

İNGİLİZCEDEKİ ÜÇ TEMEL EDAT ÜZERİNE
HATA ANALİZİ BAĞLAMINDA
BİR ÇALIŞMA

A STUDY ON THREE BASIC PREPOSITIONS
IN ENGLISH
IN TERMS OF ERROR ANALYSIS

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Yüksek Lisans Tezi

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İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

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ESKİŞEHİR, 1998

ÖZET

Bu çalışma İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Bölümü'nde eğitim gören Türk öğrencilerin İngilizcedeki üç temel edat; at, in, ve on'un kullanımında yaptıkları hataları bulmak üzere düzenlenmiştir. Bu amaçla Uludağ Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Bölümü öğrencilerinden oluşan iki grup hazırlanmıştır. Elli kişilik bir grup, birinci sınıf öğrencilerini, elli kişilik diğer grup, dördüncü sınıf öğrencilerini içermektedir. Çalışma, sırasıyla, veri toplamak için gerekli materyalleri oluşturma, hazırlanan materyaller aracılığıyla bu üç edatın denekler tarafından kullanılmasını sağlama, toplanan veriyi analiz etme, ve sonuçları açıklama aşamalarından oluşmaktadır. Veri toplamak için oluşturulan materyaller, yönlendirilmiş kompozisyon, boşluk doldurma testi ve çeviri testidir. Öğrencilerin testleri cevaplamasıyla toplanan veri, yüzde sistemine göre hesaplanmıştır. Çalışma, öğrencilerin bu edatların kullanımında yaptıkları yanlışların olası nedenlerinin hata analizi bağlamında yorumlanmasıyla sonuçlanmıştır.

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in order to find out the errors in the use of three basic prepositions in English, namely at, in, and on, by Turkish students who have been educated in English Language Teaching Department. In order to reach this aim, two groups consisted of students at Uludağ University, Education Faculty, English Language Teaching Department, were prepared. The first group was formed with fifty first year students, and the second group was formed with fifty fourth year students. The study was designed with the phases of preparing the necessary material in order to collect data, making the subjects use these three prepositions via the materials prepared, analysing the gathered data, and explaining the results, in the stated order. The materials formed in order to collect data were guided composition, cloze test, and translation test. Data formed with the subjects' having answered the questions was evaluated by using percentage system. The study was concluded with commenting on the possible reasons for the errors in the use of these prepositions in terms of error analysis.

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Abbreviations in Tables and Graphs

CP: Correct Preposition

WP: Wrong Preposition

NP: No Preposition

CHAPTER I. - INTRODUCTION

I. 1. Background to the Problem

The process of learning a language, and the difficulties learners have to cope with within this process, have always been among the linguists' areas of interest. Some aspects of a language may be easy to handle for the learner, some may be problematic. While some structures or items are used by the learner correctly, some result in the erroneous use of the language.

Prepositions are among the most problematic items of English language. The fact that prepositions are problematic is stated by Swan (1984:483), who says "It is difficult to learn to use prepositions correctly." Covitt indicates that when teaching problems of the teachers are investigated, prepositions are found out to be the second most difficult items of English for the students (cited in Celce- Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1983: 250). Research on prepositions has shown that these items cause problems for the learners of English language. These problematic items are defined and categorized by those who deal with grammar of English language.

I. 2. Prepositions in English

Greenbaum and Quirk (1991:188) define prepositions as "a closed class of items connecting two units in a sentence and specifying a relationship between them." Prepositions are placed before the pronouns, nouns and noun phrases they are related to (Yeit, 1986:37; Thomson and Martinet, 1987:91; Broughton, 1990:228). Besides, they do not have prefix or suffix. Prepositions constitute prepositional phrases together with the item following them. Some grammarians do not restrict the complement of prepositional phrases to nouns, pronouns and noun phrases, but indicate that the prepositional complement may be a nominal wh- clause (*from/what he said*), or a nominal -ing clause (*by/signing a peace treaty*), as well (Quirk et. al., 1987:657).

Prepositions are classified in two ways; namely in accordance with

their structure and in accordance with the meaning they convey.

When examined in terms of their structure, prepositions are divided into two groups: Simple Prepositions and Complex Prepositions. Prepositions are mostly "... simple in that they consist of one word." (Broughton, 1990:228) Prepositions consisting of more than one word are named *complex prepositions* (Quirk et. al., 1987:665, Crystal, 1988:166, Broughton, 1990:228).

Going further in the investigation of prepositions, it is seen that simple prepositions are examined under the sub-headings of monosyllabic prepositions and polysyllabic prepositions. Besides, complex prepositions are also categorized as two-word sequences and three-word sequences in accordance with the number of the words they involve (Quirk et. al., 1987:665). In the light of what the authors stated about the subject, a classification of prepositions can be made as in the following:

I. Simple Prepositions:

I. a. Monosyllabic Simple Prepositions

I. b. Polosyllabic Simple Prepositions

II. Complex Prepositions

II. a. Complex Prepositions Containing Two Words

II. b. Complex Prepositions Containing Three Words (Quirk et. al., 1987:665 ff.)

Prepositions are classified also in accordance with the meaning they convey. A clear classification of prepositions in terms of their semantics is put by Quirk et. al. (1987:673 ff.), Crystal (1988:168,169) and Jarvie (1993:54). According to authors, prepositions may be categorized as:

I. Prepositions expressing space

II. Prepositions expressing time

III. Prepositions expressing cause

IV. Prepositions expressing means

V. Prepositions expressing accompaniment

- VI. Prepositions expressing support and opposition
- VII. Prepositions expressing possession
- VIII. Prepositions expressing concession
- IX. Prepositions expressing addition and exception

I. 3. Problem

As stated in the above definitions and classifications, the domain of prepositions constitutes a complex part of English grammar. At the same time, research on learning a foreign language has confirmed the fact that prepositions are problematic for learners of English. Fitikides (1977) illustrates prepositional errors under the headings of Using a Wrong Preposition (1 ff.), Omission of Prepositions (49 ff.), Unnecessary Prepositions (65 ff.) and Prepositions Often Confused (89 ff.). The problems caused by prepositions were stated by Shaughnessy (1977 :192), Richards (1984:173), Ijaz (1986:401 ff.) and Bough (1987:29), whose findings will be illustrated in Literature Review of this study.

This complicated part of English grammar is, as stated by Thompson (cited in Swan and Smith, 1987:167), among the problematic items of the language for Turkish learners, as well. During a pilot study, data was gathered via homework sheets of the Turkish students studying at Uludağ University, ELT Department. Subjects were students in preparatory class, third grade and fourth grade of the department. The paper of each subject was examined, and prepositional errors in each grade were sought for. The results of this investigation showed that students committed prepositional errors at all three levels. Some examples to these prepositional errors are illustrated in the following table:

	Use of a preposition instead of another		Omission of a preposition		Addition of a preposition which must not be used normally	
	Erroneous form	Correct form	Erroneous Form	Correct form	Erroneous form	Correct Form
Preparatory class students	in school reason of sth.	at school reason for sth.	in addition this to graduate university	in addition to this to graduate from uni.	to learn to sth. to damage on sth.	to learn sth. to damage sth.
Third year students	the new words at an article gases on the air	the new words in an article gases in the air	to listen sth. to communi cate sb.	to listen to sth. to communi cate sb.	to hate from sb./sth. to like to sth.	to hate sb./sth. to like sth.
Fourth year students	in nights the reason of sth.	at nights the reason for sth.	to listen sth. to graduate school	to listen to sth. to graduate from school	besides to this to marry with sb.	besides this to marry sb.

Table 1. 1. Prepositional errors by students in different grades

It is seen that prepositions is a complicated part of English grammar, and Turkish learners of English will probably commit some remarkable errors when using these structures. Therefore, this study will try to answer the following questions:

- a) Can the Turkish learners use the prepositions **at**, **in** and **on** appropriately?
- b) If not, what errors in the use of these prepositions are made?
- c) Do the first year students and the fourth year students commit the same errors in using these prepositions?

I. 4. Aim and Scope of the Study

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1983:254) stated at, by, for, from, in, of, on, to, and with as the most commonly used prepositions in English. They also say that of these nine prepositions, **at**, **in** and **on** are often confused with each other by the learners. The fact that also Turkish learners of English confuse the use of **at**, **in** and

Turkish learners of English confuse to use **at**, **in** and **on** is put by Thompson (1987:167). On the other hand, Hoffman (1993:164) names **at**, **in** and **on** as the basic prepositions. Since the domain of prepositions is a subject too wide to study as a whole, and since it requires a restriction which is easier to work on, the three basic and confusing prepositions, namely, **at**, **in** and **on**, will be worked on in this study.

The study aims to find out if the Turkish learners of English can use the prepositions **at**, **in** and **on** appropriately. It is believed that a survey which will be carried out through three different tests, namely composition, translation and cloze test, will reveal whether the Turkish learners use these prepositions in suitable contexts or not. The amount of correct answers, no answers and erroneous answers will be found out, and an explanation will be tried to be offered for the erroneous answers with the help of error analysis. It is believed that by finding out the possible reasons for the errors, this study will lighten the way to the teaching of prepositions in English.

The study aims to answer the following questions, as well:

1)Which of these three prepositions is the most problematic for Turkish learners?

2)What may be possible reasons for the errors in the use of these prepositions?

CHAPTER II.-REVIEW OF LITERATURE

II. 1. Error Analysis

The term "error" is an unavoidable part of learning a language. It is an undeniable fact that throughout foreign language learning process, errors do occur.

The occurrence of errors led the researchers to ponder over this subject. The problematic areas for foreign language learners made some linguists think that a comparative study on native language and foreign language of the learner could help predicting the reasons for these problematic areas. The importance of this comparison had first been put forward in 1945 by Fries, who says: "The most effective materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner." (cited in Lado, 1957:1) Lado, in his book *Linguistics Across Cultures*, declared the influence of the transfer of native language's features to foreign language system (Lado, 1957:2). What Lado means by "transfer" is defined by Krzeszowski (1990:199) as "... the extension of a source language habit into the target language, with or without the awareness of the learner." This transfer may be either positive or negative. When the structures of native language and foreign language are similar and thus enable the learner to comprehend the foreign language easier, this means that transfer is positive, but the differences between the structures of native language and foreign language may result in erroneous use of the foreign language, which is caused by negative transfer, in other words, interference (Lado, 1957:2; Wilkins, 1972:199; Richards et. al., 1985:160; Krzeszowski, 1990:189). Having considered errors merely as a result of native language interference, the researchers conducted studies which compared the native language and foreign language of the learner until late 1960s (Chastain, 1976:61; Corder, 1981:1), and they were led to the term "Contrastive Analysis" (CA), which is broadly defined by

Richards et. al. (1985:63) as “The comparison of the linguistic systems of two languages, for example the sound system or the grammatical system.”

Until the second half of 1960s, CA had been in favour, and the study of learners' errors had been based on a contrastive foundation. By the time, the inadequacy of the research dependent on comparative studies of two languages made the linguists feel the need for discovering sources of errors other than interference (Chastain, 1976:61; Bayraktaroğlu, 1978:62). A new insight on learners' errors was brought by Corder, whose article named *The Significance of Learner Errors* was published in 1967 (cited in Gass and Selinker, 1994:66). In this article, Corder emphasized errors' prominence, considering them as a piece of evidence of learner's trying to comprehend foreign language system. He also explained that although linguists' studying contrastively on two languages was considered as an aid for language teacher to let him work on areas of difficulty predicted by these comparative studies, teachers' observations on learners' errors showed that this was not the case. Linguists were unable to predict many of the errors via contrastive studies (Corder, cited in Richards, 1984:19). Research following Corder's article showed that the effect of interference was not as much as proponents of CA believed. As stated by Richards (1984:182), it was found that learners' errors were not limited to those resulting from interference. As a result of a study, which was conducted in 1973, Dulay and Burt found that errors caused by interference had a percentage of 3 (cited in Chastain, 1976:61). Consequently, while contrastive studies on languages were proved to be insufficient, the term Error Analysis (EA), which is defined as “the study and analysis of errors made by second and foreign language learners” , came into prominence. (Richards et. al.; 1985:96)

II. 1. 1. Errors and Mistakes

Before giving information about Error Analysis in this chapter, to make a

make a distinction of error and mistake has been found necessary. Some linguists define error as in the following: "(in the speech or writing of a second or foreign language learner), the use of a linguistic item (eg. a word, a grammatical item, a speech act, etc.) in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning." (Richards et. al., 1985:95) Ellis (1994:51) describes error as "a deviation from the norms of the target language." Errors may be resulting from generalizations about language (Cross, 1991:69; Carter, 1993:26), confusion caused by native language of the learner (Brown, 1994:205), communication strategies (Brown, 1994:217), or reasons outside the learner himself/herself (Carter, 1993:27).

Unlike errors, mistakes are products of temporal effects, and may be committed by the users of not only target, but also mother language. They may be caused by absence of mind, carelessness, tiredness, etc. (Richards, 1985:95; Brown, 1994:205, Ellis, 1994:51).

The difference between errors and mistakes has been pointed out by researchers. While errors are the evidence of deficiencies of the learner's competence, the latter indicate that the learner is unable to convey what is in his competence (as a correct rule) to his performance (Richards, 1985:95; Ellis, 1994:51). Besides, mistakes can be corrected by the learner himself/herself since he/she "knows the rule" (Cross, 1991:69). To sum up what the authorities have stated about errors and mistakes, we may briefly say that errors are the consequence of learners' faulty knowledge about foreign language, whereas mistakes result from temporary factors, and may be observed in both native and foreign language of the learner.

II. 1. 2. The Reasons for Errors

Corder divided the sources of errors into three different types: Transfer Errors, Analogical Errors, and Teaching-induced Errors (cited in Allen and Corder, 1979:130-131). However, Richards (in Oller, 1973:127) and Brown (1994:217) suggested a fourth type of errors:

Errors caused by Communication Strategies. Thus, it is possible to examine the reasons for errors in four different categories.

The first type of errors are the results of what the followers of CA called "transfer". While positive transfer may accelerate learning of a foreign language, the problems begin when interference takes place. In the case that the learner does not know one rule of the foreign language, he will have two alternatives: Not to use that rule, or to use the most attainable and similar rule taken from his mother language. When he chooses to do the second, transfer errors occur (Corder in Allen and Corder, 1979:130). A German learner's saying "I go not", considering the German correspondent of the sentence (Ich gehe nicht) is an example to transfer errors (Ellis, 1994:58).

According to Lott, transfer errors may be investigated under three categories (cited in Ellis, 1994:59). The first category is related to learner's misuse of an item in foreign language due to its common features with an item in native language. He gives the example of Italian learners' using the word "process" to mean "trial", since "processo" in Italian has the meaning of "trial".

The second category Lott defines is when the learner uses his native language features instead of foreign language features in terms of phonology, lexicon, grammar or pragmatics, which is transfer in general sense.

The last category Lott explains is errors resulting from the lack of a specific distinction in native language, which exists in foreign language. For instance, Italian learners use the word "make", instead of "do", because of there not being a distinction of "make" and "do" in Italian (cited in Ellis, 1994.59).

Being aware of the learner's native language characteristics will be useful when detecting and analyzing these errors (Brown, 1994:214). Brown also states that not only native language interference, but also interference of a second language, or subsequent languages, may be a

factor causing errors. This interference depends on various factors, such as "... the linguistic and cultural relatedness of the languages and the context of learning" and it exists "especially if the second and third languages are closely related or the learner is attempting a third language shortly after beginning a second language (Brown, 1994:214).

The second type of errors, namely, analogical errors, originates from the learner's trying to make a generalization about foreign language by applying one rule of that language to all related conditions. Consequently, these errors occur independent of the learner's native language. *He singed, he cans come, many men, does John can sing?* are among analogical errors. The analysis of such errors may be possible by systematically observing the learner's speech data (Corder, 1979:130; Brown, 1994:214).

The third type of error is what is called "teaching-induced errors". As Ellis (1994:60) says, they occur "when learners are led to make errors by the nature of the instruction they have received." The methods', techniques' or materials' having been wrongly used by the instructor, teacher's faulty interpretation, the learner's desiring to use an unauthentic, formal style as a result of classroom context may all be the sources of induced errors. Even two vocabulary items', such as *point at* and *point out*, being taught contiguously, may later cause errors because of the short interval between their presentation (Corder in Allen and Corder, 1979:131; Brown, 1994:215). Corder states that these are the types of errors which are most difficult to analyze. (in Allen and Corder, 1979:131)

The fourth type of error is errors caused by communication strategies. Sometimes learners use communication strategies in order to be understood better, and "... at times these techniques can themselves become a source of error." (Brown, 1994:217). When the learner has to communicate in the foreign language in a way to urge him to use complex structures, he may want to use what already exists in his competence.

complex structures, he may want to use what already exists in his competence. While doing this, he may use the structures in a faulty way or by simplifying them. The fourth type of errors are the results of such an endeavor (Richards in Oller, 1973:127).

These communication strategies causing errors are defined as Avoidance, Prefabricated Patterns, Appeal to Authority and Language Switch by Brown (1994:118 ff.). An example to the use of avoidance is put by the author. In the sentence "I lost my road", since the learner does not know that "way" is convenient in the context, he uses "road" erroneously. When he understands this, he avoids to use the correct lexical item, and changes his sentence as "I got lost". The second strategy, named Prefabricated Patterns, involves using some certain phrases or sentences such as "How much does this cost?", "Where is the toilet?", "I don't speak English", "I don't understand you", without being fully aware of how they are constructed. According to Brown, the erroneous sentence "I don't know how do you do that" may be the result of two prefabricated patterns being used together without the necessary changes. The third strategy, that is, Appeal to Authority, is learner's taking the help of a native speaker or a dictionary when he has difficulty with the use of an item. Brown gives the sample of a learner's misusing the word "headlight". This learner wanted to introduce himself to the class and the teacher, by saying "Allow me to introduce myself and tell you some of the *headlights* of my past" (consulting the dictionary for the word "headlight"). The last strategy, Language Switch, is using native language features instead of the foreign language features used erroneously. As Brown (1994:121) says, "Such marvels of communication are a tribute to the universality of human experience and a balm for those who feel the utter despair of attempting to communicate in a foreign language."

II. 1. 3. Data Collection for Error Analysis

Error analysis is a subject on which a systematic study is necessary

and unavoidable. So, to make an assessment of the errors committed by the learners, the first thing to do is to collect the data to be evaluated.

As stated by Corder (cited in Allen and Corder, 1979:126), and Gass and Selinker (1994:67), though to use oral data for error analysis studies is also possible, for practical reasons, written data is more preferable. Corder examines the written data under two main headings; namely "spontaneous" and "controlled" production. He gives the example of free composition for spontaneous production, and translations, précis, paraphrases, and retelling of stories for controlled production. The difference between the two is that while in the former the learner himself creates what he intends to tell, in the latter he works on the material given to him.

