



Sudan University of Science and Technology

COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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**INVESTIGATING EFL LEARNERS' PROBLEMS OF USING
PREPOSITIONS**

تقصي مشكلات استخدام حروف الجر لدى متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية

A case study of primary school grade 8

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement of MA degree in English
language

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Dedication

To my family

Acknowledgements

Praise to Allah, and to my supervisor (**Dr. Nagla Taha Bashari**) I express my gratitude for those who assisted me, the library of college of language for their unlimited support and supplying me with references and secondary resources.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate EFL learners' problems in using prepositions in grade 8. The researcher used descriptive analytical method. The data of the study was collected by the use of a test. The respondents of the study were (50) male pupils of Al-Shaheed Ibrahim Salih Al-Amin school. The data obtained was analyzed by using (SPSS) Statistical Package for Social Science. The main findings of the research revealed that grade 8 pupils have difficulties in using prepositions of time, place and movement, prepositions create some difficulties for EFL learners, and the difficulties of prepositions affect the pupils' process in learning. The researcher recommended that English teachers should share their ideas and experience of teaching prepositions of time, place and movement in designing and teaching them.

مستخلص البحث (Arabic version)

تهدف هذه الدراسة لتقصي المشاكل التي تواجه طلاب اللغة الانجليزية في استخدام حروف الجر, اعتمد الباحث على استخدام المنهج الوصفي . تم جمع البيانات عن طريق استخدام اختبار الذي استهدف خمسين طالباً. تم تحليل البيانات عن طريق استخدام الحزم الاحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية. ومن اهم ما توصل اليه الباحث من نتائج ان الطلاب الذين يدرسون الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية لديهم صعوبات في استخدام حروف الجر للزمان, المكان والحركة, وتشكل حروف الجر بعض الصعوبات لمتعلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية, وصعوبات هذه الحروف تؤثر في عملية التعلم لدى التلميذ. اوصى الباحث بان على معلمي اللغة الانجليزية ان يشاركوا بافكارهم وخبرتهم في تدريس وتصميم منهج لحروف الجر للزمان, المكان والحركة .

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1-0 Background

Prepositions are one of the basics that connects a sentence in any language, without understanding them or knowing how to use them they will get many learners confused or unable to make a sentence or even to speak well.

Prepositions represent an important and frequently used category in English. In a corpus study of one million English words, one in ten were found to be prepositions (Fang 2000).

Prepositions tend to have a range of senses or uses that is not necessarily captured in one definition. E.g. English over, across, above... (Lakoff 1987).

As a functor word, preposition holds an important role to construct phrases and sentences together. Preposition is a crucial point in the sentence it is used together with other word classes to create such concrete meaning. It is used in front of nouns or noun phrases, pronouns or gerunds to express a relationship between one person, thing, event and another (Alexander: 1988).

Morley (2000) states that prepositions have the feature of being accompanied indeed normally followed, by a completive element in the form of a (single or multiple word) phrase or a clause. This completive element can be noun phrase, adjective phrase, adverbial phrase, further preposition phrase, subordinate clause, pronoun, and gerund. The combination of preposition and those completive elements form a prepositional phrase. Prepositional phrase comprises a preposition as the headword plus a second, complement or completive element which is integral to the structure of the phrase (Morley: 2000).

Evans and Tyler (2003) point out that "each culture will take a certain traditional view of the image. The way a culture views that scene will determine the way it is expressed in the language". So, culture and language of that culture determines which preposition to use and how to use it. If two cultures /languages view a scene from different angles, they will use different prepositions.

1-1 Statement of the Problem

Generally English prepositions are one of the most difficult aspect to deal with or master, EFL learners in primary school face difficulties in using prepositions of time, place and movement. the researcher has observed while teaching it is an attempt to find what kind of difficulties EFL students faceand what have caused this problem, it also shed more light on prepositions so that teachers can focus a bit more on prepositions to some extent and not neglecting focusing on prepositions.

The research will give teachers some effective keys to help them out overcoming this problem by putting innovative, creative and useful techniques that will lead to a better use of prepositions.

1-2 objectives of the Study

The study aims at:

- 1-Investigating difficulties encountered by EFL learners in using prepositions of time, place and movement.
- 2-Illustrating the function and use of prepositions.

1-3 Research Questions

The study will provide answers for the following questions:

- 1-to what extent do EFL learners have a problem in using prepositions of time correctly?
- 2-to what extent do EFL learners have a problem in using prepositions of place correctly?
- 3-to what extent do EFL learners have a problem use prepositions of movement correctly?

1-4 Hypotheses of the Study

- 1-EFL learners have problem in using prepositions of time correctly.
- 2-EFL learners have problem in using prepositions of place correctly.
- 3-EFL learners have problem in using prepositions of movement correctly.

1-5 Significance of the Study

Most languages depend basically on using prepositions, there are some contradictory usage when they used by learners because the culture and mother tongue have some effects on learning the English language. Therefore this research is important for teachers, students as well as syllabus designers to help in the advancement of language learning and benefit educational institutions.

1-6 Research Methodology

The researcher adopts the descriptive analytical method. A test is designed to test EFL pupils in grade 8(Al-Shaheed Ibrahim Salih Al-Amin school) and to collect data and to test the research hypotheses.to analyze data the researcher is going to use SPSS.

1-7 Limits of the Study

The study focuses on the problem of using and understanding prepositions that faced by EFL learners at Al-Shaheed Ibrahim Salih Al-Amin, grade 8(2018_2019).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

2-0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher wants to define prepositions and the different kinds of prepositions in addition to the previous studies.

2-1 The Importance of Using Prepositions

G Guillaume (1964, 1973) showed that the prepositions are characterized by mental operations which are fundamental for the development of the language. Their linguistic interpretation is taken into account through its genetic process.

Although prepositions are grammatical instruments (some of them having many semantic variants) with no notional meaning, they cannot be considered as being void of meaning because if they play the role of instituting relations between the components of the utterance (...) they have a relational meaning expressing “the dependences between objects, actions and characteristics”, so that the existence of some relational and referential functions cannot be denied (Gaitanaru, 1998:312).

2-2 Definition of Prepositions

A preposition is a word that allows you to say more about a thing or an action, because you can choose any appropriate noun after it as its object. Most prepositions are single words, although there are some that consist of more than one word, such as out of and in between (Collins.Cobuild English Grammar, p485).

“Prepositions express a relation in space between two or more entities or a relation in time between two events, or various other abstract relations such as instrument and cause.” (Cambridge Grammar of English, Carter and McCarthy, 2006, p.462).

Prepositions are words normally placed before nouns or pronouns. Prepositions can also be followed by verbs but, except but and except after , the verb must be in the gerund form.

(A.J. Thomson & A.V. Martinet 1997).

He is talking of emigrating.

They succeeded in escaping.

The student has 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: /came here to study.

The student 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 (A.J. Thomson & A.V. Martinet 1997).

2-3 Alternative Position of Prepositions

A.J. Thomson & A.V. Martinet (1997) said on their book (A practical English Grammar) a preposition 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:

1 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) It used to be thought ungrammatical to end a sentence with a Preposition, but it is now accepted as a colloquial form.

2 Similarly in relative clauses, a preposition placed before whom/which can be moved to the end of the clause. 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)

But in phrasal verbs the preposition/adverb remains after its verb, so the formal type of construction is not possible, the children I was looking after could not be rewritten with after + whom and Which bridge did they blow up? could not be rewritten with up+ which .

Omission of to and for before indirect objects sentence such as / gave the book to Tom could also be expressed:

I gave Tom the book i.e. the indirect object can be placed first and the preposition to omitted.

We can use this construction with the following verbs: bring, give, hand, leave

(in a will), lend, offer, pass (=hand), pay, play (an instrument/piece of music), promise, sell, send, show, sing, take, tell (=narrate, inform): / showed the map to Bill = / showed Bill the map.

They sent £5 to Mr Smith = They sent Mr Smith £5. 2

Similarly

I'll find a job for Ann could be expressed '/// find Ann a job

(putting the indirect object first and omitting for).

This construction is possible after book, build, buy, cook, (bake, boil, fry etc.), fetch, find, get, keep, knit, leave, make, order, reserve:

I'll get a drink for you = I'll get you a drink.

I bought a book for James = I bought James a book. Normally either construction can be used. But:

1 The construction without preposition is preferred when the direct object is a phrase or a clause: Tell her the whole story.

Show me what you've got in your hand.

2 The construction with preposition is preferred:

(a) When the indirect object is a phrase or a clause:

We kept seats for everyone on our list/for everyone who had paid.

I had to show my pass to the man at the door.

(b) When the direct object is it or them.

Sentences such as They kept it for Mary, She made them for Bill, We sent it to George cannot be expressed by a verb+ noun + pronoun construction. If the indirect object is also a pronoun (/sent it to him) it is sometimes possible to reverse the pronouns and omit to (/sent him it), but this cannot be done with for constructions and is better avoided. This restriction does not apply to other pronoun objects:

He gave Bill some. He did not give me any.

He bought Mary one. I'll show you something.

promise, show, tell can be used with indirect objects only, without to:

promise us show him tell him read, write can be used similarly, but require to: read

to me write to them play, sing can be used with to or for:

play to us play for us

sing to us sing for us

(A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet, 1997).

2-4 Prepositions of Time

A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet (1997) explained prepositions of time this way:

2-4-1 For Specific Period of Time (date)

A. 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

A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet (1997) pointed out to some exceptions in using prepositions of time:

Exceptions

at night at Christmas, at Easter

(the period, not the day only)

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

We arrived on the morning of the sixth.

It is also, of course, possible to say: this/next Monday etc.,

any Monday, one Monday

B. by, before

by a time/date/period = at that time or before/not later than that date. It often implies 'before that time/date':

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

by + a time expression is often used with a perfect tense, particularly the future perfect :

By the end of July I'll have read all those books.

before can be preposition, conjunction or adverb:

Before signing this . . .

(preposition)

Before you sign this . . .

