

A STUDY ON THE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING PREPOSITION OF DIRECTION

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Abstract: A few students might get confused which preposition could be properly used for certain conditions. In other word, they might be failed to distinguish the used of each preposition of direction appropriately because it has different application and meaning in sentences. Based on the syllabus of structure-one course, the students were expected to understand and to be able to use this kind of preposition correctly. Hence, the purpose of the research was to find out the students' ability in using preposition of direction at the first year students of English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Lancang Kuning University Pekanbaru for Academic Year 2016/2017. Therefore, the researcher conducted survey design to identify whether the students have understood this subject or not. Finally, the result of the study showed that the average score of students' ability in using prepositions of direction was 66.47. In conclusion, the students' ability in using preposition of direction was categorized into "fair" category.

Keywords: *Ability and Preposition of Direction*

1. INTRODUCTION

Grammar is useful in writing aspect because grammar helps in constructing a good sentence. Another reason is grammar makes the writing easily understood by the audiences. According to syllabus of English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training of Lancang Kuning University Pekanbaru, especially in Structure-one subject, prepositions are one of subject matters which must be learned by students, and one of the prepositions is preposition of direction. In the syllabus, students are expected to understand and be able to apply this kind of preposition.

Prepositions are words (*at, in, on, near, with, without*) used with nouns in phrases providing information about time (*at five o'clock, in the morning*), place (*on the table, near the window*) and other connections (*with a knife, without a thought*) involving actions and things (Yule, 2006). Prepositions are quite short and significant looking, but they have very important functions. Preposition is one of

the language devices that build up a sentence. In English this component is called a connective word or function word, and also part of speech. Preposition expresses a relation between two entities, one being that represented by the prepositional complement. The prepositions are normally placed before noun or pronouns, but the position itself could change depend on their functions.

Focusing on the research, the topic of discussion is taken from a micro linguistic study (grammar) especially preposition which is one of the important elements of the English sentences, in this case: prepositions of direction. Prepositions of direction indicate the location of a noun (a person, place, or thing) in relation to another noun. Prepositions precede a noun or a pronoun and often accompany verbs of motion. This research covers the prepositions *to, toward, on, and in* when they are used to express movement, direction, or purpose. Other prepositions of direction are created by adding *to* to the prepositions of location *on* or *in* (*onto* and

into). In many cases, *on* or *in* can be used without *to*. Adding *to* to the preposition implies action, whereas *on* or *in* by themselves imply position.

Based on the statement above, the prepositions of direction have different application and meaning in sentences. Thus, some students might get confused to differentiate among prepositions. Hence, the students were expected to understand and be able to apply the kinds of prepositions of direction. That is why it is very interesting to learn prepositions, especially prepositions of direction in detail. These prepositions have different application and different meaning in sentences. They are also found in various word classes in sentences. Therefore, the researcher conducted survey design to identify whether the students have understood this subject or not, in accordance with the researcher's assumptions on it, this research was expected can give contribution to realise students' background knowledge, and then increase their understanding of these prepositions, in order to use those in a sentence correctly.

Overview of Grammar

According to Thornburry (2000) grammar is partly the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language. This can be interpreting that grammar is study that learn how to construct a form in a possible language. This also means that grammar is important to make sentence have a meaning and understandable. The construction or forms are helping to make a meaningful sentence. Grammar of a language is a system of the predictable pattern; words fit together to form phrases; phrases join to form clause; clauses create sentences (Herdi, 2014). It shows that grammar is a study to recognize the system's components of the words to be a sentence. the students can develop their writing and speaking by knowing grammar well. Hence, grammar is important for the learners to increase their writing and speaking.

Baskaran (2005) says that the word "grammar" in linguistic can be taken to mean the entire system of describing the structure of a language from its sounds system to its meaning system or just the organization (form) of words (morphology) and arrangement of these words into sentences (syntax). It can be concluded that grammar is an organized pattern from words and arrange it into sentences that have meaning. Baskaran (2005) states there are four identifiable kinds of grammar, theoretical grammar, descriptive grammar, pedagogic grammar, prescriptive grammar.

