

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel



Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English

**An Investigation of Students' Errors in the Use of the Nine Most
Common English Prepositions**

**Case Study: Second Year Licence Students' at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia
University, Jijel**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of a Master
Degree in Didactics**

Submitted by:
Madiha ZIGHA
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Supervised by:
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Board of Examiners

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Academic year: 2018/2019

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to:

*My dear **mother** and my beloved **father** who encouraged me and helped me so much to finish
my dissertation, may Allah bless them*

*My beloved closest sisters: **Doria, Roumayssa, and Rimass** who were beside me*

All my family

My supervisor

All my friends and colleagues without exception

All who supported me

Madiha

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the most precious people to my heart:

My beloved parents my Allah bless them,

My fiance the one who gave me all his love,

My sisters and brothers the ones who gave me strength and hope,

My dear grandmother for her continues support.

My best friends: Leila, Loubna and Madiha.

My heartfelt gratitude must also be conveyed to my best supervisor Dr. Meriem

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To all those who were there for me.

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims at investigating the student's errors in the use of the most common English prepositions by second year license students at the English department, Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel University. The purpose of this study is to set out the main reasons that lead students to misuse those nine prepositions. It is hypothesized that second year students of English would show the same developmental errors in addition to errors which result from first language interference. To check the validity of this hypothesis, two means of research are used to collect data, a grammar test and an analysis of students' composition. The test has been administered to 120 participants out of 270 students in order to identify the most problematic English prepositions they face in using these prepositions by clarifying their types of errors. The second instrument is a written composition from the first semester exams papers of the same groups in order to determine the misuse of the most common English prepositions. Later compare their performances on the grammar test and their own written expressions. The obtained results show that second year students make errors in the grammar test. Whereas, a few of them made few errors in written composition. So, they avoid using complex English prepositions.

Key words: English prepositions, language interference, grammar test, written expression, errors, and developmental errors.

List of Abbreviations

Adv.: Adverb.

CA: Contrastive Analysis.

Dlct: Dialect.

EA: Error Analysis.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

FL: Foreign Language.

LMD: License Master Doctorat.

L1: First Language.

L2: Second Language.

N: Number.

Prep.: Preposition.

Stc: Sentence.

Stand Arb: Standard Arabic.

TL: Target Language.

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study
2. Statement of the Problem
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4. Research Questions and Hypothesis
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6. Structure of the Dissertation

1. Background of the Study

In second/foreign language learning, students generally tend to make grammatical mistakes. Errors are common aspects that occur during the learning process for all language learners. As for English, errors occur in the use of prepositions which are one of the eight components of parts of speech. Accordingly, prepositional usage is considered a challenging aspect for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners to master. Prepositions are considered as one of the most difficult areas in grammar learning and teaching because they are numerous and there are no specific rules that determine their correct and appropriate use (Quirk, 1993; & Grubic, 2004).

Research in foreign language teaching highlighted the importance of error analysis theory which focuses mainly on the proof that errors made by learners provide to the comprehension of the processes of second language acquisition. Sridhar (1980, as cited in Al-Sibai, 2004) claimed that errors analysis can explain and predict many kinds of errors apart from those caused by negative transfer; the core concept of contrastive analysis. Lados' (1957), contrastive analysis hypothesis was criticized because of its emphasis on one type of errors which is interference of the mother tongue while error analysis gained more importance in the explanation and prediction of learners' errors.

Actually, there are many causes of students' errors. However, mother tongue interference and language transfer are conceived as the prominent ones. Language transfer is considered the most important aspect in second language learning and second language teaching theories in the early 50s. Lado (1957) claimed that people transfer the features of their native language and culture to the foreign language both productively and receptively when they try to speak the target language and understand the culture. However, this concept

was eventually substituted by other concepts that relate to error analysis theory in the analysis and explanation of learners' errors.

There are many studies about the use of English prepositions by second language learners. Rumiya (as cited in Saravanan, 2014), in her study on the Indonesian students of English said that participants face many challenges in learning English grammar. They usually commit many errors, especially when they use English prepositions. The objective of her research was to identify the most difficult prepositions with regard to their types. The result of this study revealed that prepositions of manner, time, place, purpose, direction, similarity, capacity, and association were hard for learners and their use of these prepositions was very poor. This study, also, demonstrated that learners find difficulties in using English prepositions of direction, in particular.

Another study was conducted by Kim (as cited in Saravanan, 2014), to investigate the errors of using English preposition in the written work of upper Secondary Malay learners. The main purpose of this study was to identify the prepositional errors and to determine the main reasons behind these errors. The results of this study showed that learners made errors when using the prepositions of place, time, and direction due to their unawareness of the different meanings and functions of English prepositions. It was then argued that the method of teaching prepositions plays an important role in simplifying the learning of English prepositions. Teachers, accordingly, are required to adapt new approaches of teaching prepositions, in accordance to students' level.

A third study on English prepositions was conducted by Reef (as cited in Saravanan, 2014). He worked on learners' competence in the use of prepositions of place, in particular and tried to discover the main causes of students' errors whether they are attached to poor teaching or to the influence of the first language. Results revealed that English preposition of

place are problematic for learners. Results showed that learners could not differentiate between the four types of English prepositions of place and they faced difficulties in using them. Also, students faced challenges in using the preposition of position/destination more than the other types. Results also indicated a relationship between the learners' level of competence and the appropriate use of the four types of prepositions of place: position/destination, relative, passage, and orientation. The obtained results also made clear that the major causes of errors can be attributed to learners' inability to differentiate the semantic content of these preposition and poor teaching processes employed by teachers.

The main focus of the present study is the errors made by second year students at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben yahia, Jijel, in terms of using English prepositions. This research attempts to identify the main sources of errors and to check whether language interference is the only source of errors. It also attempts to show the most problematic prepositions for learner and the difficulties they face in using them.

2. Statement of the Problem

Students who learn English as a foreign language face many problems in the process of acquiring it. One of them is the use of English prepositions, particularly, the nine most common ones: in, on, at, by, for, to, of, with and about. These prepositions are polysemeous words with different meanings and functions. EFL learners, generally, make errors in the appropriate selection or use of this part of speech.

Aim of the Study

The main aim of this research is to shed light on the main reasons that lead students to misuse the most common English prepositions, through investigating whether their errors are due to language transfer or they are developmental in nature. In other words, this study seeks to identify the most frequent types of errors second year learners of English commit in the

use of prepositions. It, also, sets out to determine the most problematic prepositions for second year learners and to point out the difficulties they face in using these prepositions.

3. Research Questions and Hypothesis

The basic aim of this study, as mentioned above, is to check whether language transfer, as a source of error, is the only reason behind erroneous usage of most common English prepositions or there are other reasons. To do so, it is attempted to answer the following questions:

- What are the types of errors committed by second year students of English in the use of the most common English prepositions?
- What are the most problematic prepositions of English among the most common ones, for second year learners?
- What are the reasons of difficulty, for learners, in using English prepositions?

Accordingly, it is hypothesized that second year LMD students of English department will perform quite similarly in the use of the most common prepositions of English. In other words, learners will show the same developmental errors in addition to errors which result from first language interference.

4. Means of Research

To verify the soundness of the above stated hypothesis and to obtain reliable data that serve the aim of the study, two means of research are used, a grammar test and an analysis of students' composition. The test is administered to 120 participants out of 270 Second Year students of English at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben yahia, Jijel. They were selected on an immediate convenience sampling basis. Thus, because of that this grammar test is selected to collect the students' errors in order to classify and analyse them. The second tool is the analysis of written compositions taken from the first semester exams papers of the same groups in Written Expression. They are selected in order to compare

between students' errors in grammar test and written compositions in the use of English prepositions.

5. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into three chapters; two theoretical chapters and a practical chapter one.

Chapter one entitled '**English Preposition**' covers three main points. First, it supplies a comprehensive definition of prepositions through focusing on their characteristics in terms of form, meaning, use and function. It, also, deals with the classification or the types of English prepositions, in particular. Last, and within teaching/learning context, light is shed on the reasons of difficulties in learning English prepositions as well as the approaches and methods used to teach them.

Chapter two, '**Error Analysis, and Language Transfer Theory**' focuses mainly on theories of Errors Analysis and interlanguage as essential concept in Second Language learning and teaching. It is also concerned with language transfer, its factors and types.

Chapter three, '**Investigating Students' Errors in the Use of the Most Common English Prepositions**' is devoted to the practical part of this study. It deals, mainly, with administration and description of the means of research; the test and students' composition, in addition to the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained.

Chapter One: English Prepositions

Introduction

1.1. What is a Preposition?

1.1.1. Definition of Preposition

1.1.2. Characteristics of English Prepositions

1.1.2.1. Use

1.1.2.2. Meaning and Role

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1.1.3. Semantic Properties of English Prepositions

1.2. Classifications of English Prepositions

1.3. Prepositions in Foreign Language Learning/Teaching

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1.3.2. Reasons of Difficulties in Learning English Prepositions

1.3.3. Suggestions for Teaching Prepositions

1.4. Functions of the Most Common English Prepositions

Conclusion

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Chapter One: English Prepositions

Introduction

A preposition is a word that expresses a relationship between two parts in a sentence. Researchers agree that learning and teaching English prepositions is not an easy process. The use of English prepositions is a problematic issue. The complexity of this issue leads researchers to suggest some theories and approaches to facilitate the acquisition and use of prepositions. This chapter, then, will deal with different elements related to English prepositions. First, it starts with how researchers define prepositions, and the characteristics of English prepositions. Also, this chapter consists of some approaches and suggestions for teaching English prepositions in order to facilitate the process of using these problematic language items.

1.1. What is a Preposition?

1.1.1. Definition of Preposition

According to Essberger (2009), the word preposition is composed of 'pre+position' which means 'placing in front', i.e. in front of another word which can be a noun, a pronoun, a noun phrase or gerund. A preposition can occur after another word but is still linked to it, for example:

- Who did you see her with?
- With whom did you see her?

A preposition shows the nature of the relationship between two parts in a sentence (Quirk, 1993). This relationship includes those of time, direction, position, place, movement and other relations. Prepositions, also, can be adverbs or conjunctions as in the following examples:

- Push the door to. (Adverb)
- Walk to the shop. (Preposition)

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- I revised all the lessons but the last one.(Preposition)
- I revised all the lessons but I didn't understand.(Conjunction)

Similarly, Stannard (1974) described prepositions as are little words that come before a noun or noun-equivalent. They are pronounced softly and have the same forms. Prepositions don't come before a verb. However, they are polysemeous words, i.e. they have several meanings. Although they are used more frequently than other words, they are not easy to learn and use.

As for English prepositions, it is noteworthy to mention that they are of an unknown number because complex prepositions can be added to the language at any time as the language evolves. Essberger (2009) listed 94 prepositions and suggested that they are all simple prepositions. These prepositions include:

- Aboard, about, above, across, after, about, above, against, along, alongside, amid, amidst, among, amongst, anti, around, as, astride, at, atop.
- Bar, barring, before, behind, bellow, beneath, beside, besides, between, beyond, but, by.
- Circa, concerning, considering, counting, cum.
- Despite, down, during.
- Except, excepting, excluding.
- Following, for, from.
- Given, gone.
- In, including, inside, into.
- Less, like.
- Minus.
- Near, notwithstanding.
- Of, off, on, onto, opposite, outside, over.

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- Past, pending, per, plus, pro.
- Re, regarding, respecting, round.
- Save, saving, since.
- Than, through, thru, throughout, till, to, touching, toward, towards.
- Under, underneath, unlike, until, up, upon.
- Versus, via.
- With, within, without, worth.

Besides, Huddleston (1988) claimed that adpositions consist of prepositions and postpositions. While a preposition comes before its complement, a postposition comes after its complement depending on the position of the complement itself; whether it has to come at the first place in a clause or it is absent, as illustrated in the examples below:

- Which train did you leave him *at*? (Wh-question)
- What I'm sure *of* is that the use of technology in education will grow to a large extent. (Wh-clause)
- The town I was telling you *about* is very far.(relative clauses)
- Who did you see her *with*?(exclamation)
- She is rare to leave *with*.(infinitive clauses)

A preposition can occur with a 'noun phrase' or, a 'WH-clause' or a 'gerund' to form a prepositional phrase as demonstrated in the following examples:

- *At* the post office.
- *From* what I see.
- *For* opening bottles.

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Quirk (1993) said that ‘that-clauses’ and ‘infinitive clauses’ don’t function as prepositional complements. He argued that an adverb or an adjective may function as a prepositional complement as in: at least, at worst. .. and so on. In these examples, the presence and absence of prepositions is salient:

- John is the man *with* his hand in the pocket.
- John is the man who his hand in the pocket.

A prepositional phrase can be itself a prepositional complement, while ‘that-clauses’ may function as a prepositional complement when the appositive construction ‘the fact that’ is used as in the first and second examples respectively:

- He crawled from under the table.
- I’m afraid of the fact that I can’t finish my work.

In addition, a prepositional adverb is very similar in its form to preposition but it modifies a verb and is not followed by a complement, as illustrated in the examples below. Quirk (1993) noted that one syllable prepositions, usually, are unstressed words but they become accented when they are prepositional adverb. The prepositions: above, after, around, behind, between, by, in, near, opposite, outside and with are some of those prepositions that can function as prepositional adverbs.

- She walked *past* the bank. (Prep.)
- A day went *past* and nothing changed.(Adv.)

Different from prepositional adverbs, prepositional verbs are formed through a combination of a verb and a preposition. This combination makes a new transitive verb with different meaning, as illustrated in these examples:

- She waits *at* home.

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- She is waiting *for* the bus.

1.1.2. Characteristics of English Prepositions

1.1.2.1. Use

The use of the appropriate preposition is a problematic issue for ESL/EFL learners. Some prepositions can be used interchangeably in some context, as in the case of: 20 minutes **after/ past**. Larsen-Freeman et al. (2016) demonstrated that the prepositions *after* and *past*, in this context, have the same meaning and use. However, this interchangeability is limited, as in:

- We named the cat ~~after/past~~ my sister.

Moreover, they (2016.p. 430) suggested a list of some prepositions that can be used interchangeably in some context. Those prepositions are listed and exemplified in Table 1.1. below:

Table 1.1

Prepositions that Can Be Used Interchangeably.

Prepositions	Examples
Near/by	A house near/by the lake
Around/about	Happened around/about 10 o'clock
To/of	A quarter to/of ten
After/past	A quarter after/past ten
On/along	The towns on/along the Rhine
Until/till/to	Work from 9 until/till/to 5
Below /beneath/under/underneath	Below/beneath/under/underneath the stairs
Next to/beneath	Next to/beside the stream

Knowing how to use prepositions appropriately is a problematic issue for English language students, because they appear everywhere, before nouns (*on the table*), as part of a

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phrasal verb (*hold on*), before gerund verbs (*for explaining*), or after adjectives (*afraid of*). This entails that it is difficult to teach learners a simple rule and explain when and how to use them correctly. Rules of using prepositions can be overgeneralised and this leads to the misuse of prepositions. The appropriate use of prepositions amongst language learners can also be affected by native language interference (Larsen-Freeman et al, 2016).

1.1.2.2. Meaning

Prepositions are polysemeous words i.e. a single preposition may have different meanings and senses. The most important meaning that prepositions express is the spatial meaning which may be physical or mental space. Cowan (2008) suggested that the meaning of many English prepositions can be understood in terms of the thematic roles occupied by their object noun phrases (NPs henceforth). To illustrate, prepositions of location may describe a static location a source or a goal, or even convey temporal meanings (such as: **by**, **from**, **to**, **in**), as explained in the examples below:

- She lives **in** Paris. (The preposition **in** describes a place where something is located).
- He arrived **from** Russia. (The preposition **from** describes an action's point of source or origin).
- We take the bus **to** school. (The preposition **to** describes an action's point of goal).
- I was born **in** 1994 (The preposition **in** expresses temporal meaning)

Whereas, there some spatial prepositions as **in** and **on** that can express non-spatial meaning, for instance:

- Paris is **in** France.(spatial meaning)
- The man **in** black.(non-spatial meaning)
- The book is **on** the table.(spatial meaning)

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- **On** arriving home, I noticed that they had left.(non-spatial meaning)

To sum up, the following are meanings of some English prepositions as listed by Quirk (1993: 145-161)

Table 1.2

Meanings of Some Prepositions

Prepositions	Meanings	Examples
In	Dimension	The cow is in the field
To	Positive position/direction	Mary went to school
Away from	Negative position/direction	I went away from the room
Behind	Relative position	The child is behind the tree
Under	Relative destination	I walked under the bridge
Across	Passage	The ball rolled across the lawn
Up	Direction	Climb up the stairs
Past	Orientation	The village past the bus-stop
Over	Resultative meaning	The horses are over the fence
Through	Pervasive meaning	Chaos reigned all through the house
At	Time when	At 6 o'clock
For	Duration	We camped there for the summer
Because of	Cause, reason, motive	Because of the drought the price of the bread was high that year
In order to	Purpose	He will do anything in order to gain money
To	Recipient	He gave a beautiful doll to his daughter
Into	Goal, target	He walked into the garden
From	Source, origin	I borrow the book from bill
With	Manner	We were received with the utmost courtesy
Without	Means, instrument	I drew it without a ruler
Against	Support, opposition	It is prudent to go with rather than against the tide of public opinion

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1.1.2.3. Form

According to Larsen-Freeman et al. (2016), prepositions may come after a noun (the t-shirt of John), a verb (he jumps over the table), and adjective (it is good for you). Prepositions come before nouns as their name indicates pre-position but they can be found at the end of sentences as in the case of 'Wh-questions' as in: 'who are you coming *with*?'. Cowan (2008) asserted that prepositions are mainly followed by noun phrases that can be a pronoun (for me) or a gerund (for reading). Some prepositions are single words (in, at, for) and some others are complex words (in regard to, because of, in front of). Prepositions may follow copular verbs (the bus is **at** the station), intransitive verbs (she lies **on** her bed), or transitive adjectives (I'm afraid **of** the idea). Learners need to know the fixed collocation pattern with certain noun phrases that are preceded or followed by a preposition such as: belief in, in my opinion...and so on.

Cowan (2008) also noted that multiword prepositional clusters consist of two prepositions in the same noun phrase as for: '*in case of, on*', in addition to the prepositions followed by 'that clause'. This construction is composed of a preposition + that clause which is the object of the preposition. The second construction listed by Cowan (2008) is 'in order + infinitive clause'. The combination preposition *in* followed by the noun order is followed by purpose clause or infinitive complement. The third structure relates to 'preposition + preposition' construction where two prepositions follow immediately each other. The last construction is that of 'preposition + adjective' combination in which there are adjective + prepositions and preposition + adjective orders. This combination has a similar meaning to adverbs as in the expression if 'in private' that means privately.

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1.1.2.4. Function

As for the functions of English prepositions, Quirk (1993: 145) stated that prepositions and prepositional phrases have seven main functions. A preposition can function as:

- 1- *Head of prepositional phrase*: which is a combination of a preposition and a phrase or a clause, as in: 'Who is the man with the black suit?' In this example, preposition 'with' is the head of the phrase 'the black suit'.
- 2- *Noun phrase modifier*, as in: 'John is the man with his hand in the pocket'. In this example, the prepositional phrase 'with his hand in the pocket' describes the noun 'John'.
- 3- *Noun phrase complement*, as in: 'You use a corkscrew for opening bottles.' In this example, the prepositional phrase 'for opening bottles' completes the meaning of the noun phrases 'a corkscrew'.
- 4- *Adjective phrase complement*, as in: 'Afraid of being late.' In this example, the prepositional phrase 'of being late' completes the meaning of adjective phrase.
- 5- *Verb phrase complement*, as in: 'Drive in the forest.' In this example, 'in the forest' completes the meaning of the verb phrase.
- 6- *Adjunct adverbial*, as in: 'Her mother works in a school'. In this example, the prepositional phrase 'in a school' modifies the clause 'her mother works' by adding extra information about place.
- 7- *Disjunct adverbial*, as in: 'In my opinion, teachers need to make a test.' In this example,

The disjunct adverbial 'in my opinion' adds extra information to the entire clause 'teachers need to...' (Quirk, 1993)

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1.1.3. Semantic Properties of English Prepositions

English prepositions differ and their extended meaning differs in constant way. Some researchers attempt to explain the spatial and the temporal relationships of prepositions. Larsen-Freeman et al. (2016) explained that English prepositions used to express spatial relationships and their meanings.

1.1.3.1 Spatial Relationships

According to Close (1981), "In using spatial prepositions, we are concerned not so much with objective measurement, i.e. with the actual dimensions of the things to which we referred, as with how we imagined them to be at the time of speaking. Thus we could imagine a town as a point on the map as a surface map, as a surface to go, as a space we lived in, or walk through" (p.148). Indeed, there are many English prepositions that have the same meaning, using one preposition instead of other does not change the meaning. Some prepositions express general meaning such as: on, in, under...and so on, while others indicate specific meaning, like: within, below...etc. Besides, there is a number of prepositions which are "unambiguously dynamic and therefore, potentially very emphatic" (Lindstromberg, 2000, p.38). Two examples of such prepositions are: **into** that is the opposite of **in**, and **onto** which is the opposite of **on**. Lindstromberg (2000, p.33) made a distinction between the two prepositions when he said: "If 'in' is used, native speakers tend to understand that the chemicals are themselves, perhaps as constituents of the walls. 'With', on the other hand, strongly suggests a different meaning [...] that the chemicals were in the space enclosed by the walls. This was because 'within' meant well and truly in, not just a bit in".

1.1.3.2. Temporal Relationships

A large number of prepositions like about, for, from, on, at, in, by... can be used to indicate place and time. According to Quirk et al. (1972), "The temporal uses of prepositions

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frequently suggest metaphorical extensions from the sphere of place” (p.377). Other researcher like Hill (1989) gave a clear image about prepositions of time which are organized and very simple to understand as compared to prepositions of place. The following sentences are illustrative:

- **At:** indicating specific times of the clock of time in the day
- **In:** indicating specific times(day ,month ,season ,year), place ,shape
- **On:** indicating specific days and dates

Table 1.3

The Distribution of one, in, and at with Different Units of Time (Belhoula, 2009, p.141)

Prepositions	On	In	At
Units			
Of time			
Days	on Friday	/	/
day +part of the day	On Wednesday Afternoon	/	/
Clock time	/	/	at 8.00 p. m
Dates	On the second of April	/	/
Year	/	in 1975	/
Months	/	in October	/
Parts of the day	/	In the morning	at night
Special day	on Christmas day	/	/
Season	/	in winter	/
Festival	/	/	at Christmas/Easter
mealtime	/	/	at lunchtime
Fixed expressions			-at the same time
that refer to specific points in time	/	/	-at present
Long periods of time	/	In the middle ages	/

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1.2. Classification of English Prepositions

According to Evens et al (2003), a preposition expresses a relationship of meaning between two entities. They code spatial, temporal or other relations between two parts in a sentence. The following examples provide three types of those relations:

- He lives **in** the south **of** London (spatial meaning)
- We worked **for** three hours (temporal meaning)
- It's **for** removing and stains (purposeful meaning)

While Essberger (2009) explained that there are two main classifications of prepositions; prepositions of place (such as: above, over, in front of, beside ,under...) and prepositions of time (such as: in ,at, during...), Lindstromberg (1997) said that the traditional classification of prepositions is the classification by domain of application in which prepositions are classified into prepositions of space and time, prepositions of space, prepositions of time and prepositions of neither space nor time as mentioned below:

- Space and time: at, in, on, to, by...
- Time: during, before, after ...
- Space: below, along, beside ...
- Neither space nor time: concerning...