(conjunction)

I've seen him somewhere before,

(adverb)

(A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet, 1997).

C. on time, in time, in good time

A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet (1997) showed prepositions of time in different usage:

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.

I arrived at the concert hall in good time (for the concert).

(Perhaps the concert began at 7.30 and I arrived at 7.15.)

D. on arrival, on arriving, on reaching, on getting to

On arrival/on arriving, he . . . = when he arrives/arrived, he... on can also be used similarly with the gerund of certain other verbs (chiefly verbs of information):

On checking, she found that some of the party didn't know the way.

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

The on in the last sentence could be omitted.

E. at the beginning/end, in the beginning/end, at first/at last

At the beginning (of)/at the end (of) = literally 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.

2-4-2 Time: from, since, for, during

A. from, since and for

1. 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?

2. Since is used for time, never for place, and means 'from that time to the time referred to'. It is often used with a 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 since with other types of clause.)

3. for is used of a period of time: for six years, for two months, forever:

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:

He has worked here since this time last year.

B. 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 hired a car/I rented a house for my holidays/for the summer.

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.

(A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet, 1997).

2-4-3 to, till/until, after, afterwards (adverb)

A 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 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 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.

But note that if 'you come to' is omitted, the till must be replaced by to:

Go on to the level crossing.

(A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet, 1997).

B. 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 do not 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 tuned the piano it sounded quite different.

(A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet, 1997).

2-5 Prepositions of Place

Prepositions of place in English are used to indicate a position, location or an area. It helps people who want to describe or explain where something is located. Many types of prepositions of place can be used to indicate more specific area, position or location. Bennett (1975: 12) says that the spatial use of English prepositions assign a prominent place to show distinction between locative sentence: Gwyneth is at the supermarket and the directional sentence:

Trevor went to the post-office. Hence, locative sentences show clearly where something is located, while directional sentences describe a change of position (i.e. from one position to another). According to Lindstromberg (2010) spatial preposition is a physical thing located in relation to another. The meaning of each preposition is spatial to describe these meanings; the trajectory (TR) and the landmark (LM) are defined. He also calls the trajectory the Subject, with a capital S. The TR is defined as the element that is located and the LM as the element in respect to which the TR is located (Tyler & Evans, 2003). For example, The ball is

on the table. The preposition on is function as a preposition of place. The phrase, the ball refers to another thing whose location the speaker wants to indicate. It refers to the Subject of the preposition. The phrase, the table refers to another thing, the Landmark of the preposition The preposition locates the Subject (the ball)in relation to the Landmark (the table).

A preposition use to indicate place, in relation to the dimensional properties, whether subjectively or objectively conceived, of the location concerned. It shows clearly the distinction made between the three prepositions: in, on and at says (Quirk, et al, 1993: 159).

For instance:

1. My car is at the cottage.
2. There is a new roof on the cottage.
3. There are two beds in the cottage.

In the first sentence, the use of at makes cottage a dimensionless location, a mere point in relation to which the car's position can be indicated. In the second sentence, the use of on, refers to the cottage becomes a two-dimensional area, covered by a roof, though on is also capable of use with a one-dimensional object, as in Put your signature on this line. In the third sentence, the use of in, the cottage becomes a three-dimensional object which in reality, it is, though in is capable of being used with objects which are essentially two-dimensional, as in The cow is in the field, where field is conceived of as an enclosed space.

2-6 Travel and Movement

A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet (1997) discussed travel and movement prepositions and gave some examples:

from, to, at, in, by, on, into, onto, off, out, out of

A. 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 places.

B. 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 used with any destination, and so can reach:

He got to the 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).

C. 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.

(A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet, 1997).

D. Transport

A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet (1997) mentioned examples of transport prepositions:

by, on, get in/into/on/onto/off/out of We can travel by car (but in the/my/Tom's car), by bus/train/ plane/helicopter/hover/craft etc. and by sea/air.

We can also travel by a certain route, or by a certain place (though via is more usual):

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).

E. 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 and out here are used as adverbs:

I've lost my keys!

How are we going to get into the flat/ to get in?(adverb)

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

It's difficult to get into a university nowadays.

F. Giving Directions

A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet (1997) showed the prepositions that indicate giving directions and gave some examples:

at, into, to etc. (prepositions), along, on (prepositions and adverbs) and till(conjunction):

Go along the Strand 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.

at, in; in, into; on, onto

A at and in

(For arrive at/in.)

at

We can be at home, at work, at the office, at school, at university, at an address , at a certain point e.g. at the bridge, at the crossroads, at the bus-stop.

In

We can be in a country, a town, a village, a square, a street, a room, a forest , a wood, a field, a desert or any place which has boundaries or is enclosed.

But a small area such as a square, a street, a room, a field might be used with at when we mean 'at this point' rather than 'inside'.

We can be in or at a building, in means inside only; at could mean inside or in the grounds or just outside.

If someone is 'at the station' he could be in the street outside, or in the ticket office/waiting room/restaurant or on the platform.

We can be in or at the sea, a river, lake, swimming pool etc.in here means actually in the water: The children are swimming in the river.

at the sea/river/lake etc. means 'near/beside the sea'. But at sea means 'on a ship'.

B. in and into

in as shown above normally indicates position.

into indicates movement, entrance:

They climbed into the lorry. I poured the beer into a tankard.

Thieves broke into my house/My house was broken into.

with the verb put however, either , in or into can be used:

He put his hands in/into his pockets.

In

can also be an adverb:

Come in = Enter. Get in (into the car).

C. on and onto

On

can be used for both position and movement:

He was sitting on his case. Snow fell on the hills.

His name is on the door. He went on board ship.

onto can be used (chiefly of people and animals) when there is movement involving a change of level:

People climbed onto their roofs.

We lifted him onto the table.

The cat jumped onto the mantelpiece.

on can also be an adverb: Go on. Come on.

above, over, under, below, beneath etc.

A. above and over

above over(preposition) can both mean 'higher than' and sometimes either can be used:

(preposition and adverb)

The helicopter hovered above/over us.

Flags waved above/over our heads.

But **over** can also mean 'covering', 'on the other side of', 'across' and 'from one side to the other':

We put a rug over him.

He lives over the mountains.

There is a bridge over the river.

all over + noun/pronoun can mean 'in every part of':

He has friends all over the world.

above can have none of these meanings.

over can mean 'more than' or 'higher than'.

Above can mean 'higher than' only.

Both can mean 'higher in rank'. But He is over me would normally mean

'He is my immediate superior', 'He supervises my work', above would not necessarily have this meaning.

If we have a bridge over a river, above the bridge means 'upstream'.

over can be used with meals/food/drink: They had a chat over a cup of tea.

(while drinking tea) In the combination take + a time expression + over + noun/pronoun, over can mean 'to do/finish' etc.:

He doesn't take long over lunch/to eat his lunch.

He took ages over the job.

(He took ages to finish it.)

Above can also be an adjective or adverb meaning 'earlier' (in a book, article etc.):

The above address (the previously mentioned address)

(A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet, 1997).

B. below and under

below (preposition and adverb) and under (preposition) can both mean 'lower than' and sometimes either can be used. But under can indicate contact:

She put the letter under her pillow.

The ice crackled under his feet.

With below there is usually a space between the two surfaces:

They live below us.

(We live on the fourth floor and they live on the third.) Similarly:

We live above them.

below and under can mean 'junior in rank'. But He is under me implies that I am his immediate superior, below does not necessarily have this meaning. (Both over and under can be used as adverbs, but with a change of meaning.)

C. beneath can sometimes be used instead of under, but it is safer to keep it for abstract meanings:

He would think it beneath him to tell a lie. (unworthy of him)

She married beneath her. (into a lower social class)

(A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet, 1997).

2-7 Prepositions Used with Adjectives and Participles

A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet (1997) talked about using prepositions with adjectives and participles and said 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 it. about, at, for, in, of, on, to, with used with certain adjectives and participles:

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

He was absorbed in his book.

She is afraid/frightened/scared of the dark.

According to Tom it's 2.30. (Tom says it's 2.30.)

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. (I pity him.)

I'm sorry for forgetting the tickets.

I'm sorry about the tickets.

(For good/kind etc. +of, It was kind of you to wait.)

2-8 Verbs and Prepositions

A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet (p97, 1997) said about using verbs with prepositions that there are many verbs are used with prepositions. But there are a great many other verbs which can be followed by prepositions and some of these are listed below. More can be found in any good dictionary.

accuse sb of insist on

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

blame sb for punish sb for

charge sb with

(an offence)

quarrel with sb about

compare sth with refer to

comply with rely on

conform to remind sb of

consist of resort to

deal in succeed in

depend on

suspect sb of

dream of think of/about

fight with sb for wait for

fine sb for warn sb of/about

hope for wish for

Do you believe in ghosts?

They were charged with receiving stolen goods.

You haven't complied with the regulations.

For a week she lived on bananas and milk.

It never occurred to me to insure the house.

They persisted in defying the law.

When arguments failed he resorted to threats.

Notice also feel like + noun/pronoun= feel inclined to have something:

Do you feel like a drink/a meal/a rest?

feel like+ gerund = feel inclined to do something:/ don't feel like walking there.

Passive verbs can of course be followed by by + agent; but they can also be followed by other prepositions:

The referee was booed by the crowd.

The referee was booed for his decision/for awarding a penalty.

2-9 Gerunds after Prepositions

A.J. Thomson and A.V, Martinet (p98, 1997) explained using gerunds after prepositions as in the following examples:

A. It has been stated that verbs placed immediately after prepositions must be in the gerund form:

He left without paying his bill.

I apologize for not writing before.

She insisted on paying for herself.

Before signing the contract, read the small print.

A few noun + preposition + gerund combinations may also be noted:

There's no point in taking your car if you can't park.

What's the point of taking your car if you can't park?

Is there any chance/likelihood of his changing his mind?

Have you any objection to changing your working hours?

I am in favor of giving everyone a day off.

B. The only exceptions to the gerund rule are *except* and *but* (preposition), which take the bare infinitive: / could do nothing *except* agree He did nothing *but* complain.