Grammar itself is an important pattern in English. The language structure in English is coming from grammar. Grammar is arranging the pattern from words until become a sentence. Grammar plays an important role to make sentence understandable. Grammar constructions make the structure become meaningful. So, Grammar is a part of English that study about pattern and structure of a sentence.

Sentence

Seaton (2007) defines that a sentence is a group of words expressing a complete thought. A sentence must have a subject and a verb, but it may or may not have an object. It means that sentence will not complete without subject or verb. The sentence will be awkward and have meaning and not giving sense to the reader.

Hogue (2008: 10) states that a sentence is a group of word contains at least one subject and one verb, and expresses a complete thought. It means that, the sentence has both subject and verb. However, if it does not has a complete thought and give no sense to the reader, the sentence has still not been completed yet. Hogue (2008: 20) claims that there are four basic kinds of sentences in English: Simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, and compound-complex sentences. According to the experts above, we can conclude that

those four basic skills of writing sentences should be mastered by a writer to produce good and nice writing.

Based on the definition above, sentence usually expresses a complete sentence thought and meaning consisting of subject and verb. When writing a sentence, we must be able to make sure that the subject and the verb are agreed. Therefore, in a sentence, the subject and the verb need each other in order to make a sense. In conclusion, sentence is a group of words consisting of subject and verb expresses a complete thought.

Prepositions

Prepositions are words (*at, in, on, near, with, without*) used with nouns in phrases providing information about time (*at five o'clock, in the morning*), place (*on the table, near the window*) and other connections (*with a knife, without a thought*) involving actions and things. (Yule, 2006). An important element of English sentences is the prepositional phrase. A preposition signals that a noun or a noun structure follow it: the preposition + noun combination constitutes a preposition phrase (eg. *He walked into the house*).

Klammer (2000) states that prepositions have a relating function: they establish relations between nominal units, mainly nouns and nominal groups, and other units in the surrounding discourse. Prepositions may consist of the word (from), to words (because of) or three (in contact with) and or occasionally four (with the exception of). All are single prepositions. Prepositions are phrase connectors. They are followed by noun phrases, and relate the noun phrase to another word, or to the sentences as a whole. Direction is instructions that you give to someone about how to find a particular place. Finally, prepositions are reliable signal that a noun is coming. They occur before a noun phrase, which has the function of connecting a noun or a pronoun to another word. The words are

usually noun, verb, and adjective. For instances:

Prepositions are words used with nouns in phrases providing information about time, place and other connections involving actions and things. (Yule, 2006). Prepositions of direction indicate the location of a noun (a person, place, or thing) in relation to another noun. Prepositions precede a noun or a pronoun and often accompany verbs of motion. This handout covers the prepositions *to, toward, on, and in* when they are used to express movement, direction, or purpose.

2. METHOD

This research implemented survey design as a quantitative research. Creswell (2012) explains that “survey research is procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to entire population of people in order to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of population”.

Survey design has two kinds of these; the first is at one point in time (cross-sectional), and the second is a study over time (longitudinal). However, the researcher will conduct “at one point in time (cross sectional)”. Creswell (2012) states that cross-sectional design consists of particular type that matches to this research which is related to evaluation program. Evaluation program is a survey that provides useful information to decision maker. In this study, the resercher is going to find out the performance of the students' ability in constructing compound sentence at the third year students of English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers training.

Setting of the Research

This research had been conducted at the first year students of English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Lancang Kuning University for Academic year 2016/2017. The university is located at Jl. Yos Sudarso KM. 8, Rumbai Regency, Pekanbaru, Riau.

Population

The population was the subject of the research. In this study, the population was the first year students of English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Lancang Kuning University for Academic year 2016/2017 consisting of three classes; Class A consists of 28 students, class B consists of 27 students and class C consists of 30 students. So that, the total of the population was 85 students.