In the former there is the danger of learner's intentionally avoiding to use the items or structures which are, for him, hard to manipulate, and in the latter, learner's having memorized the correct usage is possible. Corder identifies controlled production as error-provoking and spontaneous production as error-avoiding. Therefore, controlled materials, which are used with the intention of displaying the errors committed in one certain area, are more beneficial for experimental studies.

Ellis (1994:49) explains data-collection ways in terms of the quality and quantity of the samples gathered and quantity of the subjects used:

A massive sample involves collecting several samples of language use from a large number of learners in order to compile a comprehensive list of errors, representative of the entire population. A specific sample consists of one sample of language use collected from a limited number of learners, while an incidental sample involves only one sample of language use produced by a single learner.

Data may be collected either "cross-sectionally" or "longitudinally". The former consists of samples gathered at one point in time, whereas the latter is a combination of samples gathered at successive points throughout a period. Since EA studies are generally cross-sectional, the errors committed at different phases of learning are hard to determine. (Ellis, 1994:50)

Before bringing this section to an end, to illustrate the factors which affect learners' errors in the light of what Ellis said has been found useful. The frequency of errors may change in accordance with the factors which the language learners are face to face with. For instance, a learner producing less errors in written language may commit more errors in spoken language, or the errors committed by learners with different native languages may show variety. These factors, which are shown in Table 2. 1., are to be considered when collecting data in order that "... clear statements can be made regarding what kind of errors the learners produce and under which conditions."

Factors	Description
A Language	
Medium	Learner production can be oral or written
Genre	Learner production can take the form of a conversation, a lecture, an essay, a letter, etc.
Content	The topic the learner is communicating about
B Learner	
Level	Elementary, intermediate, or advanced
Mother tongue	The learner's L1
Language learning experience	This may be classroom or naturalistic or a mixture of the two

Table 2. 1: Factors to ponder over through data collection process (Ellis, 1994:49)

II. 1. 4. The Stages to Follow in Error Analysis

Corder (1981:21 ff.) explains three stages in the process of EA; recognition, description, and explanation of errors.

The first stage; recognition of errors, is related to well-formedness

of the idiosyncratic sentences. Corder uses the word "idiosyncratic dialect" for the specific language of the second language learner. If the learner's sentence is superficially well-formed, but does not convey the meaning he intended to express, the sentence is covertly idiosyncratic. If the learner's sentence is superficially ill-formed, that means the sentence is overtly idiosyncratic.

In the case that the learner produced a covertly-idiosyncratic sentence in his context, a reconstructed sentence is required to determine to what extent that sentence is plausible. A reconstructed sentence is "what a native speaker of the target language would have said to express that meaning in the context, i.e., it is a translation equivalent." (Corder, 1981:21-22) By comparing the covertly idiosyncratic sentence with the reconstructed sentence, a plausible interpretation of what the learner intended to say may be arrived at.

When what the learner produced is overtly idiosyncratic, first of all a plausible interpretation of that sentence within the context is sought for. If to make a plausible interpretation is possible, to convert the overtly idiosyncratic sentence into a well-formed reconstructed sentence is easy. In the case that a plausible interpretation of the overtly idiosyncratic sentence is not possible, first the mother language equivalent of what the learner intended to say is investigated. Then this equivalent is translated into a well-formed reconstructed sentence of the target language to make a comparison of overtly idiosyncratic sentence with the well-formed reconstructed sentence possible. If the mother language of the learner is not known, the analysis of the overtly idiosyncratic sentence is postponed until the analyst will have been more familiar with the idiosyncratic dialect of the learner.

As Corder states, "The recognition of error, then, depends crucially upon the analyst making a correct interpretation of the learner's intended meaning in the context." (in Allen and Corder, 1979:127)

The second stage in EA is description of errors. After the first stage,

which enables the analyst to have idiosyncratic sentences of the learner and the reconstructed sentences, this stage lets a comparison of these two in terms of different linguistic categories (Corder, 1981:24).

Corder (cited in Ellis, 1994:56-57) identifies three types of errors in terms of systematicity: Presystematic Errors, Systematic Errors and Postsystematic Errors. If the learner commits an error because of his not being aware of target language rules, this is called presystematic error. The errors occurring in the case that learner knows where he is mistaken, but can not correct it, are called systematic errors. Postsystematic errors are errors committed by the learner who knows the rule and can correct the error. Thus, postsystematic errors are in fact not errors, but mistakes.

The last stage in the process of EA; explanation of errors, is the broadest one. It investigates what the reasons for errors, which were examined in II. 1. 2., could be.

II. 1. 5. The Implications of Error Analysis for Foreign Language Teaching

Learners' errors can be useful in the pedagogical sense. " In the study of second and foreign language learning, errors have been studied to discover the processes learners make use of in learning and using a language." (Richards et. al., 1985:95) Richards et. al. indicate that to study on errors gives information about learners' difficulties, which is helpful in teaching a foreign language and preparing the teaching materials.

According to Corder, errors are important for three reasons: they help the teacher to understand where the learner is in language process, they enable the researcher to have an idea about language learning or language acquisition, and they let the learner comment on his own learning (Corder in Richards, 1984:25). In his book *Introducing Applied Linguistics*, Corder (1985:265) explains that: "Errors provide feedback, they tell the teacher something about the effectiveness of his

teaching materials and his teaching techniques, and show him what parts of the syllabus he has been following have been inadequately learned or taught and need further attention." He defines the errors' helping the teacher to determine whether to go further in his teaching progress or to focus on what he has been teaching as "the day-to-day value of errors". In the long term, errors enable us to have information which will be useful when preparing "a remedial syllabus or a programme of re-teaching" for new learners. It is seen that according to Corder, to study on learners' errors is beneficial both for short and long term in teaching a foreign language.

Corder (1985:267,268) says that in terms of linguistics, to study on errors is considered to be a measurement to evaluate the reliability of the concept of transfer. Besides, due to the similarities between language acquisition and language learning, it may be said to be helpful for studies on child's language acquisition. Norrish (1983:9) states that the errors of both a child acquiring his native language and learner learning a foreign language show that the language is being learned. Therefore, errors can "...provide insights into the process of language acquisition of the learner." (Corder, cited in Croft, 1980:106)

II. 2. An Investigation of Prepositions in English

It was stated in I.2. that prepositions could be classified in accordance with their structure and in accordance with the meaning they convey. When the prepositions are listed in terms of these two different classifications, it is seen that each group involved in one classification includes some certain prepositions.

As explained in I.2., the structural analysis of prepositions makes a dual classification of these items possible. Prepositions are either simple or complex, and while the former group includes monosyllabic simple prepositions and polysyllabic simple prepositions, the latter is examined under the sub-headings of complex prepositions containing two words and complex prepositions containing three words. The prepositions

included in each group are like in the following:

I. Simple Prepositions

I. a. Monosyllabic Simple Prepositions: These prepositions may be listed as in the following: at, by, down, for, from, in, like, near (to), of, off, on, out, past, round, since, through, till, to, up, with.

Does this train stop at Lincoln? (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990:192)

I paid by travellers' cheque. (Jarvie, 1993:54)

We stumbled down the hill. (Grygel, 1992:100)

He'll do anything for money. (Quirk et. al. , 1987:696)

I worked from eight o'clock (onwards). (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:1989)

We ate in a restaurant. (Crystal, 1988:164)

You're behaving like an idiot. (Broughton, 1990:35)

She was sitting near (to) me. (Quirk et. al., 1987:680)

The cover of the book attracted attention. (Yeit, 1986:41)

The book is off the shelf. (Quirk et. al., 1987:678)

It was on the table. (Jarvie, 1993:52)

The cat run out the door. (Grygel, 1992:100)

The house is past the church. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:195)

We ran (a)round the corner. (Quirk et. al., 1987:683)

We've learned a few things since we left. (Broughton, 1990:245)

I love walking through woods in spring. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:194)

She didn't arrive there till Christmas. (Quirk et. al., 1987:691)

I'll take you to the bus-stop. (Crystal, 1988:164)

The smoke drifted up the chimney. (Grygel, 1992:100)

You must go with them. (Jarvie, 1993:54)

I.b. Polosyllabic Simple Prepositions: These prepositions may be ordered as: about, above, across, after, against, along, amid(st), among(st), around, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, besides, between, beyond, despite, during, except, inside, into, notwithstanding,

onto, opposite, outside, over, through, throughout, toward(s), under, underneath, unlike, until, upon, within, without.

Now, about your application, are you sure you would like a job of this kind? (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:202)

The picture is above the mantelpiece. (Quirk et.al.,1987:678)

They have gone across the moors. (Greenbaum and Quirk,1991:195)

The meeting will take place after the ceremony. (Quirk et.al.,1987:691)

I was against the plan. (Jarvie,1993:54)

Crowds were cheering (all) along the road. (Greenbaum and Quirk,1991:195)

The deserted house stood amid(st) snow-covered fir trees. (Quirk et.al. 1987:680)

I left the letter among(st) my birthday cards. (Greenbaum and Quirk,1991:194)

They put flowers (all) around the statue. (Quirk et.al.,1987:684)

I gave that information before tea.(Jarvie,1993:54)

The car is behind the bus. (Quirk et.al.,1987:678)

They live below us.(Thomson and Martinet,1987:100)

Such behaviour is beneath him. (Quirk et.al.,1987:686)

Come sit beside me. (Grygel,1992:99)

Besides Mary there were several other students in the hall. (Quirk et.al.,1987:680)

The costs have gone beyond the estimate. (Maclin, 1981:253)

They came despite the weather. (Crystal,1988:169)

Try to stay alert during the entire ceremony. (Greenbaum and Quirk,1991:197)

Finally we had packed everything except the typewriter. (Quirk et.al.1987:708)

Inside a week.(Broughton,1990:233)

I poured the beer into a tankard. (Thomson and Martinet,1987:99)

Thomas Carlyle, notwithstanding his tedious rhetoric, is a master of the subline in prose style. (Quirk et al.,1987:706)

We lifted him onto the table. (Thomson and Martinet,1987:99)

The police station is opposite my house. (Greenbaum and Quirk,1991:193)

Outside the fence. (Broughton,1990:293)

They live over the road. (Crystal,1988:178)

The epidemic has spread throughout the country. (Quirk et al.,1987:684)

Towards the wall. (Broughton,1990:231)

The ice crackled under his feet. (Thomson and Martinet,1987:100)

Underneath your arm. (Broughton,1990:232)

Unlike his brother (who writes poetry), Bill writes science fiction. (Quirk et al.,1987:698)

We slept until midnight. (Greenbaum and Quirk,1991:198)

Upon my word. (Quirk et al.,1987:674)

Within the perimeter. (Broughton,1990:233)

I cannot concentrate without silence. (Greenbaum and Quirk,1991:200)

II. Complex Prepositions

II.a. Complex Prepositions Containing Two Words. These prepositions are as in the following: according to, ahead of, apart from, as for, as from, as of, as per, as to, aside from, away from, back of, because of, but for, close to, contrary to, devoid of, due to, exclusive of, inside of, instead of, irrespective of, near(er) (to), next to, off of, on to, out of, outside of, owing to, preliminary to, preparatory to, previous to, prior to, pursuant to, regardless of, subsequent to, thanks to, up against, up to, upwards of, void of.

Some examples to the use of these prepositions are below:

It was great, apart from the tidal wave. (Crystal, 1988:169)

Ann is away from home. (Quirk et al., 1987:678)

She overslept because of too many late nights. (Broughton, 1990:234)

We had a great time except for the weather. (Jarvie, 1993:54)

She took out her typewriter, instead of first unpacking her clothes. (Broughton, 1990:236)

Please move this desk near(er) (to) the wall. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:194)

We camped there up to September. (Quirk et al., 1987:690)

II. b. Complex Prepositions Containing Three Words: As stated by Quirk et al. (1987:670), these prepositions are a combination of Prep. 1+ Noun+ Prep. 2.

Quirk et al. categorized these prepositions in accordance with their formation like in the following:

in+noun+of: in aid of, in back of, in behalf of, in case of, in charge of, in consequence of, in the face of, in favour of, in front of, in (the) light of, in lieu of, in need of, in place of, in (the) process of, in quest of, in respect of, in search of, in spite of, in view of.

in+noun+with: in accordance with, in common with, in comparison with, in compliance with, in conformity with, in contact with, in line with.

by+noun+ of: by dint of, by means of, by virtue of, by way of.

on+noun+of: on account of, on behalf of, on (the) grounds of, on the matter of, on pain of, on the part of, on the strength of, on top of.

Considering what Bough (1987:28), Quirk et al. (1987:671), Crystal (1988:166), Broughton (1990:228) and Jarvie (1993:53) have narrated, other types of three- word sequences may be listed as in the following: as far as, as well as, at variance with, at the expense of, at the hands of, for (the) sake of, for/from want of, in addition to, in case for, in exchange for, in return for, in relation to, in terms of, with/in

regard to, with/in reference to, with/in respect to, with the exception of.

Some examples to the use of these prepositions are like in the following:

They drove as far as Edinburgh. (Quirk et.al., 1987:677)

The orchestra was disappointing, as well as the soloist. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:201)

He resigned on account of ill-health. (Broughton, 1990:234)

The bus is in front of the car. (Quirk et. al., 1987:678)

The article is being published in spite of her disapproval. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:201)

It was stated in I. 2. that the semantic analysis of prepositions examined these items in terms of the meaning they convey. Prepositions can express nine different meanings, which are the meanings of space, time, cause, means, accompaniment, support and opposition, possession, concession, and addition and exception. The prepositions expressing either of these meanings are below:

Prepositions expressing space: These prepositions include about, above, across, against, along, amid(st), among(st), around, at, away from, back of, behind, below, beneath, beside, between, beyond, by, close to, down, from, in, in back of, in front of, inside, inside of, into, near (to), near(er) (to), next to, off, off of, on, onto, on to, on top of, opposite, out, out of, outside of, over, past, round, through, throughout, to, towards, under, underneath, up, upon, upwards of, with, within. Some examples to these prepositions are illustrated below:

He is at school. (Jarvie, 1993:52)

The referee complained because people were walking behind the goalposts. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:194)

The house stands between two farms. (Quirk et. al., 1987:680)

Put it in the box. (Bough, 1987:28)

Tom is out of the water. (Quirk et. al., 1987:678)

The picture was over the door. (Crystal, 1988:170)

The smugglers sneaked the contraband past the guards. (Yeit, 1986:37)

She drove towards Edinburgh. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:193)

The ship went under the bridge. (Broughton, 1990:229)

I left the keys with my wallet. (Quirk et. al., 1987:679)

II. Prepositions expressing time: These prepositions may be listed as in the following: at, after, before, between, by, during, for, from, in, inside, inside of, in (the) process of, on, over, prior to, since, subsequent to, through, throughout, till, to, until, up to, within.

She left at 3 o'clock. (Crystal, 1988:164)

After telling them a story, he put the children to bed. (Bough, 1987:28)

We had to be there before 5 o'clock. (Jarvie, 1993:52)

We'll probably arrive some time between 5 and 6 o'clock. (Quirk et. al., 1987:692)

She will be here by Friday night. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990:198)

During our stay in Japan we met several old friends. (Quirk et. al., 1987:689)

We can come on Monday or on any other day that you may prefer. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:197)

We'll talk about it over dinner. (Crystal, 1988:170)

We camped there through(out) summer. (Quirk et. al., 1987:689)

You can stay here up to lunch time. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:198)

III. Prepositions expressing cause: These prepositions are; because of, due to, for the sake of, for/from want of, from, on account of, out of, owing to.

Because of what they told us, we cut our trip short. (Bough, 1987:28)

She was fined for dangerous driving. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:1989)

The survivors were weak from exposure and lack of food. (Quirk et. al., 1987:696)

He was sacked on account of his laziness. (Jarvie, 1993:54)

She did it out of kindness. (Crystal, 1988:169)

IV. Prepositions expressing means: These prepositions may be listed as; by, by means of, by way of, like, unlike, with, without.

He treats me like I was his sister. (Quirk et. al., 1987:662)

He broke the window with a stone. (Crystal, 1988:169)

I drew it without (using) a ruler. (Quirk et. al., 1987:699)

V. Prepositions expressing accompaniment: The only preposition of accompaniment is stated as with, and its converse is without.

I'm so glad you're coming with us. (Quirk et. al., 1987:702)

For once, Jill went without her husband. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:200)

VI. Prepositions expressing support and opposition: These prepositions are against, for, in favour of, and with.

He's always arguing against nuclear power. (Quirk et. al., 1987:703)

We're for the plan. (Crystal, 1988:169)

They are with you all the way. (Jarvie, 1993:54)

VII. Prepositions expressing possession: These three prepositions are of, with, and without.

A musician of rare talent. (Jarvie, 1993:54)

A pianist with great talent. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:201)

The house without a porch. (Quirk et. al., 1987:704)

VIII. Prepositions expressing concession: These prepositions may be listed as despite, for all, in spite of, notwithstanding, and with all.

They came despite the weather. (Crystal, 1988:169)

With all this noise I managed to get some sleep. (Quirk et. al., 1987:706)

IX. Prepositions expressing addition and exception: These prepositions are apart from, aside from, as well as, besides, except, except for, in addition to.

The worst period of my life, aside from the war, was when I was out of work. (Quirk et. al., 1987:707)

Except for the weather, our stay in Scotland was enjoyable. (Greenbaum and Quirk, 1991:201)

There were three people present in addition to the committee. (Quirk et. al., 1987:708)

Besides the nine types of meaning indicated above, prepositions are used to convey other kinds of meaning, such as respect (with reference to, with regard to, as for, etc.), negative condition (but for), subject matter (about, on) etc. (Quirk et. al., 1987:706 ff.)

As for his book, I suppose you've read the reviews! (p. 707)

But for Gordon, we would have lost the match. (p. 709)

She spoke on butterflies. (p. 710)

II. 2. 1. An Investigation of Three Basic Prepositions

It was stated in I. 3. that the scope of this study is limited to three basic prepositions of English, namely **at**, **in** and **on**. As indicated in II. 2., these prepositions convey the meaning of both space and time. A further investigation of these prepositions is given below:

a) **At**, **in** and **on** conveying the meaning of space: These prepositions are examined in terms of two systems, namely "place" and "dimensionality" by Leech (1971:161).

Properties of these prepositions in System I, that is, Place, are defined by Leech (1971:160 ff.) as "asymmetric, irreflexive, transitive, many-one". These prepositions are asymmetric, because when one says "This case is in the box", it does not mean that "The box is in this case". They are irreflexive in that it is inappropriate to say "He is at/on/in himself." This system enables these prepositions to be transitive, as

well. That is to say, if "She is in the garden" and "The garden is in Cambridge", then, "She is in Cambridge." A many-one relationship can be built by these prepositions, such as "The case, the book and the pencil are in the box."