However, if *but* is used as a conjunction, it can be followed directly by either full infinitive or gerund Being idle sometimes is agreeable, *but* being idle all the time might become monotonous. To be idle sometimes is agreeable, *but* to be idle all the time etc...

2-10 Prepositions/Adverbs

A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet (p99, 1997) explained using prepositions with adverbs that many words can be used as either prepositions or adverbs:

He got off the bus *at* the corner, (preposition)

He got off *at* the corner,(adverb)

The most important of these are *above, about, across, along, before, behind, below, besides, by, down, in, near, off, on, over, past, round, since, through, under, up:*

They were here *before* six. (preposition)

He has done this sort of work *before*,(adverb)

Peter is *behind* us. (preposition)

He's a long way *behind*, (adverb)

She climbed over the wall, (preposition)

You'll have to climb over too.(adverb)

When the meeting was over the delegates went home, (adverb; here over = finished)

The shop is just round the corner, (preposition)

Come round (to my house) any evening,(adverb)

He ran up the stairs, (preposition)

He went up in the lift, (adverb)

Many of these words are used to form phrasal verbs:

The plane took off. (left the ground)

He came round,(recovered consciousness)

2-11 Position of Prepositional Phrases after Verbs Showing Position:

Prepositional phrases are most commonly used after verbs. They are used after verbs that indicate position in order to specify where something is.

She lives in Newcastle.

An old piano stood in the corner of the room.

You ought to stay out of the sun.

The Following Verbs are Often Used to Show Position:

be

belong

hang

lie

live

remain

sit

be situated

stand

stay

(Collins.Cobuild English Grammar, p487).

2-12 Prepositional Phrases after Nouns

As well as being used after verbs, prepositional phrases can be used after nouns to give information about place.

The muscles below Peter's knees were beginning to ache a little.

The chestnut trees in the back garden were a blazing orange.

They stood and watched the boats on the river.

The clock in her bedroom.

The low wall round the garden.

The black shapeless masses to the left and right of the road.

Prepositional phrases can be added after roads, routes, and so on, to specify them by indicating their destination or direction.

...The main road from Paris to Marseilles.

...The road between the camp and the hospital.

...The road through the canyon.

Similarly, doors, entrances, and so on can be specified by adding prepositional phrases indicating where you get to by going through them.

... He opened the door to his room.

... at the entrance to the library.

Prepositional phrases are also used after nouns to say where someone or something comes from.

...a veterinary officer from Singapore.

...an engineer from Hertfordshire.

(Collins.cobuild English Grammar, p 496).

2-13-2 Previous Studies

2-13-1 First Study: Investigating EFL Learners' Problems of Using and Understanding Prepositions (April 2016).

By Rasha Alnour Hassan

This study sheds more light on the most challenging problems which face students. In addition to that, this study attempts to raise students' awareness of different types of prepositions, semantic and grammatical rules which govern their usage and facilitate or grasp the meaning..

Moreover this study is endeavoring to find suitable tackles to these problems. Also to provide self confidence in using prepositional phrase.

Furthermore, this study tend to show some techniques that can be more beneficial in using and understanding prepositions. Also to shed extra light to identify the area of difficulties which encountered by the learners in using English prepositions and investigates reasons behind these difficulties.

2-13-2 Second Study: English Prepositions of Time Problem Encountered By Libyan Secondary Stage School (oct_2009).

By Saleh Mosa Abo_Khayyal

This study represents attempts to investigate the difficulties that Libyan students encounter difficulties in learning and using English prepositions of time. The purpose or aims of this research is to investigate the main source of difficulties and errors that encountered by Libyan secondary school students in using and learning English prepositions of time as one of the most difficult aspect of English grammar . And to highlight the area to which English language teachers should pay attention in order to help their students to learn and understand prepositions.

The sample of the research is the second year stage students (English specialization) for both sexes, in Ziliten Town Libya.

2-13-3 Third Study: Difficulties of Learning and Application English Language Prepositions (2008).

By Mohammed Abdul Majied Ahmed Ali

The objective of this study is to investigate the weakness and reasons for efficiency in learning and applying English language prepositions appropriately by the university students, and to analyze and evaluate the difficulties that strain the appropriate usage of prepositions, the study also aims to present analytical statistical study on the nature of the problem proposed, the researcher followed a descriptive methodology when conducting the study.

The main reason for choosing this topic is the practical need for such a research. Prepositions study is a neglected area in learning linguistics.

The sample of study was consisted of 78 university students of colleges of education (grade two), who are expected to be graduated as teachers of English language. They were chosen randomly from different universities representing urban and rural regions. Also the sample consisted of number of 38 qualified university staff still practicing profession, randomly selected to respond to a questionnaire.

After the theoretical and practical analysis, the study proved that the university students in Sudan face difficulties in applying English language prepositions appropriately.

2-14 Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter the researcher presented the prepositions, the importance of prepositions and its different kinds; alternative positions of prepositions ,prepositions of time ,place ,travel and movement and prepositions with adverbs ,gerunds ,verbs and after nouns.

the researcher showed also some previous studies of other researchers discussing the same issue.

The next chapter will be chapter three (Research Methodology).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3-0 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the following; methodology, population of the study, instrument, the sample of the researcher, content of the test, validity of the test, reliability of the test and data processing.

3-1 Research Methodology

The researcher uses analytical descriptive method of data collection in order to answer the research questions. This study investigates learners' problem in using prepositions.

3-2 Population of the Study

The respondents of this study are grade 8 pupils from Al- Shaheed Ibrahim Salih Al -Amin for the academic year 2018_2019. A test is deigned to collect data.

3-3 Instrument

Instrument of any study is the tool, which through them the researcher used to collect the required data for the study. A test is the only instrument was utilized to collect data.

3-4 The Sample of the Researcher

The learners' sample was selected randomly from the population, the sample of the study consists of 50 male learners from Al- Shaheed Ibrahim Salih Al -Amin for the academic year 2018_2019.

3-5 Content of the Test

The test consists of 3 questions which is designed to check the correct usage of prepositions. Each question of the hypotheses has 5 questions, question one discusses the first hypothesis (grade 8 pupils do not know how to use prepositions of time correctly, question 2 (grade 8 pupils do not know how to use prepositions of place correctly) and question 3 (grade 8 pupils do not know how to use prepositions of movement correctly).

3-6 Validity of the Test

The first data has been presented to the supervisor Dr Naglla Taha Bashari the head of English Language Department and Dr Hillary who made some modification by adding and excluding .the test covered and expressed the hypotheses of the research and matures them properly.

3-7 Reliability of the Test

The test reliability was obtained through a test ,which was applied on a group of 50 male pupils in grade 8 from Al-Shaheed Ibrahim Salih Al-Amin school who were chosen randomly from the population of the study and excluded from the sample, the test was correlated coefficient of the test was calculated using SPSS(statistical packages for social science).

The purpose of the testing and retesting is to assess and identify the reliability of the test. A reliability analysis for the test and retest sources has been conducted to measure the reliability coefficient of the test. Reliability concerns consistency of the test judgments and results. The value of good reliability ranges between (0-1).

3-8 the Procedure

The researcher collects the obtained data from the participants' responses. Then every single paper inserts into SPSS. Frequencies and percentage were calculated for each question, the first, second and third hypotheses were related with the test.

3-9 Summary of the Chapter

In this present chapter the researcher gives full description of methodology, population of the study, instrument, the sample of the researcher, content of the test, validity of the test, reliability of the test and the procedure.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4-0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents the results of data that have been collected to conduct this study, the results of the test will be reviewed and the statistical method is used to be shown in forms of figures and tables, in the light of these figures and tables the researcher discussed the results achieved.

4-1 Data Analysis

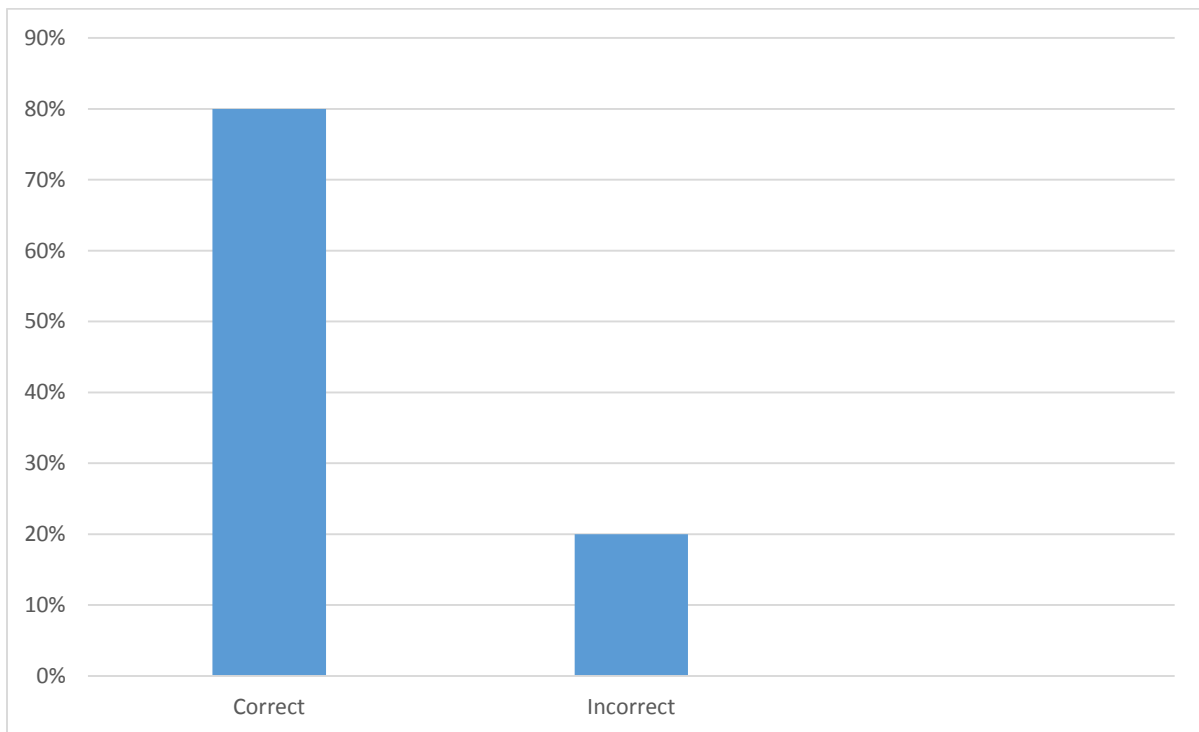
4-1-1 Section (one) Investigates the first hypothesis:

Statement (1) He wakes up 8 o'clock.

