

**Difficulties that Jordanian Undergraduate Students
Encounter when Translating English Prepositions**

الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلبة البكالوريوس الأردنيون في ترجمة حروف الجر باللغة
الإنجليزية

Prepared by

Asmaa' Suleiman Al-Odat

Supervised by

Assistant Professor Majid Abdulatif

**This Thesis is Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the M.A Degree in English Language and
Literature**

**Middle East University
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Department of English Language and Literature**

Amman, Jordan

August, 2015

Authorization

I, Asmaa' Suleiman Al-Odat, authorize Middle East University to provide libraries, organizations and even persons with copies of my thesis when required.

Name: Asmaa' Suleiman Al-Odat.

Signature: 

Date: 30th August, 2015.

Thesis Committee Decision

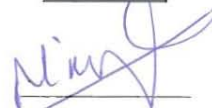
This thesis titled 'Difficulties that Jordanian Undergraduate Students Encounter when Translating English Prepositions' was successfully defended and approved on 30th August, 2015.

Thesis Committee

Signature

Dr. Majid Abdulatif

Supervisor



Dr. Norma Al-Zayed

Member and the Chair



Dr. Ibrahim Abu Shhab

External Examiner



Acknowledgment

First of all, praise is due to Almighty Allah for giving me strength and ability to complete this study.

I wish to express my thanks to my supervisor Dr. Majid Abdulatif for his encouragement and support. Special appreciation is offered to my professors who taught and guided me during my study, prof. Zakaria Abu Hamdia, prof. Tawfiq Ibrahim, Dr. Fatima Ja'far.

Sincere thanks are offered to my examination committee members, Dr. Norma Al-Zayed and Dr. Ibrahim Abu Shhab for their interest in this study, valuable comments, suggestions and encouragement.

With a deep sense of gratitude, I wish to express my sincere thanks to my parents and brothers Osama, Baker, Ammar and Saif for their kind and generous support and help. Sincere thanks are extended to my friends Fidaa', Wijdan, Riham, Nazek and Noor.

Dedication

To my father

for his endless support and encouragement.

Table of Contents		
	Subjects	Page
	Authorization	ii
	Thesis Committee Decision	iii
	Acknowledgment	iv
	Dedication	v
	Table of Contents	vi
	List of Tables	x
	List of Appendices	xii
	English Abstract	xiii
	Arabic Abstract	xv
Chapter One	Introduction	1
1.0	Background of the Study	1
1.1	Statement of the Problem	4
1.2	Objectives of the Study	4
1.3	Questions of the Study	5
1.4	Significance of the Study	5
1.5	Limits of the Study	6

1.6	Limitations of the Study	6
1.7	Definition of Terms	6
Chapter Two	Review of Related Literature	8
2.0	Introduction	8
2.1	Theoretical Studies Related to Translation	8
2.2	Theoretical Literature Related to Prepositions	10
2.3	Empirical Studies Related to Prepositions	14
Chapter Three	Methods and Procedures	26
3.0	Introduction	26
3.1	Population and Sample of the Study	26
3.2	Instruments of the Study	27
3.3	Translation Test	27
3.4	Validity of the Test	28
3.5	Reliability of the Test	29

3.6	Unstructured Interviews	29
3.7	Analysis of the Data	30
3.8	Procedures of the Study	30
Chapter Four	Results of the Study	32
4.0	Introduction	32
4.1	Results Related to the Questions (1) and (2) of the Study	32
4.2	Results of Interviewing the Professors	51
4.3	The Results Related to the First Question in the Interviews	52
4.4	The Results Related to the Second Question in the Interviews	52
4.5	The results related to the Third Question in the Interviews	54
Chapter Five	Discussion of the Results	56
5.0	Introduction	56
5.1	Summary of Results Related to the Test	56
5.2	Conclusions	59
5.3	Recommendations	60

5.4	Suggestions for Future Research	61
	References	62
	Appendices	67

List of Tables		
Number	Title	Page
Table 1	Background of the participants	27
Table 2	Participants' Translation Performance on the Test of Prepositions	35
Table 3	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 1	36
Table 4	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 2	37
Table 5	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 3	38
Table 6	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 4	38
Table 7	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 5	39
Table 8	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 6	40
Table 9	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 7	41
Table 10	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 8	42
Table 11	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 9	42
Table 12	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 10	43
Table 13	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 11	44
Table 14	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 12	45

Table 15	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 13	45
Table 16	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 14	46
Table 17	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 15	47
Table 18	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 16	48
Table 19	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 17	49
Table 20	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 18	49
Table 21	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 19	50
Table 22	Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 20	51

List of Appendices

Appendix	Title	Page
Appendix 1	Demographic Background of the Subjects	66
Appendix 2	Translation Test	67
Appendix 3	Model Translation of the Test	69
Appendix 4	Questions of Interviews	72
Appendix 5	Panel of Experts and Validation Committee	73
Appendix 6	The Validation Letter	74

Abstract

Difficulties that Jordanian Undergraduate Students Encounter when Translating English Prepositions

By

Asmaa' Suleiman Al-Odat

Supervisor

Assistant Professor Majid Abdulatif

This study aimed at investigating the difficulties that Jordanian undergraduate students encounter when translating English prepositions.

Particularly, it aimed at answering the following questions:

1. What are the difficulties that English language undergraduate students encounter when translating English prepositions?
2. What are the causes behind these difficulties?
3. What solutions can be made to ease these difficulties?

To achieve the goals of this study, the researcher selected a sample comprised 20 undergraduate students who were enrolled in the B.A programme at Middle East University during the second semester 2014/2015. The researcher designed a translation test that consisted of 20

items. The items were extracted from different sites on the internet with some modifications.

BA students were asked to translate the underlined items which include the prepositions. The items were translated into Arabic. The researcher also conducted interviews with experts in the field of translation to compile more information.

The results of the study revealed that undergraduate students face different kinds of difficulties when translating English prepositions, including mistranslations, comprehension-related errors. The results of study also revealed that the lack of knowledge about the different meanings of the prepositions and their multiple usages, unfamiliarity with the prepositions and not taking the context into consideration are the causes behind these difficulties. The results also revealed that the lack of courses in translation and poor researching skills might stand behind these difficulties. The study recommended offering the students courses in translation.

Key words: Translation, Prepositions.

ملخص الدراسة

الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلبة البكالوريوس الأردنيون في ترجمة حروف الجر باللغة

الإنجليزية

إعداد

أسماء سليمان العودات

إشراف

الأستاذ المساعد ماجد عبد اللطيف

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلبة البكالوريوس الأردنيون في ترجمة

حروف الجر باللغة الانجليزية وهدفت تحديداً إلى الإجابة عن الأسئلة الآتية:

١. ما الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلبة البكالوريوس لدى ترجمة حروف الجر باللغة

الإنجليزية؟

٢. ما الأسباب التي تؤدي إلى هذه الصعوبات؟

٣. ما الحلول التي يمكن تقديمها لتخطي هذه الصعوبات؟

وللإجابة عن هذه الأسئلة، قامت الباحثة باختيار عينة تكونت من ٢٠ طالبا من طلاب برنامج

البكالوريوس تم اختيارهم من جامعة الشرق الأوسط خلال الفصل الدراسي الثاني

2014-2015. وقامت الباحثة بتصميم امتحان ترجمة يتكون من ٢٠ من أشباه الجمل تتضمن

حروف الجر. تم اقتباس أشباه الجمل من مواقع مختلفة من الانترنت مع إجراء بعض التعديلات.

وطلب من طلاب البكالوريوس ترجمة أشباه الجمل التي تحتوي على حروف الجر. تمت ترجمة أشباه الجمل إلى اللغة العربية. كما قامت الباحثة بإجراء مقابلات مع خبراء في مجال الترجمة للحصول على كم أكبر من المعلومات.

أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن الطلاب البكالوريوس يواجهون العديد من الصعوبات عند ترجمة حروف الجر. وهذه الصعوبات تتضمن الترجمات الخاطئة، والأخطاء ذات الصلة بالفهم.

وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة أيضا " أن نقص المعرفة بالمعاني المختلفة لحروف الجر واستخداماتها المتعددة، وعدم الإلمام بهذه الحروف وعدم أخذ السياق بعين الاعتبار هي الأسباب التي تؤدي إلى هذه الصعوبات. كما أظهرت النتائج أن نقص المساقات المتعلقة بالترجمة وضعف مهارات البحث قد تقف وراء هذه الصعوبات. وأوصت الدراسة بتزويد الطلاب بمساقات في الترجمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الترجمة، حروف الجر.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Background of the Study

According to Newmark (1988), translation is transferring the meaning from one language into another including words, structures, styles, functions, attitudes and form. It is recreating the source text taking into consideration accuracy and equivalency while the message is conveyed into another language.

The purpose of translation is communication. Human beings use language as the most important means of communication. Translation has an essential role in conveying the messages of different languages.

When students translate from English into Arabic and vice versa, they almost face difficulties since English and Arabic are two different languages and there are different rules for them. Students encounter many difficulties in mastering English, such as difficulties in structure, vocabulary, meaning, word formation and so on. One of these difficulties can be related to prepositions.

Prepositions are important linkers within the parts of speech. They are essential in human communication since they help in promoting self-

presentation. The inappropriate use of prepositions alters the intended message and distorts the text. Therefore, translators, students and teachers need to be familiar with prepositions so that their translations can be accurate.

This study is designed to identify the difficulties concerning prepositions, which students face when translating them from English into Arabic.

English prepositions were defined by many scholars. Hamdallah and Tushyeh(1993) indicate that: "prepositions are function words that link words, phrases, or clauses to other words in the sentence. They are not inflected, expressing such ideas as location, destination, direction of motion, time, manner, and so on." (p.182). They state that English prepositions can express a relation between two grammatical elements, the prepositional complement and the object. For example in the sentence *She put the sweater on her shoulder*, the complement of the preposition, *her shoulder* and the object, *the sweater* have a relation with each other. They are preceded by a noun, a verb or an adjective and they can never stand by themselves; they get their meanings through their usage in contexts.

Learning English prepositions is considered difficult since prepositions generally have multiple meanings as indicated by Koffi (2010). He states that most of prepositions in English have multiple meanings depending on the context. So, determining the prepositional meanings pose a challenge to learners.

Maalej (2010) talks about the sources of difficulty in learning English prepositions. He states that the different nature of Arabic and English makes them difficult. Teachers also don't teach prepositions correctly. An Arabic preposition can be expressed in more than one English preposition which is another source of difficulty. Moreover, interference from the native language as a result of literal translation causes a difficulty.

Hendricks (2010) offers the following example to explain that learning English prepositions is difficult: the prepositions at, on, and in are used to express time. The same prepositions also are used to express place and location. So, selecting a preposition becomes a matter of guesswork. She also states that there are unhelpful rules about prepositions such as: a sentence doesn't end with a preposition. She adds that the uncertainty about choosing preposition is found even in differences within British and American English. For example, in British and South African English it is common to say "filling in a form" whereas in American English they say "filling out a form". She suggests that English learners should rely on wide reading, memorization, and dictionaries to learn prepositions. She also recommends applying "consciousness-raising" which is a technique that focuses on correct grammatical forms by highlighting them in some ways.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Translation studies are popular in many Jordanian and Arab academic institutions. However; there are still many difficulties that English language students encounter in translation. One of them is related to prepositions which cause major problem in translation from English into Arabic and vice versa .The accurate meanings of some of them are sometimes difficult to determine by the translator .Failure to produce the correct preposition in the right context will lead to wrong or ineffective translation.

Therefore, the researcher decided to focus on the difficulties that undergraduate students face when translating English prepositions.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The study aimed at:

- 1- Investigating the difficulties that undergraduate students face when translating English prepositions.
- 2- Investigating the reasons behind these difficulties.
- 3- Giving solutions to ease them.

1.3 Questions of the Study

1. What are the difficulties that undergraduate students encounter when translating English prepositions?
2. What are the causes behind these difficulties?
3. What solutions can be made to ease these difficulties?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Many studies have been conducted on prepositions, difficulties concerning prepositions, prepositions translatability and the strategies for their translation. However; this study is limited to the prepositions which according to the researcher's experience are unfamiliar and confusing to the students. The previous studies -to the best knowledge of the researcher- haven't dealt with them all in one study. This study particularly concentrated on the prepositions: over, beyond, into, across and onto.

This study aims to add another perspective to the literature regarding English prepositions. Thus, it may benefit students of translation, translators, teachers of translation and curriculum developers and it may fill a gap in literature.

1.5 Limits of the Study

This study was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2014-2015.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

This study was applied on undergraduate students majoring in English language and literature at Middle East University.

Results cannot be generalized beyond the sample and the instruments used in this study.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Theoretical Definition of Terms

Translation is defined in Merriam Webster dictionary as the act or process of changing texts from one language into another.

Prepositions are defined in Merriam Webster dictionary as a group of words that are used with nouns, pronouns, or noun phrases to show direction, location, or time, or to introduce an object.

Operational Definition of Terms

Translation: it is conveying the message from one language into another taking into consideration the constraints of the target language.

Prepositions: they are linkers that combine nouns or pronouns with other words within sentences and indicate different relationships.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of theoretical and empirical literature. The theoretical part includes literature related to translation. It also includes literature related to English prepositions including their definition, classifications, characteristics, significance, and sources of difficulty related to them. On the empirical part, the empirical literature deals with empirical studies that highlight the difficulties in using prepositions whether in the Arab countries or in the worldwide, at large.

2.2 Theoretical Literature Related to Translation

There is no agreement among scholars on the definition of translation, its types, theories, and strategies....etc.

Newmark (1988) states that translation "is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text"(p.5). He also emphasizes the importance of the communicative approach which concentrates on the ideas and renders the original message accurately, clearly and briefly.

Nida (1964) indicates that "in order to achieve an equivalent response, the translation should make sense; convey the spirit and the manner of the original; have natural and easy form of expressions"

(p.164).He also introduces two types of equivalence in translation: formal and dynamic. Dynamic is "the closest natural equivalent to the source language message". Formal equivalent " is basically source-oriented: that is, it is designed to reveal as much as possible the form and content of the original message" (p. 166).

Catford (1965) defines translation as "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)" (p.20).

Translation as a concept is classified by Jakobson (1987) into three major types:

1. Intralingual translation or rewording: the interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.
2. Interlingual translation or translation proper: the interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.
3. Intersemiotic translation or transmutation: the interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems (p.429).

Nida and Taber (2003) state that "translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style " (p.12).

2.1 Theoretical Studies Related to Prepositions

Hattab (2012) defines prepositions as short words that link certain components to give specific meanings. She indicates that prepositions are essential to offer the meaning adequately and have important role in the mutual understanding among speakers. She states that prepositions pose a difficulty in translation even for the advanced learners since there are differences regarding their uses between the mother tongue and the learned language. She explains the problems of using and translating them as follows: First, some prepositions have more than one use, so they express more than one meaning. Therefore they are confusing. Second, some prepositions are followed by verbs and some are followed by gerunds or other components. Third, sometimes there is no one to one translation. So, it is difficult to give the exact meaning. According to Hattab prepositions have syntactic and semantic classification. She indicates that the semantic relations include: spatial relations, temporal relations, comparison, content, agent, instrument, cause, reference and functional relations.

Dunstan(2003) indicates that "prepositions express a relationship of meaning between two parts of a sentence, often between two noun phrases, usually a relation of space or time" (p.14). He states that prepositions consist of just one word such as: about, down, for, from, in, of, on, through,

to, under, and with, or multi-word such as: ahead of, instead of, as far as, by means of, and on behalf of. He indicates that prepositions are combined to noun phrases to form prepositional phrases which modify nouns or verbs as in the examples: "Over the river and through the woods. To grandmother's house we go"(p.14).

According to Brown (2003) the function of a preposition "is to connect a noun or pronoun (called the object of the preposition) to another word in a sentence. It also shows how that noun or pronoun (its object) is related to the other word"(p. 570). He states that a preposition can't stand alone; it must always be within a phrase which is called a prepositional phrase. He states that prepositions indicate relationships of direction, location, time and other relationships.