The second system in terms of which these prepositions are studied is System II, that is, system of dimensionality. The dimensionality of these prepositions depends on the quality of the place. In the situations where "at" is used, the dimensions are not significant, and one specific point is represented. *At the door, at the bus-stop* are some examples to the use of **at**. "On" illustrates the relation of an item to a location which can be accepted as a "line" on the map (*on the River Nile, on the frontier*) or as a surface (*on the wall, on the ceiling, on my shirt*). However, an area may be implied by using "on", as well. (As in *there is a new roof on the cottage*.) The dimensionality represented by "in" expresses "enclosure" or "containment". This dimensionality may be either related to areas, as in the examples of *in the field, in the park*; or related to volumes, as in the examples of *in the house, in the oven*. (Leech, 1971:162, Quirk et. al., 1987:674).

It is stated by the authors that sometimes it is **the context** determining which preposition to use in the sentence (Quirk et. al., 1987:676). The preposition "at", which is considered as the basic preposition of location by Hoffman (1993:162), may simply said to be used with nouns expressing a point (such as *a corner, a location*). Besides, as stated by Hoffman (1993:162), it is "used for things that don't have surfaces or insides, like the end, an entrance." This is because "at" is used when the precise relationship in space is not important." He exemplifies this by telling that in the sentence "he waited at the cabin", whether he waited inside of the cabin or outside of it is not important. It is seen that there are specific conditions which make the use of "at" necessary. Therefore, in the situations where the use of either of two prepositions, as in the example of "She's at

Oxford/She's in Oxford" seems to be possible, the context ought to be considered. Quirk et. al. (1987:676) explain this as in the following:

She's at Oxford. ["She's a student at Oxford university"]

She's in Oxford. ["She's staying, etc. in the city of Oxford"]

Similarly, whether a person stopped at a city for a short time or he wandered within its boundaries determines the use of "at" or "in" before cities' names. Hoffman (1993:159,163) differentiates the meanings of the sentences:

(on his way to New York)

a) He stopped at Chicago

b) He stopped in Chicago

He explains that in the former, the passenger changed his plane at the airport, without entering into the town and seeing how big it is. So Chicago was considered just a specific point on the map. Whereas the latter conveys the meaning of "enclosed by". Here the passenger left the airport, wandered in the city and was "surrounded by" its boundaries, therefore, he was **in** Chicago.

A similar distinction may be drawn when "in" or "on" has to be used in accordance with the context. Quirk et. al. (1987:676) explain this situation with the following examples:

The frost made patterns on the window. [window=glass surface]

A face appeared in the window/mirror. [window/mirror=framed area]

She was sitting on the grass. [surface, i.e. the grass is short]

She was sitting in the grass. [volume, i.e. the grass is long]

When deciding whether to use "in" or "on" before street names, how that street is designed determines the preposition. Hoffman (1993:163) says that in America, streets are shaped like a straight line, thus "on ... street" is acceptable. Whereas in England, streets are shaped by the buildings surrounding them, and thus one lives "in ... street." Likewise,

if a car is parked at one point of a street, "on the street" is used, but if it blocked the street, "in the street" is convenient. "This is like 'in the way' where the way is filled more or less, in contrast to 'on the way' where the 'way' is like a line, the route that we follow on a map." (Hoffman, 1993:163)

To sum up where **at**, **in** and **on** are used to convey the meaning of location, the following can be said with the examples by Quirk et. al. (1987: 675,676):

at→To indicate a specific point

at the bus stop, at the North Pole, at the end of the road

on→To indicate a line

on the River Thames, on the boundary, on the coast

To indicate a surface

on the wall, on the ceiling

in→To indicate an area

in the world, in the village, in a park

To indicate a volume

in a box, in the bathroom, in the cathedral

Quirk et. al. (1978: 676) also state that **in** is used for sizeable territories:

continents, countries: in Asia, in China

provinces, countries: in British Columbia, in Cheshire

city districts: in Brooklyn, in Hampstead

b) **At**, **in** and **on** conveying the meaning of time: Time prepositions reply the question "When?" (Jackson, 1990:52). Time prepositions are investigated in terms of two systems, which are "time when" and "period/moment", by Leech (1971:107).

Leech states the properties of System I, that is "time when", as

"asymmetric, irreflexive, intransitive and many-one".

Time prepositions are investigated also in accordance with System II, namely "period/moment". Leech (1971:108) discriminates the prepositions as [+PERI] (which indicate a "period of time") and [-PERI] (which indicate a "moment, point of time"). It is seen that while **at** is a [-PERI] preposition, that is, it represents one single point of time, not a period, **in** and **on** are [+PERI], thus represent a period of time. He also points out that **on** represents a specific unit within the period.

Hoffman (1993:170) gives the examples of *at 3:00*, *at midnight* for the use of **at**, *in December*, *in winter* for the use of **in**, and *on the 24th of December* for the use of **on**.

As in the use of **at**, **in** and **on** to convey the meaning of space, in some cases **the context** may determine which of these prepositions to use to convey the meaning of time. However, these situations are not come across as often as in the use of space prepositions. The differentiation of *in the night* and *at night* is made by Quirk et. al. (1987:688). While the former refers to a period of the night, the latter gives the meaning of "during". They exemplify this situation as in the following:

I woke up several times *in the night*.

At night I usually have the window open.

Unlike the use of these three prepositions for indicating place, their use for indicating time is more clear and stable. Quirk et. al. (1987:688) make a differentiation of where to use these three prepositions:

at→To indicate a specific point of time

at ten o'clock, at 6:30 p.m., at noon

To indicate periods as points of time

at the/that time, at breakfast time, at night

To indicate holiday periods

at the weekend, at Christmas, at Easter

on→To indicate days as periods of time

on Monday, on the following day, on May (the) first, on New Year's day

To indicate a part of a day

on Monday morning, on Saturday afternoon, on the following evening, on the morning of 1 June

in→To indicate periods longer or shorter than a day

in the evening, in August, in 1969, in the months that followed, in summer, in the eighteenth century

c) Other uses of at, in and on: These prepositions are sometimes used to represent abstract meanings. Some examples to such usage are below:

at→To indicate direction

They laughed heartily at our jokes. (Quirk et. al., 1987:697)

To indicate reason

I was alarmed at his behaviour. (Quirk et. al. , 1987:701)

in→To indicate simultaneous

He meets many in travelling about. (Hoffman, 1993:172)

To indicate condition

To be in difficulties. (Quirk et. al., 1987:686)

To indicate abstract inclusion

in a group/party (Quirk et. al., 1987:686)

To indicate membership, participation

in the army (Quirk et. al., 1987:686)

on→To indicate target

She is working on her new play. (Quirk et. al., 1987:698)

To indicate respect

Has the candidate expressed an opinion on legal abortion? (Quirk et. al., 1987:707)

To indicate subject matter

This book is on stamps. (Quirk et. al., 1987:710)

To indicate means of communication

It's Mrs. Williams on the phone. (Also on the radio, on T.V.) (Swan, 1984:487)

To indicate membership, participation

On the board/committee/project (Quirk et. al., 1987:686)

d) Prepositions used optionally: There are some cases where prepositions **at**, **in** and **on** are never used, or are used optionally. These cases are shown by Swan (1984:487,488) and Hoffman(1993:173):

Words never taking prepositions	Words taking prepositions optionally
all night	(on) Tuesday
any day	(on) December 24 th .
next week	(on) the night of the 29 th . of February
now	(in) another way
this Thursday	(in) the same way
then	(in) this way
tomorrow	(at) home
to go home	

II. 2. 1. Studies on Prepositional Errors

As stated in I. 2.; prepositions are among the complex parts of English grammar. Research conducted by different authors has shown that prepositions caused problems for learners of English, regardless of their native languages. According to Shaughnessy (1977:192), interference could be a significant factor on the erroneous

interference could be a significant factor on the erroneous use of prepositions, especially "where the influencing language depends on fewer prepositions and therefore motivates the student to reduce the large vocabulary of prepositions in formal English or to choose uncertainly from among them." Shaughnessy states that the users of English with Spanish-speaking background have such a problem, but also students with different native languages have difficulty in using prepositions. Some of the prepositional errors illustrated by Shaughnessy (1977:192) are below:

aptitude *toward* instead of aptitude *for*

students that graduate *of* school instead of *from* school

has played a part *into* changing the game instead of *in* changing the game

few regrets *on* the life of my parents instead of *in* the life of my parents

a job *on* the field instead of *in* the field

deals with crime *on* his own way instead of *in* his own way

a frightening insight *to* our involvement instead of *into* our involvement

regardless *to* instead of regardless *of*

their education depends *of* instead of depends *on*

alerting the student *of* what is needed instead of *to* what is needed

first step *of* success instead of *towards* success

to identify *to* instead of to identify *with*

I reached *into* the conclusion instead of I reached conclusion

You must meet *to* their standards instead of meet their standards

Richards (1984:173) shows a classification of errors in the light of a study conducted with Japanese, Chinese, Burmese, French, Czech, Polish, Tagalog, Maori, Maltese, major languages of Indian and West African speakers of English. He illustrates some errors revealed as a

result of the study in terms of six grammatical items, one of which is prepositions. This illustration is shown in Table II. 2. (See page 34)

Bough (1987:29) states that prepositions are one of the most “overworked” items of the English language. She tells that prepositions are commonly used redundantly at the end of the sentences, as in the examples of *Where are the boys at?* instead of *Where are the boys?*, *Can I go with?* instead of *Can I go with you?* or *where did that cat get to?* instead of *Where is that cat?*

Another study on prepositions was conducted by Ijaz (1986:401 ff.). She studied on six English spatial prepositions, namely on, upon, onto, on top of, over, and above. She investigated if advanced learners of English were affected by their native languages when associating these prepositions with different meanings. The native language of the subjects were various, including German and Urdu. The results of her study showed that the learners were influenced by their mother tongues while ascribing meaning to these prepositions. Besides, their having used wrong prepositions for these six prepositions was due to native language interference.

Prepositional errors of Turkish learners of English are not that different from those of learners of English with other native languages. Thompson (1987:167) states that prepositions cause errors for Turkish learners of English even at intermediate level. He makes a classification of prepositions which are confusing for Turkish students. These prepositions, he indicates, include *at/in/on*; *then/from*; *with/by*; *to/for*; *until/as far as/as much as/up to/by*; *with/near/up to*. Some examples to prepositional errors of Turkish students involve *in Saturday* instead of *on Saturday*; *He went Newcastle* instead of *He went to Newcastle*; *I'm living near my landlady* instead of *I'm living with my landlady* and *by pencil* instead of *with pencil*.

Fitikides (1977) in his book *Common Mistakes in English*

examplifies the prepositional errors committed by the learners. His categorization of prepositional errors and some examples to these errors are below:

Using a Wrong Preposition [after certain words]

afraid *from* sth. instead of afraid *of* sth. (p.1)

believe *to* sb. instead of believe *in* sb. (p.3)

married *with* sb. instead of married *to* sb. (p.8)

Omission of Preposition [after certain words]

ask sth. instead of ask *for* sth. (p.49)

listen sth. instead of listen *to* sth. (p.50)

think sth./sb. instead of think *of* sth./sb. (p.51)

Unnecessary Prepositions

approach *to* sth. instead of approach sth. (p.65)

reach *at* somewhere instead of reach somewhere (p.66)

behind *of* sth. instead of behind sth. (p.67)

Prepositions Often Confused

till the river instead of *to* the river (p.85)

at Saturday instead of *on* Saturday (p.90)

among two boys instead of *between* two boys (p.91)

According to Buckingham (translated by Gülgün Denizli in İzlem, 1980:96), when learners of English have some problems with prepositions, these problems are of two types: They either omit the required preposition or misuse the preposition. He says that the former sources from the native language's not having preposition in it, and latter learner's having the habit of translating prepositions in their native language into English.

However, to conduct a research by the result of which a satisfactory explanation for prepositional errors could have been brought has not been possible so far.

1. <i>with</i> instead of \emptyset <i>from</i> <i>against</i> <i>of</i> <i>at</i>	met with her, married with her suffering with a cold fight with tyranny consist with laughed with my words
2. <i>in</i> instead of \emptyset <i>on</i> <i>with</i> <i>for</i> <i>at</i> <i>to</i> <i>by</i>	entered in the room in T.V. fallen in love in Ophelia in this purpose in this time go in Poland the time in your watch
3. <i>at</i> instead of \emptyset <i>by</i> <i>in</i> <i>to</i> <i>for</i>	reached at a place, at last year held him at the left arm at the evening; interested at him went at Stratford at the first time
4. <i>for</i> instead of \emptyset <i>in</i> <i>of</i> <i>from</i> <i>since</i>	serve for God one bath for seven days suspected for, the position for Chinese coolies a distance for one country to another been here for the 6 th of June
5. <i>on</i> instead of \emptyset <i>in</i> <i>at</i> <i>with</i> <i>of</i> <i>to</i>	played on the piano for an hour on many ways, on that place, going on cars on the end angry on him countries on the world pays attention on it
6. <i>of</i> instead of \emptyset <i>in</i> <i>by</i> <i>on</i> <i>for</i>	aged of 44, drinkless of wine rich of vitamins book of Hardy depends on civilisation a reason of it
7. <i>to</i> instead of \emptyset <i>for</i> <i>of</i>	joined to them, went to home, reached to the place an occupation to them his love to her

Table 2. 2. Prepositional Errors (Richards, 1984:185-186)

CHAPTER III.-METHODOLOGY

III.1. The Design of the Study

The purpose of this study is to reveal the errors committed in the use of **at**, **in** and **on** by first year students and fourth year students studying at English Language Teaching Department of Uludağ University. In order to reach this aim, a descriptive research has been carried out. As stated by Seliger and Shohamy (1978:124), this type of research consists of "... a collection of techniques used to specify, delineate, or describe naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation." To collect data for a descriptive study, tests, surveys and questionnaires, self-reports and interviews, and observations may be used (Ibid: 124 ff.).

Seliger and Shohamy (1978:125) say that descriptive research may be applied to either individuals or groups of subjects. If it is applied to one or few individuals with the aim of finding out their performance in learning the language and reaching a general result via this individual performance, it is named a case study. If a group of learners is used in order to arrive at a conclusion, it is named a group study, which is the sort used in this research.

III. 2. Subjects

This research was applied to students at Uludağ University, Education Faculty, English Language Teaching Department. To form the two groups, all first year students and fourth year students were administered Michigan Placement Test. After the test had been administered, the distribution of the subjects in accordance with the scores was evaluated. It was seen that in both groups, subjects had mostly scored between 72 and 86. Therefore, the groups were formed parallel to this interval.

There were two groups, one with 50 students of first year, and one with 50 students of fourth year. The tests, which were evaluating the

use of **at**, **in** and **on**, were applied to these two groups.

The administration of Michigan Placement Test and preposition tests were finished within two weeks.

III. 3. Materials for Data Collection

The data collection materials were formed by the researcher in the light of the information about prepositions, gathered from different sources. (See II. 2. 1.) These materials were three different types of test, each test with two parts set aside to the use of **at**, **in** and **on** conveying the meaning of place, and time. The first type of test was leading the subjects to write guided composition, the second type of test was in the shape of cloze test, and the third type of test was translation test. Each test consisted of nine questions or statements, which required the use of **at**, **in**, and **on** for three times in each test. In all tests; the subjects were warned to answer the questions (or fill in the blanks) by using either of **at**, **in** and **on**.

III. 3.1. Guided Composition

The first data collection material was compositions. To reveal the prepositional errors of the subjects via compositions, they were to be guided in a way enabling them to construct sentences involving the prepositions determined beforehand. As suggested by Bowen et. al. (1985:264), in guided writing, there are some " exercises which require composing full sentences." One of these exercises is "answering a series of questions." The first data collection instrument used this exercise, and made the students write a composition by responding to some questions.

The first composition test was planned to evaluate to what extent the subjects could use **at**, **in** and **on** conveying the meaning of place correctly. They were required to write a composition describing a picture given to them. (See Appendix I.) In order to prevent possible

misunderstandings about the location of the items in the picture, after each question, they were supplied with information by means of which they could find the correct answer. (See Appendix II.)

In the second composition test, the subjects' use of **at**, **in** and **on** conveying the meaning of time would be evaluated. They were expected to form a composition by answering the questions related to time of events connected with their private lives. As in the questions in the first composition test, after each question, information was given in parenthesis to ensure that all the subjects would answer the questions in the expected way. (See Appendix III.)

In the evaluation of these tests, the errors except for those in the use of prepositions were ignored.

III. 3. 2. Cloze Test

Cloze tests are prepared by omitting every *n*th. word in a passage, the blanks of which are filled by the examiners. After writing the first sentence completely, words are deleted in a regular order. Although the range from every fifth to every seventh word is acceptable, deletion of every seventh word is generally considered the most convenient. (Bowen et. al., 1985:376; Heaton, 1991:131; Hughes, 1991:649).

There were two cloze tests administered to the subjects. The first test evaluated the use of **at**, **in**, and **on** conveying the meaning of space, and the second test evaluated the use of **at**, **in** and **on** conveying the meaning of time. Every seventh word in each test was omitted in a way to be either of **at**, **in** and **on**. (See Appendix IV. and Appendix V.)

III. 3. 3. Translation Test

Although translation tests are no longer in favour (Rivers and Temperly, 1978:327; Heaton, 1991:18), to "focus on a particular grammatical feature", translation of short sentences from mother language into the foreign language may be utilized in the evaluation of

learner's English (Rivers and Temperly, 1978:327). The subjects were given two translation tests, one measuring the use of **at**, **in** and **on** conveying the meaning of space, and the other measuring the use of **at**, **in** and **on** conveying the meaning of time. The words containing prepositions were underlined, and the subjects were asked to use prepositions for these underlined words when translating the sentences into English. The errors except for those in the use of prepositions were ignored while evaluating the translation tests. (See Appendix VI. and Appendix VII.)

III. 4. Data Analysis Technique

The analysis of the data was made by using percentage system.

To apply this sytem to this study, the answers to each question in the tests were needed. Therefore, the correct prepositions, wrong prepositions, and no prepositions in the papers of each subject were revealed.

Then the percentages of correct prepositions, wrong prepositions and no preposition were calculated for both first year students and fourth year students.

The percentages illustrated in the graphs were reached by using these calculations, either.

Finally, both groups' results were compared.

CHAPTER IV.- DATA ANALYSIS

IV. 1. Analysis of Test Results

Different tables and graphics were prepared for analyzing the scores in terms of different aspects. The erroneous prepositions were calculated for each question in each test. Then the percentages of correct preposition and wrong preposition, the proportions of erroneously used **at**, **in** and **on**, and the percentages of prepositions used instead of each other, were calculated in each test. There was also an overall analysis of percentages of erroneously used **at** , **in**, **on**; and no preposition, in both first year students and fourth year students. The last two graphics illustrated the proportion of erroneously used **at**, **in**, **on**; and no preposition in the three tests investigating place meaning of these prepositions, and in the other three tests investigating time meaning of these prepositions, separately. The scores in accordance with these calculations are like in the following:

IV. 2. Analysis of the First Year Students' Test Results

IV. 2. 1. Analysis of the First Year Students' Test Results in accordance with Test Questions

Test I. (Describe the picture by answering the following questions, using the prepositions at, in and on for the necessary connections.)