Table (4-1) He wakes up at 8 o'clock.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	40	80%
Incorrect	10	20%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-1) He wakes up at 8 o'clock.



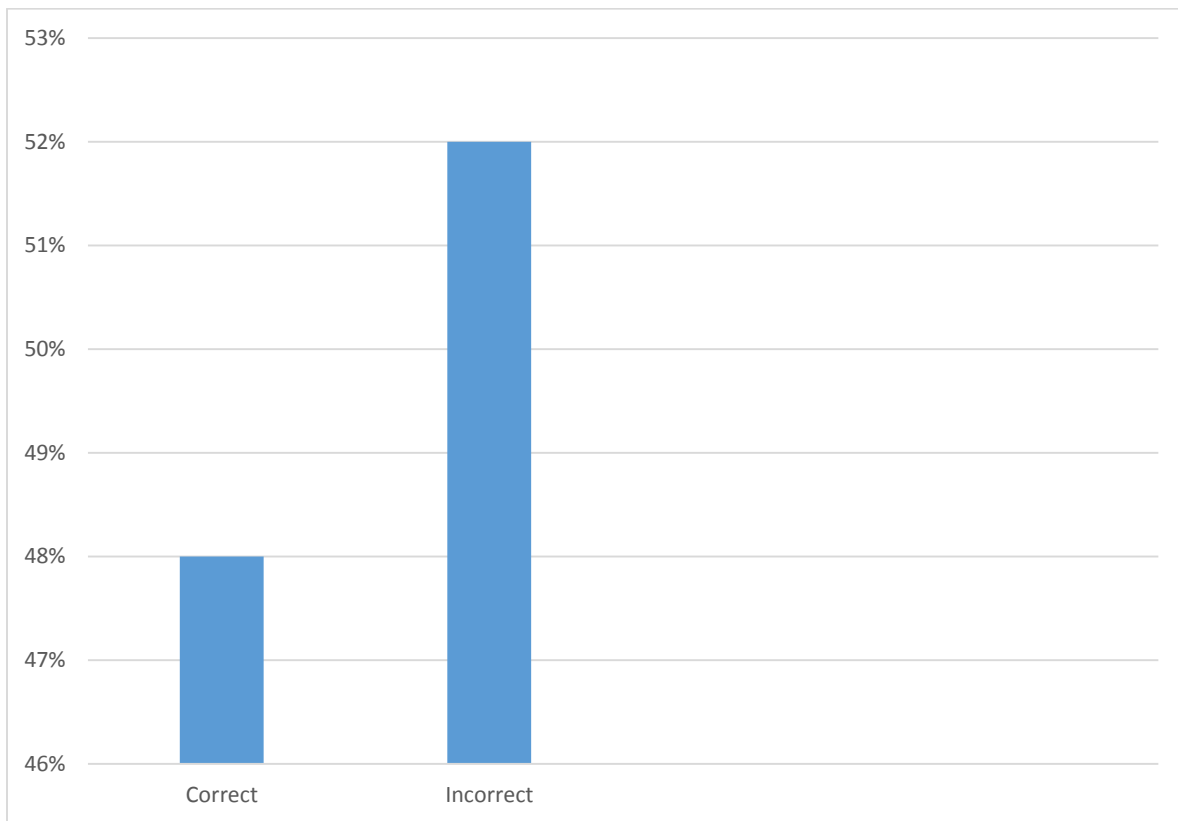
The table and figure (4-1) show that 80% of the pupils have chosen the correct preposition, so that the result indicates that majority of the pupils answered the question, this also mean that the pupils' performance is well and some of them know how to use the prepositions of time.

Statement (2) She was born 2002.

Table (4-2) She was born in 2002.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	24	48%
Incorrect	26	52%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-2) She was born in 2002.



The table and figure (4-2) show that 52% of the pupils have chosen the incorrect preposition, so that the result indicates that more than half of the pupils failed to choose the right preposition, and those who answered correctly are less than those who answered incorrectly and know how to use the prepositions of time. This also

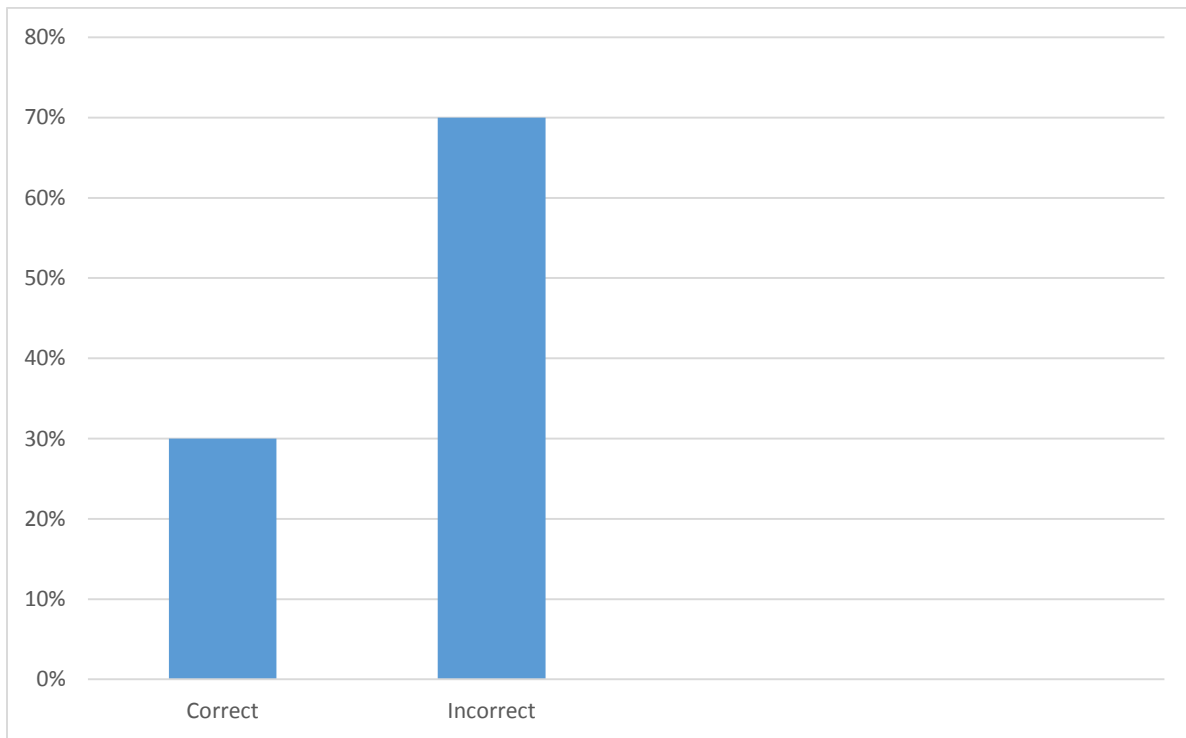
means that the performance of the pupils is not too bad and some know how to use the prepositions of time.

Statement (3) they do not go to school Saturday.

Table (4-3) they do not go to school on Saturday.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	15	30%
Incorrect	35	70%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-3): the do not go to school on Saturday.



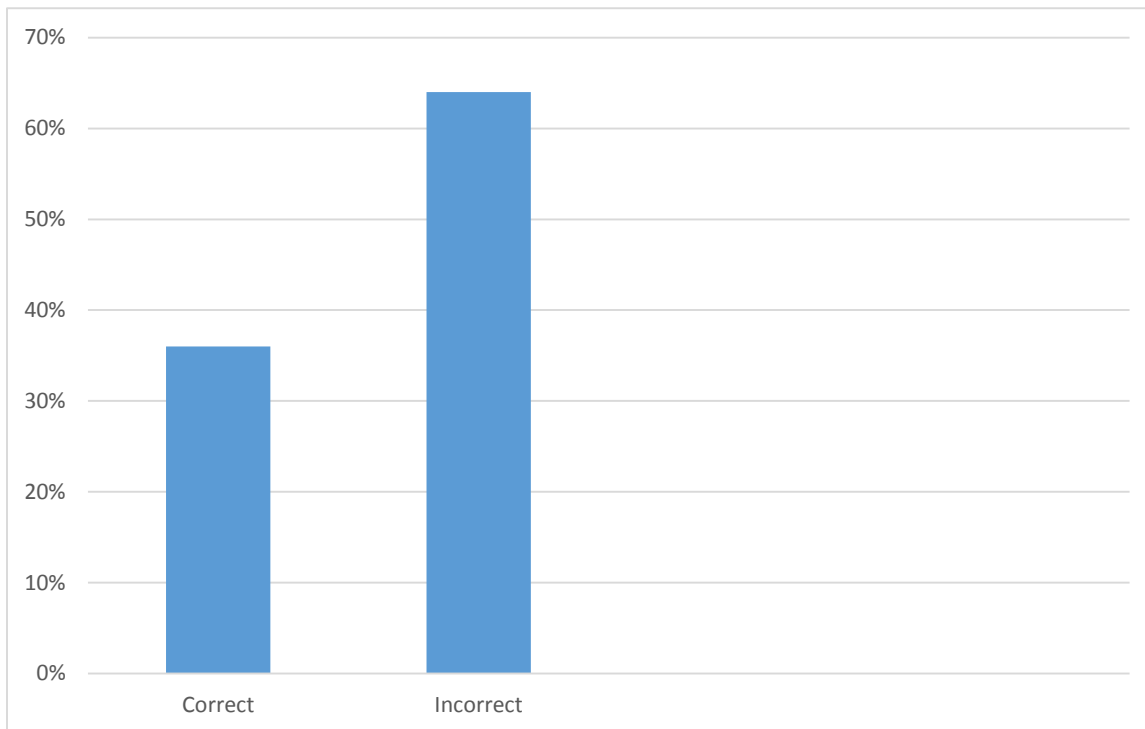
The table and figure (4-3) show that 70% of the pupils have chosen the wrong preposition, so that the result indicates that the majority of the pupils have answered incorrectly, and those who answered correctly are few and they know how to use the prepositions of time correctly, this also means the performance of the pupils is too bad and a few know how to use the prepositions of time.

