An Analysis of The Students’ Difficulties in using preposition

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Abstract

Preposition is considered as one of the most difficult part of speeches for students to learn. Some studies also showed that students often encountered significant problems in answering question about prepositions in english grammar test. Therefore, this research had the purpose to analyze difficulties faced by the students in using preposition. In order to find out the aim, the preposition test was used as an instrument in this research. It was used all junior high school students class VIII at MTsN Rukoh, Banda Aceh as the population, whereas the students class VIII 1, which were taken randomly, were selected as the sample in this research. The preposition test contained 20 multiple choice question and 10 essay Question. The result of the test showed that the most difficult type of prepositions was preposition of manner, then it was followed by preposition of time (the second most difficult for the students), and preposition of place (the least difficult for the students). Thus, it is suggested that teachers give more practices related to problems with prepositions of manner as the hardest preposition for students to learn while teaching English grammar in classroom.

Key Words : Speaking, Nonlinguistic Problems

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is such a very important thing in a human life for communication. The language is a mean to make self-expression, integration, social adaptation and social control. One of the most famous international languages is English. English is considered the most widely language used around the world. In Indonesia, English has a status as a foreign language that should be mastered by the students. Therefore, it is taught started from elementary (in some schools), junior high school to university level.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Definition of Grammar

In language learning, people will always encounter a learning material namely grammar. It always plays a central role in language learning, therefore learning English language cannot be separated from learning grammar. According
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Richards (2007, P.125) grammar is a description of the structure of language and the way in which linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language.

Harmer (2006 p.12) stated that grammar is the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can combine into sentences in that language. From this definition, it seems that grammar plays an important role in combining units of language to form sentences. People will agree that grammar is too important to be ignored, and without a good knowledge in grammar, students’ language development will be severely constrained. Thomson (2009, p. 3) said “Grammar is a description of certain organizing aspects of a particular language that includes phonological, morphological and syntactic points”.

Furthermore, grammar is a part of language and an important element in English. It is one of language components besides pronunciation, spelling and vocabulary. Learning grammar becomes a prerequisite step before learning how to practice the language. Without it grammar, it is difficult to make comprehensive sentences. As cited by Harmer (1999, p.1) grammar is partly the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language. Traditionally, grammar has been concerned almost exclusively with analysis at the level of sentences. Thus a grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language’s sentences are formed.

From the statements above, it can be concluded that grammar is a study about the rule of word formation into a manageable and understandable sentences. It is essential to avoid misunderstanding when student use language to communicate. By studying grammar of the target language without neglecting to other components, the learners will understand the language either oral or written.

Grammar refers to a science used to study the change of word forms and arrangements. The term grammar will be used in this context to refer to a device that tells the reader how to construct an infinite number of correct sentences of a language and no incorrect ones. All of them have some meanings and aims. Basically, grammar is the rules to combine the words or phrases together to be sentences in an appropriate way.

From the statements above, it can be concluded that grammar is a study about the rule of word formation into a manageable and understandable sentences. It is essential to avoid misunderstanding when student use language to communicate. By studying grammar of the target language without neglecting to other components, the learners will understand the language either oral or written.

2.2 Definitions of Preposition

Preposition is a part of grammar, meaning that learning grammar also learn preposition. Preposition is a word or a group of words often placed before noun or pronoun to indicate place, direction, time and manner. In relation to structure,
preposition is one part of speech, while part of speech is one of the structure elements. In this case, the function of structure is to make the sentence correct.

Prepositions are words used as the signal in which a noun is coming because they happen before a noun phrase, and together they will form a prepositional phrase. They add that prepositions are put together with noun and can be placed before or after noun and connect their noun phrase object to some other words or phrase in a sentence by adding information provided by adverb of place time, or manner. Accordingly, each preposition which will be used is based on what information exist in the sentence.

Prepositions are linking words that present prepositional phrases because a prepositional is generally followed by a noun phrases. So preposition can also be seen as linking words that link other structures with noun phrases. In English, preposition indicates the relationship between the following noun phrase and a preceding noun phrase.

Prepositions as we have learned in our earlier English studies are very important to the writing and to the speaking of good English. Holt and Wishon (2000, p. 12) stated that The preposition is the link that connects the words and phrases of a sentence in various special relationships. It means, the preposition has the function of connecting a noun or a pronoun to another word, usually a noun, verb or adjective.

