

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL REVIEW

#### A. Definitions of Error and Preposition

##### 1. Definitions of Error

A. S. Hornby, states that: “Error is Mistake: The accident was due to human”.<sup>11</sup>

Students often make mistakes, because he could not understand about the use of prepositions and he confused the use of prepositions in, on at. Thus, causing a high error. Error was clearly visible when I test the preposition to the students at MTsN Banjar Selatan 2.

According to W.J.S. Poerwadarminta states that: “Error is kekeliruan; kekhilafan; sesuatu yang salah.”<sup>12</sup>

When the students use a preposition, it is very difficult. So many errors, especially the use of prepositions in, on, at. Especially, the students are translating Indonesian to English using prepositions.

Somebody will make error if he/she is in the condition of having incorrect or false knowledge. Error literary means the state or quality of being wrong or

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<sup>11</sup>A. S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, (New York: Oxford University Press, Third Edition, 1995), p. 145

<sup>12</sup>W. J. S. Poerwadarminta, *Kamus Umum Bahasa Indonesia*. (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, Edisi Ketiga, 2006), p. 1014

mistaken.<sup>13</sup> According to Simon and Schuster that: “error is something incorrectly done through ignore or carelessness; and inaccuracy; an oversight”.<sup>14</sup>

Wayne O’Neil states that: “error is in doing something a mistake, especially on that causes problem or affect the result of something.”<sup>15</sup>

Students make mistakes, especially the use of prepositions in, on, at. Cause the results obtained in the use of prepositions is incorrect.

Synonym of error is mistake. Wayne O’Neil states: “mistake often implies misunderstanding, misinterpretation, and resultant poor judgment and it’s usually weaker than error in imputing blame or censure.”<sup>16</sup>

Synonyms of error are mistake, misunderstanding, and misinterpretation. All of it has the same understanding of the mistakes made by students in particular here the use of preposition in, on, at.

So, error is the condition of doing something incorrectly, the act or an instance of deviation from the accepted code behavior: wrong doing and his /her errors must be improved. Error has synonym like a mistake. These nouns refer to what is not in accordance with truth, accuracy or right. If someone make an omission or faulty at that result from one’s lack of attention. So, he/she makes mistake or error.

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<sup>13</sup>Longman group, *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, (England: London House, 1953), p. 343

<sup>14</sup>Simon and Schuster, *Webster’s New Twentieth Century Dictionary*, (New York: William Collins Publisher, Second Edition, 1979), p. 621

<sup>15</sup>Wayne O’ Neil et al, *The Grolier International Dictionary*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990), p. 445

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*

## 2. Definitions of Preposition

Simon and Schuster stated that definition of preposition is taken from latin which is preposicion (prae = before and ponere = to place).<sup>17</sup>

The definition of preposition on some term as follows:

- a. "Word, e.g. in, from or to, used before a noun or pronoun to show place, position, time or method".<sup>18</sup>
- b. "Kata yang ditempatkan sebelum kata benda atau kata ganti untuk menunjukkan hubungan dengan bagian-bagian kalimat yang lain".<sup>19</sup>
- c. Kata yang menghubungkan antara kata benda yang satu dengan kata benda yang lain".<sup>20</sup>
- d. "Preposition show how things relate to each other in space, time, or in other ways".<sup>21</sup>
- e. "Word that combines with a noun or pronoun to form a phrase".<sup>22</sup>
- f. A preposition shows a relationship between its object and other words in a sentence.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Simon and Schuster, *Webster's New Dictionary*, (New York: Prentice Hall, Second Edition, 1980), p. 1422

<sup>18</sup>Martin H. Manser. *Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary*, (New York: Oxford University Press, Third Edition, 2000), p. 338

<sup>19</sup>Rudi Hariyono, *Complete English Grammar*, (Surabaya: Gita Media Press, 2002),p. 143

<sup>20</sup>Sam S Warib, *Visual Dictionary*, Surabaya: Pustaka Agung Harapan, p. 99

<sup>21</sup>Jake Allsop, *Making Sense of English Grammar*, (Jakarta: Binarupa Aksara, 1989),p. 37

<sup>22</sup>Merriam, *Webster's American English Dictionary*, (USA: Federal Street Press,1995), p. 263

<sup>23</sup>Am. Prayitno, *Mastering English Grammar*, (Surabaya: Armythas Kurnia, 2004), p. 233

From some term above, the writer can make a conclusion that preposition is a word or group of words which show relating towards noun or pronoun with another word in sentence.

