

ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING OF THE PREPOSITIONS (TO) AND (FOR)

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1-Introduction

A preposition is used in the grammatical classification of words indicating the set of things that usually come before noun phrase, (single noun or pronoun), to shape a single constituent of structure. (Crystal, 2008:383, Chalker,1992:67, Thomson and Martinet,1986:91)

Prepositions can be used in front of nouns or noun phrases, pronouns or gerunds to state a relationship between one person,

thing, event, etc. and another: (Alexndar, 1990,P. 155)

preposition + noun: / gave the book to Charlie

preposition + pronoun: / gave it to him.

preposition + gerund: Charlie devotes his time to reading

A preposition is a minor word class that is usually used to combine fundamental words (usually nouns) to other parts of the sentence. Prepositions are closed class which are not invented by any other thing (Chalker,1984:214) A preposition forms a closed word class, which is normally invariable (Aarts and Aarts,1988:44). In other words, prepositions are closed-system items (Quirk and Greenbaum,1973:19)

Morphologically, prepositions are words which are typically followed by noun phrase, personal pronoun or noun-substitute named the object of the preposition, as in

For instance: George sat between the two deans.

George jumped on it

George went from this to that.

Prepositions have two forms, one is simple preposition, which consists of one word such as at, in and for, and the other form is complex, which includes more than one or two words. Both are in one of the subsequent classification:

A) Adv. or prep+ prep.: as for, away from, along with

B) Verb / adj./ conj. / etc + prep. : because of, due to, owing to

C) Prep. + N + prep. : by means of, in front of,

(Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973:144-45)

(See also Stageberg, 1981: 172, Eckersley and Eckersley, 1960: 277).

There are also few structures in which prepositions are used at the end of the sentence and / or postposed including Relative clauses, Passive, Infinitive, Exclamation, QW questions and set expressions, as in the following examples; (Stageberg,1981: 179) Aziz, 1989: 183-84 also adds another item which is , ing construction

The job that he worked at.

The locked had been tampered with.

Clay is fun to play with

Which room did you find it in?

The world over

What are you looking at (Aziz, 1989, 183-84)

This is the man I was looking for (Ibid, 1989, 183-84)

What a strange thing dreams are made of (Ibid, 1989, 183-84).

As for Quirk and Greenbaum (1973: 143) they state that a prepositional phrase comprises preposition followed by a prepositional complement including a noun phrase , wh-clause or V-ing clause.

(see Weber,2012,11, Teschner and Evan, 2007: 15)

Examples: At the bus

From what he said.

By signing a peace treaty.

In a preposition phrase (a preposition and noun) , unlike to the other kinds of phrase, both components are obligatory and neither form for the phrase as a whole- as head noun can form a noun phrase as a whole

Examples: in the garden, after the party. (Jackson, 1982: 80)

Semantically, we may easily say that " it is almost impossible to give all the meanings that prepositions help to convey" (Eckersley and Eckersley, 1960: 278). The meaning of a preposition is described in a better way in terms of relation it states between the complement and another part of the sentence. The most common kinds of these things are the following: place, time, cause-purpose, support-opposition (Aziz, op.Cit.:184-86)

Examples: He is in the garden

I have not seen him since last Christmas.

They died for their country

These ladies are from India

She cannot cut it with a knife

Some of these boys are coming with us

They travelled by car.

The door was opened by a servant.

The current contrastive analysis in the present study focuses on two English prepositions, which are "to and for", and their usage in motion constructions. Therefore, the current study targets to contribute to a better understanding of how prepositions are used correctly. These prepositions can be generally used to indicate a shift of description of some entity

as the current study shows their usage in various certain contexts. In the analysis, which is done upon university students, it is noted that students face difficulty in distinguishing between them. In addition to , grammarians feel that these preposition are commonly used.

2-The main uses of the preposition " to "

The main uses of prepositions " to " are explained below:

1. "To " as a preposition of motion

A) The preposition " to " is used to express motion from one place to another (Fitikides,2002:83), (See also <https://www.thoughtco.com/how-to-use-preposition-to-1211798> , Yate, 1975:52)

- (1) We come to school every morning
- (2) We went to the café (Eastwood,1994:290)
- (3) We went to the cinema (Vince, 1993: 69)

B) It can be used with distance (Ibid)

- (4) We walked to the river and beach.

C) The preposition " To " is used for a destination such as
(Eastwood,1994:291)

- (5) We are going to Doncaster.

D) The preposition " To " can have an expression of moving to another person, usually with these words such as (go/come /walk + up +to , as in

(6) A man came up to me in the street and asked me for money (Ibid).

