

Student Ability To Use English Prepositions

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Abstract

This study aims to reveal students' understanding of prepositions and describe the types that often confuse students. Field research is the activity of collecting baseline data for research purposes. This research was conducted using tests, questionnaires, interviews, and direct observation. In this method, the author gives a test essay consisting of 30 questions. The test was given to 50 Xi SMA Hang Tuah Makassar class students to determine their understanding of English prepositions. The author proposes a questionnaire that attempts to identify the methods of language learning by students and the experience of students in learning languages. The author presents a questionnaire that attempts to identify the processes of language learning by students and the experience of students in learning languages. A preposition is a type of adjective that usually precedes its object. Prepositional properties include words expressing spatial relationships, such as *y*, *in*, *on*, *under*, *over*, *too*, *from*, *through*, etc. A noun always follows prepositions. These conjunctions show the relationship between the nouns that follow them and one of the main elements of the sentence. The noun or pronoun after the preposition is the object. The pronoun used in this position is always the object pronoun. This study showed that the average yield of the correct answer for prepositions of place using *in*, *on*, and *at* can be calculated as $368/50 = 7.36$. The result of using the wrong preposition is $382/50 = 7.64$. These calculations show that the number of respondents who do not know how to use prepositions correctly is more excellent than those who do. Overall, this study shows that students' ability to use the prepositions *in*, *on*, and *at* to indicate time and place still needs to improve. But the average difference between correct and incorrect use is minimal. In other words, the results show that the ability to use prepositions in the XI SMA Hang Tuah Makassar class as respondents in this study were average.

Keywords: student's ability ; english preposition

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap pemahaman siswa tentang preposisi dan mendeskripsikan jenis-jenis yang sering membingungkan siswa. Penelitian lapangan adalah kegiatan mengumpulkan data dasar untuk tujuan penelitian. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan tes, angket, wawancara, dan observasi langsung. Pada metode ini, penulis memberikan tes essay yang terdiri dari 30 soal. Tes diberikan kepada 50 siswa kelas XI SMA Hang Tuah Makassar untuk mengetahui pemahaman mereka tentang preposisi bahasa Inggris. Penulis mengajukan kuesioner yang mencoba mengidentifikasi metode pembelajaran bahasa oleh siswa dan pengalaman siswa dalam belajar bahasa. Penulis menyajikan kuesioner yang mencoba mengidentifikasi proses pembelajaran bahasa oleh siswa dan pengalaman siswa dalam belajar bahasa. Preposisi adalah jenis kata sifat yang biasanya mendahului objeknya. Sifat preposisi termasuk kata-kata yang menyatakan hubungan spasial, seperti *y*, *in*, *on*, *under*, *over*, *too*, *from*, *through*, dll. Kata benda selalu mengikuti preposisi. Konjungsi ini menunjukkan hubungan antara kata benda yang mengikutinya dan salah satu elemen utama kalimat. Kata benda atau kata ganti setelah preposisi adalah objek. Kata ganti yang digunakan pada posisi ini selalu merupakan kata ganti objek. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa hasil rata-rata dari jawaban yang benar untuk preposisi tempat menggunakan *in*, *on*, dan *at* dapat dihitung sebagai $368/50 = 7,36$. Hasil penggunaan preposisi yang salah adalah $382/50 = 7,64$. Perhitungan ini menunjukkan bahwa jumlah responden yang tidak mengetahui cara menggunakan preposisi dengan benar lebih baik daripada mereka yang tahu. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan preposisi *in*, *on*, dan *at* untuk menunjukkan waktu dan tempat masih perlu ditingkatkan. Tetapi perbedaan rata-rata antara penggunaan yang benar dan yang salah adalah minimal. Dengan kata lain, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan penggunaan preposisi siswa kelas XI SMA Hang Tuah Makassar sebagai responden dalam penelitian ini rata-rata.

Kata Kunci: kemampuan siswa; preposisi bahasa Inggris

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking the language is human nature. We all have language acquisition devices that allow us to pick up or learn any language system used in this world. Therefore, everyday people can speak two or more languages if they are exposed to an environment in which those languages are spoken or participate in language learning. The first language (called L1) is the language that people use for the first time, and then they will be able to use the second language (called L2) due to their learning or interaction with other speakers.