According to Alexander (1988) prepositions can express the following relationships: space, time, cause, and means as in the examples:" *We ran across the field. The plane landed at 4: 25 precisely. Travel is cheap for us because of the strength of the dollar. You unlock the door by turning the key to the right* (p. 144).

Hansard (2012) classifies prepositions into prepositions of direction and prepositions of location. He states that "prepositions of location appear with verbs, describing states or conditions, especially be, prepositions of direction appear with verbs of motion." (p. 1).

Bennet (1975) offers some features of prepositions such as: First, a preposition is combined with a noun which is called the object of the preposition. Second, there is a grammatical relationship between the complement phrase of a preposition and another word or phrase in the context, made by the preposition. There is also semantic relationship made by a preposition that can be spatial, temporal or logical. Third, particular grammatical properties for the complement of a preposition are determined by the preposition. Fourth, prepositions are non-inflecting that is; they do not have different forms for different tenses, cases, genders, etc.

Zughoul (1979) classifies prepositions into: case, lexical, and unit prepositions. He talks about the reasons that make English prepositions difficult to learn by Arab learners. According to Zughoul the areas of difficulty in learning English prepositions to nonnative speakers include:

the large number of possible meanings for many prepositions, which change according to the context in which they are used; the lack of a written guide to usage; and, for native Arabic speakers, the commonly-used grammar-translation method of instruction and native language interference (p.24-29).

Similarly, Takahaski (1969) states that English speakers, including teachers, can't give any logical explanation or clear conceptual framework for the occurrence or usage of English prepositions. So, understanding the

functions and the usages of English prepositions becomes one of the most difficult problems encountered by a student who learn English as a second language.

Gass (1978) also indicates that prepositions pose a major difficulty for EFL (English as a foreign language) learners due to the fact that prepositions are often highly polysemous and, represent highly conceptual ontological category. Learners often make decisions about which prepositions to use. Thus, prepositions usage is often challenging and forms an obstacle in achieving grammatical fluency and accuracy for the EFL learners. Also, prepositions are difficult because of the cross linguistics differences between Arabic and English prepositional systems.

Scott and Tucker (1974) mention that English and Arabic prepositions rarely have a one to one correspondence. They comment on the errors made by Arab learners; they state that "Arab EFL learners learn the semantic meaning of the English lexical prepositions before they learn all the restrictions on their usage".

(cited in Hamdallah and Tushyeh, 1993, p.186).

Kharma and Hajjaj (1997) talk about learning English prepositions by Arab students. They believe that

the basic and most common sense of each English

preposition is presented to the learners first, and then

other uses are added later. The student at once equates this first meaning with an Arabic preposition, and develops a strong tendency to use that equation all the time. (p. 76).

2.3 Empirical Studies Related to Prepositions

Hendrickson (1976) aimed to investigate the most frequent communicative and linguistic errors in the written compositions of learners of English at the Ohio State University, and the influence of two types of direct teacher correction on the students' writing proficiency. Twenty-four students aged between 18-45 years old wrote picture story descriptions in English once a week for six weeks respectively and their errors were corrected according to assigned treatment. The results showed that the most communicative errors occurred due to inadequate lexical knowledge, misuse of prepositions and pronouns, and misspelled words. Most linguistic errors were committed due to inappropriate lexical choice, misuse and omission of prepositions, misspelled words, lack of subject-verb agreement, and wrong word order. The results also found that students' writing proficiency was not influenced by error correction-treatment.

khalil (1989) investigated the difficulties related to prepositions and prepositional phrases which Arab translators faced when translating from Arabic into English or vice versa .The researcher examined a number of works and texts in both languages translated by professional translators and

postgraduate students of translation at Yarmouk University .The results revealed that the translators and the students were unable to give the right meanings for the prepositions since they translated out of context. They committed errors such as misusing the right prepositions and deletion.

Tzung-yu (1993) aimed to identify the difficulties that Taiwanese college students encountered when dealing with technical texts in English and to suggest helpful techniques to help them overcome such difficulties.

Information was gathered from students in freshman English classes in Taiwan and from previous research. The results indicated that there are three essential areas of difficulty: First, the frequent use of preposition; students were confused when an English preposition with multiple meanings is used with a marker in Chinese that is similar to the genitive case. Second, the use of a relative clause that interrupts the subject-verb-object sequence of an independent clause, particularly in the long sentences. Third, inability to look at the English phrase as a whole unit and look to the words individually. To help students overpass such difficulties, two techniques were recommended. The first one was the phrase structure approach which helped students become familiar with the syntactic rules and practice them. The second helped them identify and translate specific structures in short passages about different topics.

Othman (1996) investigated the translatability of prepositions from Arabic into English and vice versa. He identified the most frequent mistakes committed by M.A. students of translation when using and translating prepositions. A sample of fourteen students in the English department at Yarmouk University answered two tests regarding prepositions. The findings of the study revealed that prepositions are problematic to the students; students had many difficulties such as inability to preserve the level of formality or informality of some prepositions in both languages and the students didn't take the context into consideration while translating in both languages. The study highlighted the importance of the context in translating prepositions which determine the meanings of prepositions.

Hashim (1996) aimed at explaining the most common types of syntactic errors that native Arabic learners commit in learning English as a foreign language. To achieve the goal, the researcher depended on a review of research to discuss the errors. The errors were identified and explained. They include: verbal errors (use of tense, phase, aspect, voice, verb formation, concord, finite and non-finite verbs), relative clauses (interlingual and intralingual errors, structural misrepresentation, simplification), adverbial clauses (comparison, purpose, result, concession, manner), sentence structure, articles (definite and indefinite), prepositions (deletion,

substitution, redundancy), and conjunctions. It was found that most common errors were attributed to the interference from the native language, since the learners applied the strategies in their first-language to English syntactic structures.

Al-Azzam (2003) investigated the translatability of the baa' from Arabic into English in light of the strategies that are used to translate it .She also identified the problems concerning the translation of the baa' in order to solve them. The researcher reviewed examples containing the baa'. A comparison was made between the Arabic prepositions in general and the baa' in particular, and then between the baa' and the English prepositions. The results revealed that certain similarities exist between the two systems with regard to meanings and functions that prepositions in both languages express. It was concluded that the baa' is translatable from Arabic into English equivalently.

Hasbún (2007) investigated the most frequent grammatical errors committed by 159 EFL students who were Spanish native speakers at the University of Costa Rica. The collected data comprised eight groups of writing samples which were part of the regular course activities. They were evaluated, and the errors were detected and classified. Results showed that the common errors among beginners were: subject omission, subject verb

agreement and negative forms. Moreover, the most frequent errors among levels were: the use of articles, prepositions, and incorrect verb forms.

Al-Marrani (2009) conducted a study which aimed to compare and contrast the subsystems of the prepositions in Arabic and English regarding their uses, function and meanings to find the major similarities and differences between the two languages and the errors that may be committed by the learners. The researcher collected data about Arabic and English prepositions from some Arabic and English grammar books. The researcher described and analyzed the function of prepositions in English and Arabic, the use and meanings of prepositions in both languages. The results revealed that there are similarities and differences between the two subsystems of the prepositions. The similarities between them make learning a foreign language easy which is called positive transfer, while the differences make it difficult and cause a lot of mistakes which is called negative transfer or interference. The study has pedagogical implications for teaching English prepositions and helping teachers identify learners' errors in using the prepositions and reduce them.

Tahaine (2010) conducted a study which aimed at identifying the kinds of errors made by EFL students in the use of prepositions and the source of such errors. Data were collected from compositions of a random sample of 162 students. The compositions were written by Jordanian first, second and

third year university EFL students. Results revealed that the students committed transfer errors and overgeneralization. Mother tongue interference was the major source of EFL learners' errors. The study showed that Arab Jordanian EFL students use the proper prepositions if equivalents are used in their mother tongue language , select the improper prepositions if equivalents are not used in their mother tongue , omit prepositions if equivalents are not required in their mother tongue and add prepositions if equivalents are required in their mother tongue.