Statement (4) It rains June.

Table (4-4) It rains in June.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	18	36%
Incorrect	32	64%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-4): It rains in June.



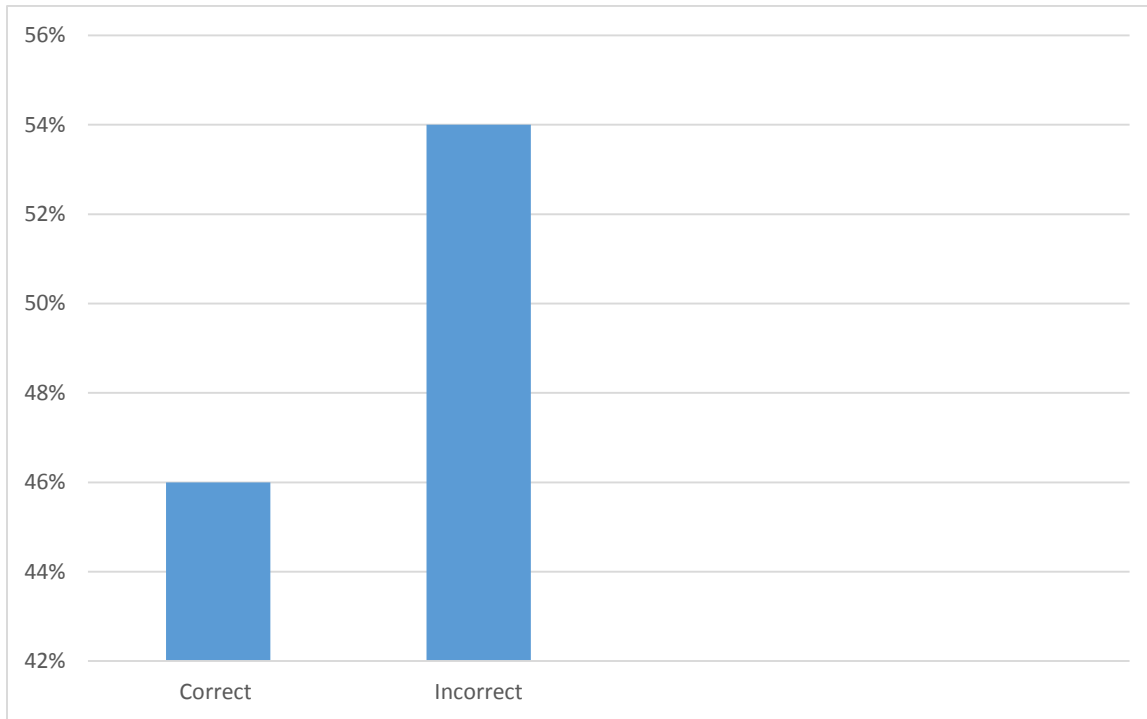
The table and figure (4-4) show that 64% of the pupils have chosen the wrong preposition, so that the result indicates that the majority of the pupils have answered incorrectly, and those who answered correctly are few and they know how to use the prepositions of time correctly. This also means performance of the pupils is not good and few know how to use the prepositions of time.

Statement (5) He plays football the morning.

Table (4-5) He plays football in the morning.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	23	46%
Incorrect	27	54%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-5) He plays football in the morning.



The table and figure (5) show that 54% of the pupils have chosen the wrong preposition, so that the result indicates that less than the half of the pupils have answered correctly and they know how to use the prepositions of time correctly, those who answered incorrectly are more than the half of the pupils and do not know how to use the prepositions of time. This means that the pupils' performance is quite good.

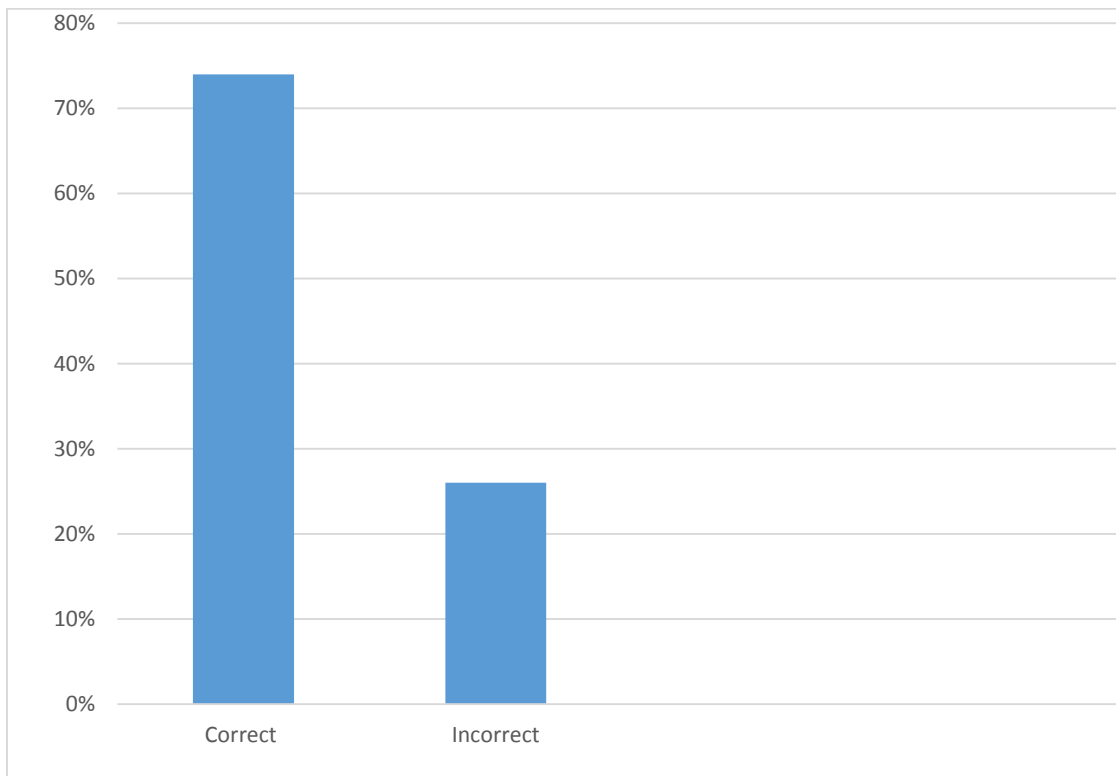
4-1-2 Section (two): investigates the second hypothesis.

Statement (1) My friend was bornLondon.

Table (4-1) My friend was born in London.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	37	74%
Incorrect	13	26%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-1) My friend was born in London.



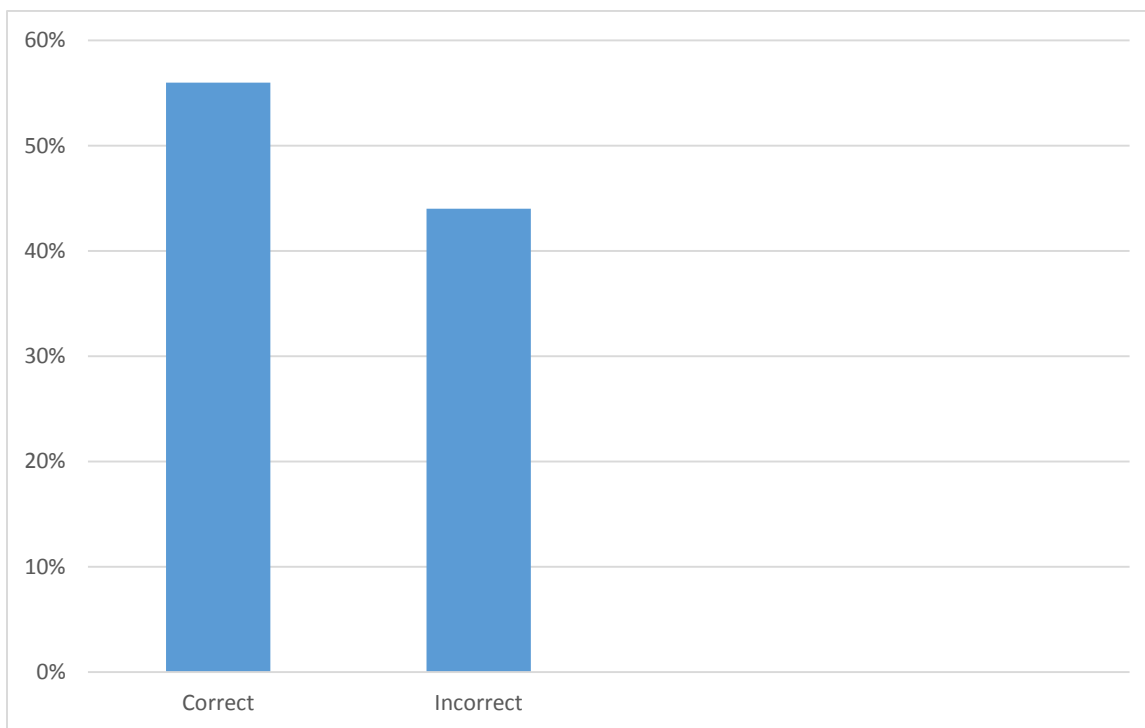
The table and figure (4-1) show that 74% of the pupils have chosen the right preposition, so that the result indicates that the majority of the pupils have answered correctly and they know how to use the prepositions of place and a few pupils failed to answer and they do not know how to use the prepositions of place. This means that performance of the pupils is excellent.