Not surprisingly, some people in Indonesia speak different dialects, such as Bugisian, Makassar, or Javanese, in addition to Indonesian and foreign languages. In most schools, from elementary to higher education, students begin to learn foreign languages such as English, German, French, etc. At this stage, students or learners of a foreign language must learn a new grammar that differs from the previous one. their native (first) language.

English, the first foreign language taught in schools, has a different grammar system than Indonesian. To be able to speak the language, students must master the rules of the language. Therefore, teaching English at school spends much time practicing English grammar.

However, even after many years of learning English, many students in Indonesia still feel that their English could be better. Therefore, the question is often asked why it is called "below" in Indonesian. Therefore, confusion may arise when translating sentences such as The valley is below sea level. (the valley is below sea level, not the valley below sea level), the shoes at the bottom are added (the shoes are under the bed, not the shoes under the bed).

The complexity of prepositions described above prompted the author to study how this fact is observed in the language activity of students. The title of this dissertation is "Student Ability to Use English Prepositions (Example from Hang Tuah High School), 2011". We see this deep in the actual implementation of this language system. As a language learner, the writer is interested in learning about this topic because it can help improve his English and prepare him for teaching this foreign language in the future.

The use of prepositions has been discussed in various works of literature, each with its discussion. In this article, we will study the phenomenon of grammar application observed in practice. In most cases, teaching English as a foreign language in schools reflects the emphasis on teaching grammar. However, a large number of teachers all over the world who teach prepositions make up only a tiny part of the lesson.

Problem Statement

Building on the previous discussion, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. Do students use English prepositions well?
2. What types of prepositions do students often confuse?

Objectives of the study

The overall goal of this study is to see the appropriateness of using prepositions. In particular, the aim of this study is:

1. Reveal students' understanding of the use of prepositions;
2. Describe The Types Of Prepositions That Often Confuse Students.

Review Of Further Literature

In this chapter, the author will present a literature review that explains the importance of grammar in the language, the Definition and function of prepositions, and the categories of the meaning of prepositions. The description of a language has three main components: phonology, grammar, and vocabulary (Huddleston, 1988: 1). In phonology, we can learn about sound systems such as; consonants, vowels, stress, intonation, and so on. In grammar, the two most basic. The units are words and sentences, where the description of word formation is discussed in morphology, and how words are combined into sentences is discussed in syntax.

The subject discussed in this dissertation concerns student mastery of grammar, namely the extent to which students use correct prepositions in English. Indonesian students often ask what more important, grammar or communication is. For spoken English, the simple answer is that communication is more important than correct grammar. After all, communicating in English is to share ideas, not just avoid grammatical errors. However, grammatical correctness is optional. A student's communication ability sometimes depends on whether he has mastered the grammar correctly.

All languages use grammar to some extent to convey meaning, but some languages rely more on grammar than others. English is one of those languages where grammar matters a lot. Consider, for example, the following two sentences that use sentences with different clauses:

1. Hera threw stones at me.
2. Hera threw stones at me.

The first example (throw....c) shows a social action performed by the Hero, and the second example (throw....c) represents an action aimed at harming someone.

Grammar errors do not always lead to communication problems, and native English speakers can often understand sentences with grammatical mistakes. However, grammatical errors can make sentences difficult to understand or change meaning. Hence, this is one reason students should try to organize as much grammar as possible.

Also, in the author's experience, the influence of Indonesian grammar as learners' first language (L1) sometimes results in incorrect English grammar as students transfer their L1 rules to L2

(second/foreign language). Regarding grammatical structure, Lado (Gass and Selinker, 1983: 43). There were cases when the native language was translated into a foreign language. This transfer happens so subtly that students only notice it once it gets their attention. Moreover, Adjerman in Gass and Selinker (1983:47) considers that.

There are nine prepositions most commonly used in English. They are listed alphabetically: in, by, for, from, to, from, on, to, and from (Murcia and Freeman, 1983: 124). The following section will discuss the description of prepositions as a grammatical component in detail. The discussion is drawn from various published literature and studies.