When the percentages of correct preposition, wrong preposition and preposition which had not been used at all are examined, it is seen that the results show variety. In the first question, which ought to have been answered by using “at the door”, 98% of the subjects gave the correct answer, and only 2% of the subjects did not answer that question.

All of the subjects used “on the wall” correctly, with 100% correct answers, in the second question.

In the third question, 76% of the subjects gave the correct answer with “in the flowerpot”, and 24% of the subjects confused “on” with

“in” in that question.

Fourth question was answered correctly as “on the reception desk” by 96% of the subjects, and 4% of the subjects wrote “at the reception desk”.

In the fifth question, 96% of the subjects used “at the reception” correctly, together with a minority of 2% “in” and 2% no answers.

In the sixth question, 78% of the subjects gave the correct answer by using “in the customer's hand”, and while 12% of the subjects confused “at” with “in”, 10% of them wrote “on”.

In the seventh question, half of the subjects were able to answer the questions correctly with “on the reception desk”. 46% of the subjects used “in”, and 4% of them answered the question using “at”.

In the eighth question, the correct answer “at the table” was given by 78% of the subjects, and 22% of the subjects used “on” instead of “at”.

In the last question, which should normally be answered with “in the lobby”, 72% of the subjects found the correct answer, 26% used “at”, and 2% “on” instead of “in”.(Table 4.1.)

Q.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	at	98%	0%	0%	2%
2	on	0%	0%	100%	0%
3	in	0%	76%	24%	0%
4	on	4%	0%	96%	0%
5	at	96%	2%	0%	2%
6	in	12%	78%	10%	0%
7	on	4%	46%	50%	0%
8	at	78%	0%	22%	0%
9	in	26%	72%	2%	0%

Table 4. 1. The percentages of at, in, on, and No Preposition in Test I. by first year students

Test II. (Write a composition about yourself answering the following questions, using the prepositions at, in and on.)

In the first question of Test II, which requires to use “in” (and the year), 90% of the subjects used the correct preposition, but 4% of the subjects used “at”, and 4% of the subject used “on” instead of “in”. There was a minority of 2%, who did not answer the question at all.

The second question required to use “on” (and the birthday) in the answer, and except for a minority of 2%, who used “at”, all of the subjects used it correctly, with a minority of 98%.

In the third question, 88% of the subjects used the preposition “at” correctly in the answer “at the age of”. However, 12% of the subjects used the wrong preposition, with 10% of them having used “in”, and 2% of them having used “on”.

68% of the subject correctly built the construction “on the opening day of the university” in the fourth question. However, 30% of the subjects used “at”, and 2% of the subjects “in” instead of “on”.

In the fifth question, 82% of the subjects used the correct preposition, that is, “at”, with “noon”, but 10% of the subjects used “in”, and 4% of the subjects used “on” instead of “at”. Besides, 4% of the subjects did not answer that question.,

In the sixth question, 94% of the subjects gave the correct answer “in the evening”. 4% of the subjects answered the question with “at”, and 2% of the subjects did not answer the question.

In the seventh question, 92% of the subjects used “at the weekend” correctly, but 8% of the subjects answered the question having used “on”.

Eighth question required to write “on Sunday mornings”, and 84% of the subjects answered the question correctly. There was 10% of “in”, 4% of “at”; and 2% the subjects did not answer the question.

In the ninth question, 92% of the subjects used “in” correctly before the word “summer”, and a minority of 8% used “at” instead of “in”.(Table 4.2.)

First Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	in	4%	90%	4%	2%
2	on	2%	0%	98%	0%
3	at	88%	10%	2%	0%
4	on	30%	2%	68%	0%
5	at	82%	10%	4%	4%
6	in	4%	94%	0%	2%
7	at	92%	0%	8%	0%
8	on	4%	10%	84%	2%
9	in	8%	92%	0%	0%

Table 4. 2. The percentages of at,in,on, and NoPreposition in Test II. by first year students

Test III . (Fill in the blanks by using the prepositions at, in and on.)

The first answer in Test I, which is “at” (METU), was given by 66% of the subjects correctly. 24% of the subjects used “in”, and 8% of the subjects used “on” instead of “at”. 2% of the subjects gave no answer to that question.

The correct answer of the second blank was “in”, and 98% of the subjects used “in”. However, there was a minority of 2%, who wrote “at England” instead of “in England”.

The third blank was to be filled with “in”, as well, but only 64% of the subjects wrote “in” (classes). 30% of the subjects used “at”, and 6% of the subjects used “on” instead of “in”.

68% of the subjects used correct preposition, that is, “on”, in the fourth blank. 22% of the subjects wrote “in” (the plane), and 8% of the subjects “at the plane” instead of “on the plane”. A minority of 2% did not fill in that blank.

The fifth blank was filled in correctly as “on” (the map) by 88% of

the subjects. 10% of the subjects wrote “at” (the map) and 2% of the subjects wrote “in” (the map).

In the sixth blank, only 22% of the subjects wrote “At” (London), but a majority of 74% used “in”, a minority of 2% used “on”, and another 2% formed the other minority, who did not answer the question.

The seventh blank, which required to use “in”, was filled in correctly as “in” (the hotel), only by 28% of the subjects. 70% of the subjects used “at”, and a minority of 2% wrote no preposition in the blank.

64% of the subjects filled in the blank in a way to form the correct statement, “(at) the entrance of her room” in the eighth question. 28% of the subjects used “in”, and 6% of the subjects used “on” to fill in the blank, and there was a minority of 2%, who did not fill in the blank.

In the last question, 82% of the subjects used the correct preposition, and formed the statement “(on) the fifth floor of the building”. In the remaining 18%, 16% of the subjects used “at”, and 2% of them used “in”. (Table 4.3.)

F.Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	at	66%	24%	8%	2%
2	in	2%	98%	0%	0%
3	in	30%	64%	6%	0%
4	on	8%	22%	68%	2%
5	on	10%	2%	88%	0%
6	at	22%	74%	2%	2%
7	in	70%	28%	0%	2%
8	at	64%	28%	6%	2%
9	on	16%	2%	82%	0%

Table 4. 3. The percentages of at, in, on, and No Preposition in Test III. by first year students

TEST IV. (Fill in the blanks by using the prepositions at, in and on.)

The correct prepositions are “in” and “at” in the stated order for the first two blanks, and these blanks were both filled in correctly by 100% of the subjects. Consequently, the first two blanks were filled in by all of the subjects as (in) “the morning” and “at” (6:00 o'clock).

The third blank required “in” , and 98% of the subjects wrote (in) “a day”. The other percentage of the subjects, who used wrong preposition was 2%. They wrote “at” instead of “in”.

In the fourth blank, the preposition should be “on”. 98% of the subjects wrote “on” (Saturdays), and there was a minority of 2%, who used “at” instead of “on”.

98% of the subjects used the prepositions “at” correctly, and formed the phrase "at night", in the fifth blank. Only 2% of the subjects used “in” to fill in that blank.

The sixth blank should be filled in with “in”, and 70% of the subjects wrote “in” (his early twenties). 22% of the subjects used “at”, and 85 of the subjects used “on” to fill in the blank.

In the seventh blank, “at” is the correct preposition, and 82% of the subjects wrote “at” (30). 12% of the subjects used “in” instead of “at”, 4% of the subjects used “on”, and the remaining minority of 2% did not fill in the blank.

88% of the subjects used the correct preposition, that is “on”, to fill in the eighth blank. 8% of the subjects wrote “in”, and 4% of the subjects used “at” instead of “on” (holiday).

The last blank was filled incorrectly by 68% of the subjects as “on” (New Year's day). 18% of the subjects filled in the blank with “in”, 12% of the subjects with “at”, and 2% of the subjects did not use any preposition. (Table 4.4.)

F.Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	in	0%	100%	0%	0%
2	at	100%	0%	0%	0%
3	in	2%	98%	0%	0%
4	on	2%	0%	98%	0%
5	at	98%	2%	0%	0%
6	in	22%	70%	8%	0%
7	at	82%	12%	4%	2%
8	on	4%	8%	88%	0%
9	on	12%	18%	68%	2%

Table 4. 4. The percentages of at, in, on, and No Preposition by first year students

Test V. (Translate the following sentences into English using at, in and on for the words underlined.)

The correct preposition is “in” in the first question of translation test. 84% of the subjects translated the sentence into English using “in”(the sea), but 12% of the subjects used “at”, and 4% of the subjects used “on” instead of “in”.

In the second question, the correct translation equivalent of the underlined statement is “at the address”. 58% of the subjects translated it correctly, 24% of the subjects used “in”, 14% of the subjects used “on”, and 4% of the subjects did not translate that sentence.

The correct translation equivalent of the underlined statement is “on TV” in the third question. 98% of the subjects translated it correctly, but there was a minority of 2% who used “in” instead of “at”.

In the fourth question, the correct translation equivalent of the underlined statement is “at home”, and there was a majority of 98% of the subjects, who translated it correctly, and a minority of 2% who used “in”.

The fifth underlined statement could be translated as “in the air”. 92% of the subjects used “in” (the air), and 8% of the subjects wrote “on the air”.

The sixth underlined statement required to use “on”, and 96% of the subjects used the correct preposition. 4% of them wrote “at the roads” instead of “on the roads”.

In the seventh question, 82% of the subjects translated the underlined statement correctly as “on the hill”. However, 16% of the subjects used “at”, and there was a minority of 2% who wrote “in the hill”.

92% of the subjects wrote the correct English equivalent of the underlined statement, that is “in (the garden)”, in the eighth question. The remaining 8% of the subjects were divided into two with 4% of them having used “at”, and the other 4% having used “on”.

Last underlined statement was translated correctly as “at the crossroads” by 76% of the subjects. 16% of the subjects used “on” and 6% of the subjects used “in” instead of “at”. 2% of the subjects did not answer that question.(Table 4.5.)

F. Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	in	12%	84%	4%	0%
2	at	58%	24%	14%	4%
3	on	0%	2%	98%	0%
4	at	98%	2%	0%	0%
5	in	0%	92%	8%	0%
6	on	4%	0%	96%	0%
7	on	16%	2%	82%	0%
8	in	4%	92%	4%	0%
9	at	76%	6%	16%	2%

Table 4. 5. The percentages of at, in, on, and No Preposition in Test V.by first students

Test VI. (Translate the following sentences into English using at, in, and on for the words underlined.)

The first underlined statement of the test can be translated as “at the moment”. 82% of the subjects translated it correctly, 4% of the subjects used “on”, 2% of the subjects used “in”, and 12% of the subjects did not translate the statement.

The subjects were expected to translate the second underlined statement as “on his this coming”. Only 22% of the subjects used the correct preposition when translating it, and most of the subjects used “at” instead of “on”, with a majority of 44%. 24 % of the subjects used “in”, and 10% of the subjects did not write any answer.

The third underlined statement required to use “in”. 66% of the subjects wrote “in June”. 30% of the subjects used “on”, 2% of the subjects used “at” instead of “in”. 2% of the subjects did not answer the question at all.

92% of the subject translated the fourth underlined statement into English correctly, and wrote “in three months”. 6% of the subjects translated the statement as “at three months”, and there was a minority of 2% who wrote “on three months”.

The fifth underlined statement could be translated as “on his birthday”. The percentage of the subjects who used “on” in their answers was 72. 20% of the subjects translated the statement having used “at”, and 8% of the subjects having used “in”.

The correct answer of the sixth underlined statement, that is, “at the breakfast”, was written by 76% of the subjects. Among the rest of the subjects, there was a majority of 18%, those who answered with “in”, and a minority of 6%, those who wrote “on” .

In the seventh underlined statement the correct answer required to use “in”. 76% of the subjects wrote “in the 18th century”. 12 % of the subjects used “on”, and 10% of the subjects used “at” when having translated the statement. 2% of the subject did not translate the

sentence.

98% of the subjects translated the eighth underlined statement having written “at the end”, and 2% of the subjects used “on” instead of “at”.

In the last underlined statement, the correct preposition was “on”, however, only 70% of the subjects wrote “on the fifth of the month”. 16% of the subject used “at”, and 12% of the subjects used “in”, instead of “on”. 2% of the subjects did not translate the sentence.

(Table 4.6.)

F.Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	at	82%	2%	4%	12%
2	on	44%	24%	22%	10%
3	in	2%	66%	30%	2%
4	in	6%	92%	2%	0%
5	on	20%	8%	72%	0%
6	at	76%	18%	6%	0%
7	in	10%	76%	12%	2%
8	at	98%	0%	2%	0%
9	on	16%	12%	70%	2%

Table 4. 6. The percentages of at, in, on, and No Preposition in Test VI. by first year students

IV. 2. 2. Analysis of the First Year Students’ Test Results in accordance with Percentages of Erroneously Used At, In and On in Each Test

Test I.

The results of Test I. showed that 83% of the subjects used the prepositions correctly, and 17% of the subjects either misused them or did not use any preposition.

This percentage of 17 was consisting of 29% erroneously used no prepositions.

At was confused with **in** in 7%, with **on**, in 79%, and it had not

been used at all in 14%.

In was confused with **at** in 51%, and with **on** in 49%.

On was confused with **at** in 15%, and with **in** in 85%. (See Appendix IX.)

Test II.

According to the results of Test II, the total percentage of correctly used preposition was 88%, and the percentage of erroneously used preposition, also including prepositions which had not been used at all, was 12%.

At was used erroneously in 46%, **in** in 29%, **on** in 16%, and there was a minority of 9%, which included no preposition.

In this test, **in** was used instead of **at** in 53%, **on** instead of **at** in a percentage of 37% and **at** was not used at all in the situations where it was necessary in 11%.

In was confused with **at** in 67% , with **on** in 17%; and the questions which were to be answered with **in**, but had not been answered, had 17%.

At was used instead of **on** in 72%, **in** instead of **on** in 24%, and **on** had not been used in the expected answers in 4%.(See Appendix X)

Test III.

The percentage of total correct preposition was 59, and 41% of the questions was answered erroneously.

Of these 41% erroneous answers 43% were errors in the use of **at**, 47% were errors in the use of **in**, 7% were errors in the use of **on**, and 3% was the percentage of preposition. **At** was confused with **in** in 85%, with **on** in 11%, and it had not been used at all in 4%.

Instead of **in**, **at** was used in 92%, **on** in 4%, and the percentage of answer which required **in**, but ignored, was also 4%.

At was used instead of **on** in 55%, **in** was used instead of **on** in 42%, and the remaining 3% was formed with no preposition .(See Appendix XI)

Test IV.

The percentage of correct preposition was 89%, and the percentages of erroneous preposition was 11%, in Test IV.

43% of the erroneous answers were errors in the use of **at**, 41% of the erroneous answers were errors in the use of **in**, 12% of the erroneous answers were errors in the use of **on**, and 4% of the erroneous answers was formed by no preposition.

At was confused with **in** in 70%, with **on** in 20%, no preposition was used instead of **at** in 10%.

In was confused with **at** in 75%, and with **on** in 25%.

On was confused with **at** in 39%, with **in** in 57%, and this preposition was not used at all in necessary situations in a percentage of 4. (See Appendix XII)

Test V.

In Test V, the percentages in the use of correct preposition and wrong preposition, (together with no preposition), were 59% and 41%, in the stated order .

Both **at**, and **in**, were problematic in the percentages of 29%, and **on** formed the 37% of the erroneous answers. 5% of the 41% stated above was the percentage of no preposition.

At was confused with both **in** and **on** in the percentages of 45%. The 9% in the use of **at** was the percentage of no preposition.

In was confused with both **at** and **on** in the percentages of 50%.

At was used instead of **on** in 83%, and **in** instead of **on** in 17%. (See Appendix XIII.)

Test VI.

75% formed the use of correct preposition, and 25% formed the use of wrong preposition and no preposition, in Test VI.

In general, 35% of the erroneous use of preposition was due to **at**, 28% was due to **in**, 25% was due to **on**, and 12% was the use of none of the prepositions.

In was used in 45% instead of **at**, and the use of both **on** and no preposition instead of **at** were both 27%.

In was confused with **at** in 27%, with **on** in 67%, and no preposition was used instead of **in** in 6%.

On was confused with **at** in 59%, **in** was used instead of **on** in 32%, and no preposition was used instead of **on** in 9%. (See Appendix XIV.)

IV. 3. Analysis of the Fourth Year Students' Test Results

IV. 3. 1. Analysis of the Fourth Year Students' Test Results in accordance with Test Questions

Test 1. (Describe the picture by answering the following questions, using the prepositions at, in and on for the necessary connections.)

In the first test of the fourth year students, 98% of the subjects answered the first question correctly, having written "at the door". Only 2% of the subjects did not answer the question.

Second question was answered correctly by 100% of the subjects as "on the wall".

In the third question, 76% of the subjects used "in" correctly. 22% of the subjects wrote "on the flowerpot" instead of "in the flowerpot", and 2% of the subjects did not answer the question at all.

Fourth question was answered correctly by 98% of the subjects as "on the reception desk", and 2% of the subjects used "at" instead of "on".

In the fifth question, 92% of the subjects wrote the correct answer, which is "at the reception", 2% of the subjects used "on" instead of "at", and 6% of the subjects did not answer the question.

Sixth question was answered as "in the customer's hand" by 88% of the subjects. 8% of the subjects used "at" instead of "in", and 4% used "on".

In the seventh question, 38% of the answers were correct, stated as "on the reception list". 94% of the subjects used "in", and 4% of the

subjects used “at” instead of “on”. “No answers” formed 4% of the answers.

82% of the answers were correct in the eighth question, which required to write “at the table”. 16% of the subjects answered the question with “on”, and 2% of the subjects did not answer the question.

In the last question of Test I, 68% of the subjects used “in the lobby” correctly. 30% of the subjects used “at”, and 2% of the subjects used “on” instead of “in”. (Table 4.7.)

F.Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	at	98%	0%	0%	2%
2	on	0%	0%	100%	0%
3	in	0%	76%	22%	2%
4	on	2%	0%	98%	0%
5	at	92%	0%	2%	6%
6	in	8%	88%	4%	0%
7	on	4%	54%	38%	4%
8	at	82%	0%	16%	2%
9	in	30%	68%	2%	0%

Table 4. 7. The percentages of at, in, on, and No Preposition in Test I. by fourth year students

Test II. (Write a composition about yourself answering the following questions using the prepositions at, in and on.)

All of the subjects answered question one correctly as “in” (and the year) with a percentage of 100.

In the second question, 96% of the subjects gave the correct answer, and 4% of the subjects wrote “in” (and the birthday).

Third question was answered correctly by 98% of the subjects as “at the age of”, and 2% of the students wrote “in the age of”.