E) The preposition " To " is used to indicate direction with reference to levels. (Alexandar, 1990: 159)

(7) He has gone to the fourth floor and now he is on the fourth floor.

(8) He has gone to Paris and now he is in Paris (Ibid).

11-Other Uses of the Preposition 'To '

A) There are some verbs, which are used with the preposition " to " (Sargeant, 2007: 105) such as

(9) Does this book belong to you?

(10) We are listening to you

(11) I lent my skate board to sue.

B) Some nouns are used with the preposition " to " (Ibid)

(12) What is the answer to this question?

(13) Traffic can cause damage to the environment.

C) The preposition " to " expresses the actual recipient

(Quirk and Greenbaum,1973: 158)

(14) He gave a beautiful doll to his daughter.

D) The preposition " to " is expresses motion toward a place especially with these verbs (run, hurry, travel, fly, walk,ride)

(15) He runs to school

(16) He goes to bed

(17) He walks to the library

(18) He flies to the city

(19) He travels to the country.

E) The preposition " to " can be used when counting the time until a future event. (Swan, 1989: 264)

(20) It is another three weeks to the holiday.

F) The -ing form is used after the preposition " to " in these expressions (get used to, be used to) .(Swan,1989:265) For examples:

(21) Iam used to driving in London

G) The preposition " to " is used after the preposition " from " as in

(22) I usually work from nine to five (Ibid).

I) The preposition "To " is also a part of the infinitive form of the verb.

<https://www.thoughtco.com/how-to-use-preposition-to-1211798>

(23) It was late, so we decided to take a taxi home

(Murphy,2004:108)

J) The preposition "to " can be used in several phrasal verbs including the following:

(24) look forward **to** something

(25) object **to** something

(26) appeal **to** someone

(27) get **to** something

<https://www.thoughtco.com/how-to-use-preposition-to-1211798>.

H) The preposition " to" can be used as to-infinitive which expresses purpose and result (Eastwood ,1994: 144)

(28) I came here to get some information.

(29) We got home to find visitors on the doorstep.

3. Main Uses of the preposition " For "

The main uses of the preposition " for "

A) "for " as a preposition of time:

1) The preposition " for " is used with a period of time to say how long something goes on (Eastwood,1994 :297, Murphy, 2004: 24, Murphy and Altman, 1989: 220).

(30) Rachel plays computer games for hours on end

(31) I once stayed at that hotel for a week

B) The preposition " for " can specifically be used with negative and superlative to express an exclusion duration ,as in

(32) I haven't seen him for years (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973:155).

C) The preposition " for " is used with the tense of present perfect , such as (Swan, 1989:104)

(33) I have known her for a long time.

3.1. Other Uses of the preposition " for "

A) The preposition " for " can be used before a noun to speak about a purpose or reason for doing something, such as (Swan, 1989:104)

(34) We went to the pub for a drink

(35) I went to London for an interview

B) According to (Swan, 1989:104) states that the preposition " for " is used after these two words (too, enough) (Ibid)

(36) It is too heavy for you to fit

(37) It is warm enough for to snow to well.

C) The preposition " for " is indicated a recipient or beneficiary

(Yate,1986: 46)

(37) I have a present for you

D) The preposition " for " refers to a special purpose: (Ibid)

(38) You need a coat for winter

(39) He has a bicycle for transportation

E) The preposition " for " describes how something is used
(Vince, 2003: 75)

(40) This is for the lights

(41) This is for starting the engine.

F) The preposition " for " is used in order to help do something

(42) What can I do for you?.

(43) Can you translate this letter for me?

4- The Test

4.1 Description of the Test

The current study is focused on an objective test which is given to third- year students in the Department of English, College of Education

, al- Qalam University Collage. The Test is built with the intention of testing students' aptitude using the prepositions " For " and " To ". It is consists of (50) multiple – choice items which cover a wide range of the fundamental uses of the preposition " for" and " to" which are found in Grammar subject

The test consists of (50) things where the suitable preposition " for or to " should be chosen. The items are selected cautiously in order to cover the various place of the test.

4.2 Categorization and Analysis of the Error

The test shows some points concerning the testees' choice of the prepositions " for" and " to". A close look at the table below shows various points that is given in detail.