Two terms are used to describe words according to them—grammatical classification. The first is the public class; the second is the private class. According to Huddleston (1988: 23-24), an open type is a vocabulary that adapts easily to adding new members because a language's vocabulary adapts to its speakers' changing needs. This includes verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. In contrast, private classes are very resistant to adding new members. The closed class category includes prepositions, determiners, coordinators, and subordinates. In *The Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* (Crystal, 1987: 243), a preposition is a term used in the grammatical classification of words, referring to a closed set of elements preceding a noun phrase. Prepositions are commonly called the most powerful small words in English (Wishon and Burks, 1980: 288). Usually, they are pretty short and look insignificant, but they perform an essential function.

Huddleston (1988: 123) points out that, on a general level, a preposition is one type of adjective, and another type is a postposition. Prepositions usually precede their objects, and postpositions follow them. Prepositions describe relationships between other words in a sentence. Words like "in" or "after" are somewhat meaningless and difficult to define in terms alone. Also, a preposition is a word that shows a "relationship" between a noun (its object) and some other part of the sentence. (webster.comnet.edu/grammar/prepositions.htm).

Prepositions usually come before the nouns they are associated with. In short, prepositions serve as a link between the object and other parts. In English, adverbs are prepositions; the typical sequence is addition + addition, not the reverse (with axes, not with axes). This out-of-order occurs in non-kernel constructions such as relative or interrogative sentences, where the preposition object is moved to the initial position of the sentence so that the preposition ends: "What class are we going to put it in." ?" This is characteristic of a relatively informal style; in a more formal version, the preposition is also preceded by: "what class are we going to put it in?"

Huddleston (1988: 123-124) details the properties of an adjective as follows:

1. These include words that express spatial relationships, such as in, in, on, under, over, too, from, through, etc. Very often, they also include words that serve to show examples that show a change in degree in a sentence, which strongly contradicts this idea.
2. Prepositions function as headings in the structure of prepositional phrases, as I do in the

The previous section mentioned that prepositions are closed classes category of words, and therefore do not change and have only a few modifications. Although prepositions are usually short and seemingly insignificant, they are essential. In the sentences below, only the preposition changes, but this is enough to change the meaning:

Letter sent to Peter Letter sent by Peter Letter sent to Peter Letter sent by Peter

Prepositions are always followed by a noun (or pronoun). This union shows the relationship between the noun that follows it and one of the main elements of the sentence: subject, verb, object, or object. They usually indicate connections between their object and other parts of the sentence, such as position, place, direction, time, manner, agent, possession, and state.

Prepositions are almost always combined with other words in a prepositional phrase structure. Prepositional phrases can be made up of a million different expressions. Still, they tend to be built around the same thing: a preposition followed by a determiner and one or two adjectives followed by a pronoun. Or a noun (called the preposition object). These whole phrases, in turn, take on a modifying role, acting as adjectives or adverbs, placing something at what time or where or under what conditions something happened.

Consider the example of an introductory prepositional phrase Burton Roberts gave (1986: 61):. Sam is sunbathing by the stream. The prepositional phrase in this sentence consists of the preposition (beside) followed by the noun phrase (flow). The relationship between side and flow is interdependent and cannot exist alone.

For our analysis, the author will focus on English prepositions that refer to time and space: in, on, and at. The author focuses on these prepositions mainly because students often need to understand them.

Is it any wonder that prepositions create such problems for students for whom English is a second language? We said we were in the hospital to visit a friend who was in the hospital. We lie on the bed but on the couch. We watch movies in the cinema, but on TV. For native speakers, these little words present some difficulty. It will take volumes to overcome all the potential difficulties with prepositions in everyday use, and the only way an English learner can begin to deal with the difficulties of using prepositions is by practicing and paying attention to spoken and written language. A good dictionary is an essential first step Prepositions of time: at, on, and in The preposition at is used to indicate a specific time. The train is scheduled for 12:15. We will arrive at 7 am. The preposition on is used to indicate the day and date. My brother will come on Monday. We're having a Fourth of July party. For an indefinite time of day, month, season, or year, prepositions are commonly used. He loves to run in the morning. It's too cold in winter to run outside. He started his work in 1971. He will retire in August.

1. Prepositions of place: at, at, and at

For a specific address, we use the preposition *at*, as in the example: The Prime Minister lives at 10 Downing Street. For sentences denoting names of streets, streets, etc., we use the preposition *on*, as in "his house on Borenza Street."