Sample

Sample is the selected numbers of those representing the population of the research. Gay (2000) defines that sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that they represent the larger group from which they are selected. In determining the sample, the researcher conducted probability sampling technique, it was exactly purposive sampling. Subjects were handpicked by the researcher on the basis of his or her own estimate of their typicality. In this case, the researcher determined to choose class A and B as the sample of this research after considering to the treatment that given by the lecturer while lecturing the course. The researcher was sure that class A and B had the same treatment in learning Structure-one particularly about prepositions because they belong to the Regular Class which was taught by the same lecturer in the same day.

Instrument of the Research

To identify the students' ability in using prepositions of direction, the instrument used was test. Test is the instrument in quantitative research to open the research question in this research. Test was used when the researcher works on the inquiry of numbers using statistics in analyzing the obtained data. This instrument had been used by the researcher to gain the data and identify the percentage and level of students' ability.

Technique of Collecting the Data

In order to find out how students' ability, a test was used to collect the data. A test is a task or set of task that elicits observable behavior from the test taker. The students were instructed to answer 25 given questions which were divided into two parts of question direction. The questions used in this study were requiring students to fill in the blank or complete the sentences in form of paragraph (15 questions) and in form of sentence in line (10 questions) including the usage of prepositions of direction choices. The students were then asked to collect the answer after testing time was in order. The answers submitted by students were assessed by the researcher to score. The scores gained were analyzed by the researcher.

Technique of Analyzing the Data

To analyze the data, this present study used descriptive analysis. Firstly, the researcher analysed the central tendency. This is about the contribution of the score based on their character of statistic namely: mean, mode, and median. They are defined as an average score (mean), the set of score (median), or the most frequently occurring score (mode). A mean is the total of the scores is divided by the numbers of scores (sample).

To calculate the mean, the researcher summed up the total of scores and then divided by number of students. The median is a middle score which is gotten by seeing the middle score. The mode is the number (score) appears most frequently in a list of scores.

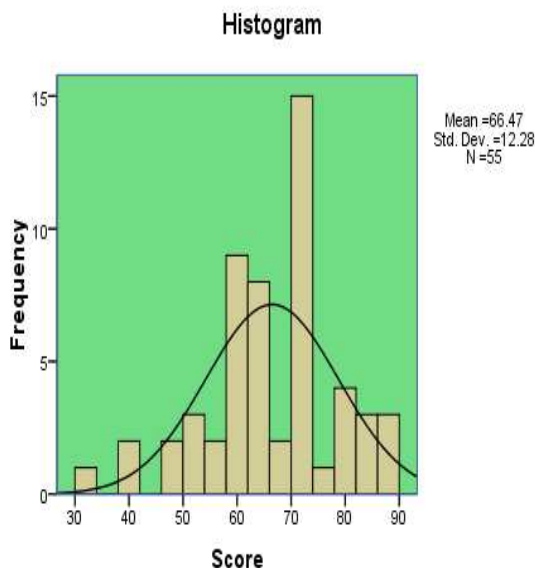
FINDINGS

The researcher conducted the test to collect the data. There were 55 number of students as the samples in this research, they had been tested at the first year students of English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Lancang Kuning University. The test was implemented to get the answer of the research question: to find out students' ability in using preposition of direction. In

order to find it, the students were directed to answer by filling the gaps in the questions by using prepositions of direction *in, on, to, into, onto, and toward*. There were 10 questions in part A and 15 questions in part B of the test, there were totally 25 questions conducted in this research.

After giving the test, the researcher calculated the scores of students from individual correct answer. Each number was given score 4, and they got 100 for them who answered the question correctly at all numbers based on the direction of the test. Furthermore, the researcher used *spss* to get the result of descriptive statistics that could be seen in the following diagram (*histogram*).

Frequency of Students' Ability in Using Prepositions of direction



Based on the histogram above, it can be seen clearly about the comparison of entire score to another score. From the diagram, the highest frequency is in 72 score in which there are fifteen students who got score 72. Otherwise, the most less score is in score 32 and 76 in which there is only one student got those score. Furthermore, the researcher presents the result of students' performance after collecting and analyzing the data in form of a table of percentage. The students'

ability in using prepositions of direction could be seen in the following table.