The last classification to present is that of Quirk, et al (1993). According to them, there are different types or classifications of prepositions that they added to those of place and time that are considered the most frequent to identify.

Also, there are other types of prepositions organized as follows:

- 1- *Prepositions for place*: used to indicate position. These include: on, at, in, around, near, below, under, beside...and so on.

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- The cat is **under** the table
- He lives **near** his workplace
- She lives **in** France

2- *Prepositions for time*: used when a particular event occurs, such as: in, on, at, since, during, until.

- James was born **in** 1977
- She will call you **at** 10A.M
- He will meet you **on** Saturday

3- *Prepositions for direction*: used to describe the direction of something. These prepositions include: into, across, to, toward, through...etc.

- She threw a stone **into** a river
- He went **to** the school
- I put an umbrella **over** the chair

4- *Prepositions for agent*: used to describe a causal relationship between a person or a thing. They are written in the passive voice. These type include :by, with

- The work was finished **by** her
- The poem is written **by** him

5- *Prepositions for instruments (device)*: used to describe certain machine, device in the sentence such as: by, with.

- She came here **by** train
- She is shooting this video **with** a camera

6- *Prepositions for source (origin)*: used to illustrate a person or something's origin. These include: from ,of

- She is a friend **of** mine
- The title **of** the book is interesting

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7- *Prepositions for connection*: used to describe accompaniment such as: with, for; relationship such as: to, and possession such as: of.

- She is a friend **of** mine (possession)
- I'm **with** her (relationship)

8- *Prepositions for purpose (reason)*: used to indicate purpose such as: for, because of, through, from....

- She is studying hard **for** the final exam
- He will protect you **from** yourself

9- *Prepositions for manner*: indicated how thing is done. These include: by, within, on...

- She speaks **in** a high voice
- He would like travel **on** train

1.3. Prepositions in Foreign Language Learning/Teaching

1.3.1. Approaches in Teaching English Preposition

1.3.1.1. Traditional Approach

Traditional approach is an approach for teaching English prepositions through grammatical structures. Lam (2009) asserted that EFL students may use techniques to facilitate the learning of prepositions individually rather than listing out the prepositions. In his study on students' learning of prepositions, Lam (2009, p.3) explained that: "there was no predictability in the use of prepositions, and they had simply learned context by context". Lam's (2009) study revealed that those learners, who were taught prepositions using this approach, gained trust and minimal retention in using English prepositions. However, he (2009) claimed that for developing news skills in language learning, teachers should attempt to create more explanatory techniques of teaching prepositions.

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1.3.1.2. Collocation Approach

Collocation approach is a method for teaching English prepositions. It involves prepositions in “chunks” rather than as individual units. Lindstromberg (1997) explained that the word collocation meant two words or more words that went together. He (1997) added that collocation, also, referred to co-occurrence, which made up two or more words that occurred together such as: hard work. Moreover, Lindstromberg (1997) stated that there were different kinds of collocation. They were strong and fixed, and some prepositions occurred at the beginning of collocations (**on** time), in the middle (side **by** side) or at the end (thank **to**). Larsen-Freeman, et al. (2016) elaborated that a verb or a transitive adjective occurred with specific prepositions (as in: **to** depend **on**, to be irrespective **of**...). A collocation occurred in a noun phrase followed by a given preposition (**in** my perspective). Also, it could occur by two preposition such as **in** view **of**, **in** spite **of**, **in** case **of**. Larsen-Freeman, et al. (2016) stated that there were a number of collocations which were fixed words order, that could be binomials, such as peace and quiet ,goods and services ,show and tell...,and others were trinomial, such as short, dark, and handsome.....Both of fixed collocations and idioms dealt with transparency of meaning. Idioms were often an expressions that were difficult to understand from the lexical items themselves (raising cats), whereas collocation words occurred together. Mueller (2011, as cited in Larsen-Freeman, et al., 2016, p.38) noted that, second language learners’ successful performance can be partially attributed to their knowledge of collocation.

1.3.1.3. Prototype Approach

Prototype approach is a strategy used for teaching English prepositions, through focusing on words that are semantically combined with prepositions. According to Lindstromberg (1996), prototype referred to “contact of an object with a line of surface” (p.229). For example, the spatial preposition “**on**” has various meanings as in: ‘Your pen’s

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was **on** the table’ .This meaning considered more frequent than others meanings when using more technical language. Lindstomberg (1997) asserted that prototypical meaning also called “conceptually basic” meaning which compared to other meanings. In the example above the preposition **on** includes contact with upper surface. It is the subject.

1.3.3. Reasons of Difficulties in Learning English Prepositions

As mentioned earlier, English prepositions are considered as a source of difficulty for learners of English. In fact, EFL students, generally, face many problems in the process of learning how to use English prepositions appropriately. Researchers have classified three main sources of difficulty or problems learners encounter when learning and using prepositions.

First, one single preposition may performs many functions. This accounts for learners’ confusion and inability to select appropriately the relevant proposition n to the context of speech. To illustrate, the preposition *of* may function as an indicator of proportion, an agent or mark possession. The second reason is that prepositions are polysemeous words (Evans et al. 2003). In addition, some languages (such as Japanese and Korean) use postpositions to express the same functions of prepositions. Third, Larsen-Freeman et al. (2016) maintained that prepositions don’t match up well from one language to another. For example, a speaker of Arabic could say ‘fi el mae’ for both ‘in the water’ and ‘on the water’.

English *to*=French *à* English for=French *pour*

(but) a glass for cognac=un verre à cognac.

Because of these reasons, mastering the use of preposition is one of the most challenging tasks in learning English language that learners face.

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1.3.3. Suggestions for Teaching Prepositions

According to Larsen-Freeman et al (2016), beginners and medium students faced difficulties to differentiate between compulsory and optional deletion of preposition, learners supposed to select suitable sentences from a list in order to enhance their learning of prepositions as in.

- On Saturday she will go swimming
- *On yesterday he went running
- Tomorrow he will go driving
- *On every day she has read story entertaining

Larsen-Freeman et al (2016) demonstrated that assisting students to learn spatial meanings and made distinction between prepositions could be approached through using charts with iconic images, learners could make a relation between the selection of preposition and the dimensions of the landmark. Yule (1998, as cited in Larsen-Freeman et al, 2016, p.433) suggested “students can be asked if reference points (landmarks) should be conceptualization as points, surfaces or areas” (p. 163) such as beach and water.

1. We were at the beach/we were on the beach

2. We saw some boats/we were on the water 1. /2. (Larsen-Freeman, et al, 2016, p.433)

Larsen-Freeman et al (2016) illustrated that clay modeling was a method that used to affirm spatial relationships. In a study conducted by Serrano Lopez and Poehner (2008, as cited in Larsen-Freeman et al, 2016), students of Spanish were asked to make a reflection underlying spatial terms for Spanish prepositions, they could create models for prepositions to discover the relationships between trajectory and landmark.

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In fact, there are different strategies for training learners to see the basic meaning of a preposition within its various uses. Taylor and Evans (2004as cited in Larsen-Freeman et al, 2016, p.433) proposed “some solutions for how to present extended meaning for overextended senses for over. For the sense of A-B trajectory, they recommended using a flip book(or a video clip that segmented into individual frames)with images of a cat jumping over a wall(point A)to the other side of the wall(point C), and asking students how the cat moved to point C. Then, focus will be on the pages (or frames) where the cat suspended over the obstacle of the wall (point B)”. This example explained the basic meaning of the preposition over as in the cat must land on the other side of the wall.

Yule (1998as cited in Larsen-Freeman et al, 2016) supported that when using English prepositions of time expression, students should first check their meanings through guessing about the landmarks that could be conceptualized as a specific time (8 o'clock), a limited unit of time (December 2nd), or as an extended period of time (February).This method followed by asking students to draw the landmarks in a way that represents the basic spatial meanings of the prepositions. Students could make relationships between spatial and meaning of English prepositions.

On his part, Lindstromberg (1996as cited in Larsen-Freeman et al, 2016) believed that teaching the prototypical meanings of English prepositions is considered as a systematic approach, and dealing with their more abstract meanings comes from metaphorical extensions.

Lindstromberg (1996as cited in Larsen-Freeman et al, 2016) followed a classic approach as in the use of Total Physical Response and schemata to make the prototypical place and goal meaning of a preposition clear. Also, he (1996) observed that using schemata to give English prepositional meaning long predates prototype theory. Moreover, using

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schemata chains presents how the prototype meaning holds throughout its metaphorical extensions.

Another useful method to express spatial relationships is to ask learners to draw images or account of papers to create designs. Learner, then, are distributed with five pieces of paper each in the shapes of a triangle, square, circle, star, and rectangle, and are asked to pair up as illustrated in the following quotation:

“Ask students A to arrange the shapes in any pattern he or she likes. Students B did not watch. Then student B has to try to construct the same pattern that student A created following A’s directions. The students seated back to back .When the five pieces of paper placed, the students should compare A’s original to B’s copy .Then it is B’s turn to create and describe a new pattern for A”(Larsen-Freeman, et al.,2016, P.434).

Larsen-Freeman, et al., (2016) stated that because of multiple meanings or senses that one preposition could have, students gave unexpected uses of English prepositions. There were some techniques that could be used such as encouraging students to discuss and explore their preposition learning experiences in the classroom. Teachers, also, could ask learners to look through texts outside of class and gather different uses of a particular preposition and practice them in class; their examples compared to core meanings and corrected. Teachers advised to keep a “preposition chart” to help learners in better learning and memorization of these prepositions. This technique was also applicable for university learners due to the complexity and multiplicity of the functions of English prepositions.

Students have challenges in selecting the appropriate preposition, because of restricted collocation pattern. Dictionaries that comprise information on collocation are a useful tool for selecting prepositions suitably. Another tip which is suggested to teachers by Larsen Freeman, et al (2016) related to finding a small biographical of someone’s interest to

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your learners to review English prepositions. Teachers, then, should omit all the prepositions used and which referred to time and place. Eventually, learners would be asked to work in pairs or individually to fill in the blanks with appropriate prepositions.

1.4. Functions of the Most Common English Prepositions

1.4.1. Preposition 'of'

English	French	Function	Arabic
1-Indicating a proportion: e.g. some of us/of the twelves of us.	de,en Quelques-uns d'entre nous/sur les douze (que nous sommes/étions).		عن،من،في،ذو،ذات،ب،قبل Stand Arb: baadon mina/mina nahnu l'itna aashar. Dlct: shwiya menna/menna hna tnash.
2-In expressions of time: e.g. it's ten of four.	Il est quatre heures moins dix.		Stand Arb : inaha rabiaa ila aashro daqa'iq. Dlct : rebaa ghir aashra.
3- Indicating an agent: e.g. that's kind of you.	C'est tres gentil de votre part/à vous		Stand Arb : hada min lotfiq. Dlct : tri gentil.
4-Made of : e.g. a ring of gold/a will of iron.	Une bague en or/une volente de fer		Stand Arb : khatem dahabi/'irada hadidiya. Dlct : khatem dahabi/'irada hadidiya.
5- In the most uses: e.g. the leg of the table.	The leg of the table.		Stand Arb : rijl el ma'id Dlct :rjel mida.

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1.4.2. Preposition 'To'

English	Function French	Arabic
1-Indirection of : E.g.to school.	à, chez,avec,sur,envers,au. À l' école.	لأن،حتى،أن،بالنسبة(الى)،ل،ألى Stand Arb :ila el madrasa. Dlct :lqraya.
2-In telling time : e.g. ten minutes to three.	Trois heures moins dix.	Stand Arb :talita ila aashro daqa' iq. Dlct :tlata ghir aashra.
3-Introducing direct or indirect object : e.g. give the book to Sophie/be nice to your brother/to dance to the music.	Donne le livre à Sophie/sois gentil avec ton frère/danser sur la musique.	Stand Arb :aeti el kitab li sofi/qun latif maa akhiq/raqs aala angham el mosiqa. Dlct :eeti lktab lsofi/qun gentil maa khuq/shtih flghna.
4-Showing reason : e.g. to invite sb to dinner	Inviter qqn à dîner.	Dlct:taered shakhs laesha. Arb :daeewat shakhs aala el aashae'.
5-Belonging to: e.g. the key to the safe/a room to myself/there's no sense to it.	La clé de coffre/une chamre pour moi tout seul/ça n'a aucun sens.	Stand Arb :miftah el amane/ghorfatun li/la maana laha. Dlct :maftah lamane/bit liya/maeendha hata maena.

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6-Showing reaction : Stand Arb:li mofaja'atih.
 e.g. to his surprise. A sa grande surprise. Dct:lalmofaja' dyalo.

1.4.3. Preposition 'At'

English	Function	Arabic
	French	
<p>1-Indicating place/position : E.g. at the airoport/at the supermarket.</p>	<p>à,de,en. A l'aéroport/au supermarché.</p>	<p>عند،في،من لدن،ب،ل،لدى،من Stand Arb :fi el matar/fi el matjar el kibir. Dlct :flmatar/flsupiret.</p>
<p>2-Indicating direction : e.g. to throw sth at/to look at sb.</p>	<p>Jeter qqch sur/regarder qn.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :ramye shaye' ma aala/el baht aan shakhs ma. Dlct :ramye haja aala/tdoh aala wahd.</p>
<p>3-Indicating time : e.g. at nine o'clock/at night.</p>	<p>A 9 h/la nuit.</p>	<p>Dlct :aala tasaa/f lil. Stand Arb :aala saaa tasiaa/fi layel.</p>
<p>4-Indicating rate,level,speed : e.g. at 60km/h.</p>	<p>À 60km/h.</p>	<p>Stand Arb:fi 60km/h. Dlct:f 60km/h.</p>

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<p>5-Indicating activity: e.g. to be at lunch/to be good at sth.</p>	<p>Etre en train de déjeuner/être bon en qqch.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :yaqun aala el aasha'/yaqun jayid fi shaye' ma. Dlct :yqun f laasha/yqun mlih fi haja.</p>
<p>6-Indicating cause : e.g. shocked at sth/angry at sb/delighted at sth.</p>	<p>Choqué par qqch/fâché contre qqn/ravi de qqch.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :motafajie' min shaye'ma/ghadib bisabab shakhs/fi montaha saada. Dlct :mchoqi mn haja/meghashash/miyet bl farha.</p>

1.4.4. Prepsition 'For'

English	French	Function	Arabic
<p>1-Intended to be used by or belong to : e.g.who are the flowers for?</p>	<p>pour,pendant,sur. Pour qui sont les fleurs?</p>	<p>من اجل، لأجل، ل، بدلاً، من، إلى، مع، عن، ب، مدة، مسافة، ان Stand Arb :liman azuhur ? Dlct :lman nwar ?</p>	
<p>2-Intended to help or benifit: e.g. he cooked dinner for us.</p>	<p>Il nous a préparé à manger.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :tabakha lana alaashae. Dilct :tayb lna laasha.</p>	
<p>3-Indicating purpose: e.g. it's for removing stains.</p>	<p>C'est pour enlever les taches.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :'inaha li izalati el boqaa. Dlct :biyesh nahiw li tache.</p>	

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5-Indicating cause

or reason:
e.g. she's been criticized for her views/the reason for doing.

On lui a reproché ses opinions/la raison pour laquelle on fait.

Stand Arb :intuqidet bisabeb ara' iha/sabab el qiyam bih.
Dlct :ntacdoha bsabat rayha/saba daelajalha dirnah.

6-Towards:

e.g. to feel sorry for somebody.

Avoir de la peine pour qn.

Stand Arb :asheur bil'asef aala shakhs ma.
Dlct :tehas bl hasra aala insan.

7-On behalf of :

e.g. to be pleased for sb/say hello to him for me.

Etre content pour qn/dit-lui bonjour de ma part.

Stand Arb :taqun saii min ajl shakhs ma/hayihi iiwadan aani.
Dlct :tqun frehan lwahed/salem aalih f plasti.

8-As regards:

e.g. she's a great one for jokes.

Elle aime rire.

Stand Arb:inaha tuhibo dahiq.
Dlct :hiya tehab tadhaq.

9-In expressions

of time :
e.g. this is the best show i've seen for years.

C'est le meilleur spectacle que j'aie vu depuis des années.

Stand Arb :hada afdal aared ra'aytoho mndo sanawat.
Dlct:hada laared mkhayir di rit lisanawat.

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<p>10-Indicating consequence: e.g. i haven't the patience for sewing.</p>	<p>Je n'ai pas la patience qu'il faut pour coudre.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :laysa ladaya el sabre lazim li el khiyata. Dlct :ma aandish sabr lazim lakhyata.</p>
<p>11-Indicating person's attitude : e.g. the film was too earnest for me.</p>	<p>Le film était trop sérieux pour moi.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :qan el film jidiyan jidn binisbati li. Dlct:qan lfilm serieu bzaf benisba liya.</p>
<p>12-Stressing particular feature: e.g. i buy it for flavour.</p>	<p>Je l'achète pour le goût.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :ishtaraytoho min ajli nakeha. Dlct :shrit aala jal lgout.</p>
<p>13-Considering : e.g. to be mature for one's age.</p>	<p>Etre mûr pour son âge.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :ishtaraytoho min ajli nakeha. Dlct :shrit aala jal lgout.</p>
<p>14-Indicating distance : e.g. to drive for miles/the last shop for 30 miles.</p>	<p>Rouler pendant des kilomètres/le dernier magasin avant 30 kilomètres.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :li yaqud li amyal/el mahal el akhir qabla 30 mile min hona. Dlct:yoq l amyal/el hanout lakher qble 30 mile mn hna.</p>
<p>15-Indicating distination: e.g. a ticket for Dublin/to swim for the shore.</p>	<p>Un billet pour Dulin/nager vers la rive.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :tadhkira li dabline/yasbah nahwa el shatie'. Dlct :biyi ldublin/yoom lashat.</p>

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

16-Indicating		
cost/value:	Ça s'est vendu	
e.g. it was sold for	(pour)100 livre	Stand Arb :biaat bi £100/sa abiooka iyaha bi £20.
£100/i'll let you	sterling/je vous le	Dlct :tbaaat b £100/nbiecha lk b £20.
have it for £20.	laisse à 20 livres	
	sterling.	
17-In favour of :		
e.g. to be all for	Etre tout à fait	Stand Arb :li yaqun qula shaye'lidalika/man
it/who's for a	pour/qui veut jouer	yalaab qoret el qadam.
game of football?	au football?	Dlct :biyesh tqun qulqsh lih/mnho dylaab balon.
18-Stressing		
appropriateness :	Elle est la	Stand Arb :inaha shakhs lmonasib li el aamel/el
e.g. she's the	personne qu'il faut	qarar lana
person for the	pour le	Dlct :hiya shakhs lmonasib lelkhadma/lkarar
job/that for us to	travail/c'est à nous	yarjaee lina.
decide.	de décider.	
19-In support of:		
e.g. there is no	Ce n'est	Stand Arb :la yujad dalil aala daliqa.
evidence for that.	absolument pas	Dlct :makayn hta dalil eelih.
	prouvé.	
20-Indicating		
availability:		Stand Arb:li el bayee.
e.g. for sale.	À vendre.	Dlct :labiee.
21-Equivalent to :		
e.g. what the	Comment dit-on	standArb :kayfa nosami l hidae' bil firansiya ?
French for 'boot'?	'boot' en français?	Dlct:kifesh nqolo sebat bl fronsi?
22-In		
explanations:		Stand Arb :min jiha...wa min jihat in okhra.../fi
e.g. for one	Premièrement...est	qol el ahwal,ana motafiq maaha.
thing...and for	deuxièmement.../en	Dlct :mn jiha...wmmn jiha khlaf.../ana nwafekeha
another.../I,for	tout cas moi,jesuis	fi qol lhwal.
one, agree with her.	d'accord avec elle.	

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

23-When

introducing

clauses : Il serait imprudent

e.g. it would be pour nous de

unwise for us to generalizer/le

generalize/the best mieux serait qu'ils

thing would be for s'en aillent.

them to leave.

Stand Arb :min ghayer el hikma an noamim/el
moghadara hiya afdal hal.

Dlct:malazamsh naamemo/lkhrouj afdel hal.

1.4.5. Preposition 'In'

English	Function French	Arabic
1-Exepressing location or position :	dans ,à,en,au,par,de,sur.	في،ب،أثناء،داخل،موجود الى الداخل،في الداخل،بينما،حظوة،مداخلة
e.g. in Paris/in Spain/in school/in prison/in the film/in the box.	A Paris/en Espagne/à l'école/en prison/dans le film/dans la boite.	Stand Arb :fi baris/fi isbanya/fi el madrassa/fi sijen/fi el oolba. Dlct :f pari/f lispernye/f lqraya/f lhabse/f boita.
2-Expressing a subject/field :	dans les assurances.	Stand Arb :fi daman. Dlct :f daman.
e.g. in insurance.		Stand Arb :taqun
3-Include,involved:	Faire de la politique/faire partie de l'équipe.	siyasi/taqun oodew fi fariq. Dlct :tqun siyasi/tqun oodew fl fariq.
e.g. to be in politics/to be in team.		Stand Arb :fi may/sanat
4-In expressions of time :	En Mai/en 1987/pendant la	1987/fi layel/fi el
e.g. in May/in 1987/in the night/in the twenties/at four in the morning.	En Mai/en 1987/pendant la nuit/dans les années 20/à quatre heures du matin.	iishrinet/aala saaa rabiaa sabahan. Dlct :f mai/f 1987/f lil/f laashrinet/aala rabaa desebah.