Najim (2010) identified the errors committed by the upper intermediate learners at Diyala University when using the English prepositions at, in, and on. A sample of 80 students in the English department answered a test on the prepositions. The findings showed that the students committed three types of errors: adding an unnecessary preposition, deleting a required preposition and using a wrong preposition. The results revealed that these errors stem from the interference of the learners' mother tongue.

Temime (2010) investigated the transfer of prepositions from standard Arabic into English by Algerian learners. To achieve the objective, a sample of thirty students in their third year in the English Department at Mentouri University answered a test on prepositions. Results indicated that Algerian learners transfer whether positively or negatively from standard Arabic, French and Algerian Arabic.

Taeha and Wonho (2010) investigated the errors of prepositional verbs made by 416 Korean university students. The data consisted of written essays for the students. The errors were detected and classified into: preposition omission, using wrong prepositions, preposition addition, disordering and others. The results indicated that students were unable to differentiate between a transitive verb and the same verb used as a prepositional verb. They were unable to differentiate between transitive and intransitive verbs which lead to errors such as preposition omission and preposition addition. Also using wrong prepositions was a common error among students. The percentage of the errors related to prepositional verbs was 18%.

Krulj (2011) investigated the misuse of English prepositions in professional medical texts by scientist non-native English speakers. A sample of four professional biomedical journals and papers published in former Yugoslavia was selected randomly and analyzed. Results indicated that these journals published articles with wrong use of prepositions when they were translated into English. There were 70 wrong uses of prepositions. It was concluded that the literal translation was beyond the improper use of the prepositions. The errors were classified into the following categories: The confused words which represented 26 examples, wrong prepositions which represented 16 examples, the omission of

prepositions which represented 28 examples, and unnecessary prepositions which represented 2 examples.

Taghavi (2012) investigated the errors that Iranian lower intermediate male students committed in their writings. Twenty students were asked to write a composition about the seasons of a year. Students' errors were identified and classified according to Corder's and Keshaverz's classifications. The results of the study revealed that most of the common errors were spelling, word choice, verb tense, preposition, subject-verb agreement and word order. The study found out that interlingual transfer and interlingual transfer lead to committing such errors.

Terdjat (2012) analyzed the errors committed by EFL Algerian students when using the English prepositions "in", "on" and "at". The study aimed at identifying the kinds of errors made by the students, the reasons behind such errors. It also aimed to check if they were affected by their mother tongue (Arabic) when using the prepositions. Data were collected by a diagnostic test which included the abovementioned prepositions. The test was administered to a random sample of 50 students who were studying English for the second year at Biskra University. The results revealed that the students committed substitution, redundant and omission errors. The reasons behind such errors were the interference from the mother tongue

(Arabic) and the ignorance about the appropriate use of the prepositions in some cases.

Al Yaari (2013) identified the difficulties encountered by Saudi EFL students in translating the English prepositions at, in and on into Arabic. He investigated which males or females could translate these three prepositions better. Fifty Saudi EFL students including 25 males and 25 females were asked to translate twenty sentences and phrases including the English prepositions at, in, and on into Arabic. Results showed that Saudi EFL students encountered difficulties when translating the prepositions from English into Arabic such as inability to give the right equivalent and unfamiliarity with the prepositions. It also showed that the females performed better than the males.

Al-Bayati (2013) identified the errors committed by the undergraduate EFL Iraqi learners when using prepositions and the reasons behind such errors. The learners in the Department of English Language at the University of Kufa were asked to answer subjective and objective questions in essay-writing forms. The writings of thirty-two students were chosen for error analysis. The results showed that students found difficulty in using English prepositions. They committed interlingual errors due to the interference of their first language. The errors were classified into three categories: omission, substitution and addition.

Al Murshidi (2014) investigated the errors made by United Arab Emirates University students in the use of prepositions. A sample of 30 Arabic students in the Engineering College participated in the study. They answered a test on English preposition which contained thirty multiple choice questions. Results revealed that the students' syntactic errors were addition, deletion, substitution, and redundancy. The Arabic learners are affected by their first language which has a negative effect on them while using English prepositions.

Almaloul (2014) investigated the errors committed by Libyan university students in using English prepositions. The sample of the study consisted of 100 students of the English department in their first year at Azzawia University. Data were collected by a test of English prepositions. Prepositions in the tests used in the study were categorized into four categories: similar Arabic and English prepositions, dissimilar Arabic and English prepositions, Arabic prepositions with no English counterparts, and English prepositions with no Arabic counterparts. The results revealed that students made more errors in the category of "English prepositions with no Arabic counterparts" than the other three categories. These errors were committed due to the lack of knowledge about the different meanings for English prepositions which made the students apply the strategy of transfer.

Jafari (2014) attempted to demonstrate that the errors committed by Persian learners of English in using English prepositions are related to their mother tongue. These errors include using wrong prepositions, addition of unnecessary prepositions, or deletion of prepositions. These steps were followed by the researcher: First, he discussed the word contrastive analysis, its history and two versions of it. Next, he discussed a cross – linguistic analysis of English and Persian prepositions in different fields such as technology, management, education, psychology. Then, he discussed the applied comparative and contrastive. After that he selected eleven couples of technical words with their definitions from the internet and he presented some predictions regarding errors that occur during the process of learning. Finally, he discussed some pedagogical explanations to explain the importance of contrastive analysis in language teaching. Results revealed that most of Persian learners of English language commit errors while using English prepositions since students express the intended message in English in a similar manner to Persian. The study recommended teachers to help their students avoid such errors and learn the language.

The previous studies indicated that English learners misused and committed errors regarding English prepositions. The studies showed that the learners misused the prepositions due to different reasons such as unfamiliarity with the prepositions, interference from the mother tongue

and not taking context into consideration. The studies suggested strategies and helpful solutions to overpass the difficulties concerning prepositions.

The previous survey of both theoretical and empirical literature showed the difficulties and problems related to prepositions .These studies and their results will shed light on the ensuing discussion.

Chapter Three

Methods and Procedures

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the sample, the instruments and their validity and reliability. It also includes the data collection and the procedures used in conducting the study.

3.1 Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consisted of undergraduate students who were enrolled in English language B.A programme during the second semester 2014/2015 at Middle East University.

A sample of twenty undergraduate students majoring in English language and literature was selected to participate in the study.

Since the aim of the study was to investigate the difficulties that undergraduate students encounter when translating English prepositions, recruiting a sample of undergraduate students majoring in English language and literature, would fulfill this goal.

The data about the sample were obtained by a means of demographic questions attached to the translation test of prepositions (see appendix 1 , p.67). The demographic questions asked for information about the

respondents' general background such as age, gender, level of education and first language.

The sample consisted of 20 students including five males and fifteen females. Their ages ranged from 19-25. All the students were native Arabic speakers and in their first, second, third and fourth year. The following table illustrates the sample.

Table 1: Background of the participants.

Age	Gender		Level of BA Education				First Language
	Male	Female	First year	Second year	Third year	Fourth year	Arabic
19-20	2	7	1	8	-	-	9
21-25	3	8	-	-	8	3	11
Total	20		20				20

3.2 Instruments of the Study

The researcher used two basic instruments: a translation test and unstructured interviews.

3.3 Translation Test

The test used in this study was administered by the researcher to find out the difficulties that undergraduate students face when translating English prepositions.

The researcher developed a test including different five English prepositions in different contexts to be translated into Arabic. The test consisted of twenty items including the prepositions: over, beyond, into, across and onto. The items were extracted from different sites on the internet by the researcher with some modifications.

The test was hand delivered by the researcher to the university students during the second week of April of the academic year 2014/2015. Students were asked to do the test individually in the classroom. Clear instructions were given to students by the researcher to take the contextual meaning into account. Students were allowed to use whatever dictionaries, tools they needed to help them in their translations. After that, the researcher corrected the test. The researcher followed the model answer which the experts modified (see appendix 3, p.70). The translations were classified into correct and incorrect translation. Then, the test was analyzed in terms of the frequencies and percentages of the students' errors.

3.4 Validity of the Test

To ensure the validity of the test, a panel of university professors who have experience in translation and linguistics were requested to judge the suitability of the test and to find out if the test measures what it is supposed to measure. After that, the test was reviewed and modified according to the

experts' comments and suggestions. Accordingly, the test was amended by some additions and omissions.