Statement (2) We are home.

Table (4-2) We are at home.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	28	56%
incorrect	22	44%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-2): we are at home.



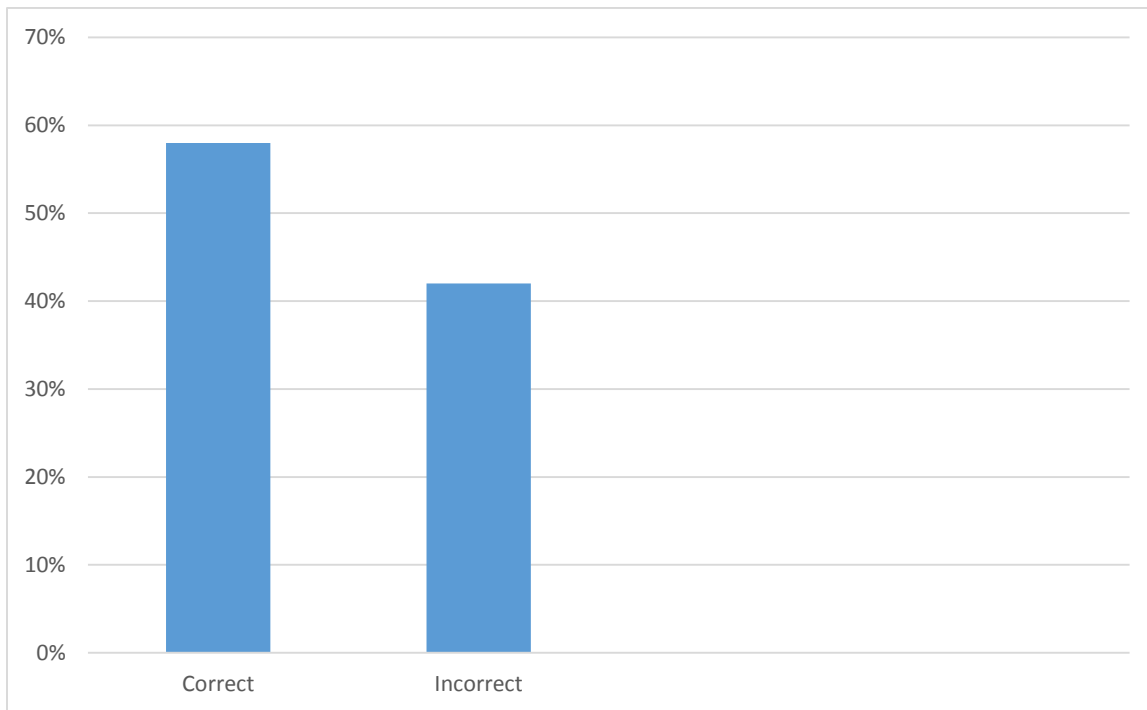
The table and figure (4-2) show that 56% of the pupils have chosen the right preposition, so the result indicates that more than the half have passed and they know how to use the prepositions of place. This shows that the pupils' performance is quite well.

Statement (3): I live Omdurman.

Table (4-3) I live in Omdurman.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	29	58%
Incorrect	21	42%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-3) I live in Omdurman.



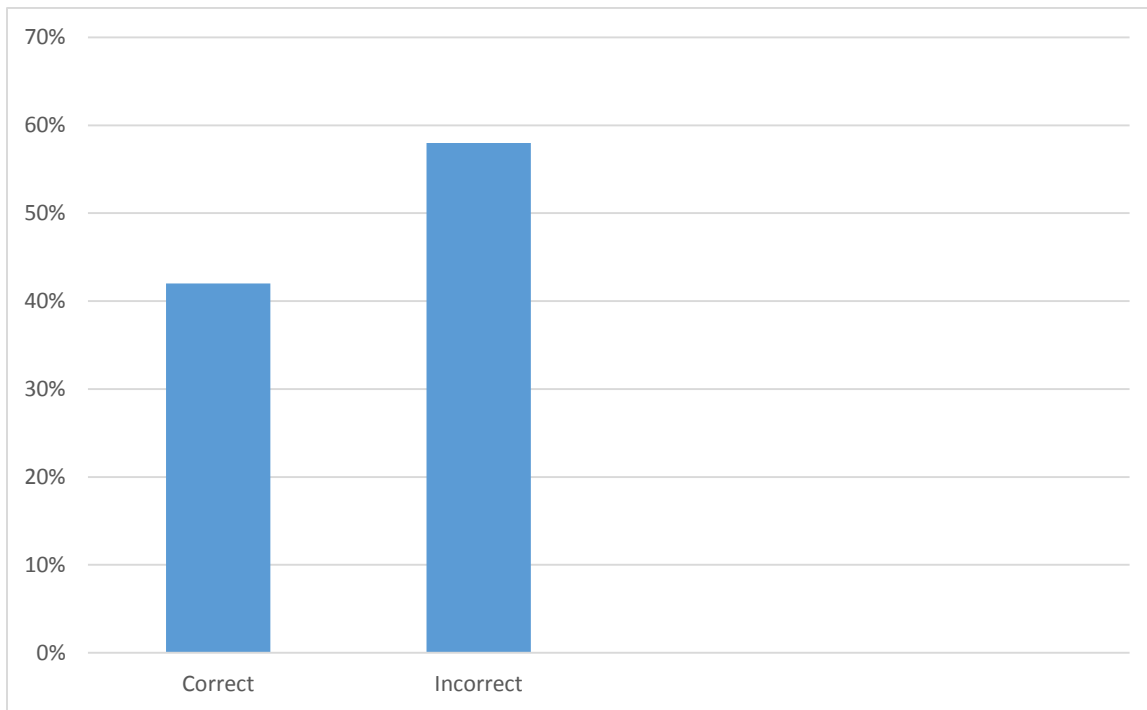
The table and figure (4-3) show that 58% of the pupils have chosen the right preposition, so the result indicates that more than the half of the pupils were able to choose the right preposition and they know how to use the prepositions of place, few were not able to choose the right answer and they do not know how to use the prepositions of place. The performance of the pupils is not bad.

Statement (4) He is the car.

Table (4-4) He is on the car.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	21	42%
Incorrect	29	58%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-4): He is on the car.



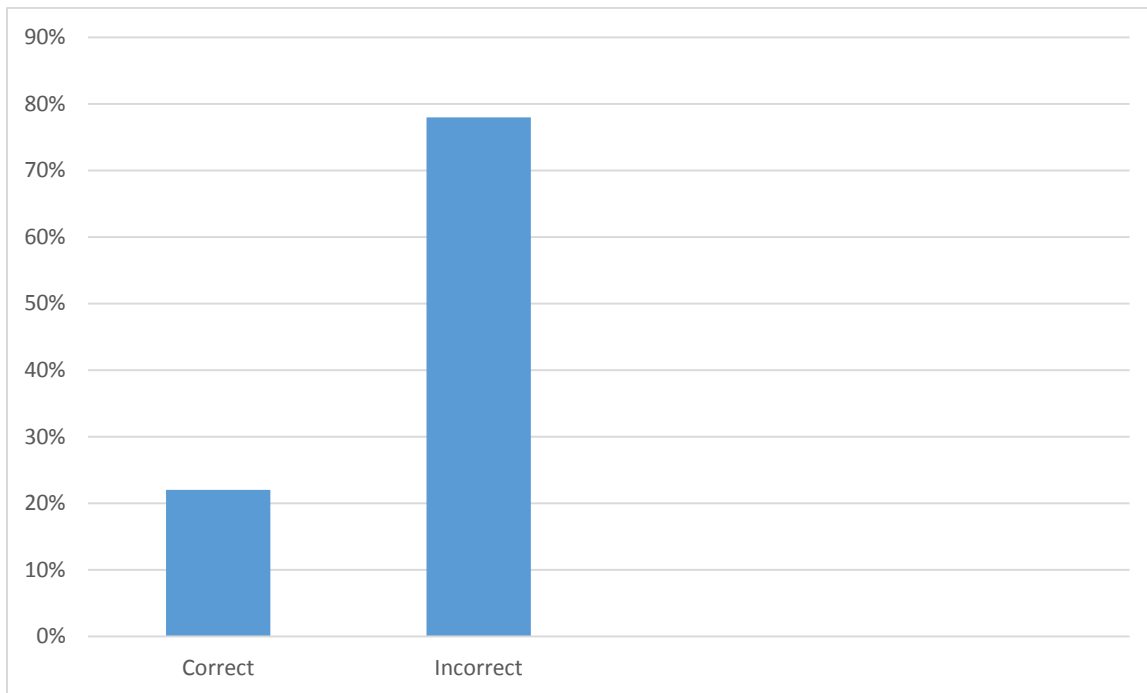
The table and figure (4-4) show that 58% of the pupils have chosen the wrong preposition, so the result indicates that less than the half of the pupils succeeded in choosing the right answer and they know how to use the prepositions of place, and more than the half of the pupils did not succeed in choosing the right answer and they do not know how to use the prepositions of place. This also means the performance of the pupils is not good.

Statement (5): They are Al-Shaheed Hamad School.

Table (4-5) They are at Al-Shaheed Hamad School.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	11	22%
incorrect	39	78%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-5) they are at Al-Shaheed Hamad School.



The table and figure (4-5) show that 78% of the pupils have chosen the wrong preposition, so the result indicates that the majority of the pupils failed to choose the right answer and they do not know how to use the prepositions of place, and those who answered the question were a few and they know how to use the prepositions of place. This shows that the pupils' performance is very bad.