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

<p>5-Within the space of :</p> <p>e.g. to do sth in 10 minutes.</p>	<p>Faire qqch en 10 minutes.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :taqum bi shaye' ma fi 10 daqa'iq.</p> <p>Dlct :dir haja f 10 dqaye.</p>
<p>6-Expressing the future:</p> <p>e.g. I will be back in half an hour.</p>	<p>Je serai de retour dans une demi-heure.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :sa aood baada nisf saa.</p> <p>Dlct:nwali baad nas saa.</p>
<p>7-With reflexive pronouns:</p> <p>e.g.</p>	<p>Ce n'est pas une mauvaise chose en soi.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :laysa amran sayie' bihadi datih.</p> <p>Dlct :mashi haja mamlihash.</p>
<p>8-Present in,inherent in :</p> <p>e.g. you see it in children/it's rare in cats/he hasn't got it in him to succeed.</p>	<p>On le rencontre chez les enfants/c'est rare chez les chats/il n'est pas fais pour réussir.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :tolahidoh iinda el atfal/inaho nadir iinda lqitat/la yotawaqaa minho najah.</p> <p>Dlct :tshofo aand drari dseghar/nadr aand qtat/mayanjahsh kaml.</p>
<p>9-In measurements:</p> <p>e.g. there are 100 centimetres in a metre/in metres/in a smaller size.</p>	<p>Il y'a 100 centimètres dans le mètre/en mètre/dans une taille plus petit.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :yataqawen el mitre min 100 centimetre/bi mitre/fi hajm asghar.</p> <p>Dlct :mitra fiha 100 centimitre/b mitra/asghar.</p>
<p>10-In ratios :</p> <p>e.g. a gradient of 1-4.</p>	<p>Une pente de 25%.</p>	<p>Stand Arb:inhidar bi 25°.</p> <p>Dlct :mayel b 25%.</p>
<p>11-In approximate amounts :</p> <p>e.g. in their hundreds/to cut sth in three.</p>	<p>Par centaines/couper qqch en trois.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :fi mi'awiyatihm/taqtii shaye' aala talata.</p> <p>Dlct :fl mi'awiya taahom/taqsam haja aala tlata.</p>

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

<p>12-Expressing age : e.g. she is in her twenties/people in their forties/in old age.</p>	<p>Elle a entre vingt et trente ans/les gens qui ont entre quarante et cinquante ans/sur ses vieux jour.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :inaha fi el iishrinat min oomriha/el ashkhas el arbainiyoun/fi sin qabir. Dlct :fl aashrinat/nas f rabiinat f sn qbir.</p>
<p>13-Expressing colour,composition: e.g. available in several colours.</p>	<p>Disponible en plusieurs couleurs.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :motawafir bi alwan motaaadida. Dlct:kayanb alwan bzef.</p>
<p>14-Dressed in: e.g. in a skirt/dressed in black.</p>	<p>En jupe/habillé en noir.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :bi tanura/labas el aswad. Dlct :bla jup/labes kehal.</p>
<p>15-Expressing manner or medium : e.g. in German/'no',he said in a whisper/in pencil/in ink.</p>	<p>En Allemand/'non',a-t-il chuchote/au crayon/à l'encre.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :fi almanya/'la',qala hamisan/bi el qalem/bi lhibre. Dlct :f almanya/qal blaql lala/b lqalm.</p>
<p>16-As regards: e.g. rich in minerals/deaf in one ear/10 cm in length.</p>	<p>Riche en minéraux/sourd d'une oreille/10 centimetres de long.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :ghaniya bi el maadine/la yasmaa bi ihda odonayh/tol 10cm. Dlct :ghaniye b lmaadine/maysmaash bwedan wahda/10cm f tol.</p>
<p>17-By: e.g. in accepting/in doing so.</p>	<p>En acceptant/en faisant cela.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :bi qobul/bi fiil. Dlct :b qobul/b fiil.</p>
<p>18-In superlative: e.g. the tallest tower in the world.</p>	<p>Le plus grande tour du monde.</p>	<p>Stand Arb :atwal borj fi el aalam. Dlct :atwal borj f laalem.</p>

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

1.4.6. Preposition 'By'

English	French	Arabic
	Function	
		حول, عن, بشأن, نحو, تقريبا
<p>1-Showing agent, results(par) :</p> <p>e.g. he was bitten by a snake/ designed by an architect/ destroyed by fire/ by working extra hours/ to begin by saying that</p>	<p>Par ,à, de, en, à cotè de, prés de,avant,au, sur ,....</p> <p>Il a été mordu par un serpent/ conçu par un architecte/détruit par le feu/ en faisant des heures supplémentaires/ commencer par dire que</p>	<p>Stand Arb :oda min taraf toaaban/somima min taraf mohandismiaamari/domirat min taraf niran/min khilal al amalsaatidafaya/tanbda o bilkawli</p> <p>Dlct :karsowhansh/ sam mmow mohandis/harkatownar/yakhdam saatidafaya/tabdatkol</p>
<p>2-Through the means of:</p> <p>e.g. to travel by bus/ by bicycle/ to pay by cheque/ By candlelight(dine)/ i know her by sight/ i took him by the hand/ he was two children by his first wife</p>	<p>Voyager en bus/en vélo/ payer par chèque/ aux bougies/ je la connais de vue/ je l'ai pris par la main/ il a deux enfants de sa première femme</p>	<p>Stand Arb:</p> <p>tosafirobilhafila/bidaraja/todfaa bichik/bichomoaa/aarifoha mina nadra/akhadtohow min yadayhi/ladayhitiflani min zawjatihi al ola/ andowzojdrarimnamralawla</p> <p>Dlct: tvoyagerfal bus/balvélo/ tkhalasbalcheque/bachmaa/ kinchofhanaarafha/ ditow man yadow</p>

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

<p>3-According to,from evidence of (à): e.g. : by my watch it is three o'clock/ I could tell by the look on her face that she was angry/ i knew him by his walk/ it is all right by me</p>	<p>A ma montre,il est trois heures/ rien qu'à la regarder je savais qu'elle était fâché/ je l'ai reconnu à sa demarche/ ça ma va</p>	<p>Stand Arb :fi sa atiinahatalita / binadariilawajjihainahaghadiba/ aarifo how min michyatihi/binisba li kolachay e alamayoram Dlct:fasaadyali ay tlata/nkadrownkolowkiynadrowl awjahabalinghachcha/aarifo ho w min michyatihi/ banisba laya kalahajamliha</p>
<p>4-Via,passing through(par): e.g. by the back door/ to travel to Rome by Venice and Florence/</p>	<p>Par la porte de derrière/ aller à Rome en passant par Venise et Florence</p>	<p>Stand Arb:minalbabalkhalfi/tosafiroil aromawatamoro min madinatalbondokayailafloransa Dlct: mnabablwarani/ tsafarwatadi aalaVenise w Florence</p>
<p>5-Near,beside(à coté de) : e.g. by the window/ by the sea/</p>	<p>A coté de la fenêtre/ au bord de la mer</p>	<p>Stand Arb:bijanibnafida/ala chatii albahr Dlct:kadam taka/ ala chat bhar</p>
<p>6-Past: e.g.</p>	<p>Passer devant quelqu'un/ ils nous ont dépassés dans leur voiture/ laissez-nous passer</p>	<p>Stand Arb: morabichakhs/marrow binabisayaratihim/da onanamorow Dlct: adaalawahad/ adawaalinabatobildyalhom/ khaliwna n adiw</p>
<p>7-Showing authorship(de): e.g. : a film by claudechabrol</p>	<p>Un film de Claude Chabrol</p>	<p>Stand Arb:film min ta elif Claude Chabrol Dlct: film daclaudechabrol</p>

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

8-Before,not later than

(avant):

e.g. by four o'clock/ by this time next week/ by the time she had got downstairs he was gone/ he ought to be here by now/ by now it was clear that they were going to win

Avant quatre heures/ d'ici la semaine prochaine/ le temps qu'elle descende ,il était parti/ il devrait etre déjà là/à ce moment-là il était clair qu'ils allaient gagne.

Stand Arb:kablasaarabaaa/al osboaaalkadimfihadaalwakt/fal waktaladi sa idat haya ila al aala kan kadrahala/yajibo an yakonahona/kanatwadihaanaho msayafozon

Dlct: kbal rab a/ fihadalwaktzmanaljaya/ falwaktatlaatlfoka kan rah/ lazamykonhnadoka/ kanatbaynabalir rayhinyrabhow

Stand

9-During :

e.g. by day as well as by night/ by daylight/ by moonlight

De jour comme de nuit/ au jour/ au clair de lune

Arb :anaharmitlalayli/khilalada w o anahar/khilaladaw o alkamar

Dlct :kililkinhar/ fanhar/ badowdlahlal

10-According to:

e.g. forbidden by law/ to play by the rules/ it seems primitive by western standards

Interdit par la loi/ jouer selon les règles/ cela a l'air primitif selon or d'après les critères occidentaux

Stand Arb:mamnoaa min tarafalkanon/alaibowifkanliikaw anin/

Dlct: mamnoaaminalkanon/ tal abbilkawa id/

10-To the extant or

degree of (de):

e.g. prices have risen by 20 %/ he is taller than me by two centimetres/by far/ it is better by far

Les prix on augmenté de 20%/ il fait deux centimètres de plus que moi ,ilest plus grand que moi de deux centimètres/de loin/ c'est beaucoup mieux

Stand Arb:irtafa at al as ar bi 20 %/howaatwali mini b centimétrayni/ilahadbaaid/aktar bikatir

Dlct: achizad b 20%/ howatwalalayabzojcentimètres/b aid/ balbazaf

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

<p>11_In measurements(sur): e.g. a room 20 metres by 10 metres</p>	<p>Une pièce de 20 mètres sur 10</p>	<p>Stand Arb:ghorfa bi ab ad 20 mètreala 10 Dlct: bit fih 20 ala 10 mitra</p>
<p>12-In multiplication ,division(par): e.g. 10 multiplied by 5 is 50</p>	<p>10 multiplié par 5 egale 50</p>	<p>Stand Arb:10 darb 5 tosawi 50 Dlct: 10 fi 5 tosawi 50</p>
<p>14-Showing rate,quality(à): e.g. to be paid by the hour/ by the dozen</p>	<p>Etre payé à l'heure/ à la douzaine</p>	<p>Stand Arb:todfaa fi ghodonsa a/ Dlct:tadfaafisaa/</p>
<p>15-In successive jour e.g. one by one</p>	<p>Un par un/un à un</p>	<p>Stand Arb:alwahidtilwa al akhar Dlct:wahadwrawahad</p>
<p>16-With regard to (de) e.g. he is an architect by profession/</p>	<p>Il est architecte de son métier/</p>	<p>Stand Arb:howamohandismahir/ Dlct: howamohandisemlih/</p>
<p>17-As a result of(par): e.g. : by accident/by mistake/by chance</p>	<p>Par accident/by erreur/par hasard</p>	<p>Stand Arb:natijalilhadit/bilkhata e/bisodfa Dlct: b l'accident/balghalta/bisodfa</p>
<p>18-Used with reflexive pronouns: e.g. he did it all by himself/</p>	<p>Il l'a fait tout seul</p>	<p>Stand Dlct:faala kola chei o bimofradihi Arb:khdamkalachwahdow</p>
<p>19-In compass directions: e.g. south by south- west</p>	<p>Sud quart sud-ouest</p>	<p>Stand Arb:aljanobkorbaaljanobalgharb i Dlct: ljanobkriblaljanobalgharbi</p>

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

1.4.7. Preposition ‘on’

English	Function	French	Arabic
1-Position(sur) :		sur, à, par, sous, au bord de, dans, selon, pour, en...	على, في, بشأن, ب, في ...
e.g.on the top of the piano/ on the floor/ there’s a stain on it/the painting on the hall.		Sur le piano/ par terre/ il y a une tache dessus/ les tableaux qui sont au mur.	Stand Arb:aala piano/aala a ardi/tojadbokaaaaaalayha/alawahatal moaalakaalaalhait. Dlct:ala piano/ ala lard/ kayan la tache aliha/ les cadres dam alkinfalalhit.
2-Indicating attachment,contact : e.g.to hang something on a nail/ on a string.		Accrocher quelque chose à un clou/ au bout d’une ficelle.	Stand Arb:taaalikchay on bimismar/aalasilsila. Dlct:taaalakhajabamasmar/ aalasalsla.
3-On or about one’s person: e.g.i’ve got no small change on me/ a girl with sandals on her feet.		Je n’ai pas de monnaie sur moi/ une fille avec des sandales aux pieds.	Stand Arb:lamyahsolaaala ay taghayorsaghir /fatatdatsanadil Dlct:maaandichtahataghayor/ taflalabsasandala.

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

<p>4- Employed, active: e.g. a programme on Africa/ have you heard him on electoral reform?</p>	<p>Une émission sur l'Afrique/ est-ce que tu l'as entendu parler de la réforme électorale?</p>	<p>Stand Arb: barnamajaaanifrikya/halsamiaata aanislah al intikhabi? Dlct: programeaalafrikya/masmaataal aislah al intikhabi ?</p>
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5-In expressions

of time:

e.g. on 22 February/
on sunny days.

Le 22 février/ quand il fait beau.

Stand Arb: fi 22 février/fil

ayammochmisa.

Dlct: fa 22 février/ kitwalichmisa.

6-Immediately

after:

e.g. on his arrival/
on hearing the
truth she...

A son arrive/ quand elle a appris la vérité, elle...

Stand

Arb: aaindawosolihi/aaindasamaaihali
lhakika.

Dlct: kiyawsal/kisamaatsaraha.

7-Taking, using:

e.g. to be on 40
cigarettes a day.

Fumer 40 cigarettes par jour.

Stand Arb: todakhin 40 sijarafinnahar.

Dlct: tkayaf 40 cigar fanhar.

Stand

Arb: tachtaghilbilbataraya/tachtaghilb

ilkahraba o.

Dlct: tamchi b la

batrie/tamchibatrisiti.

8-Powered by:

e.g. to run on
batteries/ to run on
electricity.

Fonctionner sur piles/ marcher à l'électricité.

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

<p>9-Indicating a medium : e.g.on TV/ i heard it on the news/ on video.</p>	<p>à la télé/ j’ aientendu ça aux informations/ en vidéo.</p>	<p>Stand Arb:aaalatilfazi/samiaatohadaaaalatil fazi/falvidéo. Dlct:aala la télé/ smaat fla télévision/ala vidéo.</p>
<p>10-income,amount of money: e.g.to be on \$20,000 a year.</p>	<p>Gagner 20000 livres sterling par an.</p>	<p>Stand Arb:taksab 20,000 filaaam Dlct:tarbah 20000 falaaam.</p>
<p>11-Paid for by ,at the expense of: e.g.this round is on me.</p>	<p>C’est ma tournée.</p>	<p>Stand Arb:innahowdawri. Dlct:daladyali.</p>
<p>12-In scoring: e.g.: to be on 25 points.</p>	<p>Avoir 25 points.</p>	<p>Stand Arb:takona fi 25 nakta. Dlct:tkon fi 25 nakta.</p>

1.4.8. Prposition ‘about’

English	Function	Arabic
<p>1-Cocerning: e.g. a book about/ What is it about?/ it is about.../ it is about my son.</p>	<p>Sur, de, dans, au suje de... Un livre sur/ça parle de quoi?/il s’agit de.../c’est au sujet de mon fils.</p>	<p>حول, عن, بشأن, نحو, تقريبا... Stand Arab:alkitabohawla/ aanmadayatahadatow? / yatahadatowaan.../an mawdoaaakhi.</p>

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

		Dlct: laktabaala/ aalayachkayahdar?kayahderaala.../ mataaalak b khoyi.
2-In the nature of: e.g. there is something weird about him/ What i like about her is.	Il a quelque chose de bizarre/Ce que j'aime chez elle c'est.	Stand Arb :honakachey on gharibonaanhow/achey o aladiyoaajibonifihahowa. Dlct: kayanhajaghribaaalih/lhjaditaajabn ifihahaya.
3-Bound up with :		
e.g. business is about profit.	Ce qui compte dans les affaires, ce sont les bénéfices.	Stand Arab: mayahomowfilamalhowaaribhow. Dlct :lhjadathamfalkhadmahowari bh.
4-Occupied with : e.g.to know what one is about/ and be quick about it!.	Savoir ce qu'on fait/ et fait vite !.	Stand Arb :litaalamamayadorowhawlho w/asriaabicha endalika. Dlct :: taarafdayachkayan/zrabaaliha.
5-Around: e.g. : to wander about the streets/ strew about the floor.	Errer dans les rues/ èparpillès sur le sol.	Stand Arb :tajawolofichawariaa/motanatir aaala al ardi. Dlct ::tdorfatrik/aala lard mtaycha.
6-In invitations,suggestions : e.g. what about some tea?	Et si on prenait un thè?	Stand Arb:madaa an tanawilika alkali mina

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

Achei?

Dlct: matachrabchwayadatey ?

7-When soliciting

opinions:

e.g. what about the Et les frais de justice/ et toi?
 legal costs?/ what
 about you ?

Stand

Arb:madaaantaklofaalkanoniya?/m
 adaaaanka?

Dlct:kichaala les frais? /wanta ?

8-Sout(on):

e.g.hidden about one's
 person.

Cachè sur soi.

Stand Arb:

makhfayatonaaanchakhs.

Dlct:khabawaalih.

1.4.9. Preposition 'with'

English

French

1-In description :

e.g. a girl with black
 hair / the boy with the
 broken leg/ a dress
 with a wide collar/a
 TV with remote
 control.

Avec ,à, de ,chez ,dans ,selon
 ,dans le sens de,dans,en
 ,pour.....
 Une fille aux cheveux noirs/
 le garçon avec une jambe
 cassé/ un télévision avec la
 télécommande.

ERRORS IN USING COMMON PREPOSITIONS

2-Involving,concerning

(avec) : Un traité avec quelqu'un.
 e.g. a treaty with somebody.

3-Indicating an

Agent(avec) :

e.g. to hit somebody Frapper quelqu'un avec
 with something/ to quelque chose/ marcher avec
 walk with a stick/ to unecanne/ couperquelque
 cut something with a chose avec uncanif.
 penknife.

4-Indicating

manner,attitude:

e.g.: with difficulty/ to Avec difficulté/ être patient
 be patient with avec quelqu'un.
 somebody.

5-According to:

e.g. : to increase with Augmenté avec le temps/ se
 time/ to expand with dilater sous l'action de la
 heat/ to vary with the chaleur/varier selon la
 temperature. température.

6.Accompanied by,in the presence of(avec):

.g. to travel with Voyager avec quelqu'un/
 somebody/ bring a viens avec un ami/ elle est
 friend with you/ she's accompagnée de son frère/son
 got her brother with frère est chez elle/ vivre avec

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her/ to live with somebody in one's own house/ i will be with you in a second.	quelqu'un; vivre chez quelqu'un/ je suis à vous dans un instant.
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------

7- Owning, bringing:

e.g. passengers with tickets/ people with qualifications/ somebody with your experience/ have you got the report with you?	Les passager munis de billets/ les gens qualifies/ quelqu'un qui a ton expérience/ est-ce que tu as le report ?
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

8-in relation to, as

regards:

e.g. the frontier with Belgium/ how are things with you ?/ what's up with Amy?	La frontier, avec la Belgique/ comment ça va ?/ Qu'est ne va pas avec Amy ?
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

9-Showing

consent, support:

e.g. I'm with you on this matter.	Je suis tout à fait d'accord avec toi.
--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------

10-Because of : e.g. sick with worry/ to blush with embarrassment/ i can't do it with you watching.	Malade/mort d'inquiétude/ rougied'embarras/ je ne peux pas le faire si tu me regardes.
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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11-Remaining:

e.g. with only two days to go before the election. Alors qu'il ne reste plus que deux jours avant les elections.

12-Suffering from:

e.g. people with leukemia/ to be ill with flu. Les personnes atteintes de la leucémie/ avoir la grippe.

13-In the care or

change of:

e.g.you're safe with us/ the blame lies with him. Tu es en securité avec nous/c'est de safaut.

14-against(avec):

e.g. the war with Germany/ to be in competition with La guerre avec l'Allemagne/etre en concurence avec quelqu'un.

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somebody.

<p>15-Showing simultaneity: e.g. with the approach of spring/ the introduction of the reforms/ with that,he left.</p>	<p>A l'approche du printemps/ avec l'introduction des nouvelles.réformes/ surce,ilestparti.</p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>16-Employedby, customer of: e.g.: a reporter with the Gazette/ he'swith Hachette/he'swith the UN.</p>	<p>Un journaliste de la Gazette/ il travaille chez Hachette/il travaille pour l'ONU.</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>17-In the same directions as: e.g. to sail with the wind.</p>	<p>Naviguer dans le sens du vent.</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

Conclusion

This chapter covered mainly the functions of English prepositions. First, it aims at providing a comprehensive definition or description of prepositions, and English prepositions, in particular through defining the concept of preposition, as well as identifying some major characteristics of English prepositions (form, meaning, usage, and function). The semantics and classifications of English prepositions are also presented as part of their description. Putting these prepositions within the context of FL teaching and learning seems required. Hence, an overview of the approaches used in teaching prepositions, the reasons of difficulties in learning English prepositions, as well as some suggestions for teaching prepositions are the three covered aspects. At last, the chapter gives a detailed presentation of the main functions of the most common prepositions and their equivalents in Algerian Dialect, Standard Arabic, French, and English.

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Chapter Two: Errors Analysis and Language Transfer

Introduction

Student's errors are a problematic topic in any educational system. ESL learners face a wide range of grammatical errors in their second language. Error analysis has been a fundamental issue to research in applied linguistics in order to understand the nature of errors. Until the late sixties errors were predicted to be the result of the interference of the mother tongue in the new language. At the same time the term interlanguage was coined by Selinker in the belief that interlanguage is a mixture of first and second language. The proof for this is the huge number of learners' errors which can be attributed to the process of transfer. Language transfer is an important issue in second language learning and teaching because of the effect of similarities and differences between the first and second language. In this chapter, concepts that relate to error analysis and language transfer are presented.

1.1. Errors analysis

1.1.1. Scope of Error Analysis

Error analysis (EA henceforth) was established in the 1960s by Stephen Pit Corder as a reaction to Contrastive Analysis (CA henceforth). EA realises that many learners' errors are produced by learners because the restriction knowledge of the rules of the target language (Rustipa, 2011). In his book *Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis*, Keshavarz (2011) described EA as a different method which was concerned with the study of students' errors on relation to L1 and L2 acquisition theories. It is obvious that making errors is an inevitable process in language learning. Thus, the study of errors made by ESL/EFL learners becomes crucially important because they are evidence of the process of learning.