3.5 Reliability of the Test

A test – retest was administered. It was given to a similar group from the same population but not to the selected sample. The same test was given to them again after one week to check the reliability of their answers. The results showed stability in the responses.

3.6 Unstructured Interviews

This tool is considered one of the most important techniques in gathering information as indicated by Bell (2005) "The major advantages of the interview are useful to follow up ideas" (p. 157).

After distributing the test in the second week of April of the academic year 2014/2015, the researcher interviewed three professors of translation and linguistics from three different universities: The University of Jordan, Petra University, and Al-Ahliyyah Amman University (see appendix5 , p.74). The professors have good experience in teaching translation courses. The researcher conducted the interviews herself by making appointments with the interviewees in their universities. The researcher asked the following three questions:

1. What are the difficulties that English language undergraduate students encounter when translating English prepositions?

2. What are the causes behind these difficulties?
3. What solutions can be made to ease these difficulties?

Then, the researcher asked each participant individually the three previous questions. They were cooperative and answered all the questions orally. The researcher took notes when the professors answered the questions.

3.7 Analysis of the Data

In analyzing the collected data from the test, the researcher based her analysis on the errors committed by students. The test was analyzed in terms of the frequencies and percentages of the students' errors.

3.8 Procedures of the Study

After reviewing the literature regarding difficulties related to English prepositions, the researcher did the following:

1. Selected the sample of the study.
2. Established the two instruments of the study: (a) The test (b) The interviews.
3. Validated the test by presenting it to a panel of university professors who are experts in translation and linguistics.
4. Ensured the reliability of the test by administering it to a similar group which has similar characteristics.
5. Administered the test, collected the data and corrected it.

6. Interviewed the professors to obtain their views regarding the difficulties, their causes and some solutions to ease them.
7. Analyzed the results of the test in terms of the frequencies and percentages of the students' errors.
8. Discussed the results in light of the reviewed literature.
9. Presented the conclusions and recommendations.
10. Applied the APA style to the references.
11. Added the appendices at the end.

Chapter Four

Results of the Study

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study. It answers the three research questions.

These questions are:

4. What are the difficulties that English language undergraduate students encounter when translating English prepositions?
5. What are the causes behind these difficulties?
6. What solutions can be made to ease these difficulties?

The results of the 20 items of the test were presented first. These items include the prepositions over, beyond, into, across and onto. They were translated from English into Arabic by the undergraduate students. After that, responses of the interviewed professors were reported and described.

4.1 Results Related to the Questions (1) and (2) of the Study

Results reported in table (2) show the difficulties that students have encountered when translating prepositions from English into Arabic. Although the test is included in appendix 2 (p. 68), it is provided below to help the reader establish connection with the results.

- 1-I'll read the report over the weekend.
- 2-There was a lot of discussion over who should get the job.
- 3-I burnt the dinner. I'll have to do it over.
- 4-The horses are over the fence.
- 5-She had no income beyond what she could earn as a waitress.
- 6- Inflation had risen beyond 10%.
- 7-The system was unusually complicated and completely beyond the new trainees.
- 8- By now Dr. Barnard's fame had spread far beyond South Africa.
- 9-Jackie's really into classical music.
- 10-They came into power in 2008.
- 11-This is an inquiry into safety procedures.
- 12- This road leads into the mountains.
- 13-The people across the border are moving.
- 14-She walked across the field.
- 15-They have several offices across Europe.
- 16-Across the street there's a small shop and some apartments.

17- Transfer the data onto a disk.

18-We quickly moved the conversation onto a new subject.

19-We drove onto the beach.

20-The plane landed onto the runway.

Translations of these items have been compared and analyzed in terms of frequencies and percentages. Table (2) below presents 400 received responses. The number of students who have taken the test is 20. The responses have been corrected and classified into two categories: correct answers, and incorrect answers. The answer is considered correct if it is semantically right. It is considered incorrect if it is semantically wrong.

As shown in Table 2, most respondents haven't succeeded in translating prepositions adequately in items number (4), (8), (11), (13), (19), and (20). Clearly, the inability to deal with prepositions appears in items number (4), (13), (19) and (20) which represent the highest percentages of the wrong answers. The respondents have the highest percentages of correct answers in items number (1), (3) and (17).

Table (2): Participants' Translation Performance on the Test of Prepositions

No.	The prepositional phrases	Correct translation		Incorrect translation	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	over the weekend	17	85%	3	15%
2	over who should get the job	7	35%	13	65%
3	do it over	17	85%	3	15%
4	over the fence	1	5%	19	95%
5	beyond what she could earn	5	25%	15	75%
6	beyond 10%	15	75%	5	25%
7	beyond the new trainees	4	20%	16	80%
8	beyond South Africa	3	15%	17	85%
9	into <u>classical music</u>	6	30%	14	70%
10	into power	11	55%	9	45%
11	into safety procedures	3	15%	17	85%
12	into the mountains	9	45%	11	55%
13	across the border	0	0%	20	100%
14	across the field	14	70%	6	30%
15	across Europe	14	70%	6	30%
16	Across the street	5	25%	15	75%
17	onto a disk	18	90%	2	10%
18	onto a new subject	10	50%	10	50%
19	onto the beach	1	5%	19	95%
20	onto the runway	0	0%	20	100%

Total of 20 prepositional items for 20 students	Correct translation		Incorrect translation	
	Total	percentage	Total	percentage
400	160	40%	240	60%

In addition, the percentage of the wrong translations is 60%. This result means that the respondents were unable to translate the items adequately.

The results of the 20 items of the test and examples of correct and wrong answers are listed below.

Item 1 over the weekend

As shown in Table 2, 17 respondents (85%) provided correct translation for this item, while 3 (15%) provided wrong translations. An example of correct answer is

"خلال عطلة نهاية الاسبوع". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 3: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 1

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
1	over the weekend	طول أيام الأسبوع نهاية الأسبوع في مطلع الأسبوع

Students were unable to translate this preposition correctly. This can be attributed to the lack of knowledge about the usage of the preposition.

Item 2 over who should get the job

As shown in Table 2, 7 respondents (35%) provided correct translation for this item, and 13 (65%) provided wrong translation. Examples of correct answers are

"حول من يجب ان يحصل على الوظيفة" and "حول من الذي يجب ان يحصل على الوظيفة".

Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 4: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 2

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
2	over who should get the job	<p>بواسطته حصلت على الوظيفة</p> <p>الحصول الأولى في الوظيفة</p> <p>ما الذي يجب ان تحصل عليه بالوظيفة</p>

Students were unable to give the right equivalent since they didn't understand the meaning of the source text. This indicates the lack of knowledge about the meaning of the preposition and its usages. In addition this indicates their weakness in the source language.

Item 3 do it over

As shown in Table 2, 17 respondents (85%) provided correct translation for this preposition whereas 3 (15%) provided wrong translations. Examples

of correct answers are "أعيد صنعه" and "أقوم بعمله مرة أخرى". Examples of wrong answers are indicated in the table below .

Table 5: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 3

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
3	do it over	أفعل ذلك أفعل أكثر من ذلك

The respondents didn't translate the preposition in a correct manner. Again, this is an evident to the lack of knowledge about the usages of the preposition.

Item 4 over the fence

As shown in Table 2, only one respondent (5%) provided a correct translation and 19 of the respondents (95%) provided wrong translations for the preposition. An example of correct answer is "خلف السياج". Most respondents translated the preposition wrongly as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 4

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
4	over the fence	من فوق السور من فوق السياج بجانب السياج

		فوق السياج عبر السور على السياج بالقرب من السور
--	--	--

Most of the respondents failed to translate this preposition into Arabic properly since they are unfamiliar with such preposition. This indicates the lack of knowledge about the usages of the preposition.

Item 5 beyond what she could earn

Five students provided correct translation for the preposition (25%) while 15 (75%) provided wrong translations as indicated in table 2 above. Examples of correct answers are "عدا ما استطاعت ان تكسبه" and "غير ما استطاعت أن تكسبه". Examples of wrong answers are indicated in the table below.