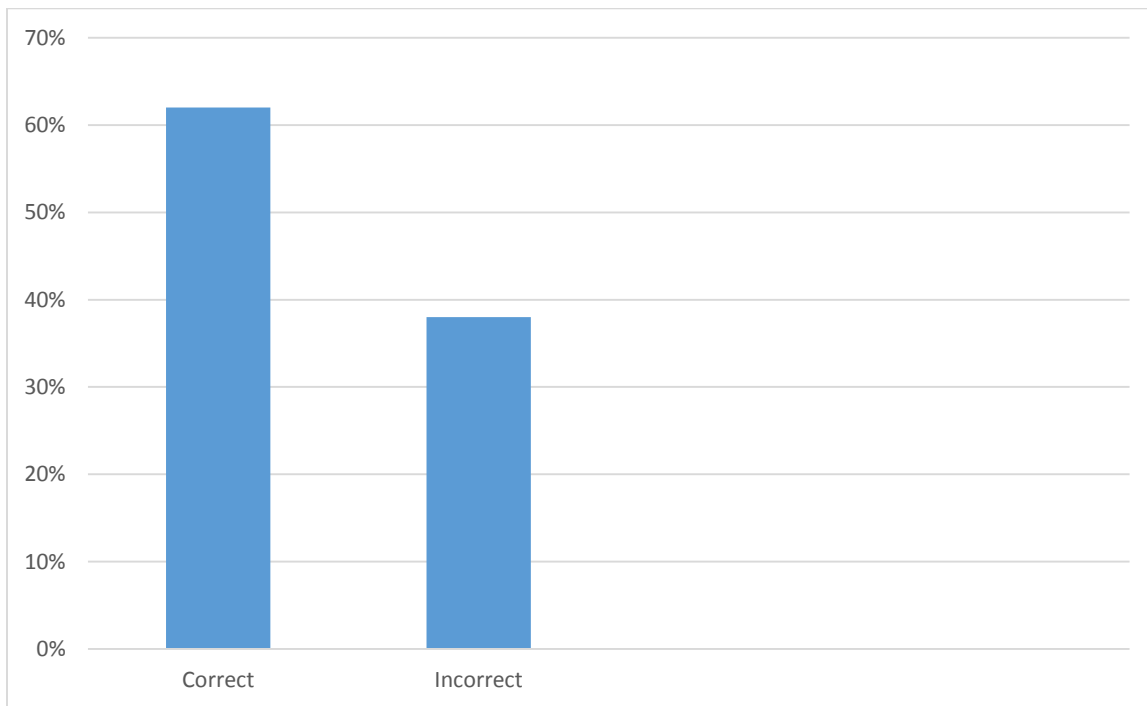
4-1-3 Section (three): investigates the third hypothesis.

Statement (1): I travel train.

Table (4-1) I travel by train.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	31	62%
Incorrect	19	38%
total	50	100%

Figure (4-1) I travel by train.



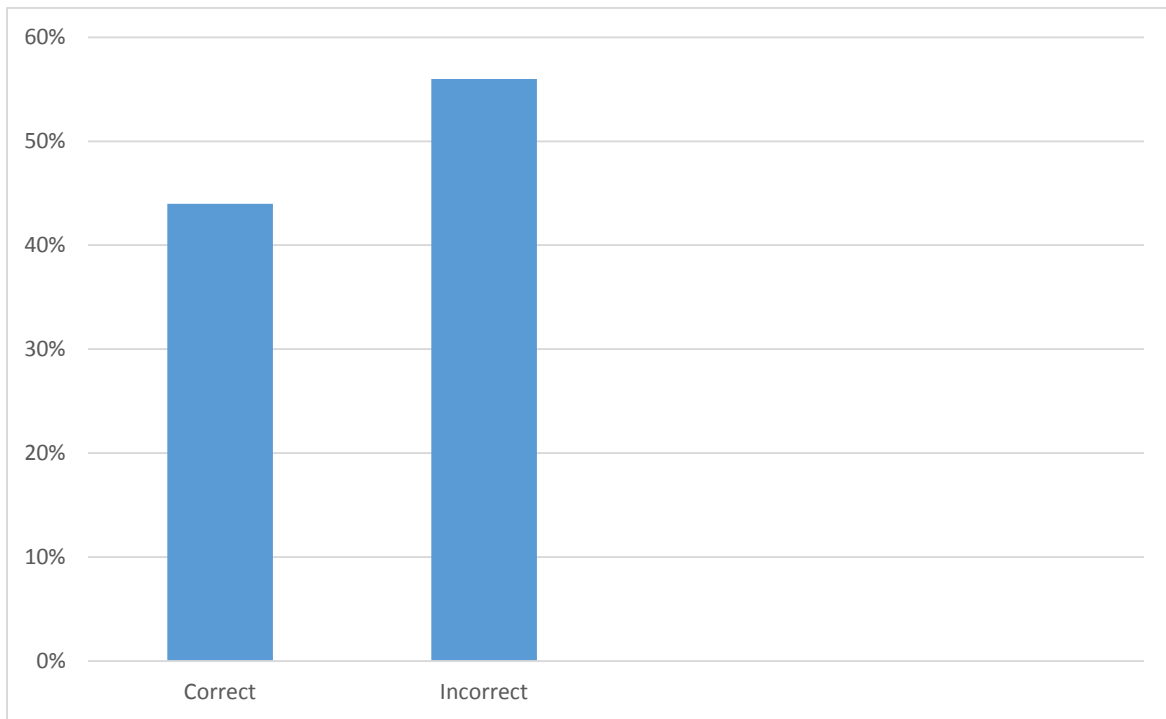
The table and figure (4-1) show that 62% of the pupils have chosen the right preposition, so the result indicates that more than the half of the pupils chose the right answer and they know how to use the prepositions of movement, those who failed were barely few and they do not know how to use the prepositions of movement. This also means that the performance of the pupils is not bad.

Statement (2): He is the bus.

Table (4-2) He is on the bus.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	22	44%
Incorrect	28	56%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-2) He is on the bus.



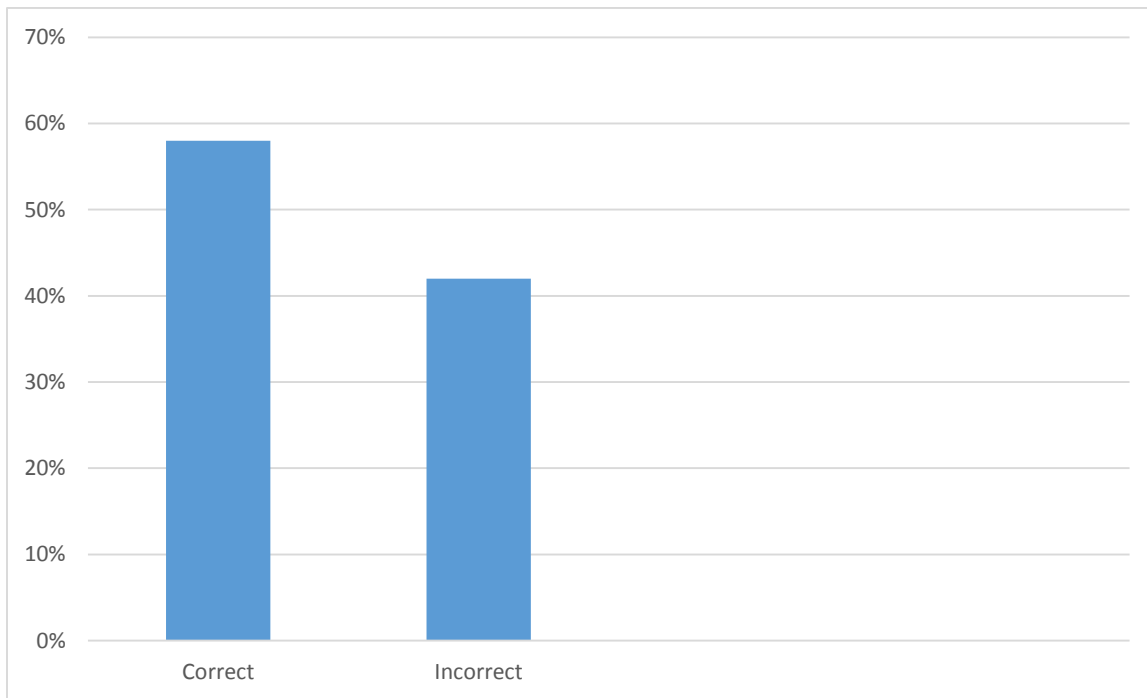
The table and figure (4-2) show that 56% of the pupils have chosen the wrong preposition, so the result indicates that less than the half of the pupils were able to answer the question and they know how to use the prepositions of movement, those who failed to answer the question were more than the half the pupils and they do not know how to use the prepositions of movement. This also shows that performance of the pupils is quite good.

Statement (3): I go to school.... foot.

Table (4-3) I go to school on foot.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	29	58%
Incorrect	21	42%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-3): I go to school on foot.