Discussion on EA requires discussion about contrastive analysis CA (henceforth), too. The latter, on the one hand, focuses mainly on interlingual errors which are L1 interference

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and literal translation from mother tongue and considers them as the major and the only one reason of students' errors. In the opinion of Keshavarz (2001), CA is considered as the best way to solve language learning and teaching problems. It occurs after Second World War when the importance of second language learning emerged. It became the main approach in 1960s. What Kebbe (2004) suggested is that CA is all about comparison between two languages i.e. similarities and differences of these two languages. CA hypothesis is classified into two versions: weak and strong version. In its strong version, contrastive analysis hypothesis suggests that mother tongue interference is the main reason of learners' error whereas its weak version interpretation of errors comes after their identification. (Kebbe 2004)

Sridhar (1980) explained the situation saying that,

... as the claims of contrastive analysis came to be tested against empirical data, scholars realized that there were many kinds of errors besides those due to interlingual interference that could neither be predicted nor explained by contrastive analysis. This led to renewed interest in the possibilities of error analysis (p. 223).

On the other hand, the main focus of EA is to show that errors made by learners provide to the comprehension of the processes of second language acquisition. It studies the errors made by EFL/ESL learners. Making errors is a necessity in language learning. As Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) suggested, people cannot learn without committing errors. However, these errors are not perceived as a failure; both teachers and learners can benefit from them in order to acquire the exact knowledge of the TL. Keshavarz (2011) demonstrated that through EA, we can know the weaknesses of students and what they still have to learn. Classification and description of errors help us to know in which features of the language the

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students have problems. Also, it is a source of information which helps syllabus designers to choose the appropriate items for the syllabus to be taught.

The importance of EA is related to the fact that it is not restricted to errors caused by mother tongue interference; it brings to light many other types of errors made by learners which are called intralingual or developmental errors such as overgeneralization, facilitation and so on. In addition, EA focuses mainly on actual, attested problems and not hypothetical problems. EA is not concerned with the complex theoretical problems as CA (Keshavarz, 2011).

Instead, EA is a theory that has been used by many researchers to identify the errors made by second language learners. Richards and Schmidt (2002) defined it as: "... the study of errors made by L2 learners, with the purpose of identifying the causes of these errors." (p.184). There are several taxonomies in EA. Keshavarz (2011) suggested a taxonomy of the inter-lingual errors that includes: "grammatical errors, lexico-semantic errors, phonological errors, morphological errors, and stylistic elements" (Sabah Salman Sabbah, 2015, p.271).

On her side, Sallata (2017) demonstrated that EA is concerned with language studies that focus on the linguistic errors of L2 learners. Henry Bating, et al. (2017) argued that EA helps researchers to know the appropriate methods and techniques needed by learners in order to enhance their TL through shedding light on reasons behind learners' errors. Similar to Kim et al (2017) who agreed on the fact that EA is used to detect, classify and then interpret learners' errors, Corder (1978) claimed that the interpretation of learners' errors shows "the most significant data on which a construction of his knowledge of the target language could be made" (p. 72).

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EA is distinguished from CA in fact that the mother tongue is not supposed to be the only reason of learners' errors. EA is a methodology for dealing with applicable data, rather than with theories of first and SLA. The purpose of EA is to identify the errors and the principles that guide effective error correction (James, 2013). According to Corder (1981), EA is not interested in theory of language learning, rather, as he claimed, "... [it is] concerned with ... discovering the degree to which the learner expresses his messages... by means of the strategies and rules which the native speaker of the target language uses" (1981, p.30). Thus the main concern of EA is the ungrammatical or inappropriate utterances.

1.1.2. Branches of Error Analysis

Keshavarz (2011) pointed out that there are two main branches of EA; theoretical and applied EA which share the basic procedures of identification and classification of errors into different linguistic categories. However, they diverge from each other in some aspects. While the branch of Applied EA is concerned with the attempt to find a therapy for the learners' difficulties in the TL by suggesting remedial materials, Theoretical EA focuses on the psychological reality of errors. It attempts to explain *why* and *how* errors occur. In other words, theoretical EA focuses on what and how the learner acquiring an L2, while applied EA deals with the manipulation of learner's errors for academic purposes (Corder, 1981). Such an attempt will shed light on the causes of errors. However, the interpretation of these causes is not easy because it is difficult to predict and understand why learners make such errors. Both theoretical and practical levels of EA are useful. It is an effective tool for research in SLA. It is very helpful, as mentioned before, for syllabus and curriculum designers and all those concerned with the process of language learning and teaching. The results of EA are for a great help with regard to the processes and strategies of second language learning because they provide valuable information for selecting suitable materials,

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successful teaching techniques and strategies and appropriate tests for different levels and groups of learners (Keshavarz 1993).

1.1.3. Steps in Error Analysis

Keshavarz (2011) asserted that there are four main steps in studying learners' errors. The first step for the analysis of errors requires the *selection* of a corpus of language and the *identification* of errors as a second step. The errors are then *classified*. The last step, after giving a grammatical analysis of each error, is the *explanation* of different types of errors.

Similarly, Ellis (1997) stated that there are four steps in EA. The first step in analysing learners' error', is to identify them, though it is not an easy process as it seems. The second step refers to describing errors, in which errors are classified and identified in terms of types or categories, such as: grammatical categories. Explaining errors is the third step and is considered as the most interesting task because its main aims pertain to identifying the sources or reasons of these errors and predicting learners' intentions. The last step is evaluating errors. According to Ellis (1997), some errors are more serious than others "because they are likely to interfere with the intelligibility of what someone says; teachers will want to focus their attention on these" (Ellis, 1997, 25).

By the same token, Carl James (2013) believed that there are four steps in errors analysis. First, in the step of identification or detection of errors, the aim is to identify the errors and to know that they exist. It is not simple as it seems especially in spoken and informal language, comparing with written and formal text. Moreover, detecting one's own errors is more difficult than detecting other people's errors. The second step is referred to as locating errors. It is also difficult to locate errors in spoken or written form of a language. Errors, in this step, are located by reference to the TL. The next step in EA as James (2013) demonstrated is, describing errors. The purpose of this step is to justify one's intuition by

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comparing them with those of another person. Another purpose is counting and gathering them into types and then create categories. The fourth major step in the EA after error detection, error location and error description, is error classification or error categorization. In this step, errors are classified into types in order to indicate which errors are similar and which are different.

1.1.3..1 Mistakes vs. Errors

Effective EA requires first distinction between error and mistake in order (Carl James, 2013). An error occurs unintentionally; the learner is supposed to be unaware that he makes an error, whereas a mistake appears when the learner is able to correct a wrong answer by himself. The distinction between errors and mistakes is made by reference to writer's /speaker's intention, i.e. what he wants to say, and how he expresses it. If the learner is unable to make the correction, it is assumed that the form the learner used is an error.

An error, on the one hand, is an item of language that cannot be corrected by the learner himself. A mistake, on the other hand, can be intentional or unintentional and the language user can correct it when he identifies it. The dichotomy of error vs. mistake is presented into modern research (Corder, 1967). He (1967) related committing errors with the inadequacy in competence and mistakes with performance. Succinctly, James (2013:78) explained this idea saying that:

... where the deviance is the product of the learners' own IL grammar, and is well-formed in terms of that grammar, we have error; and where the utterances are at odds with their authors' own grammar, leading them to reject the utterances on reflection, since they were not as intended, we have a mistake.

On the basis of the difference between competence and performance, Corder (1967) argued that errors are more important in the process of language learning because they show the level of learners' development and that they acquire the TL. While, on the other hand,

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mistakes are less important in the process of language learning and teaching, it is just a failure in performing a specific skill. A learner can correct his own mistakes when he just identifies them. Mistakes can be found in L1 and L2 as well while errors can be found only in L2 learning and cannot be corrected by the learner himself. Corder (1971) stated that errors are the result of failure in competence. Moreover, Corder (1971) believed that when learners fail to apply specific rules, which they study before, that lead to commit mistakes and they can correct those mistakes themselves. James (2016), also, confirmed that the importance of distinguishing between mistakes and errors is that it serves in the identification of FL learning progress. A mistake means getting it wrong but knowing how to put it right. Errors are wrong forms that learners could not correct even if their wrongness is to be pointed out.

According to Keshavarz (2013), errors appear because the wrong acquisition of the language rules or because learners still confuse how to apply them correctly. Errors "... are indicative of the learner's linguistic system at a given level of language learning" (Keshavarz, 2013, p.60). He (2013) noted that errors cannot be identified by the learners themselves; even if they recognise them they cannot correct them. Mistakes occur randomly. They can be due to many reasons such as fatigue, lack of concentration, slips of tongue and false starts; they are due to failure in performance and can be committed in L1 and L2 learning. Another main cause of them is the limitation of memory. They can be corrected by the learner if they are brought to his attention. They occur in writing and speech of native speakers. On the other hand, errors are related to the knowledge of rules and especially the rules of learners' interlanguage. Distinguishing between learner's errors and mistakes has always been problematic for teachers and researchers. Error analysts adapt a criterion to distinguish between errors and mistakes, which is 'frequency of occurrence'. That is, errors which have low frequency are considered as mistakes and those with high frequency as systematic errors (Keshavarz, 2013)

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1.1.3.2 Significance of Errors

Many scholars in the field of EA have stressed the significance of SL learners' errors. Corder (1967) remarked that errors are significant to teachers, researchers and learners themselves. They help teachers to know how far toward the goal the learners have progressed and what remains for them to learn. They, also, tell researchers which strategies or procedures learners use to discover the language. As for learners, errors are devices used to learn and test their hypotheses about the language.

1.1.3.3. Types of Errors

Classification of errors helps in identifying where the problem lies. However, it is not an easy task to do. Richards (1973) classified errors into two types: interlingual errors and intralingual errors. These types refer to the negative influence of the speaker's first language and the target language. Interlingual errors appear due to the interference of native language. The learner uses features of the L1 in the use of the TL. Intralingual errors, on the other hand, occur because of the misuse of particular rule of the TL. The main focus here is on the TL; errors occur because of partial or incomplete learning of the TL. Richards (1973), stated that intralingual errors are classified into: Overgeneralizations, Simplifications, Developmental Errors, Induced errors, Errors of avoidance, Errors of overproduction.

- *Overgenerations*: overgeneralization errors appear when speakers utilize a grammatical rule in cases where it should not be utilized. They occur, for instance, when dealing with regular and irregular verbs. E.g.(she took = she taked)
- *Simplifications*: they occur when learners produce simpler linguistic forms than those found in the TL.
- *Developmental Errors*: they are part of the overgeneralizations. They show that learners start developing their knowledge but fail to reproduce the rules of the TL.

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- *Induced errors*: they are errors caused by misleading teaching examples. Teachers sometimes unconditionally explain a rule without highlighting the exceptions. Richard, et al. (2002) provided an example that occurs at the level of teaching prepositions and particularly ‘at’ where the teacher may hold up a box and say ‘*I am looking at the box*’, the students may understand that ‘at’ means ‘under’, they may later utter ‘*the cat is at the table*’ instead of ‘*the cat is under the table*’.
- *Errors of avoidance*: when learners fail to apply certain TL rules just because they are too difficult, they avoid using them at all.
- *Errors of overproduction*: these errors occur when learners overproduce or frequently repeat a particular structure.

Tavakoli (2012), on his part, claimed that there are different types of errors which he categorized into three main taxonomies. First, ‘language competence taxonomy’ refers to errors that occur because of gaps in language competence. This taxonomy is divided into two subcategories: overt errors and covert errors. The latter, covert error, on the one hand, refers to the “error that is grammatically well formed at the sentence level but not correct in the context of communication; in other words a discourse level error” (Tavakoli, 2012, p.118). On the other hand, overt errors are those which are ungrammatical at the sentence level, i.e. a sentence level error.

The second taxonomy suggested by Tavakoli (2012) is called ‘surface strategy taxonomy’. This taxonomy categorizes errors according to the way surface structures are changed. This taxonomy, also, comprises four sub-categories including: omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering. Tavakoli (2012)

- *Omission*: omitting an element that is necessary in a correct utterance.
- *Addition*: adding an element that must not occur in a correct utterance.

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- Misordering: to misorder an item in an utterance.
- Misinformation: putting the wrong form of a structure.

The third taxonomy suggested by Tavokali (2012) is referred to as ‘error gravity taxonomy’. This taxonomy is based on “the relative gravity of an error which concerns the seriousness of an error” (p.119). To evaluate error gravity, Tavokali (2012) listed some criteria that help to evaluate error gravity, namely irritation, acceptability and intelligibility. Similar to the other taxonomies, this taxonomy is classified into: local errors and global errors. Global error“... does not allow the hearer to understand some aspect of the message. For example, *Well, it’s a great hurry around* in whatever context, may be difficult to interpret” (Tavokali, 2012, p. 119). Whereas a local error does not stop a message from being understood and clear, due to a minor contravention of one element of a sentence, allowing the hearer/reader to make an correct guess about the deliberated meaning. It involves noun and verb inflections, and the use of articles, prepositions, and auxiliaries (Tavokali, 2012).

Another classification of errors was suggested by Keshavarz (1993) in his taxonomy of linguistic classification of errors. He (1993) classified them into: orthographic errors, phonological errors, lexicon-semantic errors and morpho-syntactic errors. Each of these categories is divided into subtypes. To illustrate, orthographic errors can be manifested as: sound/ letter mismatch, same spelling, different pronunciation, similar pronunciation, different spelling, and ignorance of spelling rules. As for phonological errors, lack of certain TL phonemes in the learner’s L1, spelling pronunciation of words, differences in syllable structures of L1 and L2, and the problem of silent letter are some instances. Whereas, in the category of morpho-syntactic errors, Keshavarz (2013) suggested the following examples: wrong use of parts of speech, wrong use of tenses/wrong sequence of tenses, wrong word order/misplacement of adverb, wrong use of plural morpheme, double negation, errors in the

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use of articles, errors in the use of relative clauses and relative pronouns, and wrong use of passive and active voice

Later, Keshavarz (2013) provided a succinct taxonomy of process-based categorization of errors. This includes:

- Omission: omitting some necessary items of the language.
- Addition: addition of irrelevant elements.
- Substitution: using some elements instead of others.
- Permutation: disorder the words in a sentence.

1.13.4. Source of Errors

According to Tavokoli (2012) and Touchie (1989), in EA, there are two sources of errors. It analyses all errors caused from all possible sources, not just those resulting from negative transfer (i.e., interference) of the L1. In fact, errors result from several possible general sources: interlingual errors, i.e. errors which result from interference from the L1, and intralingual errors which result from faulty or incomplete learning of the TL, rather than from language transfer.

As for Selinker (1972), she suggested five sources of errors: transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication, language transfer, and overgeneralization of TL linguistic material. Whereas Richards and Sampson (1974) identified seven sources of errors: intralingual interference, language transfer, modality, sociolinguistic situation, age, successions of approximate systems and universal hierarchy of difficulty. However, Corder (1974) exposed three sources of errors: language transfer, overgeneralization or analogy, and methods or materials used in the teaching (teaching-induced error).

The researchers have different views concerning the types of errors but they are agreeing that learners share the same developmental errors.

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1.2. Interlanguage

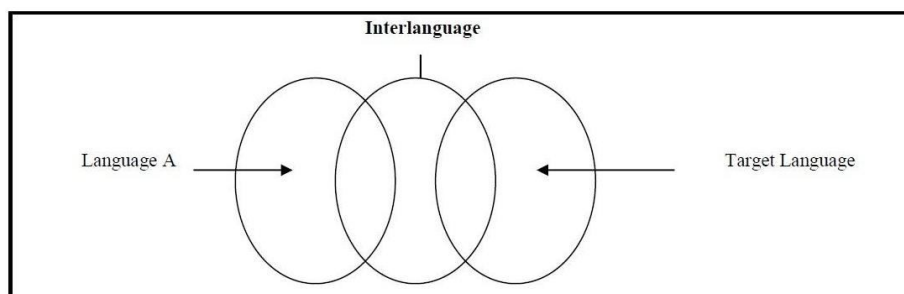
Interlanguage is the version of the TL used or known by the learner (James, 1998). It is needed in the description of the teaching enterprise, because “teachers are routinely called upon to do this when they decide whether the learners have produced something that is right or wrong” (p.3) in order to describe learners’ version of TL. It is called by Selinker (1992) Interlanguage (IL), which means the incomplete knowing of the TL. Corder (1971) called it the learners’ idiosyncratic dialect of the TL standard. Interlanguage is a comparative research. Ellis explained this idea as follows: “the acquisition of implicit knowledge involves three processes: noticing, comparing, and integrating.” (. He added: “the learner compares the linguistic features noticed in the input with her own mental grammar, registering to what extent there is a ‘gap’ between the input and her grammar” (p.238).

The study of interlanguage is the study of ‘language learner’s language’. Corder (1981) called it ‘transitional competence’. Moreover, Keshavarz (2013) claimed that the interlanguage hypothesis suggests that learner language differs from his L1 and TL, however it has features of both of them. Keshavarz (2013) demonstrated some important characteristics of interlanguage. First, interlanguage is assumed to be systematic which means it includes linguistic rules which can produce different utterances in structure from both utterances of L1 and TL. Second, interlanguage system is a reduced system compared to L1 system. Third, similar to L1, interlanguage is supposed to be systematically variable i.e. learners vary their performances systematically. Another interesting characteristic is ‘fossilization’. Keshavarz (2013) claimed that fossilization is the permanent feature of interlanguage.

Figure 2.1

The Notion of the IL (Al-khresheh, 2015, adopted from Corder, 1981, p. 17)

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1.3. Language Transfer

Generally speaking, language transfer (known as L1 interference, linguistic interference, and cross-linguistic influence) is the effect of differences and similarities between L1 on the learning L2 that is previously acquired. Language transfer is considered as an important element in language learning at all levels. It is regarded as a language learning strategy used by L2 learners in order to facilitate their language learning. Learners start learning L2 by transferring some sounds and meanings from L1 on learning TL. They also transfer different rules and structures consisting of pragmatics and word. According to Odlin (1989), the notion of language transfer started with the work of American linguists in the 1940s and 1950s. Tavakoli (2012) explained that “language transfer is the effect of one language on the learning of another” (p.347). Lado (1957 as cited in Gary and Selinker, 1993, p.2) claimed that

Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture--both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practiced by natives.

In addition, and according to Ellis (1994), both “interference” and “transfer” are not associated only with behaviorist theories of second language learning, because the effect of learner’s mother tongue could not be enough accounted for in terms of “habit information”.

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Transfer is not simply an issue of interference of falling back on the L1, instead, acquired “second” languages can also have an influence. This signifies that the term native language (L1) transfer itself is not sufficient. As Smith and Kellerman (1986, as cited in Ellis, 1994) emphasized the term is neutral and they proposed cross-linguistic influence. They commented:

...the term, “cross linguistic influence”...is theory ,allowing one to subsume under one heading such phenomena as ‘transfer’, ‘interference’, ‘avoidance’ ,‘borrowing’ and L2-related aspects of language loss and thus permitting discussion of the similarities and differences between these phenomena (1986,p.1).

Moreover, Odlin (1989) showed that transfer is considered as a fundamental for his own thoughtful treatment of such phenomena: “Transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and sometimes imperfectly) acquired” (Odlin, 1989, p.27). Whereas, Ellis (1994) described first language to the integration of features of the first language into the knowledge systems of the second language, students attempted to build differentiating this learning process from other processes included the use of the L1 for such aims of communication.

1.3.1. Types of Transfer

Language transfer divides into different categories. According to Ellis (1994), the study of transfer identified the errors that learners may make, and the main reason behind this error was due to the interference of the mother tongue into the learner’s TL (negative transfer), facilitation (positive transfer), avoidance (underproduction) of TL forms and their overuse. Otherwise, Ellis (1997) declared four types of language transfer: negative transfer, positive transfer, avoidance, and overuse .Whereas a number of researchers including Odlin (1989) classified the results of transfer into three types: positive transfer, negative transfer and varying lengths of acquisition.

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1.3.1.1. Positive Transfer

Positive transfer is the process of applying learning in one language to performing second language. Tavakoli (2012) defined positive transfer as a simple learning, which had the same form in both languages (native language and the target language), making learning not difficult for EFL learners, the learner's first language (L1) facilitated on his/her second language (L2) acquisition, because of similarities between both languages (positive transfer) the result of learning second language. Also, he (2012,p.85) claimed that "positive transfer would result and thus the L2 form was predicted to be easier to learn". Moreover, learner can transfer a structure, sound...etc to L2 positively. He (2012), This transfer occurred when L1 and L2 had the same meaning (e.g. important, mobile, bus, table terms that had the meaning in both languages English and French). According to Gass and Larry (2001), correct utterances resulted in positive transfer results, which facilitated language learning. This meant that the learner's mother tongue simplified learning second language. Furthermore, "The basic premise of CA hypothesis is that language learning can be more successful when the two languages – the native and the foreign are similar" (Lado 1957, 158). Moreover, (1997), positive transfer occurred when learner's first language (L1) simplified second language (L2) acquisition. As Odlin (1989 as cited in Ellis, 1994, p. 302-3) said "the facilitative effects could only observe when learners with different native languages studied and learner comparison carried out".

1.3.1.2. Negative Transfer

Negative transfer occurs when first language (L1) knowledge interfered in the process of learning something new in the target language (TL), resulting errors (errors as a result of interference). Tavakoli (2012) explained that negative transfer also called as interference. Ellis (1997,p.51), "The influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of an L2". Tavakoli (2012) stated that using mother tongue language pattern or rule which resulted

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errors in the target language(TL) .This meant that ,prior learned material interfered with following material .Also, he (2012) stated that a prior item considered wrongly transferred or wrongly related such as“ French learner of English may produce the incorrect sentence I am here since Monday instead of I have been here since Monday ,because of the transfer of the French pattern je suis ici depuis Sunday (‘am here since Saturday’)”(p.348).

Al-khresheh (2013) elaborated that there were different categories of negative transfer because of interference of mother tongue on the second language including:

- Overproduction: It was the result of underproduction, second language students resulted much appearance than learners’ mother tongue made, and students were benefits of what they assumed to be right or suitable. Hence, they overused of particular structures or words.
- Underproduction: This type of errors also called avoidance, learners could result few or no examples of target language structure, because certain structures in the TL was various from his/her L1. They happened by aware avoidance of difficult form.
- Misinterpretation: This type of negative transfer followed when learners’ mother tongue structures effected the interpretation of the target language messages.
- Production: This type of negative transfer divided into six elements including:
 - a- Substitutions: absence of some sounds in the word (e.g., thirty pronounced as dirty in India).
 - b- Calque: negative transfer resulted errors which reflected first language (L1).
 - c- Under-differentiation: learners could not make a difference in another language.
 - d- Over-differentiation: making a difference from one language carried into another one.