40% of the subjects used the correct preposition “on”, and wrote “on the opening day of the university”, in the fourth question. The percentages of wrong preposition were 28% with “at”, and 20% with “in”. There was a minority of 12%, who did not answer the question.

Fifth question was answered correctly by 70% of the subjects as

“at noon”. 22% of the subjects used “in”, and 8% of the subjects used “on” instead of “at”.

The percentage of correct answers was 82 in the sixth question. 14% of the subjects used “at”, and 4% of the subjects used “on”, instead of “in (the evening)”.

In the seventh question, 88% of the subjects answered the question correctly by writing “at the weekend”. 8% of the subjects used “on”, and 4% used “in” in the answer to this question.

64% of the subjects used “on” correctly in the eighth question. 20% of the subjects wrote “in Sunday mornings”, and 16% wrote “at Sunday mornings”, instead of “on Sunday mornings”.

Last question was answered by 100% of the subjects correctly as “in summer”. (See Table 4.8.)

F. Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	in	0%	100%	0%	0%
2	on	0%	4%	96%	0%
3	at	98%	2%	0%	0%
4	on	28%	20%	40%	12%
5	at	70%	22%	8%	0%
6	in	14%	82%	4%	0%
7	at	88%	4%	8%	0%
8	on	16%	20%	64%	0%
9	in	0%	100%	0%	0%

Table 4. 8. The percentages of at, in, on, and No Preposition in Test II. by fourth year students

Test III. (Fill in the blanks by using the prepositions at, in and on)

The first blank was answered correctly as “at METU” by 60% of the subjects. 30% of the subjects filled in the blank with “in”, 8% with “on”. 2% of the subjects did not use any preposition.

In the second blank, 96% of the subjects used “in” to form the phrase “in England”. 2% of the subjects used “at”, and another 2% used “on” erroneously.

Third blank, which should be filled with “in”, was completed with “in” by 68% of the subjects. 26% of the subjects wrote “at”, and 6% wrote “on”, instead of “in (classes)”.

In the fourth blank, 12% of the subjects used “on” correctly in “on the plane”. 30% of the subjects filled in the blank with “in”, 28% with “at”, and 30% of the subjects did not use any preposition.

Fifth blank was completed as “on (the map)” by 86% of the subjects, and the rest 14% used “in” instead of “on”.

20% of the subjects used "at" correctly in the sixth question. 78% of the subjects used “in”, and 2% of the subjects wrote “on”, instead of “at (London)”.

In the seventh blank, 46% of the subjects used “in (the hotel)” correctly, and 54% of the subjects filled the blank in with “at”.

Blank eight was filled in with “at” correctly by 76% of the subjects. 14% of the subjects used “in”, 6% of the subjects used “on”, instead of “at (the entrance)”, and there was a minority of 4%, who did not filled in the blank.

Last blank ought to have been filled with “on” and 76% of the subjects formed the phrase “on (the fifth floor)”. 16% of the subjects used “at”, and 8% used “in” instead of “on”. (Table 4.9.)

F. Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	at	60%	30%	8%	2%
2	in	2%	96%	2%	0%
3	in	26%	68%	6%	0%
4	on	28%	30%	12%	30%
5	on	0%	14%	86%	0%
6	at	20%	78%	2%	0%
7	in	54%	46%	0%	0%
8	at	76%	14%	6%	4%
9	on	16%	8%	76%	0%

Table 4. 9. The percentages of at, in, on, and No Preposition in Test III. by fourth year students

Test IV. (Fill in the blanks by using the prepositions at, in and on.)

The first blank was filled in correctly with “in” by 96% of the subjects. 2% of the subjects used “at”, and 2% of the subjects used “on”, instead of “in (the morning)” .

100% of the subjects used “at (6.00 o'clock)” correctly in the second blank.

In the third blank, 96% of the subjects used “in (a day)”, and 4% of the subjects failed to fill the blank in with any preposition.

Fourth and fifth blanks were filled in correctly by 100% of the subjects, forming the phrases “on (Saturdays)” and “at (night)” in the stated order.

58% of the subjects filled in the sixth blank with “in” correctly. 38% of the subjects used “at”, and 4% of the subjects used “on”, instead of “in (his early twenties)”

Seventh blank was filled in with “at (30)” correctly by 92% of the subjects. 6% of the subjects failed to write the correct preposition, by having used “in”, and 2% by having used “on”.

Eighth blank was filled in with the correct preposition “on” by 90% of the subjects. 6% of the subjects used “in”, and 4% of the subjects used “at”, instead of “on (holiday)”.

50% of the subjects used the correct preposition, that is “on (New Year's day)” in the last blank. 42% of the subjects used “in”, I and 8% “at”, instead of the correct preposition. (Table 4.10.)

F. Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	in	2%	96%	2%	0%
2	at	100%	0%	0%	0%
3	in	0%	96%	0%	4%
4	on	0%	0%	100%	0%
5	at	100%	0%	0%	0%
6	in	38%	58%	4%	0%
7	at	92%	6%	2%	0%
8	on	4%	6%	90%	0%
9	on	8%	42%	50%	0%

Table 4.10. The % of at, in, on, and No Preposition in Test IV. by fourth year ss.

Test V. (Translate the following sentences into English using at, in and on for the words underlined.)

The translation equivalent of first underlined statement in Test V was “in the sea”, and 90% of the subjects translated it having used “in”. 10% of the subjects used “at” in the first question.

In the second question, “at” was required for the underlined statement. 66% of the subjects translated it correctly as “at the address”. However, 24% of the subjects used “in”, and 6% of the subjects used “on” instead of “at”. 4% of the subjects did not translate the sentence.

Third underlined statement, which ought to have been translated as “on TV” was translated correctly by 96% of the subjects. 4% of the subjects used “at” instead of “on” for that statement.

Fourth statement was translated correctly by all of the subjects with 100% as “at home”.

Fifth statement was translated correctly as “in the air” by 94% of the subjects. 6% of the subjects used “on” instead of “in”.

90% of the subjects used the correct preposition in the sixth underlined statement, of which translation equivalent was “on the roads”. 8% of the subjects translated the statement having used “at”, and 2% having used “in”.

In the seventh underlined statement, 86% of the subjects used the correct preposition; “on”. 12% of the subjects translated the underlined statement as “at the hill”, and 2% as “in the hill”, instead of “on the hill”.

The correct translation equivalent of the eighth underlined statement was “in the garden”. 92% of the subjects used “in”, and the rest of the answers were divided into three parts, with 4% who used “at”, 2% who used “on”, and 2% who did not answer the question.

78% of the subjects translated the last underlined statement correctly as “at the crossroads”. 12% of the subjects used “on”, instead

of “at”, and 6% of the subjects used “in”, instead of “at”. 4% of the subjects was not able to translate the statement. (Tabel 4. 11.)

F. Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	in	10%	90%	0%	0%
2	at	66%	24%	6%	4%
3	on	4%	0%	96%	0%
4	at	100%	0%	0%	0%
5	in	0%	94%	6%	0%
6	on	8%	2%	90%	0%
7	on	12%	2%	86%	0%
8	in	4%	92%	2%	2%
9	at	78%	6%	12%	4%

Table 4.11. The percentages of at, in, on, and No Preposition in Test V, by fourth year students

Test VI. (Translate the following sentences into English using at, in and on for the words underlined.)

The first sentence translated correctly as “at the moment” by 84% of the subjects. 2% of the subjects used “on” in that statement instead of “at”, and 14% of the subjects did not translate this statement.

The correct translation equivalent of the second sentence was “on his this coming”. 26% of the subjects translated it correctly having used “on”. 36% of the subjects used “at”, and 32% of the subjects used “in”, instead of “on”. 6% of the subjects did not translate the statement.

68% of the subjects translated the third underlined statement correctly as “in June”. 24% of the subjects used “on”, instead of “in”.

The fourth underlined statement's translation equivalent was “in three months”. 90% of the subjects wrote the correct translation of it, and 10% of the subjects translated it having used “at”.

60% of the subjects wrote the phrase “on his birthday”, which was the correct translation equivalent, in the fifth question. 22% of the subjects translated the sentence by having used “in”, and 18% of the subjects having used “at”.

In the sixth question, the underlined statement could be translated as “at the breakfast”. 88% of the subjects translated it with “at”. 6% of the subjects wrote “in”, and 4% wrote “on”, instead of the correct preposition. There was a minority of 2%, who did not translate this statement.

Translation equivalent of the seventh underlined statement was “in the 18th century”. 84% of the subjects used “in” correctly, however, there was a 10%, who used “at”, 4%, who used “on”, and 2%, who did not translate the underlined statement.

In the eighth question, 96% of the subjects translated the underlined statement correctly as “at the end”, and 2% of the subjects used “in” instead of “at”. There was another 2%, who did not translate the sentence.

Last underlined statement of the test was to be translated correctly as “on the fifth of”. 72% of the subjects translated it correctly. 16% of the subjects translated it having used “at”, and 6% having used “in”. 6% of the subjects did not translate the underlined statement. (Table 4.12.)

F.Y. Ss.	C.P.	at	in	on	N.P.
1	at	84%	0%	2%	14%
2	on	36%	32%	26%	6%
3	in	8%	68%	24%	0%
4	in	10%	90%	0%	0%
5	on	18%	22%	60%	0%
6	at	88%	6%	4%	2%
7	in	10%	84%	4%	2%
8	at	96%	2%	0%	2%
9	on	16%	6%	72%	6%

Table 4.12. The percentages of at, in, on, and No Preposition in Test VI. by fourth year students

IV. 3. 2. Analysis of the Fourth Year Students Test Results in accordance with Percentages of of Erroneously Used At, In and On in Each Test

Test I.

The percentages of correct preposition and wrong preposition were 82% and 18% in the stated order in Test I.

At was used erroneously in 28%, **in** was used erroneously in 34%, **on** was used in erroneously 28% , and no preposition was used in 10%.

At was confused with **on** in 64% and, no preposition was used instead of **at** in 36%.

At was used instead of **in** in 56%, **on** was used instead of **in** in 41%, and no preposition was used instead of **in** in 3%.

On was confused with **at** in 9%, with **in** in 84%, and the percentage of no preposition instead of **on** was 6%. (See Appendix XV.)

Test II.

There were 82% correct prepositions, and 18% wrong prepositions. The percentage of erroneously used **at** was 36%, erroneously used **in** was 44%, erroneously used **on** was 13%, and the percentage of no preposition was 7%.

At was confused with **in** in 64%, and **on** was used instead of **at** in 36%.

In was confused with **at** in 78%, and with **on** in 22%.

At and **in** were used instead of **on** both in the percentage of 44%. No preposition was used instead of **on** in the percentage of 12%.(See Appendix XVI.)

Test III.

The percentage of correct preposition was 60, and the percentage of wrong preposition was 40.

The erroneous use of **at** was 35%, **in** 48%, and **on** was 7%, and no preposition was used in 10%.

At was confused with **in** in 85%, with **on** in 11%, and there was 4% no preposition.

At was used instead of **in** in 92%, **on** was used instead of **in** in 8%.

On was confused with **at** in 35%, with **in** in 41%, and no preposition was used instead of **on** in 24%. (See Appendix XVII.)

Test IV.

The percentages of correct preposition and wrong preposition were 87% and 13% in the stated order.

At was used erroneously in 44%, **in** in 46%, **on** in 7%, and no preposition was used in 3%.

In was used instead of **at** in 75%, and **on** instead of **at** in 25%.

In was confused with **in** in 80%, with **on** in 12%, and no preposition was used instead of **in** in 8%.

On was confused with **at** in 20%, and with **in** in 80%. (See Appendix XVIII.)

Test V.

The percentage of correct preposition was 88, and the percentage of wrong preposition was 12.

36% of the wrong prepositions was **at**, 31% of the wrong prepositions was **in**, 24% of the wrong prepositions was **on**, and there was 9% no preposition.

In was used instead of **at** in 54%, **on** was used instead of **at** in 32%, and no preposition was used instead of **at** in 14%.

At was used instead of **in** in 58%, **on** was used instead of **in** in 33%, and there was 8% no prepositions.

On was confused with **at** in 86%, and with **in** in 14%. (See Appendix XIX.)

Test VI.

The percentages of correct preposition and wrong preposition were 74% and 26% in the stated order.

At was used erroneously in 42%, **in** was used erroneously 29%, **on** was used erroneously in 15%, and no preposition was used in 14%.

In was used instead of **at** in 25%, **on** was used instead of **at** in 19%, and the percentage of no preposition instead of **at** was 56%.

Both **at** and **on** were used in the percentage of 48 instead of **in**, and there was 3% no preposition in the use of **in**.

At was used in 49% instead of **on**. **On** was confused with **in** in 42%. The percentage of no preposition was 8%. (See Appendix XX.)

IV. 4. A Comparative Analysis of the First Year Students and Fourth Year Students' Test Results

IV. 4. 1. A Comparative Analysis in Terms of Percentages of Correct Preposition and Wrong Preposition in Tests

When the percentages of the correct preposition and the wrong preposition are examined comparatively, it is seen that while in the first test, the percentages of correct preposition and wrong preposition are 83% and 17% in the stated order by first year students, they are 82% and 18% in the same order by fourth year students. In the second test, first year students had 88% correct, 12% wrong prepositions, and fourth year students had 82% correct, and 18% wrong prepositions. In Test III., first year students scored 59% correct prepositions, and used 41% wrong prepositions, and fourth year students scored 60% correct prepositions and used 49% wrong prepositions. In the fourth test, the percentages of correct and erroneous prepositions are 89% and 11% in the stated order by first year students, and 87% and 13% in the same order by fourth year students. In Test V., first year classes had 86% correct, 14% erroneous answers, and fourth year classes had 88%

correct, 12% erroneous answers. In test VI., first year students scored 75% correct prepositions, and used 25% wrong prepositions. Fourth year students scored 74% correct prepositions, and used 26% wrong prepositions.(Table 4.13.)

	Test I		Test II		Test III		Test IV		Test V		Test VI	
	C.A	W.A.	C.A	W.A.	C.A	W.A.	C.A	W.A.	C.A	W.A.	C.A	W.A.
First Year Ss	83	17	88	12	59	41	89	11	86	14	75	25
Fourth Y. Ss	82	18	82	18	60	40	87	13	88	12	74	26

Table 4. 13. The percentages in accordance with the tests (C.A stands for Correct Answer ; W.A. stands for Wrong Answer, including No Preposition)

IV. 4. 2. Analysis of the Test Results in accordance with Percentages of Erroneous Use of Each Preposition

When an overall analysis of the percentages of wrong prepositions in all tests are considered, it is seen that first year students used **at** erroneously in 7,59%, and fourth year students in 7,70%. The percentage of erroneously used **in** was 6,89% in first year students, and 8,44% in fourth year students. **On** was used erroneously in 3,93% by first year students, and 2,89% by fourth year students. The percentages of no prepositions by first year students and fourth year students were 1,15% and 2,04% in the stated order. (See Appendix XXI-a.)

IV. 4. 3. Analysis of the Test Results in accordance with the Meaning the Prepositions Convey

When the percentages are examined in terms of Test I, Test III, and Test V, which examine the space meaning of **at** , **in** and **on** , the results are like in the following:

When these prepositions convey the meaning of space, the percentages of erroneous answers in **at** were 8,07%, and 7,70 by first and fourth year students in the stated order. In **in**, the erroneous answers' percentages were 8,47% by first year students and 9,70% by fourth year students. **On** was used erroneously in 3,41% by first year students, and 3,56% by fourth year students. The percentages of no

prepositions were 0,74% and 2,30% by first year students and fourth year students in the same order. (See Appendix XXI-b.)

When these prepositions convey the meaning of time, first year students score 7,11%, fourth year students had 7,70% erroneous answer in the use of **at**. In the use of **in**, there were 5,04% erroneous answers by first year students, and 7,19% erroneous answers by fourth year students. First year students had 4,44% erroneous answers in the use of **on**, fourth year students had 2,22% erroneous answers in the use of the same preposition. Finally, the percentages of no preposition were 1,56% and 1,78% by first year students and fourth year students in the same order. (See Appendix XXI-c.)

CHAPTER V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

V. I. A Summary of the Study

This study was conducted with the aim of finding out the problems of Turkish learners of English in the use of **at**, **in** and **on**. The errors committed in the use of these three prepositions, and their possible reasons, would be sought for. It was believed that by finding out the possible reasons for the erroneous use of these prepositions, some clues about the sources of errors in the use of other prepositions could be obtained, either. In order to reach these goals, a descriptive study, which consists of three different types of test, was conducted. These three types of tests were applied to two groups of subjects. One group was formed with first year students, the other with fourth year students at English Language Teaching Department, in order to find out whether the length of time in which the learners exposed to the language could be a factor determining their success in the use of these prepositions. The scores of the tests were calculated via percentage system. These scores were surprising in that they were approximate in both first year students and fourth year students. In this chapter, these scores will be commented on, and answers to the research questions in Chapter I will be given.

V. 2. Discussion of the First Year Students' Test Results

V. 2. I. Discussion of the First Year Students' Test Results in accordance with Test Questions

When the answers in each the tests are examined, it is seen that some answers to questions were problematic for the subjects. When the noticeable prepositional errors involved in these questions are classified according to their possible reasons, the groups are like in the following:

Errors presumably originating from lack of a specific distinction of that preposition in the subjects' native language:

in the reception list instead of on the reception list

at the map instead of on the map

in the entrance instead of at the entrance

in the age of instead of at the age of

Errors presumably originating from generalizations about the foreign language

at the lobby instead of in the lobby (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "at school", "at home")

at classes instead of in classes (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "at school")

at the opening day of the university instead of on the opening day of the university (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "at the beginning", "at the end")

in noon instead of at noon (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "in the afternoon")

at his early twenties instead of in his early twenties (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "at the age of")

at his this coming instead of on his this coming (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "at the beginning")

Errors presumably originating from deficiencies during the learning process

on the flowerpot instead of in the flowerpot

at the customer's hand instead of in the customer's hand

on the table instead of at the table

in METU instead of at METU

in the plane instead of on the plane

in London instead of at London
at the hotel instead of in the hotel
at the fifth floor instead of on the fifth floor
at the sea instead of in the sea
in the address instead of at the address
at the hill instead of on the hill
on the crossroads instead of at the crossroads
in Sunday mornings instead of on Sunday mornings
in 30 instead of at 30
in holiday instead of on holiday
in New Year's day instead of on New Year's day
on June instead of in June
at his birthday instead of on his birthday
in the breakfast instead of at the breakfast
on the 18th century instead of in the 18th. century
at the fifth of the month instead of on the fifth of the month

Errors presumably originating from communication strategies (in this sample "avoidance")

at the moment (The subjects avoided to use "at", and translated the sentence into English without using "at")

V. 2. 2. Discussion of the First Year Students' Test Results in accordance with Percentages of Erroneously Used At, In and On in Each Test

In Test I, the prepositions from the most problematic to the least problematic are **on**, **in** and **at** with approximate percentages in their erroneous use. **On** was mostly confused with **in**, and in an insignificant percentage, with **at**. **In** was confused with first **at** and then **on** in almost the same percentages. **At** was confused generally with **on**, and rarely, with **in**. (See Appendix IX.)