The Result of Descriptive Statistics using SPSS

| Statistics | | |
|--------------------|---------|---------|
| N | Valid | 55 |
| | Missing | 0 |
| Mean | | 66.47 |
| Std. Error of Mean | | 1.656 |
| Median | | 68.00 |
| Mode | | 72 |
| Std. Deviation | | 12.280 |
| Variance | | 150.809 |
| Range | | 56 |
| Minimum | | 32 |
| Maximum | | 88 |
| Sum | | 3656 |

Based on the calculation above, it could be known the ability of the students in using prepositions of direction. The table 4.2 above presents the average score of 55 respondents in which the mean is 66.47. Furthermore, by calculating and checking on students' scores, it was gotten that the mode of students' scores was 72. It means that this score is generally more often obtained by the students in answering the test. The median is 68. It means that from all score gained by students, it is in the middle of the range. Meanwhile, the range between the highest score and the lowest score is 56 in which the minimum score is 32 and the maximum score is 88. It concludes that the students ability in using prepositions of direction among students in class A and B are different. The standard deviation is 12.280 and the variance is 150.809. Finally, the data above is valid.

Furthermore, the researcher presented the result of students' performance after collecting and analyzing the data in form of a table of percentage. The students'

ability in using prepositions of direction could be seen in the following table.

**The percentage of classification
of the students' ability
in using preposition of direction**

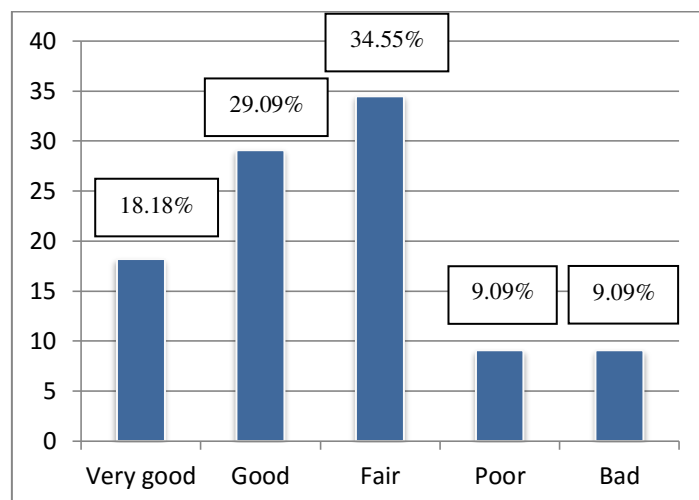
| No. | Scoring | Grading | Level | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| 1 | 80-100 | A | Very good | 10 | 18.18% |
| 2 | 70-79 | B | Good | 16 | 29.09% |
| 3 | 60-69 | C | Fair | 19 | 34.55% |
| 4 | 50-59 | D | Poor | 5 | 9.09% |
| 5 | <49 | E | Bad | 5 | 9.09% |
| Total | | | | 55 | 100% |

Based on the table above, the students' ability in using prepositions of direction could be explained that there were ten students who can be categorized into "very good" level because they got score in the interval 80 to 100, it was about 18.18% of the total samples. Sixteen students or 29.09% were categorized into "good" because of getting good score. Moreover, nineteen students got score in range 60 to 69; Therefore, they were categorized into "fair" with grading "C". However, for students grading "D" and "E" have the same percentage, however, they were the less percentage in using prepositions of direction; there were five students who got score under 50 to 59 with the percentage 9.09% and also five students who got score under 49 with the percentage 9.09% from the total samples in this research.

Related to the mean of students' scores 66.47, and dealing on the percentage of classification of the students' ability in using prepositions of direction, in can be described that there were more than a half number of students who were categorized into "fair, poor, and bad".

To explain and describe more clearly about the percentage of students' ability in using prepositions of direction. It would be presented on the following diagram.