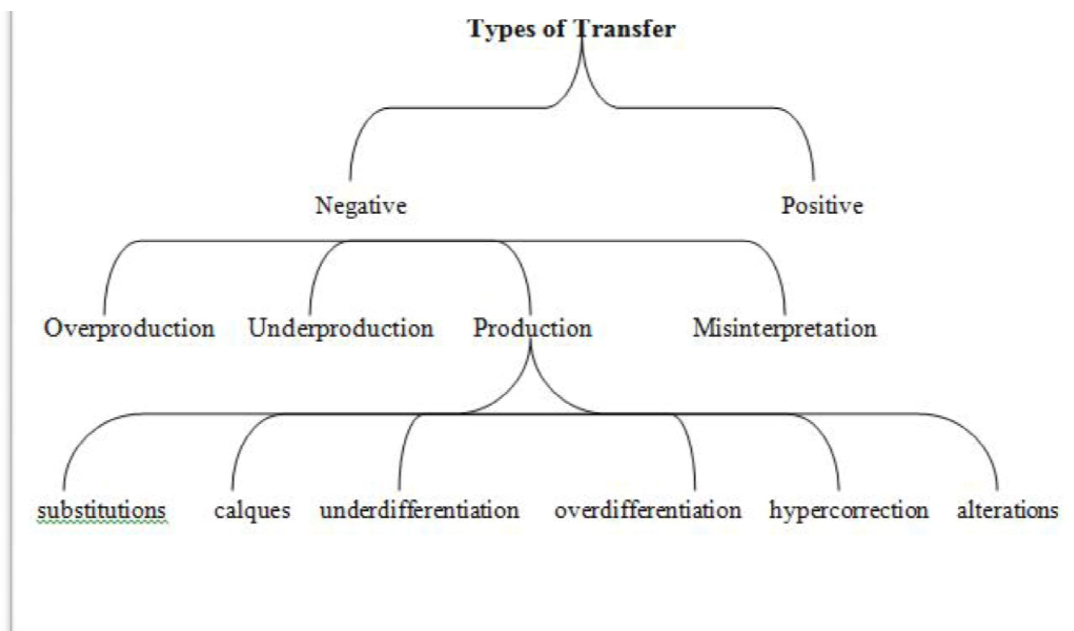
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e- Hypercorrection: it was a process of erroneous use of linguistic forms alterative of structure.

While, Odlin (2003, p .37) supported that calques, substitutions and alterations of structures consisted several forms of production errors. According to Odlin (1989), there were four different outcomes of negative transfer .They summarized as followed: Underproduction, overproduction, production, and misinterpretation

Figure 2.2

Types of Transfer (Al-Khresheh, 2016, p.333)



The above figure demonstrated that language transfer divides into two types: positive transfer and negative transfer. There are different types of negative transfer. Students face when they fall back on their first language (L1). Moreover, SL learners make the use of their knowledge from the First language to aid them in learning and using other languages.

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1.3.1.3. Avoidance

An easy definition of this term would be that language transfer occurs when L2 learners try to avoid using their structures (i.e. absence of certain structures) as a result of differences or similarities between their L1 and the TL. Ellis (1994) suggested that students avoid using certain linguistic structures, when they face problems due to differences between their L1 and the TL. He (1994) argued that the influence of the L1 is obvious not in what errors students make but in what they neglect using omissions. Avoidance is not considered as a simple task. As Seliger (1989) mentioned, it is the only possibility to appeal that avoidance is taking place if the student show knowledge of the form in question, and if there is a proof available that native speakers of the L2 would use the form in the context .That is to say, it makes sense to talk of avoidance if the learners know what they are avoiding. In fact, the use of avoidance is a difficult phenomenon. Kellerman (1992) attempted to explain the difficulty by differentiating three categories:

- 1- Avoidance is followed when learners know or anticipated that there is a problem and have at least some sketchy ideas of what the target form is like.
- 2- Avoidance emerges when learners know what the target is but face it too difficult use in a certain circumstances.
- 3- Avoidance is obvious when learners know what to say and how to say it but you are unwilling to actually say it because it results in them flouting their own norms of behavior.

In all three situations it is easy that much more is included than the learner's L1. The extent of learner's knowledge of the L2 and the attitudes learners hold toward their own and the target-language cultures act as agents that interact with L1 knowledge to determine avoidance behavior.

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Ellis (1997) explained that first language could result in avoidance.(e.g. Japanese and Chinese students of English found to avoid the use of relative clauses).These learners commit fewer errors in relative clause than Arabic learners of English ,because English relative clauses were less difficult for the Chinese and Japanese students than for the Arabic learners. Moreover, their language does not have equivalent structures, and they rarely use them.

1.3.2.4. Over-Use

According to Ellis (1997), the overuse of certain forms accounts for reflection in the use of mother tongue. He (1997) gave a simple example of Chinese students who overuse some expressions of regret for apologizing in English with the forms of mother tongue, Ellis (1997) called this type over-use as “over-indulgence” to refer to the use of particular grammatical forms in SLA that can be considered as a consequence of intralingual processes. To illustrate, L2 learners have often been observed to over generalize the regular past tense inflection to irregular verbs in L2 English. He (1994) explained that the main reason behind the over-use was as a consequence of the avoidance or underproduction of some complex structure. Students may show a preference of certain grammatical forms, words and discourse types in L2.

1.3.2. Factors That Lead to Language Transfer

1.3.2.1. Interlingual Transfer

Interlingual (also called as Interference, language transfer, transfer error and cross-linguistic interference) refers to the negative transfer of the native language on the TL. It was the main reason for L2 learner’s error. Brown (2007) considered interlingual transfer as the main cause of errors for EFL students. Brown (2007) penned:

The beginning stages of learning a second language are especially vulnerable to interlingual transfer from the native language, or interference. In these early

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stages, before the system of the second language is familiar, the native language is the only previous linguistic system upon which the learner can draw. We have all heard English learners say ‘sheep’ for ‘ship’, or ‘the book of Jack’ instead of ‘Jack’s book’; French learners may say ‘Je sais Jean’ for ‘Je connais Jean’, and so forth (p. 224).

As Brown (2007) exposed, errors are not the result of negative transfer from learners’ L1, these errors occur in learner speech significant knowledge with a learner’s L1, by helping the teacher in analyzing errors. He (2007), also, elaborated that learning a third language gives a good context for study. There are many factors such as the linguistic and culture relatedness of the languages. Another one relates to the context of learning, and degrees of interlingual interference that are different from L1 and TL, particularly when the foreign languages are combined together after beginning a second language.

1.3.2.2. Intralingual Transfer

The early stages of language learning are characterized by a predominance of interlingual transfer. However, once a learner begins to acquire parts of a new system (language), more and more transfer generalization within the target language will be manifested (Brown, 1980). Ellis (1994) argued that errors are the result of transfer (interference). This means that intralingual transfer is considered as the general process of language development and is the same in first language acquisition.

Richard (1974, as cited in Ellis, 1997) divided the intralingual errors into four kinds including over generalization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of the rules, and false concept hypothesized or semantic error:

- 1- *Overgeneralization*: this type of intralingual errors occurs when a learner provides the use of grammatical rules on the basis of his experience in first language (L1) and second language ,e.g., she can plays tennis (wrong sentence)

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- 2- *Ignorance of Rule Restrictions*: “involves the application of rules to contexts where they do not apply .An example is ‘He made me to rest’ through extension of the pattern found with the majority of verbs that take infinitival complement (for example: ‘He asked/ wanted/invited me to go’)” (Richard, 1974, as cited in Ellis,1997,p.59).
- 3- *Incomplete Application of the Rules*: this type of intralingual error occurs when learners fail to apply the rules correctly in sentences such as some learners use declarative sentence as in “she listens to music?” instead of interrogative sentence as in “Does she listen to music?”
- 4- *False Concept Hypothesized*: when learners do not understand a distinction in the L2 such as the use of “were” as a sign of past tense, “One day they were played”.

As Brown(2007) stated, learner language study has its recognition of the main causes of error which expand beyond interlingual errors in learning an L2. Intralingual transfer within the TL itself, is a major reason in TL learning. Overgeneralization of rules is considered as negative intralingual transfer. A number of researchers like Jaszczolt and Taylor (as cited in Brown,1994) found that at the beginning of language learning distinguished by a predominance of interlingual transfer, students start to take parts of the new system, hence more and more intralingual transfer-generalization within the target language-is manifested.

Conclusion

In this chapter, an overview of the scope of EA and CA is presented. Both of them are considered as important elements in language teaching and learning. This chapter, then, covers the steps of EA and its significance. Distinction between errors and mistakes is also highlighted in addition to the presentation of the concept of interlanguage. The second part of this chapter deals with language transfer, its types: positive transfer (similarities), negative transfer (differences), avoidance, and overuse. Finally, factors that cause language transfer (interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer) are developed.

Chapter Three:

Investigating Students' Errors in the Use of the Most Nine Common English

Prepositions

Introduction

This chapter reported on the procedures followed in collecting data. It, also, attempted to present, analyse and discuss the results obtained in this study. In other words, this chapter aimed at investigating the most difficult English prepositions for students and the reasons of their erroneous use of these prepositions. For this purpose, a test and an analysis of the students' compositions are used as data collection tools for this research project. The results are analysed were interpreted on the basis of the frequency of occurrence of the correct and wrong usages of these prepositions in each of the test and the compositions.

3.1. The Sample

The sample consisted of one hundred twenty students chosen on an immediate convenience sampling basis, from a population of two hundred seventy students of second year LMD students at the English department, at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel. All of the participants were Algerian EFL students whose native language is Algerian Arabic. They were all supposed to have studied English prepositions and have reached a certain level of proficiency in English. A grammar test was administered to this sample. Also, the analysis of the papers of the first semester examination in Written Expression of the same sample was done. The aim of the test was to collect the students' errors in the use of English prepositions and analyzed them in order to get the results and explanation of students' errors. Then, a comparison between findings of the test and the composition will be presented in order to show how students performed in grammar test and the composition and tried to find out the causes of their errors.

3.2. Administration and Description of the Means of Research

3.2.1. The Students' Test

As stated above, the aim of this research was to investigate students' errors in the use of the most common English prepositions, a research tool was considered suitable: a grammar test. The test was administered to one hundred twenty students, consisting of four groups who were asked to fill in the gap of fifty sentences (stcs) with the appropriate prepositions that expressed certain meanings, in one hour time. The participants were given a list of the most common used prepositions to select from (at, in, during, of, by, with, over, for, about, to, on, from, around). This list contained also of some irrelevant prepositions such as: during, around, over. As for the prepositions to choose, they were distributed as follows:

- The preposition 'to' should be chosen in 8 stcs: stc 1, stc 3, stc 20, stc 25, stc 34, stc 42, stc 45, stc 46.
- The preposition 'with' should be chosen in 6 stcs: stc 2, stc 4, stc 11, stc 27, stc 35, stc 49.
- The preposition 'in' should be chosen in 9 stcs: stc 2, stc 8, stc 10, stc 21, stc 33, stc 39, stc 41, stc 44, stc 50.
- The preposition 'about' should be chosen in 6 stcs: stc 5, stc 26, stc 28, stc 36, stc 40, stc 48.
- The preposition 'on' should be chosen in 9 stcs: stc 3, stc 7, stc 9, stc 12, stc 13, stc 16, stc 23, stc 38, stc 47.
- The preposition 'at' should be chosen in 6 stcs: stc 15, stc 18 (in this stc, it should be selected twice), stc 19, stc 31, stc 39, stc 45.
- The preposition 'by' should be chosen in 9 stcs: stc 6, stc 9, stc 14, stc 24, stc 29, stc 30, stc 32, stc 37, stc 43.
- The preposition 'of' should be chosen in 5 stcs: stc 12, stc 15, stc 18, stc 23, stc 38.

- The preposition ‘for’ should be chosen in 4 stcs: stc 17, stc 22, stc 27, stc 28.

To mention, during the distribution of test, students seemed cooperative and willing to answer due to their interest in studying grammar. This served in obtaining reliable data.

3.2.2. The Students’ Compositions

For the sake of obtaining more valid and reliable data, the researchers took the compositions of the same sample of students who answered the test in order to compare their performances between the grammar test and their own written compositions. The analysed compositions were part of the first semester examination in Written Expression in which they were asked to write a paragraph on “Technology in education” or “Learning Foreign Languages”.

3.3. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

3.3.1. The Students’ Test

3.3.1.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results Obtained per Sentences

To analyse the findings, the percentage of correct and wrong usage of prepositions in each stc was calculated. However, and as a starting point, the sum of the correct and wrong answers of all the prepositions was given in Table 3.1 below.

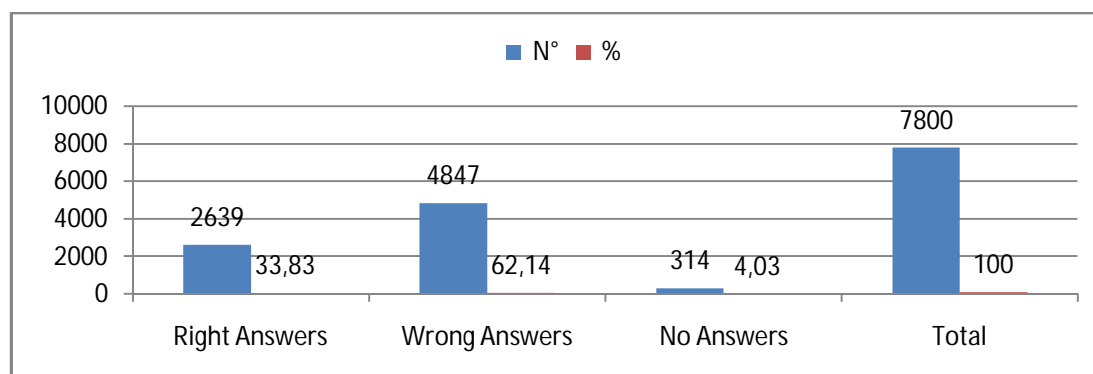
Table 3.1

The Sum of Correct and Wrong Usage of Prepositions

	N	%
Right answers	2639	33.83
Wrong answers	4847	62.14
No answers	314	4.03
Total	7800	100

Figure 3.1

The Sum of Correct and Wrong Usage of Prepositions



As shown in table 3.1, the grammar test consisted (4847 errors; 62.14%) and right answer (2639; 33.84%) and only (314; 4.02%) no answer at all. It was noticeable that approximately the number of the wrong responses was twice the correct ones which meant that students still commit many errors in the use of the most common English prepositions although they studied them in first and second year. Also, few of them did not answer at all may be because they were not interested in doing the test or because of lack of intention. Another reason, which is the most predominant one, they did not know the answers. Now, the analysis will precede one sent by one. Moreover, and in order to avoid repetition in the fifty stcs, the possible interpretations of the misused prepositions will be presented in **Section 3.3.1.2** below.

Stc 1: My car does 10 miles to the litre

Table 3.2

Students' Answers to Stc 1

Stc 1	N	%
Right answer	4	3.34
Wrong answer	106	88.33
No answer	10	8.33
Total	120	100

This table showed the distribution of correct and wrong answer of the first stc. Students were supposed to select the preposition **to** as a correct answer. The preposition **to** in this stc used to show the relationship between the distance (10 miles) and the liter. It was clear that the majority of students misused the preposition **to** (106 errors; 88.33%) whereas only four right answers (4 correct answers; 3.34%) and ten students (10; 8.33%) did not answer it at all. Majority of students substituted the preposition **to** by the preposition **for**. It was clear that students translated this stc into standard Arabic. The equivalent of this stc in standard Arabic was ‘tastahliqo sayarati aasharat amyal li litr elwahd’.

Stc 2.a: John is the man with his hand in the pocket

Table 3.3

Students’ Answers to Stc 2.a

Stc 2.a	N	%
Right answer	73	60.38
Wrong answer	39	32.5
No answer	8	6.67
Total	120	100

This table revealed that (60.38%) of students gave the correct answer. Whereas, (32.5%) provided a wrong answer. Also, the rest population (6.67%) did not answer. In this stc, students should choose preposition **with** as a correct answer. The meaning of **with** here is having or carrying something. As the table showed the majority of the population selected the appropriate preposition and that due to positive transfer from mother tongue into target language. However, the majority of wrong answers were **on**.

Stc 2.b: John is the man with his hand in the pocket

Table 3.4

Students’ Answers to Stc 2.b

Sent 2.b	N	%
Right answer	66	55
Wrong answer	42	35
No answer	12	10
Total	120	100

The results in the table above showed that almost all the students under the study (55%) gave the appropriate preposition, whereas (35%) mistook the preposition **in**, and less than (10%) did not provide the answer. Majority of students answered this stc correctly because of L1 interference. The equivalent of the preposition **in** in the Arabic language is ‘fi’ which is the same meaning of the preposition **in** in this stc. Whereas the majority of students, which selected wrong answer, chose the preposition **on** instead of the preposition **in**. in the second position came the preposition **at**.

Stc 3.a: The Luxembourg Shell station **on** the motorway **to** France happens to be Europe’s largest one

Table 3.5

Students’ Answers to Stc 3.a

Stc3.a	N	%
Right answer	16	13.33
Wrong answer	91	75.83
No answer	13	10.84
Total	120	100

The table showed that (75.83%) of students selected the wrong preposition, whereas (13.33%) gave the correct preposition. However, some students ignored to answer (10.84%).

The results showed that the majority of students used the preposition **at** instead of **on** which means that students still confused in the use and application of the preposition **on**, **in** and **at**. Some others used preposition **of** instead of **on**. In the third position came those who substituted it by **in** and the interpretation of this case is mentioned previously.

Stc 3.b: The Luxembourg Shell station on the motorway **to** France happens to be Europe’s largest one

Table 3.6

Students’ Answers stc 3.b

Stc 3.b	N	%
Right answer	16	13.33
Wrong answer	93	77.5
No answer	11	9.17
Total	120	100

As shown in the table above, more than (77.5%) of students misused the preposition **to**, and (13.33%) could answer. The rest students did not select any preposition (9.17%). On one hand, the majority of students used the preposition **in** instead of **to** may be because student overgeneralized the rules of prepositions and their usage. In some cases the preposition **in** is used with the name of countries. Thus, the learners overgeneralized this rule and used it instead of the correct one. On the other hand, some students chose the preposition **of**, which totally change the meaning of the sentence.

Stc 4: Muriel is the girl **with** black hair

Table 3.7

Students’ Answers to Stc 4

Stc 4	N	%
Right answer	75	62.5
Wrong answer	44	36.67
No answer	1	0.83

Total	120	100
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The table above demonstrated that out of (75) respondents selected the right answer, (44) students chose wrong answer, while only one student could not give the answer. The results showed that the majority of students selected the preposition **on** instead of **with** and some others selected the preposition **in**.

Stc 5: They walked about the town

Table 3.8

Students' Answers to Stc 5

Stc 5	N	%
Right answer	40	33.34
Wrong answer	79	65.83
No answer	1	0.83
Total	120	100

As can be seen from the table, 65.83% of students chose the inappropriate preposition. Whereas, 33.34% selected the right answer. 0.83% did not chose the preposition. Some students selected the preposition **about** some others chose the preposition **to** while others selected the preposition **around**, all these choices were considered right answers even if the meaning of the sentence differed each time. Concerning the choices of those who answer this stc incorrectly, the results showed that the majority of them selected the preposition **on**, may be because they translated the stc into Arabic language. The equivalent of the stc 'they walked on the town' is 'mashaw fi el madina'. The Arabic stc had a sense but the English one had no sense.

Stc 6: Our belief is that peace is built hour **by** hour

Table 3.9

Students' Answers to Stc 6

Stc 6	N	%
Right answer	58	48.33
Wrong answer	62	51.67
No answer	0	0
Total	120	100

This table showed that all the students filled in the blank of this stc whether correctly or wrongly. With regard to using the suitable preposition, 48.33% chose the right answer, 51.67% gave inappropriate preposition. There was not a big difference in the amount of results between wrong and right answers. Concerning the wrong answers, the findings showed that the majority of students substituted the preposition **by** with the preposition **over** which was irrelevant.

Stc 7: I need a book **on** bio-chemistry

Table 3.10

Students' Answers to Stc 7

Stc 7	N	%
Right answer	3	2.5
Wrong answer	117	97.5
No answer	0	0
Total	120	100

The table showed that 2.5% of students selected the preposition **on**. Whereas, 97.5% of students had problem in choosing the appropriate preposition. The wrong answers were **at** in

the first place and **for** in the second place. On one hand, concerning those who selected the preposition **at** maybe they were influenced by their mother tongue i.e. in some context the meaning of the preposition **at** in Arabic is **aan**. On the other hand, those who selected **for** instead of **on** maybe they were influenced by their first foreign language which is French because in French we said ‘de la biochemie’.

Stc 8: Her mother works **in** a school

Table 3.11

Students’ Answers to Stc 8

Stc 8	N	%
Right answer	48	40
Wrong answer	72	60
No answer	0	0
Total	120	100

According to the table mentioned above, 40% of students selected suitable preposition. Meanwhile, 60% of students provided wrong answer. Hence, 0% of the population did not answered it at all. All wrong answers were **at** or **on**.

Stc 9.a: Harry comes to work **by** car but I prefer to come **on** foot

Table 3.12

Students’ Answers to Stc 9.a

Stc 9.a	N	%
Right answer	102	85
Wrong answer	17	14.17
No answer	1	0.83
Total	120	100

It was noticeable that 85% (102) of students could not answer. 14.17% were erroneous answers. 0.83% of students did not answer it at all. Most of students substituted the preposition **by** with the preposition **on**.

Stc 9.b: Harry comes to work **by** car but I prefer to come **on** foot

Table 3.13

Students' Answers to Stc 9.b

Stc 9.b	N	%
Right answer	85	70.83
Wrong answer	35	29.17
No answer	0	0
Total	120	100

With regard to using the appropriate English prepositions, the table showed that the majority of students used the preposition **on** correctly (85 errors; 70.83%). Whereas (35 incorrect answers (29.17 %), and (0 %) with no answers. In this stc the students used the preposition **by** and **on** interchangeably. They ignored the rule of using **on**, and **by**, with **car** and **foot**.