In Test II, the prepositions may be ordered as **at**, **in** and **on** from the most problematic to the least problematic with noticeable differences in their percentages. **At** was confused mostly with **in**, and then, with **on**. **In** was often confused with **at**, and in a small percentage compared to **at**, with **on**. **In** was often confused with **at**, and in a small percentage compared to **at**, with **on**. **On** was generally confused with **at**, and sometimes with **in**. (See Appendix X.)

Prepositions are **in**, **at**; and compared to these two, with a very small percentage **on**, from the most to the least problematic in Test III. **In** was confused with **at** in a noticeably large percentage, and with **on**, in a very small percentage. **At** was mostly confused with **in**, and seldom, with **on**. **On** was confused with first **at** and then **on** in percentages which are approximate. (See Appendix XI.)

The prepositions from the most to the least problematic are **at**, **in** and **on** in Test IV; with approximate percentages in the erroneous use of **at** and **in**; and as in Test II and Test III, with a small percentage of erroneously used **on**. **At** was generally confused with **in**, and in a small percentage, with **on**. **On** was mostly confused with **in**, and not in a very small percentage, with **at**. (See Appendix XII.)

In Test V, **at** and **in** are both the most problematic preposition with the same percentages, and **on** is the least problematic preposition. **At** was confused with both **in** and **on** in the same percentages. Likewise, **in** was confused with both **at** and **on** in the same percentages. **On** was frequently confused with **at**, and sometimes with **in**. (See Appendix XIII.)

Prepositions from the most problematic to the least problematic are **at**, **in** and **on**, with approximate percentages in their erroneous use, in Test VI. **At** was mostly confused with **in**, and not in a very small percentage, with **on**. **In** was frequently confused with **on**, and then with **at**. **On** was generally confused with **at**, and in a relatively small

percentage, with **in**. (See Appendix XIV.)

When the results above are examined, it is seen that the percentages of erroneously used prepositions, and their frequency of being confused with each other, vary in accordance with each test. While one preposition is the most problematic in one test, it may be the least problematic in another. For instance, the preposition **on**, which is the most problematic in Test I, may be the preposition which caused little confusion, say, in Test III. While **in** is the most problematic preposition in Test III, **at** caused the most confusion in Test VI. Similarly, while **at** is confused in a high percentage with **on**, and in a very little percentage with **in** in Test I, it is rarely confused with **on** and mostly confused with **in** in Test III, or it was confused with both prepositions in the same percentages in Test V. While **in** is mostly confused with **at** and sometimes with **on** in Test IV, the opposite is observed in Test VI; or as in Test V, **at** and **on** are used in the same percentages instead of **in**. **On** is confused with **at** in a relatively small percentage, and with **in**, in a high percentage in Test I. On the other hand, in Test V, it is mostly confused with **at** and in a relatively small percentage, with **in**. Therefore, to tell with a very firm explanation why some prepositions are confused with each does not seem possible. However, there is one definite result that all these findings led to. It is seen that the most problematic prepositions and the percentages of prepositions being confused with each other depends on where that preposition is used, in other words, the context which requires the use of one specific preposition.

V. 3. Discussion of the Fourth Year Students' Test Results

V. 3. 1. Discussion of the Fourth Years Students' Test Results in accordance with Test Questions

Errors committed by fourth year students can be classified in accordance with their possible reasons as in the following:

Errors presumably originating from lack of a specific distinction of that preposition in the subjects' native language

in the reception list instead of on the reception list

in the entrance instead of at the entrance

Errors presumably originating from generalizations about the foreign language

at the lobby instead of in the lobby (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "at school", "at home")

at classes instead of in classes (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "at school")

in the map instead of on the map (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "in the book")

at the opening day of the university instead of on the opening day of the university (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "at the beginning", "at the end")

in noon instead of at noon (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "in the afternoon")

at his early twenties instead of in his early twenties (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "at the age of")

at his this coming instead of on his this coming (The subjects might be affected by prepositional phrases such as "at the beginning")

Errors presumably originating from deficiencies during the learning process

on the flowerpot instead of in the flowerpot

at the customer's hand instead of in the customer's hand

on the table instead of at the table

in METU instead of at METU

in the plane instead of on the plane
in London instead of at London
at the hotel instead of in the hotel
at the fifth floor instead of on the fifth floor
in the address instead of at the address
at the hill instead of on the hill
on the crossroads instead of at the crossroads
at the evening instead of in the evening
on the weekend instead of at the weekend
in Sunday mornings instead of on Sunday mornings
in New Year's day instead of on New Year's day
on June instead of in June
in his birthday instead of on his birthday
in the breakfast instead of at the breakfast
at the 18th century instead of in the 18th century
at the fifth of the month instead of on the fifth of the month

Errors presumably originating from communication strategies (in this sample, "avoidance")

at the moment (the subjects avoided to use "at", and translated the sentence into English without using "at")

When the prepositional errors of fourth year students is compared with first year students', it is seen that, in general, errors and their possible reasons are the same. However, there are some differences when the errors are evaluated in terms of each problematic answer.

For example, unlike first year students, who used "at" instead of "on" in "on the map", fourth year students formed the prepositional phrase as "in the map". This may be because of the fact that they made a generalization considering phrases like "in the book". First year students had written "at the map", possibly because they had made an

error caused by the interference of the native language.

It is remarkable that two errors which were not among the most noticeable errors in first year students were problematic for fourth year students. These two errors were “at the evening” and “on the weekend”, and they can be called as “fossilized errors”.

It is also noticeable that the erroneous prepositional phrase “in the age of”, which supposedly has been caused by the subjects’ native language in first year students, was not observed in a remarkable proportion in fourth year students. This situation, and the reason for first year students’ having used “at” in “on the map”, could be an indicator of the fact that fourth year students committed relatively less interference errors compared to first year students.

V. 3. 2. Discussion of the Fourth Year Students’ Test Results in accordance with Percentages of Erroneously Used At, In and On in Each Test

In Test I, the most problematic preposition is **in**. **At** and **on** are both the second problematic preposition with the same percentage. **In** was mostly confused with **at** and not in a small percentage with **on**. **At** was confused only with **on**. **In** was mostly confused with **at**, and not in a small percentage with **on**. **On** was confused with **in** a high percentage, and in a very small percentage, with **at**.(See Appendix XV)

The prepositions from the most problematic to the least problematic are **in**, **at** and **on**, with **on** in a relatively small percentage in Test II. **In** was frequently confused with **at**, and in a relatively small percentage, with **on**. **At** was mostly confused with **in**, and then, with **on**. **On** was confused with both **at** and **in** in the same percentages.(See Appendix XVI.)

In Test III, the prepositions are ordered as **in**, **at**; and in a noticeably small percentage, **on**, from the most problematic to the least problematic. **In** was frequently confused with **at**, and in a small

percentage, with **on**. **At** was often confused with **in**, and in a small percentage, with **on**. **On** was confused mostly with **in**, and in an approximate percentage, with **at**. (See Appendix XVII.)

As in Test III, the prepositions are **in**, **at** and **on** from the most problematic to the least problematic in Test IV, with **in** and **at** in approximate percentages of erroneous use, and **on** in a noticeably small percentage. **In** was confused with **at** frequently, and rarely with **on**. **At** was mostly confused with **in**, and sometimes with **on**. **On** was generally confused with **in**, and in a relatively small percentage with **at**. (See Appendix XVIII.)

In Test V, prepositions are ordered as **at**, **in** and **on** from the most problematic to the least problematic. **At** was mostly confused with **in**, and then, with **on**. **In** was mostly confused with **at**, and sometimes with **on**. **On** was frequently confused with **at**, and in a small percentage, with **in**. (See Appendix XIX.)

Prepositions from the most problematic to least problematic are **at**, **in** and **on** with percentages which are quite different from each other in Test VI. **At** was confused mostly with **in**, and in an approximate percentage, with **on**. **In** was confused with both **at** and **on** in the same percentages. **On** was confused generally with **at**, and in an approximate percentage, with **in**. (See Appendix XX.)

The results above show that as in first year students the percentages of erroneously used prepositions, and their frequency of being confused with each other, vary in accordance with each test also in fourth year students. However, while the most problematic preposition changed in accordance with the percentages of erroneous answers in each test, the least problematic preposition has always remained **on** for fourth year students. This may be an indicator of the fact that fourth year students had, in some way, reinforced the use of this preposition within the years at the university.

As in first year students, the prepositions confused with each other varied in accordance with the test. For instance, the preposition **at**, which seems like mostly being confused with **in** in five tests, had not been confused with **in** at all, but with **on**, in Test I. Likewise, while **on** was mostly confused with **in** in Test I, and with **at** in Test V, it was confused both with **at** and **in** in the same percentages in Test II. It was clear in tests that **in** was mostly confused with **at**. This may be because it could not be confused with **on** because compared to **at**, **on** has a more clear and definite meaning. Therefore, the subjects preferred to use **at** in situations where they were not sure which preposition to use. The fact that sometimes **at**, sometimes **in** was the most problematic preposition in the tests (e.g. in Test VI, the former, and in Test I, the latter), and also the fact that prepositions mostly confused with each other differed in accordance with each test, led to one result. As in first year students, the context in which the preposition is used could determine a preposition's being problematic or not.

V. 4. Comparison of the First Year Students' and Fourth Year Students' Test Results

V. 4. 1. An Overall Comparison in terms of Percentages of Correct Preposition and Wrong Preposition in Tests

When the scores are examined depended on the percentages of correct prepositions and wrong prepositions, it is seen that there is not a big difference between the results of two groups (See IV. 4. 1.) Both groups scored approximate results in each test. Besides, the percentages of correct prepositions and wrong prepositions in terms of all tests were close to each other in general. However, Test III, which is a close test evaluating the use of **at**, **in** and **on** conveying the meaning of space, and Test VI, which is a translation test evaluating the use of **at**, **in** and **on** conveying the meaning of time, seemed to be the most problematic two test for both groups. One possible reason for the

frequency of erroneous answers in Test III is the meaning the prepositions convey. When **at**, **in** and **on** convey the meaning of space, they become a bit more problematic for the students, maybe because of the variety in their use when they have space meaning. (See II. 2. 1.) Another possible reason is that Test III evaluates the use of these three prepositions under the circumstances which are too specific for the subjects to know (**on** the map, **at** London...) Therefore, it is possible that the subjects were confused when they were face with statements may be they had not seen before, so they may have filled in the blanks carelessly in this test. Test VI. was relatively problematic for the subjects, either. The reason for this is may be that it was the last test they had to have, so they were not able to translate the sentences properly due to tiredness or boredom.

It is noticeable that although the test scores are similar in both groups, first year students had achieved better results in the tests except for Test III and Test V. It is possible that fourth year students, who could not have internalized the correct use of preposition in their earlier stages of learning, were later in a stage of fossilization.

V. 4. 2. Discussion of the Test Results in accordance with Percentages of Erroneous Use of Each Preposition

The general evaluation of the test has shown that in first year students, prepositions from the most problematic to the least problematic can be listed as **at**, **in** and **on**; and in fourth year students, they are **in**, **at** and **on** from the most problematic to the least problematic.

At was the most problematic preposition for first year students probably because the circumstances where **at** is used are not clear to the subjects. Unlike **in** and **on**, which convey a more clear and definite meaning, **at** is used in a variety of situations. (See II. 2. 1.) Another reason may be that when the subjects “think in Turkish”, they find a certain equivalent of the prepositions **in** and **on** in their native

languages. This makes the situations where these two prepositions are used more clear to them. So, they have difficulty mostly in the use of **at**; they can not find the Turkish equivalent of the preposition, and do not know which category they should put **at** into.

Fourth year students had difficulty mostly in the use of **in**. The effect of native language possibly reduces within the years, so while they decreased the errors in the use of **at**, of which possible reasons are stated above, they could not correct errors in the use of **in**, maybe because these errors were fossilized.

It is remarkable that **on** is the least problematic preposition in both groups. This may be because the situations where **on** is required is more clear. (See V. 4. 3.)

V. 4. 3. Discussion of the Test Results in accordance with the Meaning the Prepositions Convey

Test I, Test III and Test V measured the subjects' performance when the prepositions **at**, **in** and **on** conveyed the meaning of space, and Test II, Test IV and Test V measured the subjects' performance when the prepositions **at**, **in** and **on** conveyed the meaning of time. The results were like in the following:

When these prepositions conveyed the meaning of space, they were ordered as **in**, **at** and **on** from the most problematic to the least problematic in both groups. **In** was confusing for the subjects when space preposition, probably because they could not form a definite concept of where to use **in**, and confused it frequently with **at** due to the reasons stated beforehand. (See V. 2. 1. and V. 3. 1.). **On** was the least problematic space preposition for both groups. This may be because in situations which require **on**, its function of specifying surfaces was more clear in Tests. (See Page 21.) That is to say, when subjects saw the statements like (on) "the wall", (on) "the fifth floor" or (on) "the roads", they had no difficulty with building the connection

between the preposition and the surfaces specified by it, because it was evident to them. When these prepositions conveyed the meaning of time, they were ordered as **at**, **in** and **on** from the most problematic to the least problematic in both groups. **At** was confusing for them, possibly because it had a wider range of time functions compared to **in** and **on**. Maybe this wide range of functions were difficult for the subjects to learn, especially if these different functions had not been emphasized in classes. Consequently, they had difficulties in the use of **at**. Time preposition **on** was the least problematic for both groups, probably because the subjects had internalized the simple rule “on indicates days ... or part of a day”, which underlies almost all correct answers related to the use of time preposition **on** in the tests. (See page 22.)

V. 5. An Overall Discussion of the Results

As stated at the beginning of this study, prepositions are one of the problematic items of English language, and **at**, **in** and **on** are among the prepositions which cause learners to be confused. It was also explained that **at**, **in** and **on** had a variety of functions, and their uses differed based on these functions. Our data analysis has shown that the subjects, whether first or fourth year students, were not able to use prepositions correctly all the time.

The possible reasons for the errors in the use of these prepositions were sought for in this study. As a result, it was seen that to offer very fixed explanations for these errors was not always possible. However, the fact that prepositional errors could be dependent on the context seemed to be valid in both first and fourth year students. It was explained that the prepositions which had mostly been confused with one another in both groups changed depending on the type of the test. For example, while **in** was observed to have been the most problematic preposition in Test III, in Test VI, **at** appeared as the most problematic preposition in both groups. (See V. 2. 2. and V. 3. 2.) Furthermore, one preposition used correctly by

all of the subjects in one sentence could be problematic in another sentence in a remarkable proportion in both groups. For instance, the preposition **on** was used correctly by 100% of both first year students and fourth year students in the second question of Test I. However, only 50% of first year students and 38% of fourth year students was able to use it correctly in question 7 of the same test. (See Table 4.1. and Table 4. 7.) Sometimes the sentence, as well as the preposition itself, could be a factor determining whether that preposition is problematic or not. The sentences, or, in a more general sense, **the context** in which the prepositions were to be used, caused one preposition to be more problematic than the other. Consequently, all these findings led us to the comment that one reason for the prepositional errors was **the context** which required the use of a preposition.

As stated in the Literature Review section of this study, the use of prepositions **at**, **in** and **on** differ depending on the conditions. Even the same sentence may require the use of one specific preposition in accordance with the meaning conveyed by that sentence, as in the example of He stopped at Chicago/He stopped in Chicago. (p. 26) It is stated in II. 2. 1. that there may be situations where either of two different prepositions is convenient. In such a case, the user should be fully aware of the meaning conveyed by the preposition. Although there are some clear-cut definitions of where to use which preposition, it is possible to see some exceptions to the rules because of the meaning one sentence conveys. So prepositions are items of English which are themselves too complex. They are sometimes used in a variety of situations, which may be confusing for learners of English as a foreign language. For a nonnative speaker of English, to be very competent in the use of prepositions may not be possible all the time, especially while he/she has no chance of living in a country whose native language is English and learning to use prepositions properly in all situations. Therefore, it is possible to say that prepositions can be problematic because of their being complex in terms of meaning,

function and structure. As a result, the subjects possibly committed **intralingual errors**.

When the results of the tests were evaluated considering the general performance of both first year students and fourth year students, it was seen that there were not very big differences between the two groups. Errors committed by first and fourth year students' performance had a similar pattern in spite of some exceptions. The time through which learners are exposed to language did not seem to be very effective in the correct use of prepositions. That prepositions could be problematic depending on the context and that prepositions are a complex part of English grammar, resulted in their having been used erroneously in both groups. However, though limited in number, there were some errors seemingly connected with the subjects' grade. While the first year students committed errors possibly caused by **native language interference**, errors presumably stemmed from faulty generalizations were committed more commonly by fourth year students. (pages 70, 71) Maybe through their university education, fourth year students learned some rules about the use of prepositions in some way, so sometimes committed **analogical errors** by trying to apply that rule to all similar situations in the tests.

As a result, it is possible to say that prepositions are a part of English grammar which needs special emphasis. As has been previously stated, there are many other prepositions as well as **at**, **in** and **on**. Being plenty in number, they are not used properly in language classes. The variety in the prepositions' functions presumably make them difficult to deal with. Furthermore, their difficulty for the learner may change from one context to another. A preposition used correctly by the learner in one context may be problematic for him in another one; or what is convenient in one sentence under a specific situation may not be considered convenient in the same sentence under a different situation. Besides, the learners may be affected by sometimes their native language characteristics, sometimes the target language's features when using the prepositions. Consequently, they either misuse prepositions or prefer not to use prepositions at all as a result

of these factors. It is clear that these complex items should be assigned more importance in classes. In order to provide this, prepositions can be explained explicitly in terms of not only their grammatical meaning, but also their functions. Different uses of prepositions can be paid attention to. Their use in different contexts can be illustrated with plenty of examples. To prevent native language interference, the students can be taught the differences between preposition system in their native language and preposition system in English. To prevent misunderstandings caused by faulty generalizations, the learners can be made aware of the exceptions in the rules about the use of the prepositions. Finally, texts containing prepositions can be brought to language classes to let the students reinforce what was taught to them. By doing these, it is expected that students will learn not only prepositions, but also how to use them.

V. 6. Suggestions for Further Study

This study was a descriptive research having aimed at finding out the possible reasons in the use of **at**, **in** and **on**. The scope of the study was bounded with three prepositions due to time limitations. Research may be conducted with more prepositions.

This study does not deal with the pedagogical dimension of the subject. It is possible to conduct further studies seeking for the best way in teaching prepositions.