Table 7: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 5

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
5	beyond what she could earn	الى ما يجب عليها كسبه ابعد ما يمكن أن تكسب وراء ما يمكن أن تكسبه

Many students translated the preposition wrongly as shown in Table 7 above due to the lack of semantic knowledge about the preposition.

Item 6 beyond 10%

Fifteen students (75%) provided right translation and five (25%) provided wrong translations as mentioned in table 2. Examples of correct answers are "تجاوزت ال ١٠%" "تعدت ال ١٠%" and "فوق نسبة ال ١٠%". Examples of wrong answers are shown in table 8 below.

Table 8: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 6

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
6	beyond 10%	الى ما يقارب ١٠% الى حد ١٠% وصل الى ١٠% حوالي ١٠%

Students mistranslated the preposition as they don't have enough knowledge about the different usages of such preposition.

Item 7 beyond the new trainees

Table 2 reveals that four students (20%) provided correct translation while sixteen (80%) provided wrong translations. Examples of correct answers are

" يفوق مستوى المتدربين الجدد" and " يتعدى قدرات المتدربين الجدد".

Examples of wrong answers are illustrated in the table below.

Table 9: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 7

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
7	beyond the new trainees	<p>من جانب المتدربين</p> <p>عدا المتدربين الجدد</p> <p>ما وراء المتدربين الجدد</p> <p>للمتدربين الجدد</p> <p>وراء المتدربين الجدد</p>

Once again, many students translated the preposition in a wrong manner. Apparently, the respondents chose the wrong meaning of the preposition and they didn't take the context into consideration.

Item 8 beyond South Africa

Three students (15%) provided correct translation for the preposition in item 8 whereas seventeen (85%) provided wrong translations as shown in table 2. An example of correct answer is "خارج إفريقيا الجنوبية". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 10: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 8

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
8	beyond South Africa	ما وراء جنوب إفريقيا في جنوب إفريقيا إلى جنوب إفريقيا بجانب جنوب إفريقيا

As indicated in the table above, the respondents chose the wrong meaning of the preposition and they didn't take the context into consideration. Additionally, they have restricted knowledge about the usages of the preposition.

Item 9 into classical music

As shown in table 2, six students (30%) provided correct translation while 14(70%) provided wrong translations. An example of correct answer is "مهمة بالموسيقى الكلاسيكية". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 11: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 9

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
9	into <u>classical music</u>	في داخل صف الموسيقى إلى الموسيقى الكلاسيكية في الموسيقى الكلاسيكية

		عن قرب الموسيقى الكلاسيكية
--	--	----------------------------

Respondents mistranslated the preposition since they are not familiar with the usages of the preposition .This is an indicator to the lack of the knowledge about the preposition and its multiple usages.

Item10 into power

Eleven students (55%) provided correct translation while 9 (45%) provided wrong translations as shown in table 2. An example of correct answer is "إلى السلطة". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 12: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 10

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
10	into power	<p>خلال السلطة</p> <p>للقة</p> <p>زادت القوة</p>

Students faced difficulty in translating the preposition since they don't have enough knowledge about the multiple usages of the preposition.

Item11 into safety procedures

Three students (15%) provided correct translation while 17 (85%) provided wrong translations as shown in table 2. An example of correct answer is "عن إجراءات السلامة". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 13: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 11

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
11	into safety procedures	إلى إجراءات السلامة على إجراءات السلامة من إجراءات السلامة

The majority of the respondents failed to translate this preposition into Arabic. This is an indicator to the lack of the knowledge about the preposition and its multiple usages.

Item12 into the mountains

Nine students (45%) provided correct translation whereas 11 (55%) provided wrong translations as shown in table 2. An example of correct answer is "إلى الجبال". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 14: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 12

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
12	into the mountains	عبر الجبال في الجبال على الجبال من خلال الجبال

Students translated the preposition wrongly. Clearly, the respondents chose the wrong meaning of the preposition and they didn't take the context into consideration. This indicates their restricted knowledge about the multiple usages of the preposition.

Item13 across the border

None of the students (0%) provided correct translation whereas 20 (100%) provided wrong translations as shown in table 2. An example of correct answer is "في الجهة المقابلة للحد". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 15: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 13

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
13	across the border	عبر الحدود على الحدود

		ما وراء الحدود اجتازوا الحدود من جانب الحدود على طول الحدود
--	--	--

All the students failed to translate this preposition correctly due to their restricted knowledge about the multiple usages of the preposition.

Item14 across the field

As shown in table 2, fourteen students (70%) provided correct translation whereas 6 (30%) provided wrong translations. An example of correct answer is "عبر الحقل". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 16: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 14

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
14	across the field	نحو الميدان بجانب الحقل في الحقل على ملعب في جميع المجالات من خلال الحقل

Students translated the preposition wrongly since they don't have enough knowledge about the different usages of the preposition.

Item15 across Europe

As shown in table 2, fourteen students (70%) provided correct translation whereas 6 (30%) provided wrong translations. An example of correct answer is "في شتى أنحاء أوروبا". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 17: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 15

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
15	across Europe	تجتاز أوروبا في أوروبا

Students translated the preposition wrongly since they don't have enough knowledge about the different usages of the preposition.

Item16 Across the street

As shown in table 2, five students (25%) provided correct translation whereas 15 (75%) provided wrong translations. An example of correct

answer is "على الجانب الآخر من الشارع". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table18: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 16

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
16	Across the street	<p>على حافة الطريق</p> <p>عند مقاطعة الشارع</p> <p>عبر الشارع</p> <p>فوق الشارع</p> <p>في مقاطعة الشارع</p> <p>نحو الشارع</p>

Many students translated the preposition wrongly since they don't have enough knowledge about the different usages of the preposition.

Item17 onto a disk

As shown in table 2, eighteen students (90%) provided correct translation and only two (10%) provided wrong translations. An example of correct answer is "إلى قرص صلب". An example of wrong answer is in the table below.

Table 19: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 17

No.	The item	A wrong translation
17	onto a disk	بداخل قرص إلكتروني

Students translated the preposition wrongly since they don't have enough knowledge about the different usages of the preposition.

Item18 onto a new subject

As shown in table 2, ten students (50%) provided correct translation and 10 (50%) provided wrong translations. An example of correct answer is "إلى".

Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 20: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 18

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
18	onto a new subject	من خلال موضوع جديد على موضوع جديد

Students translated the preposition wrongly since they don't have enough knowledge about the different usages of the preposition. In addition, they are unfamiliar with such preposition.

Item19 onto the beach

Only one student (5%) provided a correct translation whereas 19 (95%) provided wrong translations as shown in table. An example of correct answer is "باتجاه الشاطئ" .

Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 21: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 19

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
19	onto the beach	فوق الشاطئ على الشاطئ إلى الشاطئ

Most of the students translated the preposition wrongly since they don't have enough knowledge about the different usages of the preposition. In addition, they are unfamiliar with such preposition.

Item 20 onto the runway

None of the students (0%) provided correct translation whereas 20 (100%) provided wrong translations as shown in table 2. An example of

correct answer is "نحو المدرج". Examples of wrong answers are listed in the table below.

Table 22: Sample of Wrong Translations of Item # 20

No.	The item	Sample of wrong translations
20	onto the runway	فوق المدرج من المدرج على المدرج في المدرج

All the students translated the preposition wrongly since they don't have enough knowledge about the different usages of the preposition. In addition, they are unfamiliar with such preposition.

4.2 Results of Interviewing the Professors

Confirming the results of the test, the researcher interviewed three professors informally. The interviews were conducted in English. The professors of English language and literature who teach translation were three males. The professors were teaching at private universities in Amman. The researcher asked them the three questions.

1. What are the difficulties that English language undergraduate students encounter when translating English prepositions?

2. What are the causes behind these difficulties?
3. What solutions can be made to ease these difficulties?

4.3 The Results Related to the First Question in the

Interviews- What are the difficulties that English language undergraduate students encounter when translating English prepositions?

The professors' answers were summarized as follows:

Students are unable to give the right equivalents for the prepositions and they are unable to understand the meanings of the prepositions and their multiple usages.

4.4 The Results Related to the Second Question in the

Interviews –What are the causes behind these difficulties?

