, and also the calculated mean is (2.6) which is greater than the hypothesized mean (2.3) which support the respondents who agreed with the statement "University student are not familiar with the function of prepositions.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the statement No (3) was (31) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, and also the calculated mean is (2.5) which is greater than the hypothesized mean (2.3) which support the respondents who agreed with the statement "University students tend to overuse one type of prepositions e.g.(in) in the school , in the home, in Sunday.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the statement No (4) was (22) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, and also the calculated mean is(2.9) which is greater than the hypothesized mean (2.3) which support the respondents who agreed with the statement "Teaching technique can develop university students in using prepositions effectively .

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondent's answers in the statement No (5) was (27) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, and also the calculated mean is(2.8) which is greater than the hypothesized mean (2.3) which support the respondents who agreed with the statement Syllabus designer can help university students in learning English preposition properly .

According to the previous results we can say that our hypotheses are accepted.

4.4 The Analysis of the Second Tool Students' Test:

4.4.1 Statistical reliability and validity for student's test

The reliability coefficient was calculated for the measurement, which was used in the test using Alpha - Cronbach coefficient Equation as the following:

For calculating the validity and the reliability of the test from the above equation, the researcher distributed the a test to respondents to calculate the reliability coefficient using the Alpha-Cronbach coefficient the results have been showed in the following table:

	<i>Reliability</i>	<i>validity</i>	<i>N</i>
ALPHA – CRONBACH	0.89	0.93	30

$$\text{Validity} = \sqrt{\text{Reliability}} .$$

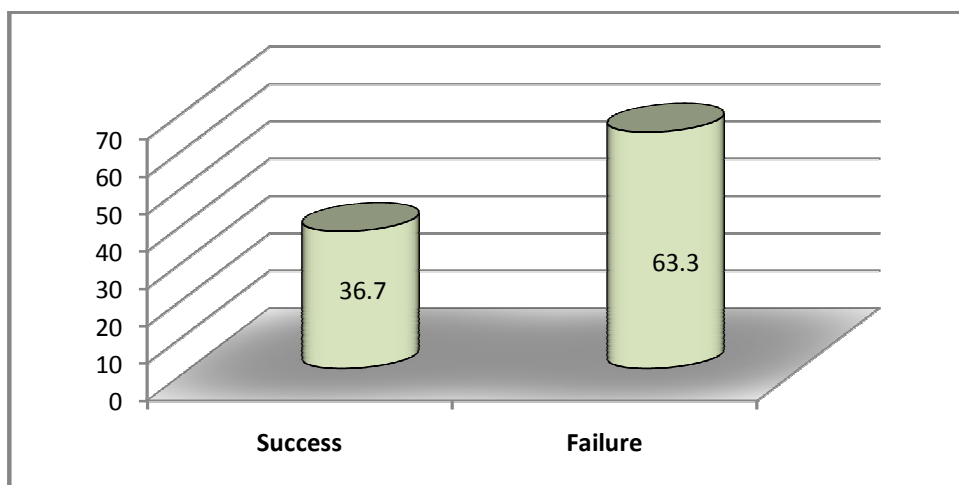
From the above table its shown that the validity of the test is very high (0.93) . this indicate that if we repeat the test we are sure with 93% that it's going to give us the same results.

Question (1) : Use the list of words in the box below to fill in the space provided

Table (4.7) the frequency and percentage distribution of the students according to section (1)

Valid	Frequency	Percentage
Success	11	36.7%
Failure	19	63.3%
Total	30	100

Figure No. (4.6)