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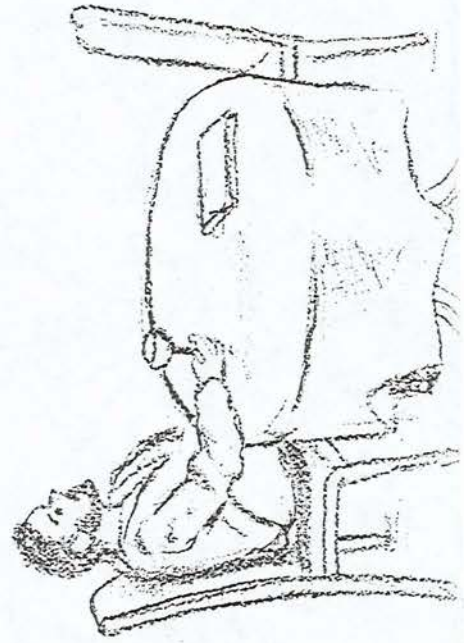
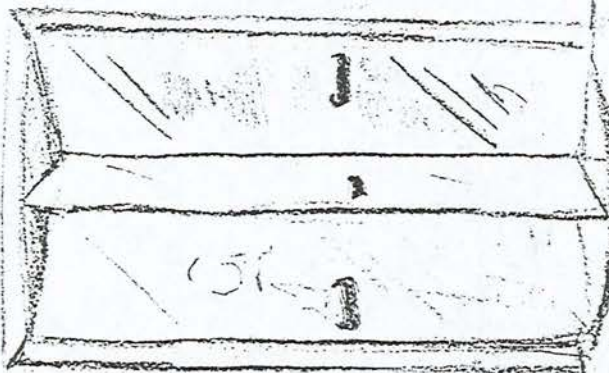
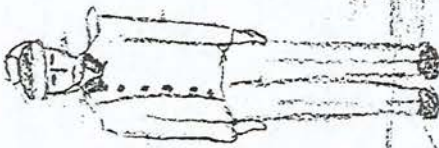
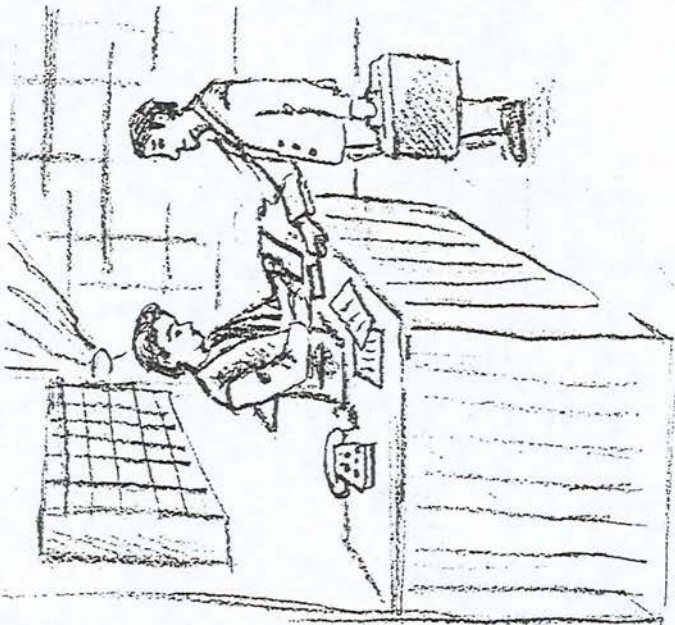
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Appendices

Appendix I.



Appendix II.

TEST I.

Describe the picture by answering the following questions, using the prepositions at, in and on for the necessary connections.

- 1) Where is the doorman? (the door)
- 2) Where is the picture? (the wall)
- 3) Where is the flower? (the flowerpot)
- 4) Where is the telephone? (the reception desk)
- 5) Where is the customer? (the reception)
- 6) Where is the bag? (the customer's hand)
- 7) Where is the customer's name registered? (the reception list)
- 8) Where is the man sitting? (the table)
- 9) Where are all these man? (the lobby)

Appendix III.

TEST II.

Write a composition about yourself answering the following questions, using the prepositions at, in and on.

- 1) When were you born? (give the year only)
- 2) When is your birthday? (give the day and month)
- 3) When did you begin the university? (the age of)
- 4) When did you first come to school this year? (the opening day of the university)
- 5) When do you have lunch? (noon)
- 6) When are your classes over everyday? (the evening)
- 7) When do you go to the cinema? (the weekend)
- 8) When do you have time to sleep properly? (Sunday mornings)
- 9) When will you go your home? (summer)

Appendix IV.

TEST III.

Fill in the blanks by using the prepositions at, in and on.

The girl was very excited because of her first travel to another country. She had been studying computer engineering _____ METU, and was given a course _____ England due to her high performance _____ classes. She was happy and curious _____ the plane, trying to see Essex _____ the map, her last arrival point. _____ London she changed the plane, and _____ the hotel, she was finally relaxed. _____ the entrance of her room, which was _____ the fifth floor of the building, she sighed with relief. There she had come!...

Appendix V.

TEST IV.

Fill in the blanks by using the prepositions at, in and on.

He is a very succesful businessman despite his young age, and he says that the reason for his success is his self-discipline. He is accustomed to studying regularly; _____ the morning, he gets up early, _____ 6.00 o'clock, and works ten hours _____ a day. He doesn't quit working _____ Saturdays, and if necessary, he works _____ night. He had a good career _____ his early twenties, and became manager _____ 30. He says that working when _____ holiday, or even going to office _____ New Year's day, is a pleasure for him. It is easy to understand how he became that successful within a short period!

Appendix VI.

TEST V.

Translate the following sentences into English, using at, in and on for the words underlined.

- 1) Çocuk denizde yüzüyordu.
- 2) Verdiği adreste onu tanıyan kimse yok.
- 3) Televizyondaki filmi büyük bir dikkatle izliyordu.
- 4) Onu aradım, ama evde yoktu.
- 5) Havada birçok gaz vardır.
- 6) Yollardaki kar ulaşımı etkiledi.
- 7) Tepedeki evin manzarası çok güzel.
- 8) Bahçede dolaşmak onu rahatlatıyordu.
- 9) Kavşakta durmayan arabanın sürücüsüne polis ceza yazdı.

Appendix VII.

TEST VI.

Translate the following sentences into English, using at, in and on for the words underlined.

- 1) Onu gördüğü anda nasıl davranacağını şaşırdı.
- 2) Bu gelişinde de onu karşılayamadık.
- 3) Yıllık izinini Haziranda kullanacak.
- 4) Kitabını üç ayda tamamladı.
- 5) Yaşgününde bir sürü arkadaşı telefon etti.
- 6) Kahvaltıda beraberdiler.
- 7) 18. yüzyılda ilginç siyasi gelişmeler oldu.
- 8) Sanatçı konserin sonunda büyük alkış aldı.
- 9) Ayın beşinde bize de uğrayacaklarmış.

Appendix VIII.

THE KEY

TEST I : at, on, in, on, at, in, on, at, in

TEST II : in, on, at, on, at, in, at, on, in

TEST III : at, in, in, on, on, at, in, at, on

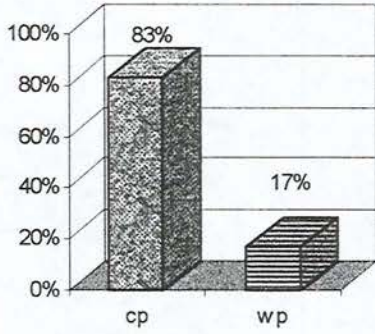
TEST IV : in, at, in, on, at, in, at, on, on

TEST V : in, at, on, at, in, on, on, in, at

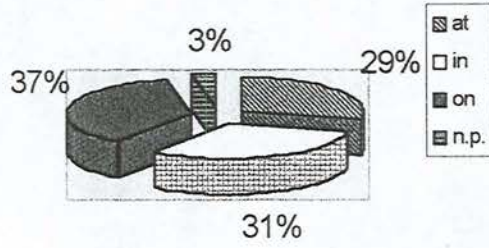
TEST VI : at, on, in, in, on, at, in, at, on

Appendix IX.

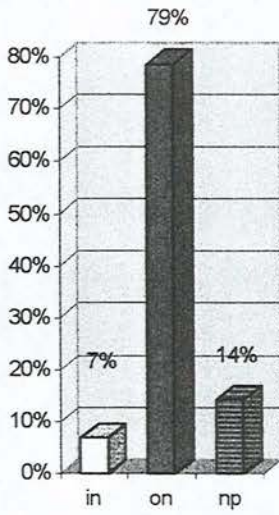
First Year Ss Test-1



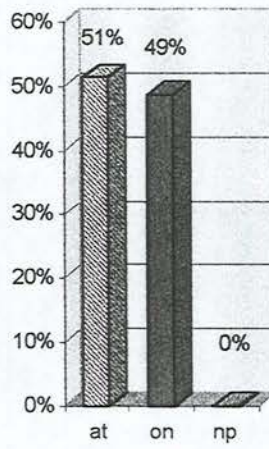
First Year Ss Test-1
(percentages of WP)



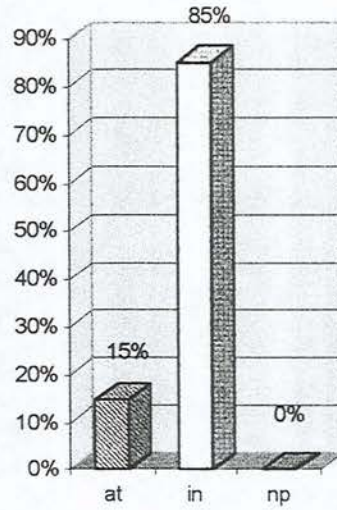
cp : at



cp : in

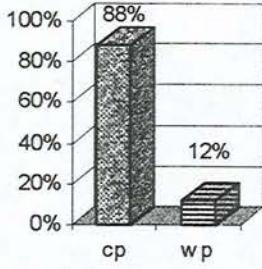


cp : on

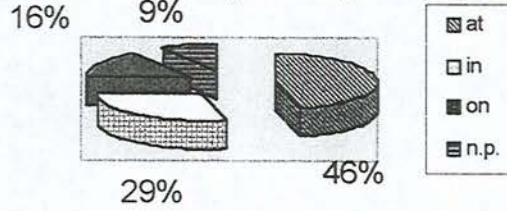


Appendix X.

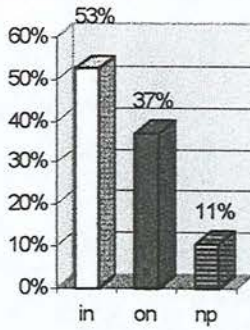
First Year Ss Test-2



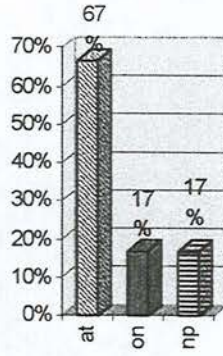
First Year Ss Test-2 (percentages of WP)



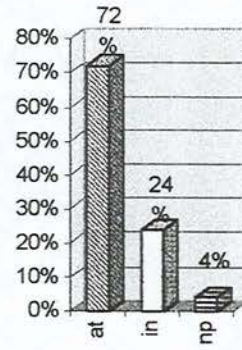
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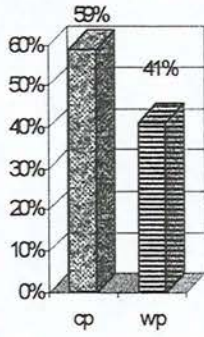


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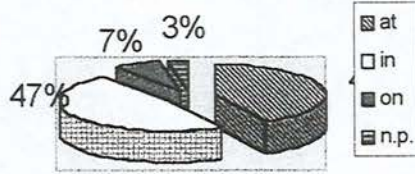


Appendix XI.

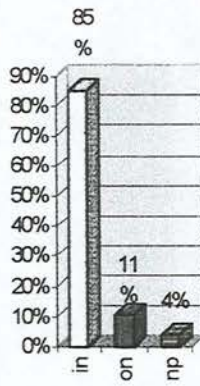
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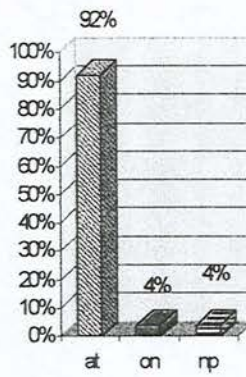
First Year Ss Test-3
(percentages of WP)



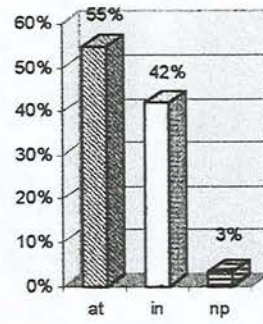
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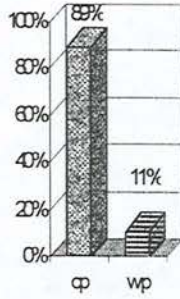


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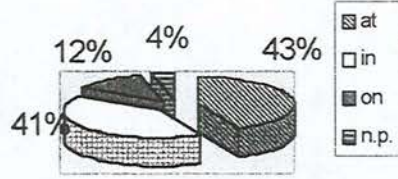


Appendix XII.

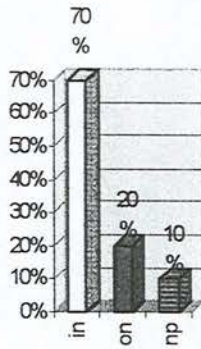
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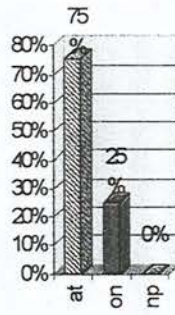
First Year Ss Test-4
(percentages of WP)



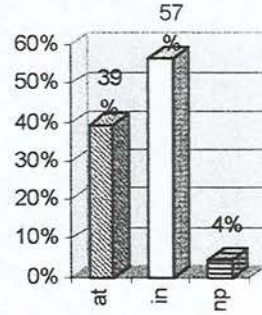
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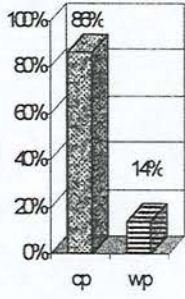


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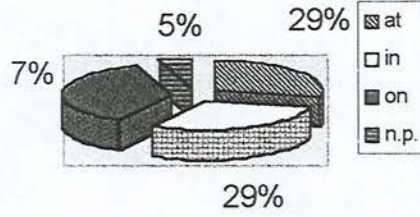


Appendix XIII.

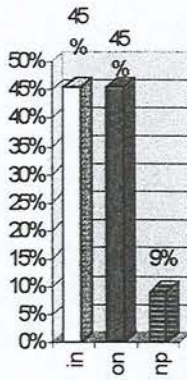
First Year Ss Test-5



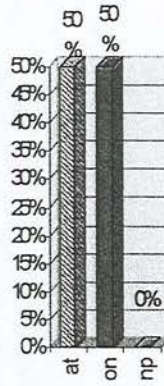
**First Year Ss Test-5
(percentages of WP)**



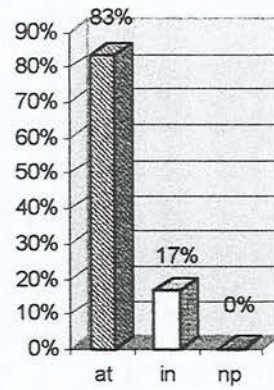
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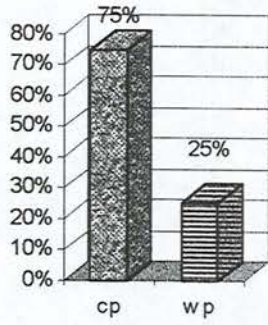


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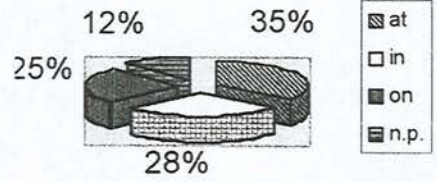


Appendix XIV.

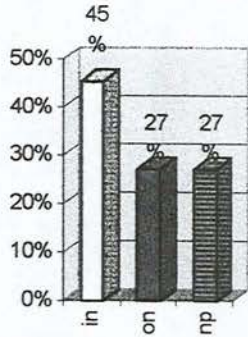
First Year Ss Test-6



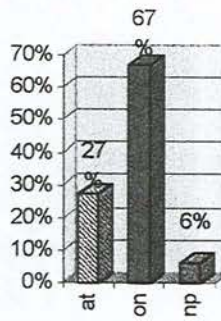
**First Year Ss Test-6
(percentages of WP)**



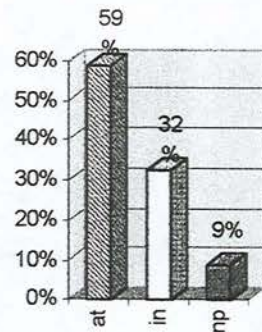
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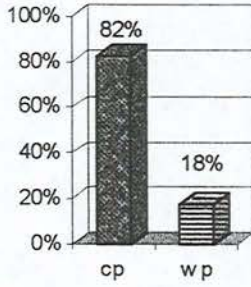


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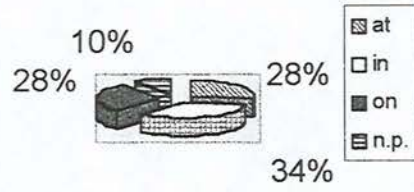


Appendix XV.

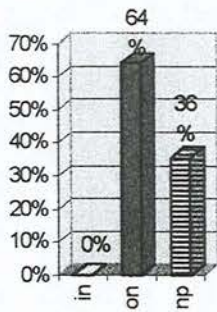
Fourth Year Ss Test-1



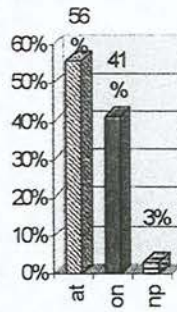
**Fourth Year Ss Test-1
(percentages of WP)**



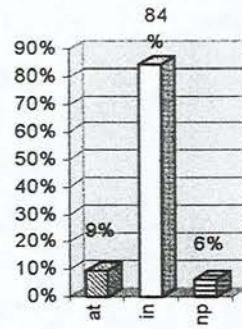
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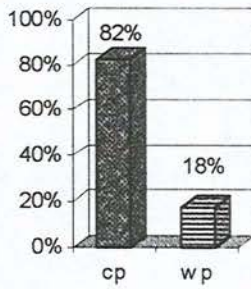


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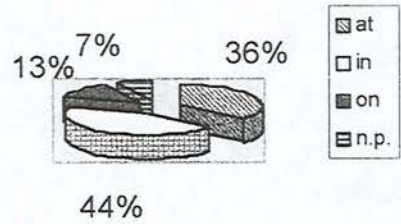


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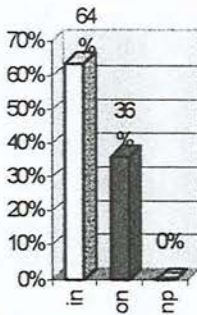
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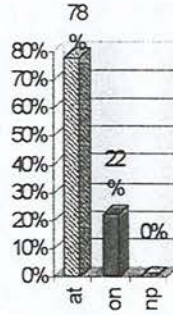
**Fourth Year Ss Test-2
(percentages of WP)**



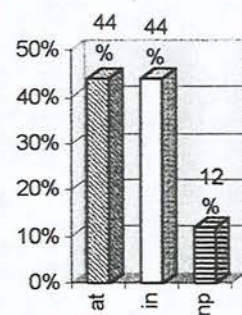
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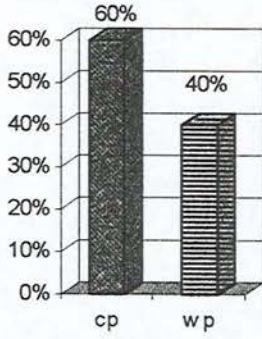


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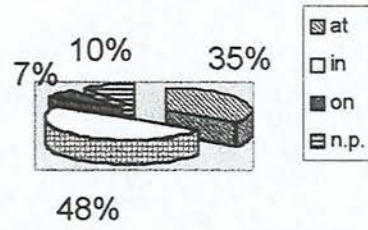


Appendix XVII.