Stc 10: There is something true **in** what he says

Table 3.14

Students' Answers to Stc 10

Stc 10	N	%
Right answer	17	14.17
Wrong answer	102	85
No answer	1	0.83
Total	120	100

The table showed that the majority of students misused the preposition **in** (102 errors; 85%). Whereas (17 correct answers; 14.16%) and only one student (0.83%) did not answer it at all. Concerning the wrong answer, the majority of students selected the preposition **at** and some others chose the preposition **on** instead of the preposition **in**. it could be said that learners confused in the application of **in**, **at** and **on**. Whereas few of them selected the preposition **for**,

Stc 11: You shouldn't be so generous with us

Table 3.15

Students' Answers to Stc 11

Stc 11	N	%
Right answer	45	37.5
Wrong answer	60	50
No answer	15	12.5
Total	120	100

The results in the table above demonstrated that 37.5% (45) of students gave the correct answer. Whereas, 50 % (60) provided a wrong answer. Also, 12.5 % (15) of the population did not answer. The students substituted the preposition **with** by the preposition **to**, which means that students were affected by their first foreign language which is French. The preposition **to** in French has the same meaning of **with** in English which is “avec”

Stc 12.a: He broke his leg on getting out of the car

Table 3.16

Students' Answers to Stc 12.a

Stc 12.a	N	%
Right answer	6	5

Wrong answer	109	90.83
No answer	5	4.17
Total	120	100

This table revealed that only 5% (6) of students answered correctly. Whereas, 90.83% provided an erroneous answer. However, 4.17(5) of the rest population did not answer it. The majority of wrong answers were **during**, in the first place. In this case the suitable interpretation of this error was that learners were affected by their mother tongue i.e. they translated the stc into standard Arabic. The nearer equivalent of this stc in Arabic was ‘qasara rijelaho ‘atnaa’ khorojih min esayara’. ‘Atnaa’ is the meaning of during in English. In other words the reason of this error is the negative transfer from standard Arabic. While some others substituted the correct answer by the preposition **by**. This selection had no sense. Thus, the appropriate reason behind this error was the lack of intention.

Stc 12.b: He broke his leg **on** getting out **of** the car

Table 3.17

Students’ Answers to Stc 12.b

Stc 12.b	N°	%
Right answer	59	49.16
Wrong answer	56	46.67
No answer	5	4.17
Total	120	100

According to the table shown above, 49.16% (59) of students chose the suitable preposition. Meanwhile, 56.67% of students provided wrong answer. Hence, 4.17 %(5) of the rest population did not answer. It was clear that the majority selected the appropriate preposition. While a big number of students misused the preposition **of** in this utterance. The results

revealed that the majority of students chose the preposition **from** instead of the correct preposition which was **of**.

Stc 13: I will see you **on** Christmas Day

Table 3.18

Students' Answers to Stc 13

Stc 13	N	%
Right answer	63	52.5
Wrong answer	57	47.5
No answer	0	0
Total	120	100

The table above demonstrated that 52.5% (63) of students provided the correct answer While, 47.5% (57) chose wrong answer and 0 % (0) with no answer. Thus, the majority of them selected appropriately. While the erroneous selection differed between the preposition **in** the first position and preposition **at** in the second position. It was clear that second year students still confused and could not distinguish between these three prepositions and their usage especially in the exceptions.

Stc 14: The report must be finished **by** tomorrow

Table 3.19

Students' Answers to Stc 14

Stc 14	N	%
Right answer	67	55.83
Wrong answer	50	41.67
No answer	3	2.5
Total	120	100

The results in the table above demonstrated that 55.83 % (67) of students gave the correct answer which means the majority of the participants could select the right choice. Whereas, 50 (41.67%) provided a wrong answer. Also, only 2.5%(3) they ignored the answer. Starting with those who ignored the answer, the suitable interpretation was the lack of interest or because they did not know the answer, so they just ignored it. Second, concerning those who selected wrong answers, which were the most important, the majority of them gave the preposition **on** as the correct choice.

Stc 15.a: We are aiming **at** sale **of** \$1,000,000

Table 3.20

Students' Answers to Stc 15.a

Stc 15.a	N°	%
Right answer	5	4.17
Wrong answer	109	90.83
No answer	6	5
Total	120	100

This table showed that the majority of students misused the preposition **at** (109 errors; 90.83%) whereas only five answers (3.33%) were correct, and six students did not answered it at all. It was obvious that this stc was too difficult for the students. They gave different choices to this stc some of this choices were correct but change the meaning of the stc. Whereas the majority of them suggested the preposition **to** as a correct answer.

Stc 15.b: We are aiming **at** sale **of** \$1,000,000.

Table 3.21

Students' Answers to Stc 15.b

Stc 15.b	N°	%
Right answer	6	5
Wrong answer	108	90

No answer	6	5
Total	120	100

The majority of students misused the preposition **of** (108 errors; 90 %), whereas only six right answers (5%), and six answers (8.33%) with no answer. The two choices of this stc were too difficult for students as previous tables and table revealed. Maybe because students did not get the whole meaning of this stc. With regard to the second choice of this stc, the majority of students substituted the correct option which was **of** by another one which was **about**. This type of error was an interlingual error because students translated this stc into their native language which was standard Arabic. In Arabic the equivalent of this stc was ‘taqriban or hawali 1.000.000\$’.

Stc 16: He hates travelling because he gets sick when he is **on** the plane

Table 3.22

Students’ Answers to Stc 16

Stc 16	N°	%
Right answer	68	56.67
Wrong answer	49	40.83
No answer	3	2.5
Total	120	100

The majority of students 56.67 % (68) chose the right preposition **on**, while 40.83% (49) of students misused the preposition **on**. Only three students (2.5%) did not give a choice. The majority of students provided correct answers due to positive transfer from their mother tongue (standard Arabic). Whereas some of them gave wrong choices such as the preposition **in**.

Stc 17: We worked **for** three hours.

Table 3.23

Students' Answers to Stc 17

Stc 17	N°	%
Right answer	83	69.17
Wrong answer	37	30.83
No answer	0	0
Total	120	100

The majority of students misused the preposition **for** (37 errors; 30.83%) whereas 83 answers (69.16%) and 0% did not answer it. All the students selected an option to this stc whether right or wrong. The majority of them found it easy and clear and gave the appropriate choice. Concerning wrong answers students' choices differed between **about** and **during**.

Stc 18.a: **at** the end **of** the 19th century, Queen Victoria was **at** the head of a huge empire

Table 3.24

Students' Answers to Stc 18.a

Stc 18.a	N°	%
Right answer	80	66.67
Wrong answer	40	33.33
No answer	0	0
Total	120	100

The result in the table above showed that 66.67% (80) of students gave the appropriate answer. Whereas, 33.33% (40) provided a wrong answer. Also, 0%(0) or none of the population did not answer. This stc had three choices and each one affected the other and the whole meaning of the stc. Starting with the first choice, it was clear that two thirds of the population gave right answers. Whereas one third of them misused the use of the preposition

at in this context and suggested other choices such as **on** in the first position and **in** in the second position.

Stc 18.b: at the end of the 19th century, Queen Victoria was at the head of a huge empire

Table 3.25

Students' Answers to Stc 18.b

Stc 18.b	N	%
Right answer	112	93.33
Wrong answer	8	6.67
No answer	0	0
Total	120	100

The table above demonstrated that 93.33% (112) of students gave the right answer. Whereas, few of them 6.66% (8) provided a wrong answer. Also, 0% none of the population could not answer. The reason behind this big number of right answers may be was the frequency of this construction. Whereas almost the wrong choices were selected just one time i.e. only one student selected the preposition **on** and also only one other selected the preposition **to**.

Stc 18.c: at the end of the 19th century, Queen Victoria was at the head of a huge empire

Table 3.26

Students' Answers to Stc 18.c

Stc 18.c	N	%
Right answer	28	23.33
Wrong answer	89	74.17
No answer	3	2.5
Total	120	100

23.33% (28) of students gave the correct answer. Whereas, 74.17% (8) provided a wrong answer. Also, 2.5% (3) of the rest population did not suggest any choice. The third option of this stc was not so easy like the two ones. It was clear that most of them misused the

preposition **at** in this case and substituted it with the two closest prepositions in meaning to it which were **in** in the first position and **on** in the second position.

Stc 19: Mary lives **in** 6,Drury Street

Table 3.27

Students' Answers to Stc 19

Stc 19	N	%
Right answer	23	19.17
Wrong answer	93	77.5
No answer	4	3.33
Total	120	100

77.5% (93) of students answered correctly. While, 19.16% (23) provided an erroneous answer. Also, 3.33%(4) of students did not answer. The results showed that the majority of the answers were **on** and **in** which confirmed that second year students could not distinguish between the prepositions **at**, **in** and **on** and their usage. This type of error was an intralingual error. They shared the same developmental errors.

Stc 20.a: It can cost anything **from** \$5 **to** \$15

Table 3.28

Students' Answers to Stc 20.a

Stc 20.a	N	%
Right answer	60	50
Wrong answer	54	45
No answer	6	5
Total	120	100

The results in the table above illustrated that 50% (60) of students provided the right answer. Meanwhile, 45% (54) made an erroneous answer. Also, 5% (6) with no answer. The majority

of students provided right answers. Concerning the wrong answers the majority of them substituted the preposition **from** with another option which was **for**. They translated the stc from standard Arabic. In Arabic the equivalent of this stc was ‘yomqino an toqalif min 5 dolarat ila 15 dollaren. One of the several meanings of **for** is **min** but **for** is not appropriate in this context. This was an interlingual error.

Stc 20.b: It can cost anything **from** \$5 **to** \$15

Table 3.29

Students’ Answers to Stc 20.b

Stc 20.b	N°	%
Right answer	94	78.33
Wrong answer	20	16.67
No answer	6	5
Total	120	100

The table above showed that 78.33% (94) students could not select the most suitable preposition in the stc. While, 16.66% (20) students could provide the answer, thus, 5% (6) with no answer. The second option of this stc was easier for students than the first one. As it mentioned before the majority of them provided right answers. Concerning the wrong answers the students substituted the preposition **to** by other options such as **around**, **with...**the students in this case seemed that they were not interesting in answering the test because the stc is clear or because of the lack of basic knowledge of English.

Stc 21: We got **to** France after some delay.

Table 3.30

Students’ Answers to Stc 21

Stc 21	N	%
Right answer	26	21,67
Wrong answer	91	75,83
No answer	3	2,5

Total	120	100
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The table demonstrated that 75.83% (91) pupils could not provide the right .Whereas, only 21.67 % (26) students could select the preposition **to**. Thus, 2.5 % (3) did not answer at all. The majority of students substituted the preposition **to** by the preposition **in**. this type of error was an intralingual error because students overgeneralized the rule of English preposition usages. With noun of countries in some contexts the preposition **in** is the most appropriate one but in this context was not. Some others selected the preposition **on** as a right answer may be because they did not get the meaning of the sentence and translated it wrongly.

Stc 22: You use a corkscrew **for** opening bottles

Table 3.31

Students' Answers to Stc 22

Stc 22	N°	%
Right answer	57	47.5
Wrong answer	57	47.5
No answer	6	5
Total	120	100

The table showed that the percentage of wrong and right answer were similar (47.5%; 57).Thus, 5% (6) with no answer. Starting with the wrong answers almost all the students suggested the preposition **to** instead of **for** because the preposition **to** is used to show reasons but in this context it was not appropriate. Some others selected the preposition **in** as a right choice may be because of the lack of the knowledge in terms of vocabulary. During the test some students did not get the meaning of the word ‘corkscrew’ so, that lead to misunderstanding of the whole stc and misused of the preposition.

Stc 23.a: I feel like a balloon **on** the end **of** a string

Table 3.32

Students' Answers to Stc 23.a

Stc 23.a	N	%
Right answer	8	6.67
Wrong answer	107	89.17
No answer	5	4.16
Total	120	100

The table above illustrated that almost all students misused the preposition **on** with the percentage of 89.17% while few of them could suggest the right answer with the percentage of 6.67% and only 5 of the population ignored the stc. Students in this stc suggested different choices, however the majority of them selected the preposition **at** as a correct one because learners overgeneralized the rule of English prepositions usages. The prepositional phrase at the end is very common for student especially beginners but in this stc is not appropriate.

Stc 23.b: I feel like a balloon **on** the end **of** a string

Table 3.33

Students' Answers to Stc 23.b

Stc 22.b	N	%
Right answer	103	85.83
Wrong answer	11	9.17
No answer	6	5
Total	120	100

The table above illustrated that 85.83% (103) is the highest percentage of students answered correctly. While, 9.16% (11) committed errors. However, 5% (6) omitted the preposition **of**. With regard to wrong answers, the results showed that only few students (2) suggested the

preposition **for** and 2 others suggested the preposition **in** ...etc these results could show the lack of basic knowledge of some students.

Stc 24: The room is 10 metres **by** 6 metres

Table 3.34

Students' Answers to Stc 24

Stc 24	N	%
Right answer	10	8.33
Wrong answer	105	87.5
No answer	5	4.17
Total	120	100

The preceding table showed the results of the stc 24, the highest percentage is 87.5(105) for the wrong answers. Meanwhile, only ten (8.33) students provided the right answer. The rest 4.16 (5) of students ignored the stc. The majority of students selected the preposition **on** instead of **by** because of mother tongue interference. They translated the sent into their dialect ‘misahat al bit 10 amtar**aalasita**’, the equivalent of **aala** in English was **on** and that interpreted the choice of students.

Stc 25: Chilean workers stakes a claim **to** mine profit

Table 3.35

Students' Answers to Stc 25

Stc 25	N	%
Right answer	7	5.83
Wrong answer	101	84.17
No answer	12	10
Total	120	100

The table above illustrated that the majority of students 84.17% (101) made errors, 5.83% (7) right answers, and 10% (12) did not mention the preposition **to**. The majority of students provided wrong answers and substituted the preposition **to** by other choices such as **of, for ...** During the test the majority of students did not get the meaning of this stc and asked many time about the intended meaning of this stc may be because of the lack of knowledge in terms of vocabulary or due to incomplete learning of English prepositions. These types of errors are developmental errors or intralingual errors.

Stc 26: I do not like it, but there is nothing I can do about it

Table 3.36:

Students' Answer to Stc 26

Stc 26	N	%
Right answer	53	44.17
Wrong answer	64	53.33
No answer	3	2.5
Total	120	100

The table showed that 53 (44.17%) was The highest percentage of wrong answer. While, 53 (44.16 %) right answer, only 3 (2.5%) students did not answer. Most of them used the preposition **for, with** instead of **about**. This called a substitution. The equivalent of this stc into Arabic “I can do about it” was “astatiaao alkayama bichae nidalika”. Concerning the function of the preposition **about (bichae ni)** in this stc, literal translation was the main cause of the misuse of the preposition **about**.

Stc 27.a: He is been with EnglishClub.com for two years

Table 3.37

Students' Answer to Stc 27.a

Stc 27.a	N	%
Right answer	3	2.5
Wrong answer	114	95
No answer	3	2.5
Total	120	100

The table above illustrated that the majority of students 114 (95%) made error, 3 (2.5 %) right answer, only 3 (2.5%) students did not mention the preposition **with**. They used **in, on ,at** instead of **with**. Accompaniment was the function of the preposition **with (maa)**. Also, this error considered as literal translation.

Stc 27.a: He is been with EnglishClub.com for two years

Table 3.38

Students' Answer to Stc 27.b

Stc 27.b	N	%
Right answer	85	70.84
Wrong answer	30	25
No answer	5	4.16
Total	120	100

The result from table (27.b) illustrated that, 30 (25%) of students misused the preposition **for**. Whereas, the majority of students used this preposition in correct way 85 (70.83%), randomly five students (4.16%) no answer. Majority of them give the right answer because the

preposition for indicated time (years). Few of them used **in, to** instead of **for (li)**. This error considered as a literal translation.

Stc 28.a: We wondered **about** the town **for** an hour or two

Table 3.39

Students' Answer to Stc 28.a

Stc 28.a	N	%
Right answer	22	18.34
Wrong answer	94	78.33
No answer	4	3.33
Total	120	100

As can be seen from table (28), the majority of answers were incorrect 78.33% (94). Whereas, 18.34% (22) of students used the preposition **about** correctly, and only 3.33 % (4) students ignored the answer. They used **in, on, for** instead of **about**. Concerning the function of the preposition **about (aan)** in the sentence “we wondered **about** the town **for** an hour or two”. Also, this error was a literal translation.

Stc 28.b: We wondered **about** the town **for** an hour or two

Table 3.40

Students' Answer to Stc 28.b

Stc 28.b	N	%
Right answer	63	52.5
Wrong answer	54	45
No answer	3	2.5
Total	120	100

As the table indicated, less than 45% (54) of students misused the preposition **for**. Whereas 52.5%, (63) of students made errors, and only three students did not use the preposition **with**.

Here, the preposition **with** indicated time. In the stc the preposition **with** in Standard Arabic was **Li**. Literal translation was the main reason of this errors.

Stc 29: I'm delighted **by** your optimistic feelings

Table 3.41

Students' Answer to Stc 29

Stc 29	N	%
Right answer	16	13.33
Wrong answer	98	81.67
No answer	6	5
Total	120	100

The results in the table above illustrated that 16 (13.33%) of students gave the correct answer. Whereas, 98 (81.66%) provided a wrong answer. Also, 6 (5%) of the rest population did not mention which preposition. They used the preposition **about, in, of** instead of **by**. The stc the preposition **by** in standard Arabic was **aan**. It used to indicate evidence. This error considered as literal translation.

Stc 30: He was a tailor **by** trade

Table 3.42

Students' Answer to Stc 30

Stc 30	N	%
Right answer	1	0.84
Wrong answer	113	94.16
No answer	6	5
Total	120	100

The table 3.34 demonstrated that students were supposed to select the preposition **by** as a correct answer. Out of 113 (94.16%) respondents which were faulty, only one student (0.84%) gave the correct answer, and six (5%) students did not provide the suitable answer. They used the prepositions **of, in** instead of **by**. This error is called substitution. Here, the preposition **by (bi)** in this stc “He was a tailor **by** trade” expressed idiomatic expression. Learner did not know the meaning of this stc. So, they translated the stc and the preposition (literal translation).

Stc 31: We got off the ship **at** all ports

Table 3.43

Students’ Answer to Stc31

Stc 31	N	%
Right answer	13	10.83
Wrong answer	97	80.84
No answer	10	8.33
Total	120	100

This table showed the distribution of correct, wrong and no answer. Students were supposed to select the suitable preposition. The preposition **at** used to express place (port). The majority of students misused the preposition **at**. 97 errors (80.84%), whereas 13 (10.83%) were erroneous answers, only 10 (8.33%) did not mention the answer. They used the preposition **in, with, from** instead of **at**. This error considered as substitution. In this examples **at** in Standard Arabic is **fi**. Lack of basic knowledge was the main reason.

Stc 32: She’s standing **by** the tree over there

Table 3.44

Students’ Answer to Stc 32

Stc 32	N	%
Right answer	31	25.83
Wrong answer	87	72.5
No answer	2	1.67
Total	120	100

As the table indicated, less than 31 (25.83%) of students misused the preposition **by**. While, 87 (72.5%) of students made errors, and only two students did not use the preposition **by**. The majority of them used the preposition **on** instead of **by**. This called substitution. In this example **by** in Standard Arabic is **bijanib**. The preposition **by** used to indicate place (tree) this error considered as lack of knowledge

Stc 33: We got **in** late

Table 3.45

Students' Answer to Stc 33

Stc 33	N	%
Right answer	41	34.17
Wrong answer	69	57.51
No answer	10	8.33
Total	120	100

The results in the table above showed that the highest percentage of students was 69 (57.51%) selected the wrong preposition of **in**. Whereas, 41 (34.17%) gave the right answer and just 10 (8.33%) students did not answer. The majority of them used the prepositions **on at by in** instead of **in**, it was a substitution. In this example, the preposition **in** in Standard Arabic **fi**. Here, the preposition **in** used to indicate time, but only few students provided the appropriate answer. The main reason of this error was lack of knowledge.

Stc 34: It took you 10 seconds to run **to** the tree and back again

Table 3.46

Students' Answer to Stc 34

Stc 34	N	%
Right answer	33	27.5
Wrong answer	87	72.5
No answer	0	0
Total	120	100

The table demonstrated the distribution of correct, wrong, and no preposition. Students were supposed to select the preposition **to** as a correct answer. The preposition **to** in this stc used to show place. In this example, the preposition **to** in Standard Arabic **ila** (87; 72.5%) of wrong answers, few others 33 (27.5%) didn't commit error. The majority of them substituted the preposition **to** by **around, of**. This called substitution. Hence, this error considered as literal translation.

Stc 35: Who did you see her **with**

Table 3.47

Students' Answer to Stc 35

Stc 35	N	%
Right answer	52	43.33
Wrong answer	57	47.51
No answer	11	9.16
Total	120	100

The table above showed the distribution of right, wrong and no preposition in the stc. The majority of students, 57 (47.5%) did not select the preposition **with** and less than 52 (43.33%) of pupils provided the right preposition. While the rest confused 11 (9.16%) the answer. The

preposition used to describe accompaniment “Who did you see her **with**”. They used prepositions **around, from, in** instead of **with**. This is called substitution. In the example, the preposition **with** in Standard Arabic **maaa**. This error was a literal translation.

Stc 36: The Earth and Moon both revolve about a common center of gravity

Table 3.48

Students’ Answer to Stc 36

Stc 36	N	%
Right answer	5	4.16
Wrong answer	111	92.51
No answer	4	3.33
Total	120	100

The table above demonstrated that 111 (92.51%) was the highest percentage of making error. Moreover, less than 5 (4.16%) right answer, and four students (3.33%) did not answer .The majority of them substituted the preposition **about** by **around, of, in**. This called substitution. Also, the preposition **about** in Standard Arabic was **hawla**. In this example, the preposition about indicated place, this error considered as a literal translation.

Stc 37: She was deeply hurt by his insults

Table 3.49

Students’ Answer to Stc 37

Stc 37	N	%
Right answer	41	34.16
Wrong answer	78	65
No answer	1	0.84
Total	120	100

The results in the table above showed that 41(34.16%) of respondents replied correctly. Whereas, 78(65%) provided inappropriate answer. Also, only one student (0.84%) did not use

the preposition **by**. They used **with, in, to** instead of **by**. In the example the preposition **by** (**min**) indicated agent. This error considered as a literal translation.

Stc 38.a: Both **of** these campgrounds are right **on** the ocean

Table 3.50

Students' Answer to Stc 3.38.a

Stc 38.a	N	%
Right answer	110	91.67
Wrong answer	8	6.67
No answer	2	1.66
Total	120	100

The table above showed the distribution of correct, wrong and no preposition. The majority of students 110 (91.67%) selected the appropriate preposition **of**. Whereas, 8 (6.67%) of students could not answer. No answer was the option of 2 (4.16%) participants. They used **on, in** instead of the preposition **of**. Connecting with something was the function of the preposition of (aan). A few of them did not provide the correct answer, this error is considered as overgeneralization.