The professors' answers were summarized as follows:

1. Lack of basic knowledge of prepositions and their multiple usages.
2. Lack of related courses that focus on syntactic issues especially prepositions.
3. Lack of knowledge in linguistic features of language, such as semantics, syntax.
4. Unfamiliarity with some of the prepositions caused a difficulty for students.
5. General weakness in both languages Arabic and English.

6. Dictionaries are of little help and only the context has the great importance in determining the meaning of the prepositions.
7. Lack of communication with the second language native speakers.
8. The need of effective researching skills in a way that saves time and effort.
9. The need for a course that exposes students to prepositions and their contexts.

The experts answered this question based on their experience. The first expert mentioned that the main cause for difficulty in translating prepositions is due to their nature since they have many different meanings which are changeable according to context. They also sometimes have idiomatic meaning so their meanings are sometimes unpredictable. This formalizes a main obstacle for the students. He also stated that the lack of communication with English native speakers is a major reason that stands behind their weak performance in translation; students seldom practice the language in real situations. Meanwhile, the second expert clarified that students are often unable to render the meaning properly since they don't have enough knowledge about prepositions and their usages. Students also don't have the skill to search in an effective way that help them find the proper translation and that is another reason that let them provide wrong translation. Moreover, the

third expert indicated that the difficulty in translating prepositions is attributed to students' weakness in English. In some cases, the weak background, even in Arabic, makes them unable to guess the equivalent context in the target language. Prepositions also are usually underestimated and neglected by teachers. They are rarely taught so they are unfamiliar to students.

4.5 The Results Related to the Third Question in the

Interviews- What solutions can be made to ease these difficulties?

The professors' answers were summarized as follows:

1. Students should be offered introductory courses in translation to improve their performance.
2. The students are recommended to search using dictionaries and online resources to get the correct equivalents of prepositions.
3. Students are advised to translate long sentences, and paragraphs about different topics from and to their language.
4. Students at universities are also advised to read and listen to both Arabic and English literature including poems, novels, fictions, plays, and dramas.
5. Teachers should apply helpful suitable techniques and strategies in teaching prepositions.

6. The students should communicate with English native speakers to help them master the language.

Chapter Five

Discussion of the Results

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a brief summary and a short discussion of the findings of the test. It also attempts to explain and interpret the results in light of the reviewed literature. The chapter concludes with recommendations and suggestions for future research.

5.1 Summary of Results Related to the Test

As per results reported in Table 2, there are difficulties encountered by the students. These difficulties include mistranslations, comprehension-related errors. Results indicate that the students failed to translate the prepositions adequately. Students were unable to give the right equivalents since they didn't understand the meaning of the source text. This can be attributed to the lack of knowledge about the different meanings of the prepositions and their multiple usages. The respondents also failed to translate the prepositions properly since they are unfamiliar with the prepositions and they didn't take the context into consideration. This result is in line with Zughoul (1979) as he talks about the reasons that make English prepositions difficult to learn by Arab learners. According to Zughoul the areas of difficulty in learning English prepositions to

nonnative speakers include: "the large number of possible meanings for many prepositions, which change according to the context in which they are used" (p.24-29).

This result also goes along with Gass (1978) as he indicates that prepositions pose a major difficulty for EFL learners due to the fact that prepositions represent highly conceptual ontological category.

Furthermore, this result goes hand by hand with Takahaski (1969) as he states that English speakers, including teachers, can't give any logical explanation or clear conceptual framework for the occurrence or usage of English prepositions. So, understanding the functions and the usages of English prepositions becomes one of the most difficult problems encountered by a student who learn English as a second language.

This result is also in line with Scott and Tucker (1974) where they mention that English and Arabic prepositions rarely have a one to one correspondence. They comment on the errors made by Arab learners; they state that "Arab EFL learners learn the semantic meaning of the English lexical prepositions before they learn all the restrictions on their usage".

(cited in Hamdallah and Tushyeh,1993,p.186).

Moreover, this result goes side by side with Hendrickson (1976) who found out that learners of English misused English prepositions.

The respondents failed to translate the prepositions properly since they didn't take the context into consideration. This result goes parallel with khalil (1989) who concluded that the Arab translators and students were unable to give the right meanings for the prepositions since they translated out of context. This result is also in line with Othman (1996) who found out that prepositions are problematic to the students who didn't take the context into consideration while translating. Othman highlighted the importance of the context in translating prepositions which determine the meanings of prepositions. Moreover, this result agrees with Krulj (2011) who found that the literal translation was beyond the improper use of the prepositions in professional medical texts translated by scientist non-native English speakers.

Students were unable to give the right equivalents since they didn't understand the meaning of the source text. This can be attributed to the lack of knowledge about the different meanings of the prepositions and their multiple usages. This result is consistent with Terdjat (2012) who indicated that the ignorance about the appropriate use of the prepositions was a reason beyond the misuse of the prepositions by EFL Algerian students. This result is also in line with Almaloul (2014) who indicated that students misused English prepositions due to the lack of knowledge about the different meanings for English prepositions.

The respondents failed to translate the prepositions properly since they are unfamiliar with the prepositions. This result is also in line with Al Yaari (2013) who pointed out that the difficulties that are encountered by EFL students in translating English prepositions include the inability to give the right equivalent and unfamiliarity with the prepositions.

5.2 Conclusions

The data obtained by means of test and interviews indicated that students encountered difficulties while translating prepositions such as failing to render the prepositions adequately into Arabic as shown through their performance in the test.

Professors elaborated on the reasons behind these difficulties and through their answers it was clear that unfamiliarity with prepositions and lack of basic knowledge about their multiple usages are major reasons for failing in translating prepositions.

The interviews confirmed these results and have suggested solutions for such difficulties.

5.3 Recommendations

The present study addressed the difficulties that undergraduate students encounter in translating prepositions in Jordan and the reasons behind them. In light of the results of this study the following are recommended:

- Students should be offered introductory courses in translation to improve their performance.
- Translation guides should be established and distributed to BA students to help them in building a solid base to start from.
- Department of foreign languages is also recommended to provide its students with all materials that guarantee the best knowledge for them.
- The students are recommended to search using dictionaries and online resources to get the correct equivalents of prepositions.
- Programs including seminars, visiting a western institution (e.g., cultural councils, embassies, etc.) are also recommended to link students with the western culture.
- Students are advised to translate long sentences, and paragraphs about different topics from and to their language.
- Students at universities are also advised to read both Arabic and English literature including poems, novels, fictions, plays, and dramas.
- The students should communicate with English native speakers to help them master the language.

- Graduate students and teachers are invited to conduct pedagogical studies on their students and try to utilize the best approaches in teaching prepositions.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

It is hoped that this study will contribute to the current research agenda in the field of translation.

The researcher recommends for further studies in this field using different and more participants.

References

- Al-Azzam, T. (2003) *Translatability of the Arabic preposition baa' into English* (Unpublished M.A thesis) Yarmouk University, Irbid: Jordan .
- AL-Bayati, W.A. (2013) Errors made by Iraqi EFL undergraduates in the use of prepositions. *Bulletin of the Transilvania* 6 (55) 41-56.
- Alexander, L. G. (1988) *Longman English Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Almaloul, A.M. (2014) Investigating interference errors made by Azzawia University 1st year students of English in learning English prepositions. *International Journal of Social, Education, Economics and Management Engineering*, 8(1) 267-283.
- Al-Marrani, Y.M. (2009) A comparative and contrastive study of preposition in Arabic and English. *Language in India*, 9, 47-68.
- Al Murshidi, G. (2014) The difficulties of UAE university students in the use of preposition. *European Scientific Journal*, 10(17)173-191.
- Al Yaari, S. A. (2013) The problem of translating the prepositions at, in and on into Arabic: An applied linguistic approach. *Macrothink Institute*, 1(2) 256-273.
- Bell, J. (2005). *Doing your research project*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Bennett, C. D. (1975). *Spatial and Temporal Uses of English Prepositions: An Essay in Stratificational Semantics*. London: Longman.

Brown, B. (2003) Prepositions. *Academic Center and the University of Houston-Victoria*, 570.

Catford (1965) *The linguistic theory of translation: An essay in applied linguistics*. London: Oxford University Press.