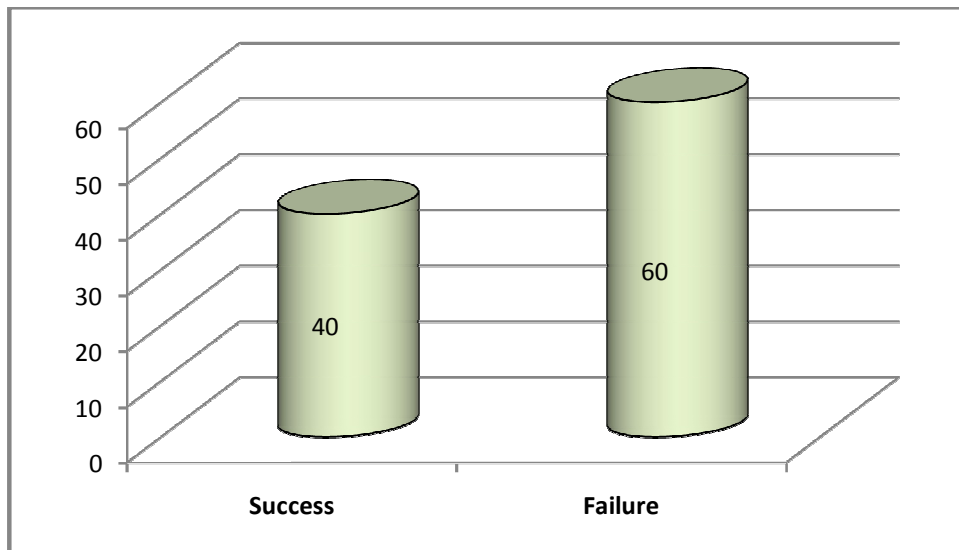
From the above table No.(4.7) and figure No (4.6) its shown that there are (11) students in the study's sample with percentage (36.7%) are success the test in section number 1 (**Choose the words below that best complete the sentences in the text**). There are (19) persons with percentage (63.2 %) are failure.

Question (2): Draw a circle in the correct answer from (a ,b, c or d) in the following alternatives

Table (4.8) the frequency and percentage distribution of the students according to section (2)

Valid	Frequency	Percentage
Success	12	40
Failure	18	60
Total	30	100

Figure No. (4.7)



From the above table No.(4.8) and figure No (4.7) its shown that there are (12) students in the study's sample with percentage (40.0%) are success the test in section number 2 (*Choose the meaning of underlined words or phrases from the given four alternatives*) There are (18) persons with percentage (60.2 %) are failure.

Hypothesis one: University students are poor in using prepositions efficiently.

Hypothesis two: University students at college of languages cannot understand prepositions in writing.

Table (4.9) one sample T-TEST for the questions of the study

Sections	N	mean	SD	t-value	DF	p-value
1	30	3.6	0.2	14.5	29	0.002
2	30	2.7	1.81	17.1	29	0.001
For all	30	6.33	4.03	15.50	29	0.032

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent’s answers in the section No (1) was (14.5) 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 is statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents . this mean that our hypothesis is accepted .

The calculated value of T – TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondent’s answers in the section No (2) was (17.1) 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 is statistically significant

differences at the level (0.05 %) among the answers of the respondents. This means that our hypothesis is accepted.

4.5 Summary of the Chapter:

This chapter provides the discussions of the current study focused on investigating difficulties encountered by university students in using English prepositions on written performance. The data were collected and statistically analyzed through (SPSS) programme and the discussion of the data gathered from the teachers' questionnaire and students' test answered by third year of English language department at Sudan University of Science and Technology. This showed that students are poor in using English prepositions, it also pointed out that there is insufficient specialized preposition materials for practicing prepositions in the study course, in addition to interference of mother tongue. The next chapter will be chapter five which will compose main findings, recommendations and suggestion for further studies.

CHAPTER FIVE

Main Findings, Conclusion, Recommendations, and Suggestions for Further Studies

CHAPTER FIVE

Main Findings, Conclusion, Recommendations, and Suggestions for Further Studies

5.0 Introduction

This is a final chapter of the study. It includes the following:

Main findings, conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Main Findings of the Study:

This study arrived at the following findings:

- 1- University students are poor in using English prepositions due to the nature of prepositions.
- 2- Ignorance of English prepositions meanings by third year students at Sudan University of Science & Technology College of languages, English language department.
- 3- University students do not have enough practice on English prepositions.
- 4- There are insufficiency specialized prepositions materials in using prepositions in college languages, department of English language at Sudan university of Science and technology.
- 5- Mother tongue inference is one of the main causes of difficulties in using English prepositions for university students.
- 6- The results show that the majority of university students commit mistakes in using English prepositions.

7- University students are not aware of using and understanding English prepositions properly.

8- Prepositions usage, actually, creates some difficulties for university students.