**The percentage of the students' ability
in using prepositions of direction**



Regarding to the diagram of percentage of students ability in using prepositions of direction above, it could be interpreted clearly the percentage of comparison among all categories. From 55 students at the first year of English Department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Lancang Kuning University, there are 34.55% categorized into "fair" as the biggest number of students' level. It is followed by students who can be categorized into "good" with 29.09% of total students as the second higher percentage. Furthermore, for students who got score categorized into "very good", it is only about 18.18% of total number of students. Meanwhile the lowest percentage is in "poor and bad" level which have the same percentage, it is 9.09%. Finally we could see the level of the students ability in using prepositions of direction in the class A and B regular class students at the first year of English education department of lancang kuning university.

Based on the analysis of the test, it is found that the misuses of prepositions of direction often occur in the test. The most common mistakes found are about the use of *in*, *on*, *to* in which *in* indicates completely or partly enclosed by something, *on* indicates the basis for something, and *to* indicates in a direction.

It seems that a few students do not know very well about the rules of these three prepositions. Based on the result of the test, identified several examples:

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first all the students would work *in* a collaborative environment.

Details: The students would be surrounded by a collaborative atmosphere.

However, there were few students who used other prepositions which were not appropriate to complete the sentence. Secondly They need to concentrate *on* their studies.

Details: The studies are the basis for their concentration.

But some students completed the sentence using preposition except *on*. Based on the test conducted in the research, the correct answer must be the ***bold-underlined-italic*** prepositions stated above.

In accordance with the previous studies related to this research, then, after doing the study, it was also found that a few of the students failed to use correct preposition. In other words, they used wrong prepositions. It means that most of them had bad ability in using prepositions especially prepositions of direction. The research finding shows that misuse between *in*, *on*, and *to* occur in the students' answer that indicates that they had lack of knowledge about using prepositions. However, there were some students who can use preposition in the test given which means that they had good ability to determine what preposition should be used in certain condition appropriately. In other word, they failed to distinguish the use of each prepositions.

Furthermore, based on the analysis on the students answer, it was found some cases in using prepositions especially *toward*, *into*, and *onto*. *Toward*, like *to*, suggests movement. However, *toward* indicates movement in the direction of a general area rather than a specific destination. *Toward* implies that the destination may not have been reached.

Onto (*On* + *To*) is used to express movement toward the outside of an object. *Into* (*In* + *To*) indicates movement toward the inside of an object, space, or volume. It seems they do not know which preposition could be properly used for certain conditions.

Refers to the aim of survey design research, the finding of this research had purpose to give information, reflection, or input to the structure-one lecturer such as evaluation in teaching grammar structure especially in using prepositions of direction according to the syllabus indicator of English Education Department, FKIP, Lancang Kuning University Pekanbaru. The findings of this research are hoped to be an input or reflection to increase the students' achievement in learning English, especially in using prepositions in term of using prepositions of direction: *in*, *on*, *to*, *into*, *onto*, and *toward*.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research finding presented in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that students' ability of most of the first year students of English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Lancang Kuning University are categorized into "fair" in using prepositions of direction. From the result of the test, the average score of students' ability in using prepositions of direction is 66.47. From 55 students, there are 18.18% categorized into "very good", 29.09% are categorized into "good", 34.55% categorized into "fair", 9.09% categorized into "poor", and 9.09% are categorized into "bad" category. Moreover, the median is 68, the mode is 72, and the range is 56 with the minimum score is 32 and the maximum score is 88.

SUGGESTION

Regarding the result and the conclusions of the study, the researcher would like to give some suggestions as follows:

1. The first semester students should review the lesson and apply it to daily activities, so the students will be able

- to use correct grammar in daily activities, especially prepositions of direction. The students should learn more about grammar and the different usage of each kind of prepositions, so the students will have deep understanding in English grammar.
2. In teaching structure, the lecturer should consider the understanding of the lesson to the students. There are still some weaknesses in using prepositions of direction.
 3. The researcher hopes that all findings, conclusions, suggestions of this study could give a valuable contributions for both lecturers and students, especially the students of English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Lancang Kuning University Pekanbaru.

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