Dunstan, A. (2003) Preposition problems up with which we should not put. *California English*. 8(4), p14-15.

Gass, S. (1978) Language transfer and universal grammatical relations. *Language Learning*, 29, 327-344.

Hamdallah,R. and Tushyeh,H. (1993) A contrastive analysis of selected English and Arabic prepositions with pedagogical implications.*Papers and Studies in Contrastive Linguistics* ,28,181-190.

Hansard, M. (2012) Prepositions of Location: At, In, On. *Purdue University Online Writing Lab*, 1-8.

Hasbún,L. (2007) Fossilization and acquisition: A study of learner language. *Filología y Lingüística*, (1) 113-129.

Hashim, N.H. (1996). English syntactic errors by Arabic speaking learners. *Educational Resources Information Center*. (On Line) available: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED423660>.

Hattab (2012) English prepositions: New perspectives .*Alostath* 9(201) 309-318.

Hendricks, M. (2010) Consciousness raising and prepositions. *English Teaching Forum*, 2 , 24-29.

Hendrickson, J. M.(1976) Error analysis and selective correction in the adult ESL classrooms: An experiment. *Education and Welfare National Institute of Education*. (On Line) available:
<http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED135260>.

Jafari, S.S. (2014) A cross-linguistic study of English and Persian prepositions. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 5(3) 689-697.

Jakobson, R. (1987) *Language in literature translation*. U.S.A: Library of Congress.

Khalil, A. R. (1984) *English prepositions and the Arab translator*(Unpublished M.A thesis), Yarmouk University, Irbid: Jordan.

Kharm, N. and Hajjaj, A. (1997).*Errors Among Arabic Speakers*. Beirut: Librairie du Liban.

Koffi, E. (2010) *Applied English syntax: Foundations for word, phrase, and sentence analysis*.Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company.

Krulj, S. (2011) Influence of realization of prepositions and prepositional phrases on their proper use in professional medical texts in English.

Scientific Journal of the Faculty of Medicine in Niš, 28 (4) 235-240.

Maalej, Z.(2010) Spatial scenes in Arabic and English. *KSU Journal*, 3-9.

Najim, Z.T. (2010) Problems and common mistakes on prepositions of place at, in, and on. *Journal of the Fundamental Education College*, 64.87-104.

Nida, E.A. (1964) *Toward a science of translation*, Netherland. (Online), available:

<http://books.google.jo/books?id=YskUAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=tow>.

Nida, E. & Taber, C. (2003) *The theory and practice of translation*,

Netherland: Library of congress.

Newmark, P. (1988) *A textbook of translation*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Othman, W.A. (1996) *The translatability of prepositions in literary contexts*, (Unpublished M.A thesis) Yarmouk University, Irbid: Jordan .

Taeha, Y. and Wonho, Y. (2010) Korean university students' use of prepositional verbs: A corpus-based study. *English Teaching*, 65(4) 403-424.

Taghavi, M. (2012). Error analysis in composition of Iranian lower intermediate students. *Educational Resources Information Center*. (On Line) available:

<http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED528901>.

Tahaine, Y. S. (2010) Arab EFL university students' errors in the use of prepositions. *Modern Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1(6) 76-112.

Takahaski (1969) Perception of space and the function of certain English prepositions. *language learning*, 19.217–234

Temime, A. (2010) *Transfer of simple prepositions from standard Arabic into English* (Unpublished MA thesis) Mentouri University, Constantine: Algeria.

Terdjat, H. (2012) *Challenges encountered by Algerian EFL students when using the English prepositions "in", "on" and "at"*, (Unpublished MA thesis) Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra: Algeria .

Tzung-yu, C. (1993) The syntactical problems Chinese college students meet in reading English technical textbooks. *Educational Resources Information Center*. (On Line) available:
<http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED364094>.

Zughoul, M.R. (1979) Teaching English prepositions. *English Teaching Forum*, 17.24-29.

Appendix 1

Demographic Background of the Subjects

Please fill in the information below:

Age

Gender 1- Male () 2- Female ()

Level of Education BA level A- First Year ()

B- Second Year ()

C- Third Year ()

D- Fourth Year ()

First Language 1- Arabic () 2- English () 3- other()

Appendix 2

Translation Test

Dear participants you are kindly requested to translate the following underlined phrases communicatively into Arabic.

1-I'll read the report over the weekend.

2-There was a lot of discussion over who should get the job.

3-I burnt the dinner. I'll have to do it over.

4-The horses are over the fence.

5-She had no income beyond what she could earn as a waitress.

6- Inflation had risen beyond 10%.

7-The system was unusually complicated and completely beyond the new trainees.

8- By now Dr. Barnard's fame had spread far beyond South Africa.

9-Jackie's really into classical music.

10-They came into power in 2008.

11-This is an inquiry into safety procedures.

12- This road leads into the mountains

13-The people across the border are moving.

14-She walked across the field.

15-They have several offices across Europe.

16-Across the street there's a small shop and some apartments.

17- Transfer the data onto a disk.

18-We quickly moved the conversation onto a new subject.

19-We drove onto the beach.

20-The plane landed onto the runway.

Appendix 3

Model Translation of the Test

1-I'll read the report over the weekend.

خلال عطلة نهاية الأسبوع

2-There was a lot of discussion over who should get the job.

حول من يجب أن يحصل على العمل

3-I burnt the dinner. I'll have to do it over.

أعيد صنعه

4-The horses are over the fence.

خلف السياج

5-She had no income beyond what she could earn as a waitress.

غير ما استطاعت أن تكسبه

6- Inflation had risen beyond 10%.

أكثر من ١٠%

7-The system was unusually complicated and completely beyond the new trainees.

يتعدى قدرات المتدربين الجدد.

8- By now Dr. Barnard's fame had spread far beyond South Africa.

خارج أفريقيا الجنوبية

9-Jackie's really into classical music.

مهتمة بالموسيقى الكلاسيكية

10-They came into power in 2008.

إلى السلطة

11-This is an inquiry into safety procedures.

عن إجراءات السلامة

12- This road leads into the mountains

إلى الجبال

13-The people across the border are moving.

في الجهة المقابلة للحد

14-She walked across the field.

عبر الحقل

15-They have several offices across Europe.

في شتى أنحاء أوروبا

16-Across the street there's a small shop and some apartments.

على الجانب الآخر من الشارع

17- Transfer the data onto a disk.

إلى قرص صلب

18-We quickly moved the conversation onto a new subject.

إلى موضوع جديد

19-We drove onto the beach.

باتجاه الشاطئ

20-The plane landed onto the runway.

نحو المدرج

Appendix 4

Questions of Interviews

Please answer the following three questions:

1. What are the difficulties that English language undergraduate students encounter when translating English prepositions?
2. What are the causes behind these difficulties?
3. What solutions can be made to ease these difficulties?

Appendix 5		
Interviewed Experts		
Name	Place of Work	Major
Prof. Abd Al-Baki As-Safi	Petra University- Jordan	Translation
Prof. Riyad Hussein	The University of Jordan	Applied linguistics
Dr. Suleiman Al- Abbas	Al-Ahliyyah Amman University (AAU)- Jordan	Applied linguistics

Panel of Experts and Validation Committee		
Name	Place of work	Major
Dr. Nihal Ameira	Petra University-Jordan	Applied linguistics
Dr. Basel Hussein	Al-Zaytoonah University- Jordan	Applied linguistics
Dr. Ula Al-Dabbagh	Petra University- Jordan	Applied linguistics

Appendix 6

The Validation Letter

Dear Professor,

Based on your experience in the field of language studies, I would like to ask for your assistance in determining the face and content validity of the main instrument that will be used in collecting data for my M.A thesis titled (Difficulties that Jordanian Undergraduate Students Encounter when Translating English Prepositions).

The instrument is a translation test that consists of 20 items which undergraduate students will be asked to translate from English into Arabic. Your time, assistance and cooperation in commenting on the following are highly appreciated:

1. Do the statements cover an efficient amount of expressions and phrases relevant to prepositions?

2. According to your experience will this test help showing the difficulties that undergraduate students face when translating English prepositions?

3. Please feel free to make any further suggestions or comments.