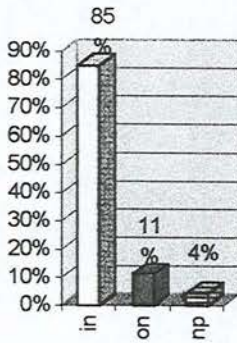
Fourth Year Ss Test-3



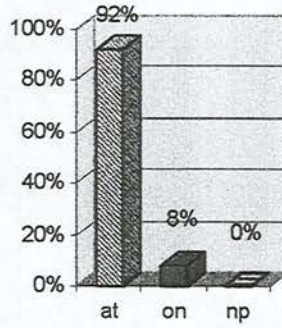
**Fourth Year Ss Test-3
(percentages of WP)**



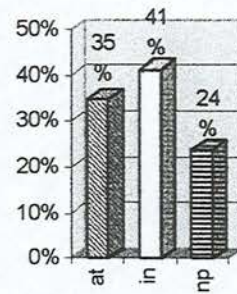
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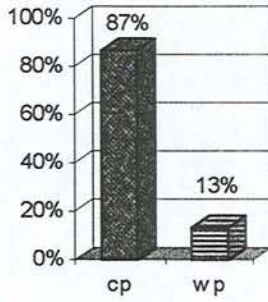


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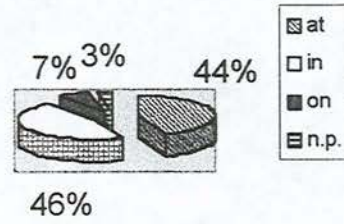


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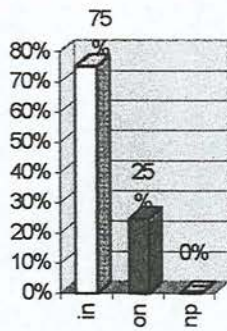
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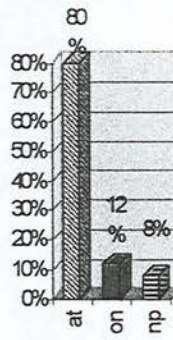
**Fourth Year Ss Test-4
(percentages of WP)**



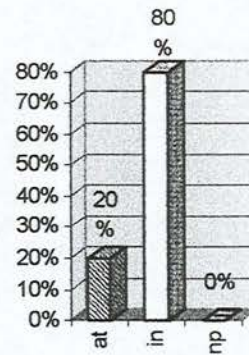
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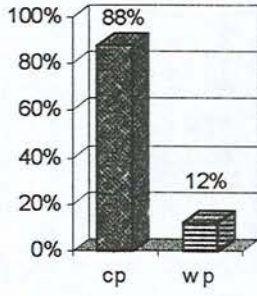


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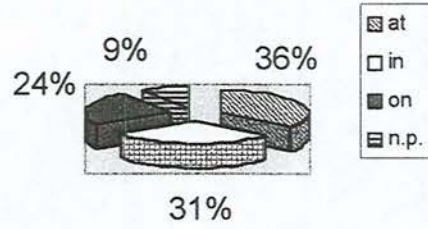


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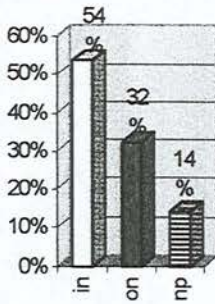
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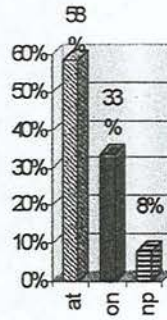
**Fourth Year Ss Test-5
(percentages of WP)**



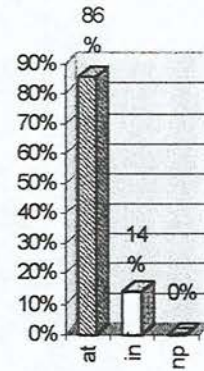
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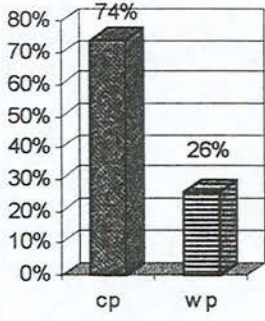


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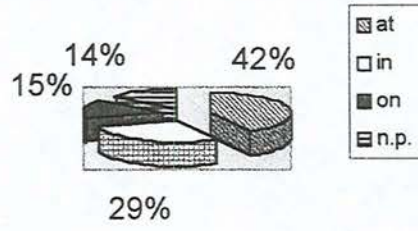


Appendix XX.

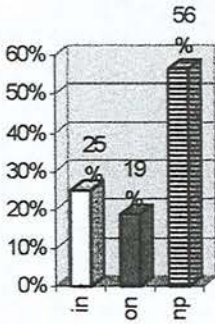
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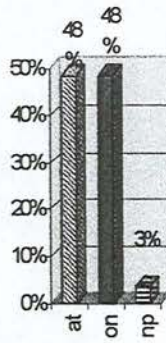
**Fourth Year Ss Test-6
(percentages of WP)**



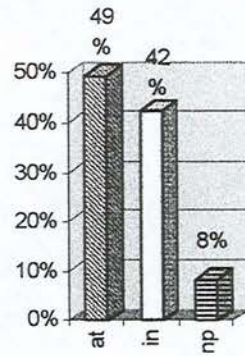
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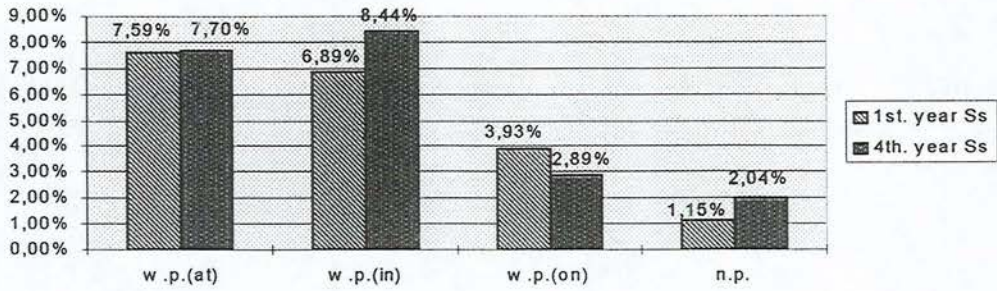
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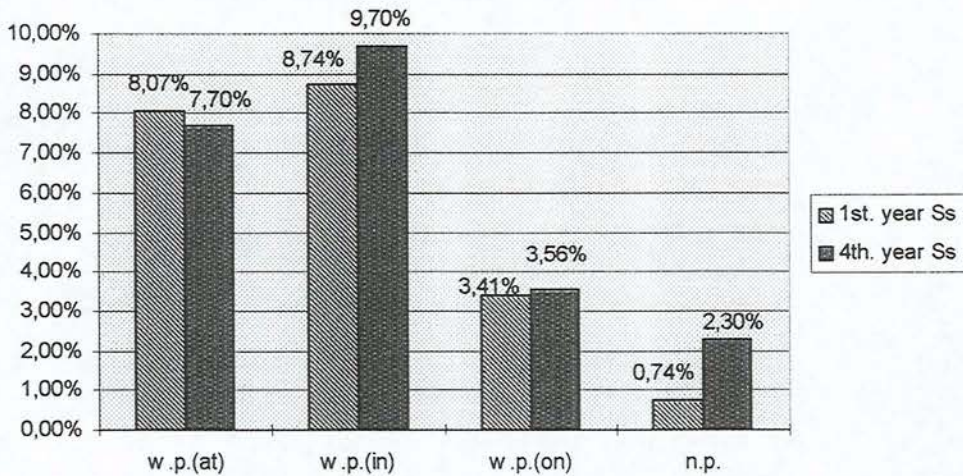
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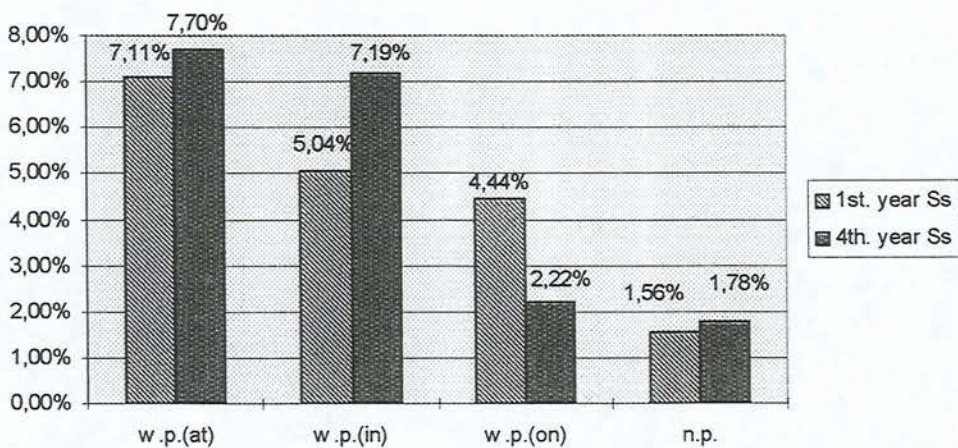
Appendix XXI.



a) The percentages of erroneously used at, in, and on



b) The percentages of erroneously used at, in, and on when they convey space meaning



c) The percentages of erroneously used at, in, and on when they convey time meaning

Appendix XXII.
Sample Test by a First Year Student

TEST I.

Describe the picture by answering the following questions, using the prepositions at, in and on for the necessary connections.

- 1) Where is the doorman? (the door) He is at the door
- 2) Where is the picture? (the wall) It is on the wall
- 3) Where is the flower? (the flowerpot) It is in the flowerpot
- 4) Where is the telephone? (the reception desk) It is on the reception desk
- 5) Where is the customer? (the reception) He is at the reception
- 6) Where is the bag? (the customer's hand) It is in the customer's hand
- 7) Where is the customer's name registered? (the reception list) It is registered on the record
- 8) Where is the man sitting? (the table) He is sitting at the table
- 9) Where are all these men? (the lobby) They are in the lobby

TEST II.

Write a composition about yourself answering the following questions, using the prepositions at, in and on.

- 1) When were you born? (give the year only)
- 2) When is your birthday? (give the day and month)
- 3) When did you begin the university? (the age of)
- 4) When did you first come to school this year? (the opening day of the university)
- 5) When do you have lunch? (noon)
- 6) When are your classes over every day? (the evening)
- 7) When do you go to the cinema? (the weekend)
- 8) When do you have time to sleep properly? (Sunday mornings)
- 9) When will you go your home? (summer)

I was born in 1977 on July 7th I began to university at the age of 20 I first come to school at the opening of the day. I have lunch at noon. My classes over in the evening every day. I go to cinema at the weekend. I have time to sleep on Sunday mornings. I will go my home in summer.

Fill in the blanks by using the prepositions at, in and on.

TEST III.

The girl was very excited because of her first travel to another country. She had been studying computer engineering on METU, and was given a course in England due to her high performance in classes. She was happy and curious at the plane, trying to see Essex on the map, her last arrival point. ~~At~~ London, she changed the plane, and in the hotel, she was finally relaxed. On the entrance of her room, which was on the fifth floor of the building, she sighed with relief. There she had come!...

TEST IV.

He is a very successful businessman despite his young age, and he says that the reason for his success is his self-discipline. He is accustomed to studying regularly; in the morning, he gets up early, at 6:00 o'clock, and works ten hours in a day. He doesn't quit working on Saturdays, and if necessary, he works at night. He had a good career in his early twenties, and became manager at 30. He says that working when on holiday, or even going to office on New Year's day, is a pleasure for him. It is easy to understand how he became that successful within a short period!

Translate the following sentences into English using at, in, and on for the words underlined.

TEST V.

1) Çocuk denizde yüzüyordu.

The child ~~was~~ swimming in the sea

2) Verdiği adreste onu tanıyan kimse yok.

There is no one in the address which he gave

3) Televizyondaki filmi büyük bir dikkatle izliyordu.

He ~~was~~ watching the film carefully on T.V.

4) Onu aradım, ama evde yoktu.

I called him but he ~~wasn't~~ at home.

5) Havada bir çok gaz vardır.

There are kinds of gasses in the air

6) Yollardaki kar ulaşımı etkiledi.

The snow on the road affects the transportation

7) Tepedeki evin manzarası çok güzel.

The scene of the house in the hill is very nice.

8) Bahçede dolaşmak onu rahatlatıyordu.

Wandering in the garden made him relax

9) Kavşakta durmayan arabanın sürücüsüne polis ceza yazdı.

The police gave punishment to the driver who didn't stop at the crossroads

TEST VI.

1) Onu gördüğü anda nasıl davranacağını şaşırdı.

He was mixed at the moment of seeing him

2) Bu gelişinde de onu karşılayamadık.

We couldn't meet him on his last come

3) Yıllık izini Haziran'da kullanacak.

He will spend his leave on June

4) Kitabını üç ayda tamamladı.

He continued his book in 3 months.

5) Yaşgününde bir sürü arkadaşı telefon etti.

A lot of friends phoned him on his birthday.

6) Kahvaltıda beraber diler.

They were together at breakfast.

7) 18. yüzyılda ilginç siyasi gelişmeler oldu.

There were interesting developments on 18. yy.

8) Sanatçı konserin sonunda büyük alkış aldı.

The artists took lots of claps at the end of the concert

9) Ayın beşinde bize de uğrayacaklar.

He will pass by us on the fifth of this month

Appendix XXIII.

Sample Test by a Fourth Year Student

TEST I.

Describe the picture by answering the following questions, using the prepositions at, in and on for the necessary connections.

- 1) Where is the doorman? (the door) He is at the door.
- 2) Where is the picture? (the wall) It is on the wall.
- 3) Where is the flower? (the flowerpot) It's in the flowerpot.
- 4) Where is the telephone? (the reception desk) It's on the reception desk.
- 5) Where is the customer? (the reception) He is at the reception.
- 6) Where is the bag? (the customer's hand) It's in the customer's hand.
- 7) Where is the customer's name registered? (the reception list) It's on the reception list.
- 8) Where is the man sitting? (the table) He is sitting at the table.
- 9) Where are all these men? (the lobby) They are in the lobby.

TEST II.

Write a composition about yourself answering the following questions, using the prepositions at in and on.

- 1) When were you born? (give the year only)
- 2) When is your birthday? (give the day and month)
- 3) When did you begin the university? (the age of)
- 4) When did you first come to school this year? (the opening day of the university)
- 5) When do you have lunch? (noon)
- 6) When are your classes over every day? (the evening)
- 7) When do you go to the cinema? (the weekend)
- 8) When do you have time to sleep properly? (Sunday mornings)
- 9) When will you go your home? (summer)

ST II / I was born in 1978. My birthday is on 5th January.
I began the university at the age of 16. I first came to school this year on the opening day of the university.
I have lunch at noon. My classes are in the evening.
I usually go to the cinema at the weekend. I have time to sleep properly on Sunday mornings. I will go my home in the summer.

Fill in the blanks by using the prepositions at, in and on.

TEST III.

The girl was very excited because of her first travel to another country. She had been studying computer engineering _____ METU, and was given a course in England due to her high performance in classes. She was happy and curious on the plane, trying to see Essex on the map, her last arrival point. In London, she changed the plane, and in the hotel, she was finally relaxed. _____ the entrance of her room, which was on the fifth floor of the building, she sighed with relief. There she had come!...

TEST IV.

He is a very successful businessman despite his young age, and he says that the reason for his success is his self-discipline. He is accustomed to studying regularly; in the morning, he gets up early, at 6:00 o'clock, and works ten hours in a day. He doesn't quit working on Saturdays, and if necessary, he works at night. He had a good career in his early twenties, and became manager in 30. He says that working when on holiday, or even going to office on New Year's day, is a pleasure for him. It is easy to understand how he became that successful within a short period!

Translate the following sentences into English using at, in and on for the words underlined.

TEST V.

- 1) Çocuk denizde yüzüyordu.
The child was swimming in the sea.
- 2) Verdiği adreste onu tanıyan kimse yok.
There is nobody recognizing him at the address that he gave.
- 3) Televizyondaki filmi büyük bir dikkatle izliyordu.
He was carefully watching the film on T.V.
- 4) Onu aradım, ama evde yoktu.
I called her, but she wasn't at home.
- 5) Havada bir çok gaz vardır.
There are a lot of gases in the air.
- 6) Yollardaki kar ulaşımı etkiledi.
The snow on the road affected the transportation.
- 7) Tepedeki evin manzarası çok güzel.
The view of the house on the hill is very beautiful.
- 8) Bahçede dolaşmak onu rahatlatıyordu.
Walking in the garden was making him relaxed.
- 9) Kavşakta durmayan arabanın sürücüsüne polis ceza yazdı.
The police wrote a fine to the driver of the car who didn't stop at the cross-road.

TEST VI.

- 1) Onu gördüğü anda nasıl davranacağını şaşırdı.
She surprised at the moment she saw him.
- 2) Bu gelişinde de onu karşılayamadık.
I couldn't meet her again on her this coming.
- 3) Yıllık izinini Haziran'da kullanacak.
She will use her yearly permission on June.
- 4) Kitabını üç ayda tamamladı.
He completed his book in three months.
- 5) Yaşgününde bir sürü arkadaşı telefon etti.
On her birthday, a lot of friends ~~of her~~ called her.
- 6) Kahvaltıda beraber diler.
They were together at the breakfast.
- 7) 18. yüzyılda ilginç siyasi gelişmeler oldu.
Interesting political developments happened in 18th century.
- 8) Sanatçı konserin sonunda büyük alkış aldı.
~~Every~~ Actor was cheered up by everybody at the end of the concert.
- 9) Ayın beşinde bize de uğrayacaklarmış.
They will ^{also} come to us on fifth ^{day} of the month.