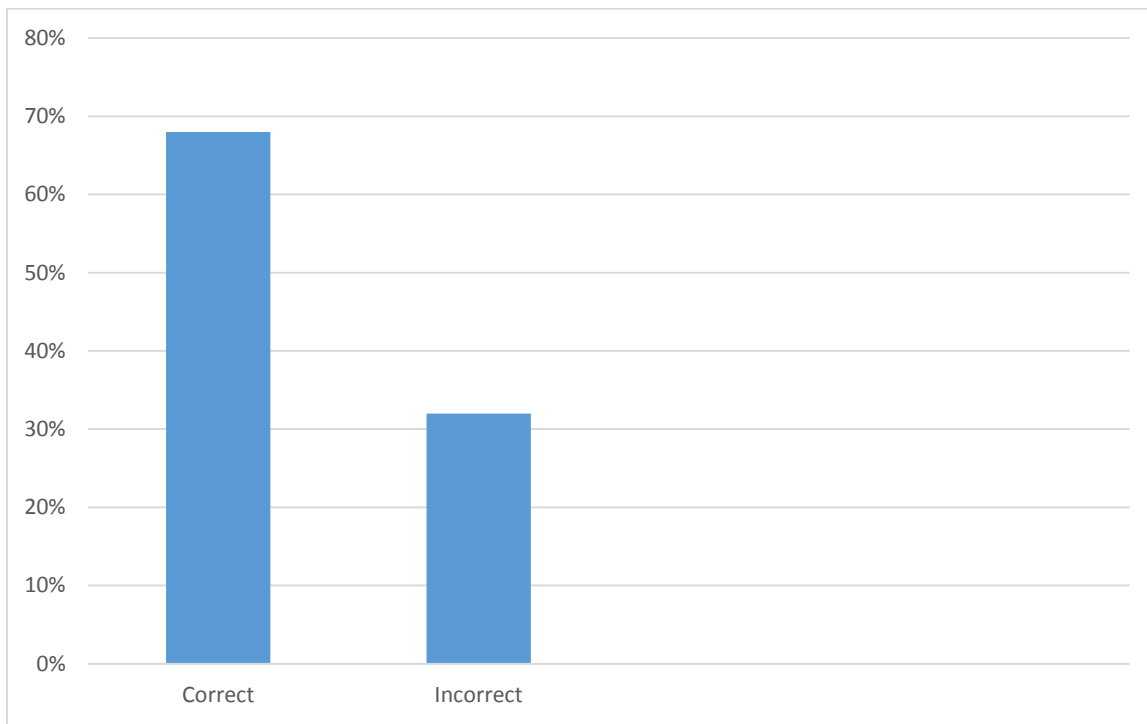
The table and figure (4-3) show that 58% of the pupils have chosen the right preposition, so the result indicates that more than the half of the pupils succeeded in answering the question and the know how to use the prepositions of movement, those who failed to answer the question were few and they do not know how to use the prepositions of movement. This means that the performance of the pupils is quite good.

Statement (4): I come to school.....car.

Table (4-4) I come to school by car.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	34	68%
Incorrect	16	32%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-4) I come to school by car.



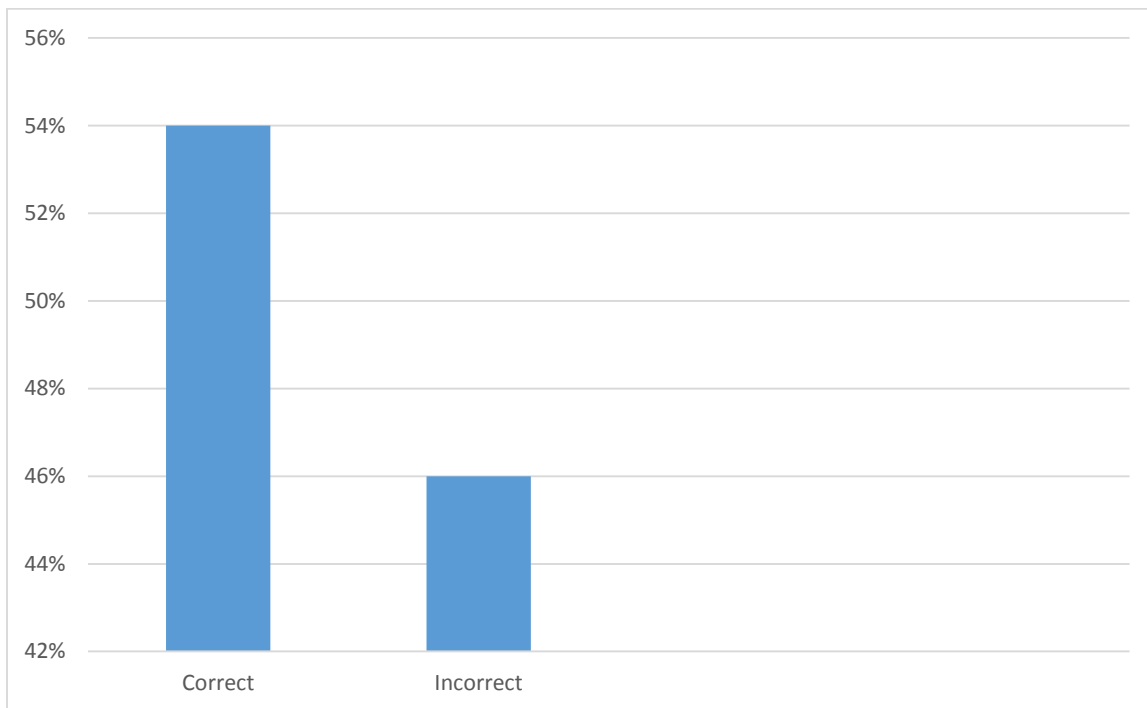
The table and figure (4-4) show that 68% of the pupils have chosen the right preposition, so the result indicates that a reasonable number of the pupils answered the question and they know how to use the prepositions of movement, those who failed were few and they do not know how to use the prepositions of movement. This also shows that the pupils' performance is quite good.

Statement (4-5) Three people can sit.....taxi.

Table (4-5) Three people can sit in a taxi.

Items	Number	Percentage
Correct	27	54%
Incorrect	23	46%
Total	50	100%

Figure (4-5) Three people can sit in a taxi.



The table and figure (4-5) show that 54% of the pupils have chosen the right preposition, so the result indicates that barely more than half were able to answer the question and they know how to use the prepositions of movement, those who failed were less than the half and they do not know how to use the prepositions of movement. This means the performance is not very bad.

4-2 Discussions of the Research Hypotheses

4-2-1 Testing the Hypothesis One

In discussion one, the result was that EFL learners do not have a problem in using prepositions of time correctly. The hypothesis one was that EFL learners do not have a problem in using prepositions of time correctly. Hence the hypothesis one is not equivalent to the result .so the researcher rejects hypothesis one to the study.

4-2-2 Testing the Hypothesis Two

In discussion two, the result was that EFL learners do not have a problem in using prepositions of place correctly. The hypothesis two was that EFL learners have a problem in using prepositions of place correctly. Hence the hypothesis two is not equivalent to the result. So the researcher rejects hypothesis two to the study.

4-2-3 Testing the Hypothesis Three

In discussion three, the result was that EFL learners have problem in using prepositions of movement correctly. The hypothesis three was that EFL learners have problem in using prepositions of movement correctly. Hence the hypothesis three is equivalent to the result.so the researcher confirms hypothesis three to the study.

4-3 Summary of the Study

To sum up chapter four the researcher presented the introduction and data of the pupils' test has been collected and analyzed with SPSS. This chapter includes: investigating the first hypothesis, the second hypothesis and the third hypothesis. The researcher came out through the results and discussions of the total findings and the summary of the chapter, the next chapter will be chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE

MAIN FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

5-0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher, presents the main findings of the study and it includes: introduction, recommendations and suggestions for further study.

5-1 Main Findings

This study was an attempt to investigate the difficulties that encountered by EFL learners of primary school in using English prepositions properly and to facilitate the learning of English prepositions. So, the researcher comes out with the following findings or results after the analysis and of discussion and data obtained:

1. The results show that the majority of EFL learners of the primary school have errors in using English prepositions.
2. Prepositions usage, in fact creates some difficulties for EFL learners in primary school.
3. The difficulties of prepositions affect the pupils' process in the study.
4. EFL learners of primary school need more prepositions activities to solve prepositions' problems.

Most of the important causes of English prepositions' problems in using and understanding the meaning of prepositions is the influence of L1 on L2 which can cause errors.

5. The syllabus and teachers' methods have no clear rules for teaching English prepositions' system for learners to understand and use prepositions.
6. EFL primary school learners are poor and have weakness in using and understanding of prepositions specially prepositions of time, place and movement.

5-2 Recommendations

After analysis, discussions and conclusions, the researcher would like to propose the following recommendations many studies may be conducted as following:

1. Primary school teachers should provide intensive lessons containing prepositions for EFL primary school learners to solve their problems.
2. Primary school teachers should use different methods and ways for teaching English prepositions.
3. Teachers must encourage their learners at prepositions' activities.
4. English teachers should cooperate with the subject teachers in designing courses and selecting a good material.
5. It is very important to give some good activities in English prepositions regularly inside the class.
6. It is much better to construct a system and a test to evaluate the performance of the learners' English prepositions.
7. English learners should pay attention to prepositions since they are part of the learning process.
8. Teachers should teach the learners through which the learner can know the rules of English prepositions and explain and correct their errors.
9. Primary schools should design full syllabus for teaching English prepositions in order to solve learner's problems.
10. EFL learners in primary schools should care more about the use and understanding of prepositions to use them properly.

5-3 Conclusions

The purpose of the study is to find good techniques that will help teachers and learners out, prepositions are necessary part of the language, as the results of

statistical analysis in chapter four show the answers of hypotheses in the test. Therefore, all hypotheses successfully achieved.

5-4 Suggestions for Further Studies

To improve and develop the process of learning English prepositions many studies may be conducted as the following:

1. Exploring the impact of prepositional techniques in simple written texts.
2. Investigating the impact of teaching prepositions developing the pupils' knowledge.
3. Investigating the problems encountered by EFL learners of primary schools in using English prepositions in writing.
4. Investigating the difficulties that encountered by EFL learners in primary school in using prepositions of time, place and movement.

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Diagnostic Test

Name (optional):.....Time: 40 minutes

Hypothesis 1: Grade 8 pupils have a problem in using prepositions of time correctly.

A) Fill in the blanks with correct the preposition

at, in ,on

1-He wakes up.....8 o'clock.

2 -She was born.....2002

3-They do not go to school Saturday.

4-It rains..... June.

5-He plays football the morning.

Hypothesis 2:Grade 8 pupils have a problem in using prepositions of place correctly.

B) Fill in the blanks with the correct preposition

at ,in ,on

1-My friend was born London.

2-We are Home.

3-I live Omdurman.

4-He is The car.

5-They are.... Al-shaheedHamad school.

Hypothesis 3: Grade 8 pupils have a problem in using prepositions of movement correctly.

C) Draw a circle around the correct preposition

1-I travel train.

a) in b) on c) by

2-He is the bus.

a) by b) in c) on

3- I go to schoolfoot.

a) on b) by c) in

4- I come to school..... car.

a) In b) by c) in

5-Three people can sit a taxi.

A) On b) in c) by