Table No (I) The special statics of student's responses according to the form of the responses (To) and (For)

Items	Number of correct response	The percentage of the responses
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to	1500	60%	
for	1000	40%	
total	2500	100%	

The results have been obtained from applying the test of the preposition " for and " to" is given to third year students in the Department of English , College of Education, al- Qalam University Collage, using the prepositions (to) and (for) .It is comprised of (50) multiple choice items which covers a wide range of the fundamental uses of the prepositions " for and to" .The total percentage of the students that response correct answer items (to) 1500 which is 60% percentage male and female students and 1000 which is 40% who gave in correct items that need responses in uses of (for) from the total responses of the testing , the prepositions subject in Grammar as the table (I) above is revealed. Thus, the highest percentage of mistakes done by students is " for " than " to". The main reason behind the students' failure is to refer to the exact preposition that English is an analytic language, and both prepositions are somehow equivalent in Arabic language so the students thought of as the same in Arabic language. Therefore, the students must translate the preposition compared with Arabic language. Another solution is to keep some fixed rules in order to avoid making mistakes

Conclusions and Recommendations

The test includes 50 items and covered 50 students too, 20 items are filled in 'for" and 30 items are filled in " to" 'The aim of the current paper is to analyze and find the problematic area in which learners and students face difficulty in suing them, so by doing the test given to the third – year students. The prepositions " To and For " are used in many different positions. These two prepositions belong to the goal class of Prepositions and thus serve as heads of prepositional phrases that indicate destination of

motion. The results of the test can be summarized in the following paragraphs.

The preposition "to" is in its main meaning most related with these kinds of objects, and a huge number of nouns fall into this category. This part is the most extensive. Therefore, it can be divided into two subparts; the first focuses on motion constructions as a whole and analyzed them from a syntactic as well as a semantico-pragmatic point of view. The second subpart focused on the prepositional phrases alone. Thus, the current study has shown the following findings:

A) Both the prepositions "for" and "to" form the problem and confusion among students to

B) The preposition "for" and "to" are almost similar in use in Arabic and English. Therefore, the students see them as the same. Thus, in this case learners should not think in Arabic language when they want to use them.

C) Both prepositions should be memorized by learners and students in some cases due to having items out of the certain rule

D) Because the learners and students seem unhappy with structure and some abnormal rules they made mistakes, so they need to practise more in different context.

E) Because of many uses of "to", students make mistakes, so they must keep them as it exist in the grammar books

APPENDIX

The Test

- 1- I am going to Spain..... a holiday
- 2- You need a lot of experience.....this job
- 3- You need a lot of experience.....do this job
- 4- We will need more time.....make a decision

- 5- I went to the dentista check-up
- 6- I had to put on my glasses.....read the letter
- 7- Do you have to wear glasses.....reading
- 8-I wish we had a garden.....the children.....play in
- 9- We are going.....Italy next month
- 10- I must go.....the bank today
- 11-What time do you usually go.....bed?
- 12- Does this bus go.....the center?
- 13- Ali didn't gowork today
- 14- Ann is not very well.....she has gone.....the doctor
- 15- Would you like to come..... a party on Sunday
- 16- We are goinga concert tomorrow evening
- 17- I went.....New York last year
- 18- Next year we hope to go.....Canada to visit some friends
- 19- Shall we gothe cinema this evening
- 20- How often do you go.....the dentist?
- 21- We waited for Sue..... Half an hour but she didn't come
- 22- I am tired. I am going to lie down.....a few minutes
- 23- Next week I am going to Paris.....three days
- 24- Where have you been? I have been waiting for you.....twenty minutes
- 25- I stayed in Rome..... five days
- 26- Yesterday evening I watched TVthree hours
- 27- Jill has been in England.....three days
- 28- My aunt has lived in Australia.....15 years
- 29- The bus is late. We have been waiting.....for minutes

- 30- Nobody lives in those houses. They have been empty.....many years
- 31- Mike has been ill.....a long time
- 32- Linda and Frank have been married.....20 years
- 33- Silvia has been learning English..... Six months
- 34- Have you known Lisa.....a long time
- 35- It has been raining.....an hour
- 36- Why are you going out? I am going out.....post a letter
- 37- A friend of mine phoned.....invite me to a party
- 38- This wall iskeep people out of the garden
- 39- The president has a team of body guardprotect him
- 40- It is difficult to find a place..... Park in the center
- 42- Would you like something.....eat?
- 43- Have you got much work.....?
- 44- I get lonely if there is nobody.....talk to
- 45- I need something.....open this bottle with
- 46- They gave us some money.....buy some food
- 47- Do you have much chance.....practice your English
- 48- I need a few days....think about your proposal
- 49- There weren't any chairs.....us to sit on
- 50- Do you use this brush.....washing the dishes?

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