5.2 Conclusion:

After the analysis of data, the researcher has come out with the conclusion that university students should be exposed to enough practice in terms of English prepositions usage which will help them to build their own knowledge. Students also should have intensive lessons focusing on English prepositions to tackle their problems. The results of the present study indicate that prepositions are problematic for university students due to structure of English prepositions and the interference of mother tongue in addition to insufficient specialized materials for practicing prepositions at university.

5.3 Recommendations:

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following points:

1- University students should be exposed to enough practice in terms of English prepositions usage.

2- University students should be encouraged by teachers to do more practice in English prepositions lessons so as to build their own knowledge.

3- Teachers should follow suitable ways of teaching which can help university students to know the rules of English prepositions.

4- Teachers should provide intensive lessons focusing on English prepositions for university students to tackle their problems.

- 5- Syllabus designers should provide syllabuses with English prepositions intensively.
- 6- Teaching techniques should be taken in consideration while teaching the different types of prepositions.
- 7- Teachers should raise the awareness of the importance of English prepositions among the university students.
- 8- University students should use the audiovisual aids that enhance their knowledge regarding English prepositions.
- 9- University students should have more practice in English prepositions in order to tackle their weaknesses.
- 10- Mother tongue should not be used in learning English prepositions.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies:

Throughout this study, the researcher has noticed that the following areas need to be researched:

- 1- To investigate the impact of English prepositions usage among the EFL students.
- 2- To investigate the problems in teaching English prepositions at secondary schools.
- 3- To investigate the difficulties encountered by university students in using prepositions in sentences structure.
- 4- Exploring the impact of prepositional knowledge in writing stories.

5.5 Summary of the Chapter:

This chapter has presented the findings of the study, in addition to recommendations offered and suggestions for further research are proposed.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix (1)

Sudan University of Science and Technology

College of Graduate Studies

College of Languages

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

I will be grateful if you respond to the following statements, this questionnaire has been designed to collect the data about teachers' opinion about "Investigating Difficulties Encountered by University Students' in Using English Prepositions on Written Performance". A case study of third year students at (SUST) University.

General Information:

Gender: Male () Female ()

Age: ()

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	disagree	Strongly Disagree
1- University students are unable to identify the different types of prepositions such as (time, place, movement).					
2- University students are not familiar with the function of prepositions.					
3- University students tend to overuse one type of preposition e.g. (in) in the school, in the home, in Sunday.					
4- Teaching techniques can develop university students in using prepositions efficiently.					
5- Syllabus designers can help university students in learning English prepositions properly.					

Appendix (2)

Sudan University of Science and Technology

College of Graduate Studies

College of Languages

Department of English Language

Students' Test

Dear student,

This test is a part of master's degree in English language (linguistics), please answer this test accurately and the information of this test will be treated confidentially for academic purpose only.

Please, answer the following questions:

Time: 30 minutes

Question One:

Use the list of words in the box below to fill in the spaces provided:

on – in – below – to - from – under – of – after – at – before – for – with – by
--

- 1- I have a good relationship my friends.
- 2- It is always hot Summer and cold Winter.
- 3- She is good Arabic language.
- 4- I prefer tea coffee.
- 5- As the result of war, some rural people made big towns.
- 6- Mothers take care their children.
- 7- Cheese is made milk.
- 8- When they reached Numalie Park, the students were amazed
the magnificent sight.
- 9- He congratulated me my success.

10- We always suffer malaria.

Question Two:

Draw a circle round the correct answer from (a, b, c, or d) in the following alternatives.

1- Let's talk something different.

a- in b- of c- about d- none of

2- Take your hands your pockets and help me.

a- off b- out of c- away d- in

3- The population has increased the past twenty years.

a- in regard of b- by regard of c- with regard to d- during

4- Knife is used cutting.

a- for b- with c- to d- in

5- night we watch TV.

a- by b- in c- at d- of

6- Nobody seems afraid it.

a- from b- with c- at d- of

7- Clever university students often reading.

a- depend in b- depend at c- depend on d- at above

8- On my way to Liverpool, I ran fuel.

a- off b- out of c- from d- out from

9- In the past, people sent messages radio.

a- by b- in c- on d- through

10- The photographer told me to move

a- by ward b- under ward c- off ward d- in ward