Stc 38.b: Both **of** these campgrounds are right **on** the ocean

Table 3.51

Students' Answer to Stc 38.b

Stc 38.b	N	%
Right answer	13	10.83
Wrong answer	98	81.67
No answer	9	7.5
Total	120	100

The table above illustrated that the majority of students, 98(81.67%), selected the most suitable preposition. Whereas, 13 (10.83%) of students misused the prepositions **on**, and the

rest 9 (7.5%) did not answer it at all. They used **in, of, from** instead of **on**. In the stc the preposition **on (aala)** used to indicate place. This error considered as a literal translation.

Stc 39.a: We would arrive **at** the dance hall **in** a fairly excitable mood

Table 3.52

Students' Answer to Stc 39.a

Stc 39.a	N	%
Right answer	27	22.5
Wrong answer	87	72.5
No answer	6	5
Total	120	100

As can be seen from table (39.a), 87(72.5%) of students made error in the use of preposition **at**. While 27 (22.5%) participants used this preposition correctly. Thus, 6(5%) did not answer. Participants were supposed to select the appropriate preposition. Most of them used **to** instead of **at**. The preposition **at** indicated place, “we would arrive **at** the dance hall in a fairly excitable mood”. In this example **at** in Standard Arabic was **ila**. This error considered as literal translation.

Stc 39.b: We would arrive **at** the dance hall **in** a fairly excitable mood

Table 3.53

Students' Answer to Stc 3.39.b

Stc 39.b	N	%
Right answer	34	28.33
Wrong answer	79	65.84
No answer	7	5.83
Total	120	100

This table demonstrated that the majority of students, 79 (65.84%) chose the wrong preposition **at**. Whereas, 34 (28.33%) of students could select the preposition. Most of them used the prepositions **with, to** instead of **at**. This called a substitution. In the example the

preposition **at (fi)** indicated how somebody was. Literal translation was the main cause of the misuse of the preposition.

Stc 40: There is something about him that I don't quite trust

Table 3.54

Students' Answer to Stc 40

Stc 40	N	%
Right answer	73	60.83
Wrong answer	46	38.33
No answer	1	0.84
Total	120	100

The table above showed the distribution of correct, wrong and no preposition answer of the forty stc. Participants were supposed to select the preposition **about** as a right answer. 73 (60.83%) students could answer correctly, while 46 (38.33 %) of them made errors. Only one participant did not answer. They used **on, with** instead of **about**. “Concerning” was the meaning of **about** in this sentence “There is something **about** him that I don't quite trust». In this example **about** in Standard Arabic was “**aan**”. The misuse of the preposition **about** was a literal translation.

Stc 41: He broke in my reveries

Table 3.55

Students' Answer to Stc 41

Stc 41	N	%
Right answer	33	27.51
Wrong answer	82	68.33
No answer	5	4.16
Total	120	100

This table demonstrated the distribution of right, wrong and no answer. 82 (68.33%) of the participants misused of the preposition **in**. Whereas, 33(27.51%) of students used the wrong

answer. However, 5 (4.16 %) did not answer. The majority of students did not provide the appropriate answer. They replaced the preposition **in** by **with, about, on**. The preposition **in** (**fi**) indicated place. This error is considered as an idiomatic expression.

Stc 42: The weather forecast says the odds are five to one against rain

Table 3.56

Students' Answer to Stc 42

Stc 42	N	%
Right answer	40	33.33
Wrong answer	68	56.67
No answer	12	10
Total	120	100

The results in the table above showed that most students made errors in the use of the preposition **to** (68; 56.67%). While 40 (33.33%) of students chose the wrong answer. However, 12 (12%) avoided selecting a preposition. They used **about, on and of** instead of **to**. The preposition **to** is used to indicate the end or limit of something. In this example, **to** in Standard Arabic was **ila**.

Stc 43: She needed to go by the bank and sign the paper.

Table 3.57

Students' Answer to Stc 43

Stc 43	N	%
Right answer	4	3.33
Wrong answer	114	95
No answer	2	1.66
Total	120	100

The data demonstrated in the table above shows that 4 (3.33%) of students provided a correct use of the preposition **by**. Whereas, 114(95%) students made errors, they chose a wrong

preposition. Only two students ignored the answer. The majority of them used the preposition **at, to** and **over** instead of **by**. They translated the preposition by saying **minkibal**. The preposition **by** used to indicate place. This sent is considered as an idiomatic expression

Stc 44: The moment he walked **in** the door you could've heard an olive bounce

Table 3.58

Students' Answer to Stc 44

Stc 44	N	%
Right answer	20	16.67
Wrong answer	95	79.17
No answer	5	4.16
Total	120	100

This table revealed that the majority of students, 95 (79.17%) selected the wrong preposition **in**, whereas 20 (16.67%) of students could answer. No answers five (4.16%). They used the prepositions **to, by** instead of **in (ala)**. Here, the preposition **in** used to show position.

Stc 45.a: Our flight from Islamabad **to** Manchester had a stopover **at** Dubai

Table 3.59

Students' Answer to Stc 45.a

Stc 45.a	N	%
Right answer	74	61.67
Wrong answer	42	35
No answer	4	3.33
Total	120	100

The table showed that the majority of students selected the preposition **to** (74 errors; 61.67%). Whereas, only 42 answers (35%) and four students (3.33%) ignored the answer. In this example the preposition **to (ila)** indicated place. They substituted the preposition **to** by **in** and **of** instead of **to**.

Stc 45.b: Our flight from Islamabad to Manchester had a stopover at Dubai

Table 3.60

Students' Answer to Stc 45.b

Stc 45.b	N	%
Right answer	12	10
Wrong answer	103	85.84
No answer	5	4.16
Total	120	100

The result in the table above demonstrated that 12 (10%) of students gave the correct answer. Whereas, 103 (85.84%) provided a wrong answer. Also, 5 (4.16%) of the rest population did not answer. The majority of them used the preposition **in**. In the example, the preposition **at** (**fi**) used to indicate place.

Stc N° 46.a : A lockbox is an attachment to a door that holds the key **to** that door

Table 3.61

Students' Answer to Stc 46.a

Stc 46.a	N	%
Right answer	11	9.16
Wrong answer	102	85
No answer	7	5.84
Total	120	100

It is clear that the majority of students misused the preposition **to** (85errors; 102%). Whereas only 11 participants (9.16%) answered correctly and seven students (5.83%) did not give any

response. They substituted the preposition **at** by **in** and **from**. This is called a substitution.

The preposition **to** is used to show place. In this example **to** in Standard Arabic was **li**.

Stc 46.b : A lockbox is an attachment **to** a door that holds the key to that door

Table 3.62

Students' Answer to Stc 46.b

Stc 46.b	N	%
Right answer	12	10
Wrong answer	103	85.84
No answer	5	4.16
Total	120	100

The Table demonstrated that students misused the preposition **to** (103 errors; 85.84%). Whereas only 12 answers (10%), and five students (4.16%) did not answer. Most of them misused the preposition **to**, instead they used **in**, **of** and **at**. Here, the preposition **to** is used to show place. Also, in this example **to** in Standard Arabic was **li**. This error is considered as a literal translation.

Stc 47 : Only a rattlesnake has a rattle on the end of its tail.

Table 3.63

Students' Answer to Stc 47

Stc 47	N	%
Right answer	2	1.67
Wrong answer	115	95.83
No answer	3	2.5
Total	120	100

As can be seen from the table, Only 2 (1.67%) of the respondents. In contrast 115 (95.83%) of pupils mistook the preposition **on**. Only three students (2.5%) did not give the answer. Students translated this stc into Standard Arabic by saying “al afaa al mojaljila faqat ladayha

hashraja fi dayliha”. In this stc, the preposition **on** used to indicate place, and the majority of students did not provide the right answer, they used some prepositions like **at, over, from** instead of **on**. This called a substitution. Also, in these examples **on** in Standard Arabic was **fi**. Students did not know that the preposition on used to show place. Hence, this error considered as lack of basic knowledge.

Stc 48: She tiptoed **about**the room being careful not to wake anyone

Table 3.64

Students' Answer to stc 48

Stc 48	N	%
Right answer	1	0.84
Wrong answer	113	94.16
No answer	6	5
Total	120	100

The Table showed correct,wrong, no preposition in the fourty eight sentence. Students were supposed to choose the preposition **about** as the suitable preposition. However, 113 of students (94.16%) mistook the preposition **about**. Whereas only 1 student answered correctly. On the other hand, only 6 students (5 %) did not provide the answer. The equivalent of this stc in Arabic is "haya dahabt nahwa alghorfa bidon ikad ay chakhs”. Here, the preposition **about** used to indicate place (around),but participants made errors by putting such prepositions **to, in, on, at,** instead of **about**. This is called substitution; they used these prepositions instead of **about** because they translated this stc into Standard Arabic by saying “haya dahabat **ila** alghorfa bidon ikad chakhs”, they used the preposition **to**. This

grammatical error of the misuse of the preposition **about** was due to the influence of Standard Arabic in the learning of second language. So, the preposition **about** was a literal translation.

Stc 49:Let’s get on withthe meeting

Table 3.65

Students’ Answer to stc 49

Stc 49	N	%
Right answer	14	11.67
Wrong answer	102	85
No answer	4	3.33
Total	120	100

This table demonstrated the distribution of right, wrong, and no answer in the forty nine stc.14 students (11.67%) gave the right preposition, whereas 102 (85%) of students misused the preposition **with**, and four students (3.33%) did not answer. The equivalent of this stc into Standard Arabic is “daaaona natahadat aan alijtimaa”. They used the preposition about “**hawla**” instead of **with**. This is called substitution. In this stc “daaaona natahadat ~~hawla~~ al ijtimaa”, it is considered as a literal translation.

Stc 50: We drove deeper in the forest

Table 3.66

Students’ Answer to stc 50

Stc 50	N	%
Right answer	49	40.83
Wrong answer	67	55.84
No answer	4	3.33
Total	120	100

The table above showed the distribution of correct, wrong and no preposition of the fifty stc. Here, students were supposed to select the preposition **in** as the appropriate answer. In this stc the preposition **in** is used to indicate place (the forest). It is clear that the majority of students misused the preposition **in** (67 wrong answer, 55.84%) randomly 49 students (40.83) answer correctly, and four students (3.33%) did not answer it at all. They substituted the preposition **in** by the preposition **to**. That is to say, most of them translate this stc into Standard Arabic. The equivalent of this stc in Arabic is “komna binozha fi lghaba”. This error is considered as a literal translation

3.3.1.2. Analysis and Interpretation of the Obtained Results per Preposition

For the sake of providing a comprehensive presentation of the results obtained, the analysis of students’ performances with regard to the prepositions will be done. Starting with the preposition **for**.

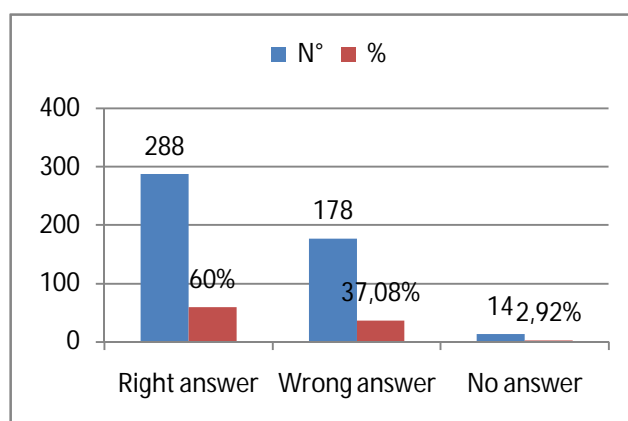
Table 3.67

Sum of Students’ Answers to Preposition ‘for’

For	N°	%
Right answer	288	60
Wrong answer	178	37.08
No answer	14	2.92
Total	480	100

Figure 3.2

Sum of Students’ Answers to Preposition ‘For’



As could be seen from tables above, the preposition **for** was mentioned in four sentences. The majority of students provided a correct use of the preposition **for** as in stc 17 “we worked **for** Three hours (63 right answer), and in stc 22 “you use a corkscrew **for** opening bottles” (83 correct answer).The main reason was due to the literal translation from Standard Arabic (nahno aamilna li talatat saat) and (istaamalna almiftah **Li** fath azojajat). In these examples **for** in Standard Arabic is “**Li**”, and it used to refer to period of time (hour). Also, **for** was used to express purpose, cause, distance.....etc. This called a positive transfer which facilitated student’s use of second language, whereas other students made errors, they chose a wrong preposition. This error can be considered as substitution. Students used **about, to, on, during, at, from, over, by, with, in, of** instead of **for**. This error could be considered as substitution as in stc 27 and 28 “he is been with English Club.com ~~at~~two years” 25 % students substituted the preposition for by from (6), for (4)... .In this example “we wondered about the town ~~to~~ an hour or two” (45 % wrong answer). It was found that, 54 students substituted the preposition for by the preposition about (12), during (9),at (3).....The learners’ erroneous usage are due to the influence of Standard Arabic. However, the rest population did not answer .This was called omission as in stc 27.b (only 5 students answered). The omission of the preposition may be they didn’t have any idea which prepositions were more suitable in this stc.

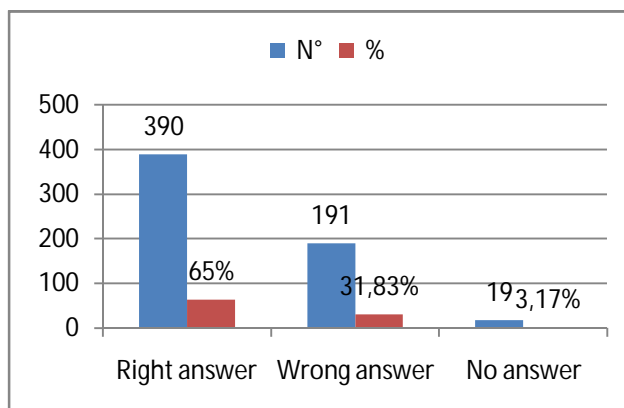
Table 3.68

Sum of Students’ Answers to Preposition ‘of’

Of	N	%
Right answer	390	65
Wrong answer	191	31.83
No answer	19	3.17
Total	600	100

Figure 3.3

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'of'



Second the preposition **of**, was mentioned in seven stcs. As shown in tables above, the highest percentage of students answered correctly, others they failed to give the right answer, whereas the rest did not provide the appropriate choice.

Students selected the suitable preposition, because of positive transfer (e.g. At the end **of** the 19th century). The equivalent of this example in Standard Arabic was (fi nihayat alqarntasiaa aachar). Here, the preposition **of** (Dlct: aan, min./Fr: de, à) is used to indicate time, other functions of the preposition **of**: indicating an agent, preposition. The main reason of making errors was due to the interference of the mother tongue. Learners used at, to, during instead of **of**. The following were examples of wrong stcs: He broke his leg on getting out **at** the car/ we are aiming at sales **to** \$1,000,000. This means that, learners misused of the preposition **of**. It was called substitution. The rest students did not answer; this was called omission.

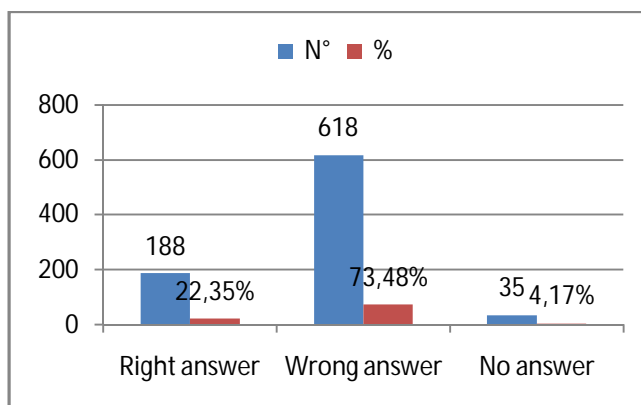
Table 3.69

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'at'

At	N	%
Right answer	188	22.35
Wrong answer	618	73.48

No answer	35	4.17
Total	841	100

Figure 3.4
Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'at'



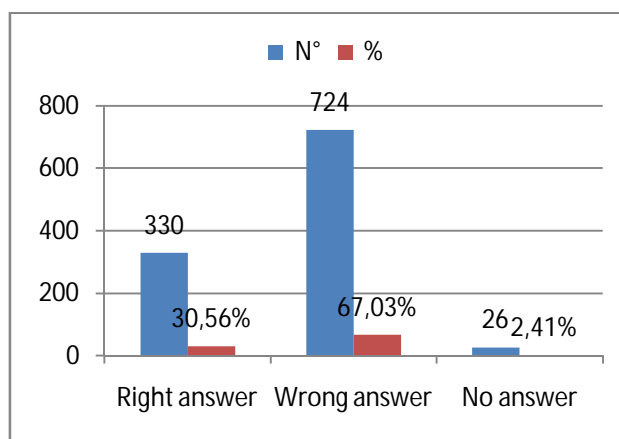
The tables above demonstrated that the preposition **at** was appeared in six stcs, few students gave the wrong answer as in “we got off the ship **at** all ports” 97 students failed to give the correct answer and” We would arrive **at** the dance hall **in** a fairly excitable mood” (87 wrong answer).Some students used the prepositions **to ,in ,of ,by ,for ,with** instead of **at** “ala”, because of the effect first L1 to L2. This category called substitution and the majority of students were able to select the right preposition as in “**at** the end of the 19th century, Queen Victoria was **at** the head of a huge empire (93.33% right answer). Learners used the method of translation because of the influence of the mother tongue. The equivalent of this example in Standard Arabic was “qanat almalika Victoria aalara’esi al imbratoraya dakhma”, **at** was used to indicate place. However, the preposition **at** had a multi-function which were indicating place, time, cause and so on, while the rest did not answer, this category called omission. For example “we are aiming **at** sale of \$1,000,000 (5% students ignored to provide the answer).

Table 3.70
Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'by'

By	N	%
Right answer	330	30.56
Wrong answer	724	67.03
No answer	26	2.41
Total	1080	100

Figure 3.5

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'by'



It was clear from the tables, that the preposition **by** "hawla, aan, mina..." was showed in nine stcs. Many students gave incorrect answers as in "The report must be finished **in** tomorrow" (87 faulty answer). The equivalent of this example in Standard Arabic is "yajibo al intihae' **mina** taqrir ghadan" and "he was a tailor **by** trade" (113 erroneous answers) the learners' erroneous usage can be from the influence of first language. They used prepositions **at, for, on, in** instead of **by**, this is called substitution using unnecessary prepositions. Whereas others provided correct ones .For example "The report must be finished **by** tomorrow" (67 right answer). Learners used prepositions correctly because of positive transfer. They used prepositions: **at, for, on, in** instead of **by**, this is called substitution using unnecessary prepositions. Some learners omit the preposition **by** because these respondents could not understand the usage of preposition **by** in the correct way. This category is called omission.

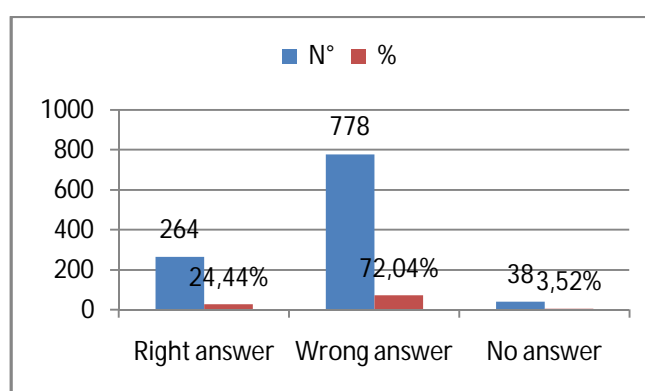
Table 3.71

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'on'

On	N	%
Right answer	264	24.44
Wrong answer	778	72.04
No answer	38	3.52
Total	1080	100

Figure 3.6

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'on'



As can be seen from tables the preposition **on** is mentioned in nine stcs. 97.5 % of students gave the wrong answer as in “I need a book **on** bio-chemistry”, they used the preposition **of, in, from, about** instead of **on**. The reason behind this error is due to the literal translation this means that learner’s mother tongue effects on L2. However, the rest of the population provide an appropriate answer as in “he hates travelling because he gets sick when he is **on** the plane”. Here, learners put the preposition **on** correctly because of positive transfer. In this examples **for** in Standard Arabic is **fi** (yakraho safar li anaho yamrado aaindama yakono **fi** ta'ira). The proposition **on** is used to indicate time, position, medium, whereas the rest they ignored to answer (this category called omission).

Table 3.72

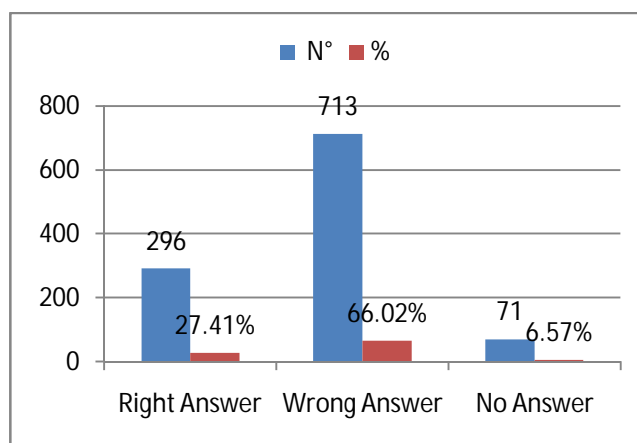
Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'to'

To	N	%
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Right answer	296	27.41
Wrong answer	713	66.02
No answer	71	6.57
Total	1080	100

Figure 3.7

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'to'



The preposition **to** is mentioned in eight stcs. Sometimes the majority of students answer correctly as in stc 'it can cost anything from 5\$ **to** 15\$' (94 right answer; 78.33%). The reason behind this may be due to the literal translation from standard Arabic (yomqino an toqalif min 5 **ila** 15 dalaren) the equivalent of the preposition **to** in standard Arabic is **ila** and that what we called positive transfer whereas in some sentences the majority of students select a wrong prepositions and substitute the preposition **to** by another one as in the first stc (my car does 10 miles **to** the litre) when 33 student replace the preposition **to** by the preposition **for**. In this case may be the reason behind this error is the L1 interference. In standard Arabic we say 'li litr' and that explains why the majority select the preposition **for** instead of **to**. However, in stc (the Luxembourg Shell station on the motor way to France happens to be Europe's largest one) the majority of students answer incorrectly (93 errors; 77.5%) and also the majority of them substitute the preposition **to** by the preposition **in**. the reason behind such error may be due to the overgeneralization of the rules. In English, with nouns of

countries the most used preposition is **in** and that explains why most of students select it instead of **to**.