METHOD

The authors use mixed methods to obtain an up-to-date theory and accurate data for research. Literary research refers to activities relevant to the subject, such as reading books and magazines. This kind of research is carried out to obtain important information about the linguistic theory and grammar of the English language. A general discussion of grammar, as well as prepositions, can be found in the previous chapter.

Field research is the activity of collecting baseline data for research purposes. To do this, the thesis is carried out by applying tests, questionnaires, interviews, and direct observation.

In this method, the author gives a test essay consisting of 30 questions. The test was given to class 50 XI SMA Hang Tuah Makassar to determine their abilities—understanding of English prepositions. The author proposes a questionnaire that attempts to identify the methods of language learning by students and the experience of students in learning languages.

The population used in the study is considered to represent a large group with the same characteristics (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989: 107). The people in this study were class XI students of SMA Hang Tuah Makassar.

When selecting a sample, the authors used the technique of random sampling. Fifty students took part in the study. Twenty-five students of the second-semester term study English I, and twenty-five students of the fourth-semester study English IV. According to direct observations, students study English for six to nine years, from high school to college.

When obtaining primary data in this study, the authors give 25 questions about using prepositions of time, place, and direction. Questions are shown in the form of an essay. From the answers received, the writer classifies the correct answers. And the wrong answer. Based on this, the writer can see the level of possession of prepositions. In addition, the authors also obtained secondary data from the questionnaire. This includes the learner's teaching method and experience in language learning. This data allows the author to see how students overcome difficulties and discover student disability.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses the presentation of the data obtained from the study. Two types of data will be presented here: primary and secondary. The preliminary data is preliminary to reveal students' skills in using skills prepositions, while the secondary data shows students' English level, learning strategies, etc.

In addition, primary data will be analysed based on correct and incorrect test answers. The authors use the theories presented in the previous chapter to test the level of truth. The approach used in this study is inapplicable to any particular variety of English. Therefore, the author will focus his analysis on grammar, as described above. Level from Understanding Prepositions time at, on, in

Tabel 1. POINT 1. Let's meet (in-on-at) at six o'clock.

CHOICE	at	on	in
Number of responses	5	9	36
Suggested answer: in			

Analysis As seen from the table above, most respondents (72%) "choose" the correct answer. Nine students (18%) prefer the preposition who on. This percentage indicates that some respondents must distinguish between using prepositions to demonstrate relevance. Time and they got used to Time showing a month, year, long period.

Tabel 2. POINT 2. He was born (at-on-in) in July.

CHOICE	at	on	in
Number of responses	12	32	6
Suggested response: in			

Analysis:

The wrong answer was chosen by 32 respondents (64%). This shows that most students still need to learn prepositions indicating time. Which refers to the month. Twelve out of fifty respondents use the word "in." This option can also specify a month but use a date.

Tabel 3. POINT 3. I went there (in-on-at) in 1978

CHOICE	it	on	at
Number of responses	31	19	0
Suggested answer: in			

Analysis:

The correct choice was made by 62 percent of respondents. The number of students who chose correct and incorrect answers is practically irrelevant. However, most respondents chose the right option, which means that the respondent knew the use of the following year.

Tabel 4. POINT 4. It will work (in-on-at). Friday.

CHOICE	on	at	in
Number of responses	34	10	6
Suggested answer: on			

Analysis

Thirty-four respondents (70 percent) received correct answers. This means that most students understand how prepositions relate to days. There 3.2 percent of the respondents gave the wrong misunderstanding that may cause this standing due to the date preposition.

Tabel 5. POINT 5. We met (in-on-at). Christmas.

CHOICE	on	in	at
Number of responses	35	10	5
Suggested answer: on			

Analysis

The majority of students (70%) chose the wrong answer, and only ten (20%) respondents chose the correct answer. This shows that most students still use the preposition for special events. As many as 5 percent of respondents chose the preposition "at"

Tabel 6. POINT 6 They go to Rochester (in-on-at) Son September 15th.

CHOICE	in	On	at
Number of responses	17	31	2
Suggested answer: on			

Analysis

Compared to the previous point, the majority of respondents answered correctly. Thirty-one students voted yes, and seventy percent voted against it. The respondent chose ." n." Students often need clarification when selecting the preposition month with or without a date.