Furthermore, Treanor (2007, p. 28) defined that preposition is word that shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun and other word in the sentence expression (p. 28). In other words, prepositions are always followed by nouns (or pronouns). They are connective words that show the relationship between the nouns following them and one of the basic sentence elements: subject, verb, object, or complement. They usually indicate relationship, such as position, place, direction, time, manner, possession, and condition, between their objects and other parts of the sentence.

Prepositions are not only capable of forming prepositional phrases with nominal but also capable of following nouns, adjectives, and verbs, forming a large number of set phrases and verbal phrases.

Preposition is classified as part of speech in traditional grammar. However, preposition as well as conjunction differ from other parts of speech that each is composed of a small class of words that have no formal characteristics endings: each signals syntactic structures that function as one of the other parts of speech.

2.3 The Function of Prepositions

The preposition has the function of connecting a noun or pronoun to another word, usually a noun, verb or adjective. The prepositions is used to convey effective information, to determine the clarity of the meaning of sentences. Furthermore it can also complement the information that was conveyed from the sentences.

The preposition is the link which connects the words and phrases of a sentence in various special relationships (Wishon and Burks, 1980, p. A-12). Prepositions are very important to the writing and to the speaking of good English. Writing will be bad without using preposition appropriately. For example: I sit between all of the students. The usage of preposition “between” is inappropriate.

In this sentence, preposition "between" is used for two things or persons. The appropriate preposition is "among" since among is used for more than two
things or persons. So, the correct sentence should be: I sit among the students. Prepositions are always followed by nouns (or pronoun). They are connective words that show relationship between the nouns following them and one of the basic sentence elements: subject, verb, object, or complement.

They usually indicate relationships, such as place, direction, time, manner, agent, possession, and condition, between their object and other parts of the sentence (Wishon and Burks, p. 1980-288). Logically, preposition has very important function in writing of a good paragraph because the inappropriate usage of preposition will destroy the relationship among the sentence element.

3. METHODS

Research design means a strategy for managing the background of research until the writer collected the validity of data that is suitable to characteristic of variables and the aim of study. Burns and Grove (2001, p.27) states that designing a study to help writer to plan and to implement the study in a way that is used to help them obtain the intended results. Therefore, it increases the chances of obtaining information that could be associated with the real situation. Furthermore, it means that the research design is the writer’s overall plan for obtaining answers to the research questions guiding the study.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

This study was aimed at investigating difficulties faced by students in using prepositions. In order to get the data of this study, the writer conducted a research at MTsNRukoh, Banda Aceh. The technique which was used in collecting data was a test. It consisted of 20 multiple choice and 10 essay questions. The population used was all students class VIII at MTsNRukoh, Banda. Each class consisted of 30 students, so there 150 students used as the population in this study. In choosing the sample, it was used a random sampling technique. Class VIII 1 at MTsNRukoh was determined as the sample in this study based on the writer’s interview to the teacher at that school who said that the students got difficulties in using prepositions before conducting the research. In addition, the problem was they studied about prepositions.

4.2 Discussion

In language learning, people will always encounter a learning material, namely grammar. It always plays a central role in the language learning, therefore learning English language cannot be separated from learning grammar. Grammar is the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language. From this definition, it seems that grammar plays an important role in combining units of language to form sentences. People will agree that grammar is too important to be ignored, and without a good knowledge in grammar, students’ language development will be severely constrained. Furthermore, grammar is a part of language and an important element in English. It is one of language components beside pronunciation, spelling and vocabulary. Learning grammar becomes a prerequisite step before learning how to practice the language. Without it grammar, it is difficult to make comprehensive sentences. Preposition of one of the grammatical...
aspects of any language which is considered the most difficult one for the students to master.

In this study, the writer analyzed students’ difficulties in using prepositions. This study was conducted in order to answer the research problems about students’ difficulties in using prepositions and whether or not the students will get the higher score if they are taught in understanding prepositions. Based on the calculation of the result test that consists one class, the writer concluded that most of students have difficulties in using prepositions. From the result of the test, it was found that preposition of manner is the most difficult type of preposition for the students. Then, it was followed by preposition of time as the second most difficult type of preposition for the students. Preposition of place was the least difficult type of preposition for the students.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

After finishing this research which is entitled “An Analysis of The Students’ Difficulties in Using Prepositions of Second Grade Students at MTsN Rukoh in The Academic Year of 2017/2018”, the writer can draw some conclusions. The conclusion are based on the result of the test about the students’ difficulties of using prepositions

REFERENCES