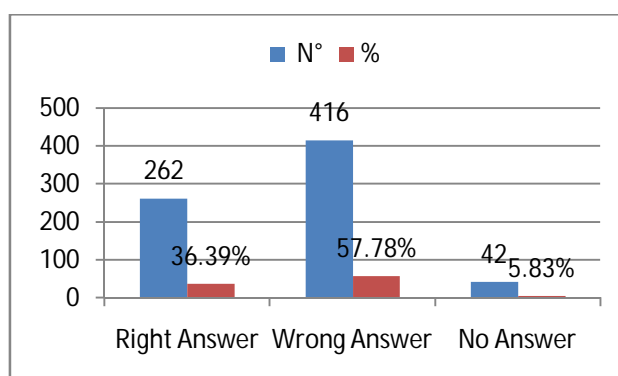
Table 3.73

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'with'

With	N	%
Right answer	262	36.39
Wrong answer	416	57.78
No answer	42	5.83
Total	720	100

Figure 3.8

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'with'



In addition, the preposition **with** is normally used in six stcs as a correct answer. In some stcs the majority of students use the correct answer as in stc four (Muriel is the girl **with** black hair) (75 right answers; 62.4%) and stc two (John is the man **with** his hand **in** the pocket) (73 right answers; 60.38%) the reason behind the correct selection of the preposition **with** in this cases is the appropriate understanding of the rule of using the preposition **with** or the meaning of the stc was clear to the students or may be the construction of this stc is seen many times. Thus, the students overgeneralize the rules positively. On the other hand, the other four stcs the majority of students select wrong answers and substitute the preposition **with** by other prepositions. For instance, in stc eleven (You shouldn't be so generous **with**

us) there are (60 errors; 50%). If students translate the stc into their L1, they will answer it correctly. However, the majority of them substitute the preposition **with** by the preposition **to**. In this case the reason is may be the lack of basic knowledge of prepositions and their usage. In stc twenty seven (He is been **with** EnglishClub.com **for** two years) there are (114 errors; 95%) and only (3 correct answers; 2.5%) and the majority of students use the preposition **with** instead of the preposition **in**. the students translate literally this stc into Arabic. The equivalent of **with** in Arabic in this context is '**fi**' and that what explain that selection.

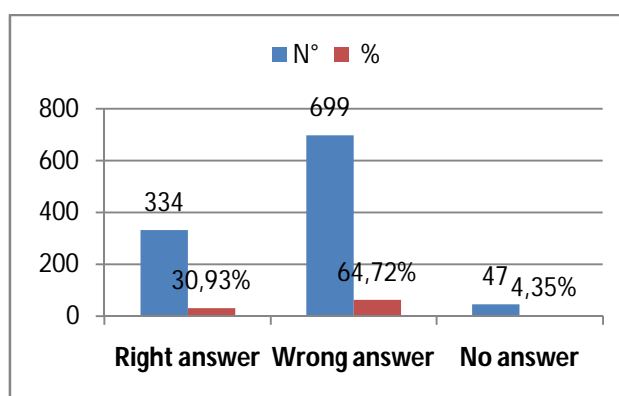
Table 3.74

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'in'

In	N	%
Right answer	334	30.93
Wrong answer	699	64.72
No answer	47	4.35
Total	1080	100

Figure 3.9

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'in'



The next preposition is **in** that has been mentioned in nine stcs. For instance, in the stc number two (John is the man **with** his hand **in** the pocket) the majority of students answer correctly (66 right answer; 55%) may be because of positive transfer from L1 to the target language. In standard Arabic the equivalent of 'in the pocket' is 'fi el jayb'. However, in

some stcs most students select the wrong answer and substitute the preposition **in** by the preposition **at** as in stc number eight (Her mother works **in** a school) (72 errors; 60%) maybe the students still confused in the application of **in, on, at**.

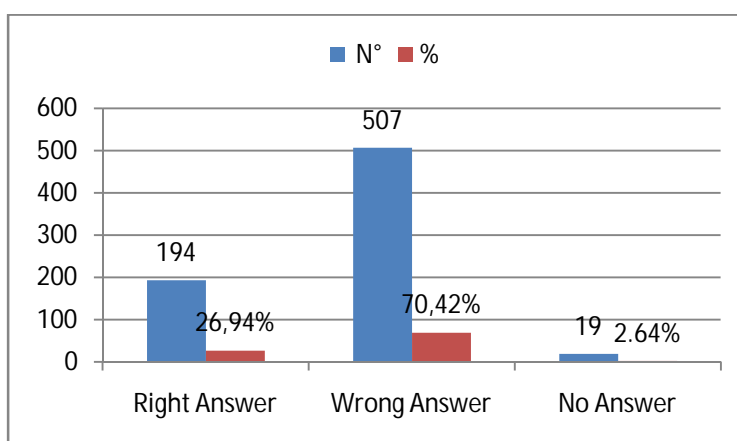
Table 3.75

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'about'

About	N	%
Right answer	194	26.94
Wrong answer	507	70.42
No answer	19	2.64
Total	720	100

Figure 3.10

Sum of Students' Answers to Preposition 'about'



The last preposition is **about**. For this preposition we select six stcs for the test. In some stcs the majority select the right answer as in the stc forty (There is something **about** him that I

don't quite trust) there are (73 right answers; 60.83%). In this case may be the students translate the stc in their L1 and that leads to positive transfer because in standard Arabic we say (honaqa shaye' aanho) and the equivalent of **about** in standard Arabic is **aan**. However, for instance, in the stc twenty six (I do not like it, but there is nothing I can do **about** it) (54errors; 53.33%) the majority use **around** instead of **about**. This error is due to negative transfer from mother tongue language to target language.

3.3.2. The Students' Compositions

To analyse the findings of the composition, the percentage of wrong usage and correct usage of the prepositions was calculated. The table 3.76 shows all the students' usage of prepositions.

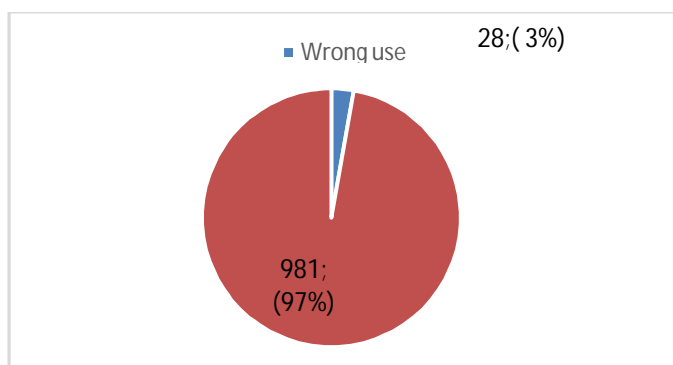
Table 3.76

Students' Use of Prepositions in the Composition

Use	N	%
Wrong use	28	2.78
Right use	981	97.22
Total	1009	100

Figure 3.11

Students' Use of Prepositions to the Composition



Most of the prepositional errors occurred in the category of substitution (17 errors; 60.71%). This was followed by the category of addition (8 errors; 28.57%) and the least errors occurred in the category of omission with only 3 errors (10.71%).

Table 3.77

Students' Erroneous Use of Prepositions in the Composition

Prepositions	Substitution	Omission	Addition	N	%
For	2	0	2	4	14.29
By	1	0	1	2	7.14
In	2	1	2	5	17.86
About	2	0	0	2	7.14
From	1	0	0	1	3.57
At	1	1	0	2	7.14
Of	0	1	2	3	10.71
With	5	0	1	6	21.44
To	3	0	0	3	10.71
Total	17	3	8	28	100

As the table shows the category of substitution consists of the majority of errors with (17 errors; 60.71%). In this category the preposition **with** is the most misused (5 errors; 17.86%) followed by the preposition **to** with (3 errors; 10.71%). The second category is addition with (8 errors; 28.57%). The most misused prepositions in this category is **of**, **for** and **in** with (2 errors; 7.14%). The last position is for the category of omission which consists of only (3 errors; 10.71%).

First, in the category of substitution **to**, **in**, **by**, is replaced by **with**, for instance, in the sentence 'you can talk **with/to** me.' the student uses the preposition **with** instead of **to**. The errors in this example may be due to the L1 interference because in standard Arabic the equivalent of this sentence is 'yomqinoqa taqalom mae mn torid'. So, negative transfer can be considered as a cause to this error. Also, sometimes both 'talk to' and 'talk with' are used

exchangeably, but 'talk to' is used in one side conversation but 'talk with' is used to discuss with many participants.

The preposition **to** comes in the second position in this category. For instance, in the sentence 'times depends ~~to~~/**on** what we do', the student may have a lack of English rules. The verb 'depend' mainly is associated with the preposition **on**. Thus, the student ignores the rule. In the example 'when I intended ~~in~~/**at** a university ...' the student uses **in** instead of **at**. The reason behind this error may be due to the overgeneralization of the rules. In some contexts we can say 'in university' and in others we use 'at university'. The most common used is 'at university'. The error in the example '~~about~~/**in** my opinion, ...' the student replaces the preposition **in** by the preposition **about**. One possible reason for this error may be the incomplete learning of English rules. Thus, the student overgeneralizes some inappropriate rules because of the lack of basic knowledge of prepositions.

Second, in the category of omission, learners avoid using certain prepositions; for example 'the children have a wide perception (**of**) knowledge'. The error in the omission of the preposition '**of**' may be due to the negative transfer from L1 to L2 has caused students to omit the preposition. However, in the example of 'students want to learn (**at**) least two or three languages', learners think that there is no necessity for the verb "learn" to be followed by the preposition '**at**'. Another error is on the omission of preposition '**in**', for example 'technology plays a big role (in) education'. In this example the main reason is the effect of L1 because in standard Arabic the equivalent of this sentence is 'atignolojya talaabo dawran mohiman fi taalim'.

The Third category is addition as in the sentence 'there are many ~~of~~ good software' students were added the preposition **of** because of the influence of first language in the second language which caused an error. In Standard Arabic the equivalent of this sentence is

‘tojado alaadid mina albaramij aljadida’. In the second example ‘Learning foreign language is very important (**in**) nowadays’ students applying knowledge of L1 on another language. The equivalent of this sentence in Standard Arabic is ‘taalom logha ajnabiya mohim fi el wa9t al hadir’. In this stc ‘Technology gives ~~for~~ us many things’, learners used the translation method, which is incorrect. They translated the whole stc into Standard Arabic by adding the preposition **for**. This can be considered as a major cause to this error.

3.4. Overall Results

The analysis of these results demonstrated that students have three types of problems with the most common used English prepositions: substitution of the most common prepositions, addition of unneeded prepositions and omission of the required prepositions. The analysis of all the correct and wrong prepositional usage of both grammar test and the composition shows that one of the major reasons behind the erroneous usage of prepositions is L1 interference or negative transfer from Standard Arabic or Algerian Arabic and sometimes from their SL which is French, on the one hand. Those errors that result from L1 interference are called interlingual errors. On the other hand, the errors made by learners, and which could not be explained in terms of mother tongue interference reveal other reasons of erroneous usage of English prepositions such as overgeneralization of the rules or may be ignorance of some important rules due to the incomplete learning and understanding of these rules and those are intralingual errors.

Some errors were not easy to find out their sources. In addition, results showed that in the grammar test, the majority of answers are wrong whereas in the composition there are fewer errors comparing to the test. The reason can be attributed to the fact that in the composition the students control the context and avoid the use of difficult prepositions. Indeed, it was noticed, in students’ writings, that they mostly use simple prepositions especially those nine most common prepositions and that leads to overproduction of simple prepositions which is

called simplification and avoidance of complex prepositions. This limitation was expected because of their level of proficiency and the limitations they have in terms of vocabulary. Whereas in grammar test, students cannot control the context and that explains the big number of errors in comparison with their compositions. Thus, the results obtained confirmed the hypothesis of this study. It is clear that second year students shared the same developmental errors in addition to errors due to language interference. In other words, they committed errors due to several reasons. The most problematic prepositions are: **'on'** with 72.04% of errors, **'by'** with 67.03% of errors, and **'to'** with 66.02% of errors. Concerning the reasons of difficulties in the use of these prepositions, it is clear that lack of basic knowledge, incomplete learning of English prepositions, overgeneralization of the rules are the most common reasons of difficulty.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed at investigating the most difficult English prepositions for Second year LMD students and the major reasons of their erroneous use of these prepositions by identifying each type of errors. Statistical analysis of the grammar test demonstrated that the majority of students committed a number of grammatical errors in the use of prepositions. While, students' compositions showed that a few of them faced difficulties in using these prepositions. They usually failed in the use of complex prepositions and resort to use simple prepositions. The test results revealed that students sometimes use unnecessary prepositions, replace one preposition by others, and also omit them in the sentences. These three types of errors were addition, substitution, and omission. However, the data gathered showed that all these errors are of interlingual, intralingual and developmental nature, in addition to overgeneralization as main sources of errors.

General Conclusion

This study investigated students' errors in the use of English prepositions especially those most common used ones. Most common used English prepositions could have different functions and meaning and that is what made them difficult. The appropriate use of these prepositions was the biggest problem faced by foreign language learners. The wrong selection of a preposition could change the intended meaning of a sentence. This study aimed at shedding light on the reasons which lead to incorrect use of English prepositions. The results of this research revealed that EFL learners avoided using complex prepositions and overused the most common ones especially **at, on, in, to, of, for, by, with, about**. Also, the analysis of the findings revealed that when students confused in the use of English prepositions, they used their previous knowledge of their mother tongue which is Standard Arabic and sometimes French, or even their Algerian dialects. In some cases they transferred positively and sometimes negatively. They transferred positively when the English preposition had the same equivalent of Arabic prepositions in some contexts. However, they transferred negatively when the features of the two languages differed from each other; interlingual errors. Negative transfer was not the only reason behind the erroneous use of English prepositions. The results indicated that there were other sources of errors of intralingual nature which result from incomplete or partial learning of English language.

In this study we aimed at answering some specific questions related to the use of English prepositions. The findings revealed that there were other types of errors in addition to interlingual errors. The students also committed intralingual errors. Concerning the most problematic prepositions, the results showed that **on, by** and **to** were the most problematic ones. There were three types of problems with the most common English prepositions which

were omission, substitution and addition of prepositions. The findings suggested many possible reasons of difficulties in the use of English prepositions which were incomplete learning of English, the lack of basic knowledge of English prepositions, overgeneralization of the rules and ignorance of some others. From the results shown above, it was clear that the hypothesis of this study was confirmed because second year students shared the same developmental errors in addition to errors due to their previously learned languages.

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Appendix one

TEST YOUR PREPOSITIONS:

Name:

..... Group:..

Choose the most suitable prepositions from the list below:**at- in- during- of- by- with- over- for- about- to- on- from- around**

1. My car does 10 miles.....the litre.
2. John is the man.....his hand.....the pocket.
3. The Luxembourg Shell station.....the motorway.....France happens to be Europe's largest one.
4. Muriel is the girlblack hair.
5. They walked.....the town.
6. Our belief is that peace is built hour.....hour.
7. I need a book.....bio-chemistry.
8. Her mother works.....a school.
9. Harry comes to work.....car but I prefer to come.....foot.
10. There is something true.....what he says.
11. You shouldn't be so generous ...us.
12. He broke his leg.....getting out.....the car.
13. I will see you.....Christmas Day.
14. -The report must be finished.....tomorrow.
15. We are aiming.....sales.....\$1,000,000.
16. He hates travelling because he gets sick when he is.....the plane.
17. We worked.....three hours.
18.the end.....the 19th century, Queen Victoria wasthe head of a huge empire.
19. Mary lives.....6, Drury Street
20. It can cost anything.....\$5.....\$15.
21. -We got.....France after some delay.
22. -You use a corkscrew.....opening bottles.
23. I feel like a balloon.....the end.....a string.
24. -The room is 10 metres.....6 metres.
25. Chilean workers stakes a claim.....mine profit.
26. I do not like it, but there is nothing I can do.....it.
27. He is been.....EnglishClub.com.....two years.
28. We wondered.....the town.....an hour or two.
29. I'm delighted.....your optimistic feelings.
30. He was a tailor.....trade.
31. We got off the ship.....all ports.
32. She's standing.....the tree over there.
33. We got.....late.
34. It took you 10 seconds to run.....the tree and back again.
35. Who did you see her
36. The Earth and Moon both revolvea common center of gravity.
37. -She was deeply hurt.....his insults.
38. -Both.....these campgrounds are right.....the ocean.
39. -We would arrive.....the dance hall.....a fairly excitable mood.
40. There is somethinghim that I don't quite trust.

41. He broke.....my reveries.
42. -The weather forecast says the odds are five.....one against rain.
43. She needed to go.....the bank and sign the paper.
44. -The moment he walked.....the door you could've heard an olive bounce.
45. -Our flight from Islamabad.....Manchester had a stopover.....Dubai.
46. -A lockbox is an attachment.....a door that holds the key.....that door.
47. -Only a rattlesnake has a rattle.....the end of its tail.
48. She tiptoedthe room being careful not to wake anyone.
49. Let's get onthe meeting.
50. We drove deeper.....the forest.

Appendix two

Exercise 3

Learning Foreign Languages

Learning foreign languages is very beneficial for many reasons. First, it makes you much cultured. For example, you will be cultured in any languages that you study, and may be you will be know the culture of every country by your learning some language that you want. Second, it gives you the chance to study in foreign countries. Third, learning foreign languages is a best experience, because it isn't include in study, we can say also it is as an entertainment, because when you learn some language, you feel like you enjoy this. Another reason is that learning languages gives you the opportunity to connect with people from another countries, and this is very important to everyone. In addition, learning foreign languages gives you also the chance to work everywhere, because foreign languages are very useful especially in that time, for example, when you study foreign languages, you can be a translator, and this help you to do many things in much places of work with your diploma of translation. Finally, it also good and necessary for our country in order to make a good and high level in languages, and

guided practice in class and independent practice at home, for example, the ideal composition process allows time for student to think and to reflect on their ideas, as well as time to revise and to proofread their writing. Also, homework gives students additional practice of skills covered in class. In addition, since all students do not work at the same speed, giving students time at home to finish work keeps them from falling behind. Another reason, homework provides time to complete longer assignments, and not only is homework essential to mastering new skills and maintaining previously learned skills, but it also guarantees constant review and provides time for longer assignments, as well as additional time for students who need it. Students who do their daily homework, make better grades, and learn more! Also students who do their homework daily are prepared for tests and make better grades; for instance, when homework proceeds smoothly it can become a positive aspect of your relationship with your child. In conclusion, middle school classes are too short to teach a new concept and practice it sufficiently for students to master.

Exercise B:

Technology in education is useful for many reasons, first, technology gives ~~for~~ students more information and details about any topic and help them to ~~make~~ their research ~~if~~ their teachers asked them. Second, ~~by~~ technology, students can improve their speaking ~~skills~~ for example, when ~~one~~ of them download a song or a conversation, they will be learn more and correct ~~at~~ their errors that he faced before. The third reason, technology help student to prepare for tests and exams. In addition, they provide times for them. To conclude, technology ~~are~~ the most important thing especially in the field of education.

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Exercise 35.

04/04

Technology in education becomes an effective method to improve the learning & teach process for many reasons. One of the most important reasons is the easy of access and gathering information by using the internet, also it helps students to do research and connect each other in a virtual world to discuss and advise their lessons. In addition to information technology, modern devices that help student and teachers to explore science as: microscope, telescope, the skill of human body, computers and more, and some countries adopt a complete technology system as a learning process like Japan. Students like use iPod to write, TV to watch lessons and cameras to record in the exam without the intercept of teachers. Another reason of the importance technology in education is the flourish of science and opening the door to the unknown, also students get better marks and they become needless to ask parents to help them because what technology provides. Finally, at this time of flourish and exploration technology becomes a real part of education.

Résumé

La présente étude vise à étudier les erreurs de l'étudiant dans l'utilisation des prépositions anglaises les plus courantes par les étudiants de deuxième année au département d'anglais, Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Université de Jijel. Le but de cette étude est d'exposer les principales raisons. Les étudiants du département d'anglais montrent les mêmes erreurs de développement en plus des erreurs qui résultent de l'interférence de la première langue. Pour vérifier la validité de cette hypothèse, deux moyens de recherche sont utilisés pour collecter des données, un test de grammaire et une analyse de la composition des élèves. Le test a été administré à 120 participants sur 270 étudiants afin d'identifier les prépositions anglaises les plus problématiques auxquelles ils sont confrontés en utilisant ces prépositions en clarifiant leurs types d'erreurs. Le deuxième instrument est une composition écrite à partir des documents d'examen du premier semestre des mêmes groupes afin de déterminer l'usage abusif des prépositions anglaises les plus courantes dans les phrases. Puis comparez leurs performances entre le test de grammaire et leurs propres expressions écrites. Le résultat obtenu montre que les étudiants de deuxième année font des erreurs en utilisant le test de grammaire. Considérant que, quelques-uns d'entre eux commettent des erreurs dans la composition écrite. Ainsi, ils évitent d'utiliser des prépositions anglaises complexes.

Mots-clés: prépositions en anglais, interférence de la langue, test de grammaire, écrit expression, erreurs, erreurs de développement.

ملخص

تتعلق الدراسة الحالية إلى التحقق من اخطاء استخدام حروف الجر الاكثر شيوعا لطلبة السنة الثانية قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، بجامعة محمد صديق بن يحيى ،جبل . الهدف الرئيسي من الدراسة هو تحديد الأسباب الرئيسية التي جعلت الطلاب يواجهون مشاكل في استخدام هذه الحروف التسعة. تركز هذه الدراسة على اشكالية ان طلاب السنة الثانية يرتكبون نفس الأخطاء التنموية بالإضافة إلى الأخطاء الناتجة عن تداخل اللغة الأولى اللغة الأولى. للتحقق من صحة هذه الفرضية ، اعتمدت الدراسة على استخدام وسيلتين لجمع البيانات، من خلال اختبار قواعد اللغة وتحليل تكوين الطلاب. تم إجراء الاختبار على 120 مشاركًا من بين 270 طالبًا من أجل تحديد أكثر المشاكل التي يواجهها الطلاب عند استخدامهم لحروف الجر من خلال توضيح أنواع الأخطاء التي يقعون فيها. الوسيلة الثانية هو التعبير الكتابي من أوراق الامتحانات الفصل الدراسي الأول من نفس المجموعات من أجل تحديد سوء استخدام حروف الجر الاكثر شيوعا. ثم قارن أداءهم بين اختبار القواعد والتعبير المكتوبة الخاصة بهم. تظهر النتيجة التي تم الحصول عليها أن طلاب السنة الثانية يرتكبون أخطاء في استخدام اختبار القواعد. في حين يرتكب عدد قليل منهم أخطاء في التعبير المكتوبة. لذلك ، تجنبوا استخدام حروف الجر التي تكون معقدة.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

حروف الجر في اللغة الإنجليزية ، نقل اللغة ، اختبار القواعد ، التعبير المكتوبة، الأخطاء ،الاطعائ التنموية.