Tabel 7. POINT 7. We arrived at the dacha (in-on-at) in October.

CHOICE	in	at	on
Number of responses	38	10	2
Suggested answer: in			

Analysis

The correct answer is above the percentage of respondents. It is believed that the preposition of time refers to the month understood by the respondents. However, they still need clarification on the selection of months for dates.

Tabel 8. POINT 1. The label is located (in - on - on) in the vial.

CHOICE	in	on	at
Number of responses	42	6	2
Suggested response : in			

Analysis

The data above shows that the percentage of respondents who chose the correct answer was only 6 out of 50 (12%). Most respondents chose the preposition "in" (84%). It is assumed that the prepositional phrase "in the bottle" is used more often than "at the bottle."

Tabel 9. POINT 2. Jack is waiting (in-on-on) at the bottom of the stairs.

CHOICE	at	On	in
Number of responses	20	23	7
Suggested answer: at			

Analysis:

The table shows that only 14% of the 50 respondents chose the correct answer. At the same time, 86 percent of Respondents gave the wrong answer. This indicates that most respondents need help understanding the use of surface prepositions.

Tabel 9. POINT 3. Our seats (in-on-in) third row.

CHOICE	in	On	at
Number of responses	40	4	6
Suggested answer: in			

Analysis:

The table above shows the percentage of correct answers, namely 80 percent (40 respondents). On the other hand, the proportion of respondents who gave incorrect answers was 20% (10 respondents).

Tabel 10. POINT 4. Left turn signal (in-on-at).

CHOICE	at	On	in
Number of responses	4	44	2
Suggested answer: on			

Analysis:

Choosing the correct prepositions. Respondents chose one; most respondents chose prepositions. While the respondent's preposition in this sentence is "on."

Tabel 11. POINT 5. He sits (in-de-in) on a chair next to the piano.

CHOICE	at	On	in
Number of responses	0	48	2
Suggested answer: ON			

As seen above, almost all respondents (96%) chose the correct option, "on the chair." Pretext. Only two out of fifty respondents (4%) decided "in" This shows that most respondents are familiar with the expression.

Tabel 12. POINT 6. I met Jack (in-on-at) on the street.

CHOICE	in	on	at
Number of responses	20	20	10
Suggested answer: on			

Analysis:

As seen above, the respondents who chose the prepositions at and at location (in this case, on the road) are the same (40%). In contrast, ten respondents (20 percent) chose at. Sometimes it takes work to choose an English preposition for a phrase. We can say "on the street" or "in the street." However, to indicate a precise location, such as an address, we use at, as in the example "at 10 Downing Street". Students should be familiar with these prepositions.

Tabel 13. POINT 7. He has a lot of beautiful paintings on (on-on) the walls.

CHOICE	at	on	in
Number of responses	1	41	8
Suggested response ; on			

Analysis:

Similarly, the results above show that 82 percent of the respondents chose the correct preposition "on the wall." In comparison, 18 percent of the respondents chose the correct preposition; percent chose the wrong preposition. It is assumed that most respondents understand these prepositions' use.

CONCLUSION

A preposition is a type of word, not an adjective as mentioned in your previous statement. It is a part of speech that typically shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun and another element in the sentence. Prepositions often indicate location, direction, time, manner, or other relationships. Some examples of prepositions include "in," "on," "at," "under," "over," "through," "from," and so on. A preposition is a type of adjective that usually precedes its object. Prepositional properties include words expressing spatial relationships, such as y, in, on, under, over, too, from, through, etc. A noun always follows prepositions.

These conjunctions show the relationship between the nouns that follow them and one of the main elements of the sentence. The noun or pronoun after the preposition is the object. The pronoun used in this position is always the object pronoun. As a result of the study, it was found that the average correct response to the use of prepositional places using in, on, and at can be calculated as follows: $368/50 = 7.36$. While the results of using the wrong preposition are: $382/50 = 7.64$. from this the calculation shows that the number of respondents who need to learn how to use prepositions correctly is higher than those who do.

Overall, this study shows that students' ability to use the prepositions in, on, and at to indicate time and place is still low. However, the average difference between correct and incorrect usage is minimal. In other words, the results show that the ability to use prepositions in the XI SMA Hang Tuah Makassar class as respondents in this study were average.

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