## **B. Kinds and Types of Preposition**

Before talking about kinds prepositions, the writer will give common prepositions as follows:

About	before	despite	of	to
Above	behind	down	off	toward(s)
Across	below	during	on	under
After	beneath	for	out	until
Against	beside	from	over	up
Along	besides	in	since	upon
Among	between	into	through	with
Around	beyond	like	throughout	within <sup>24</sup>

### **1. Kinds of Preposition**

John S. Hartanto and friends state that “Prepositions may be classified into six kinds, namely: simple prepositions, double prepositions, compound prepositions, participle prepositions, phrase prepositions, and disguised prepositions.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Betty Schramfer Azar, *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Second Edition, 1989), p. A-2

<sup>25</sup>John. S. Hartanto. et al, *Op. cit.*

a. Simple prepositions

Simple prepositions consist of one word. Such as: at, by, on, in, to, for, off, of, from, through, up till, over, under, after.

b. Double prepositions

Double preposition consist of two parts such as: from among, from behind, from within, out of, on to, out side of, etc.

c. Compound prepositions

These are formed from some noun, adjective, or adverb compounded with the prepositions (= by) or a (= on), e.g. across (= on across), behind (by + hind), along, amidst.

d. Participle prepositions

Participle prepositions are participles of verb used as prepositions: e.g. concerning, during, pending, touching, not with standing, except, past, save etc. example: The prisoner died during his trial.

e. Phrase prepositions

These are two or three words habitually thrown together ending with a simple preposition, e.g. by virtue of, by way of, in addition to, in accordance with, in the event of, with a view to, in spite of, instead of, with regard to.

f. Disguised prepositions

In certain expressions, some prepositions are disguised:

Of in \_\_\_\_\_ two o'clock

In in \_\_\_\_\_ once a week a month

Per in \_\_\_\_\_ five kilogram's a rupee.

## 2. Types of Preposition

Hayden, Pilgrin and Haggaru state that “preposition may be in the form of one word (at, by, in, on, etc) or in the form of a phrase that functions as unit (in front of, by way of, etc).<sup>26</sup> According them there are some other types of prepositions namely:

### a. Agent (or instrument) by and with

This poem was written by Walt Whitman

I can write better with my own pen

### b. Accompaniment – with

He went with her to the store

### c. Purpose – for

This day is for engineering exits only

### d. Association – of

The new wing of the building is almost completed

### e. Measure – of and by

I want three quarts of milk and a pound of cheese.

Coffee is sold by the pound, but ribbon is sold by the yard.

### f. Similarity – like

You look like your brother

### g. In the capacity of – as

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<sup>26</sup>Hayden, Pilgrin, and Haggaru, *Mastering American English* (USA: Prentice Hall, 1956), p. 171-176

He got a job as an elevator operation<sup>27</sup>

Based on the syllabus of English subject, the types of preposition that has been taught in Junior high school are preposition place and time, especially such as: in, on, at.

### C. Functions of Preposition

Prepositions have been called the biggest little words in English. They are usually quite short and significant looking, but they have very important functions. In fact, prepositions become the most frequent word in English and as known there are so many prepositions in English. Many of these prepositions have more than one meaning. So, it is very important to know the functions of preposition first, before making a sentence.

According to some references, the functions of preposition are:

1. Preposition show how thing relate to each other in space, time, or in other ways.<sup>28</sup>
2. The preposition has some the function of connecting a noun or pronoun to another word, usually a noun, verb, or adjective.<sup>29</sup>
3. Preposition act links between sense groups of words in sentences.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup><http://isu.indstate.edu/writing/handouts/setii/prints/SETII1P.html>. Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010

<sup>28</sup>Jake Allsop, *loc. cit.*

<sup>29</sup>Marcela Frank, *Modern English A Practical Reference Guide*, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1972), p. 171

<sup>30</sup>Desmon W. Evans, *Improving English Skills*, (London: Pitman Publishing, 1986), p. 131

4. Prepositions are connective words that show the relationship between noun following them and one of the basic sentence elements: subject, verb, object, or complement.<sup>31</sup>

5. Prepositions connect a noun structure to some other word in the sentence.

a. To connect noun with pronoun

Example: she has talked to that boy *in* the room.

Here, preposition *in* that connects noun boy with pronoun room.

b. To connect noun with adjective

Example: I am late *for* the party.

c. To connect noun with verb

Example: She always arrives *at* home late.

d. To connect noun with type of verb that has function and its characteristic as verb or adjective

Example: Anton is very interested *with* the game

e. To connect noun with participle

Example: They *stand up* near the car.<sup>32</sup>

Besides Elan Dwi Winarno also states that the function of prepositions are:

1. Preposition referring to place

Example: - There is a beautiful lady *in front of* my room

- The shop is just *around* the corner

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<sup>31</sup>George E. Wishon and Julia M. Burks, *Let's Write English*, (New York: American Book Company, 1980), p. A – 12

<sup>32</sup>Ismul Jalala, *Panduan Memahami Preposition*, (Jakarta: Poliyama Widyapustaka, 2003), p. 7 -12



2. Preposition referring to direction

Example: - This road leads *toward* the sea

- The salmon were swimming *up* the river

3. Preposition referring time

Example: - I told her to meet us *at* six o'clock sharp.

- Take this medicine *before* mealtime.

4. Preposition referring to reason (purpose)

Example: - Take this medicine *for* your headache.

5. Preposition referring to reason (instrument)

Example: - I enjoyed going there *by* train.

- You can go to that restaurant *in* jeans.

6. To refer identification

Example: - The shops *at* the corners sell stamps.

- The books *by* Hemingway is a masterpiece

7. To refer distance

Example: - He walks *for* mile and miles

8. To refer representative

Example: - This film was directed *by* him.

9. To refer possession

Example: - The leader *of* the scouts has not arrived yet

## 10. Materials

Example: - I must fill my pen *with* ink.<sup>33</sup>

### D. Methods and Techniques in Teaching Preposition

Teaching preposition is a complex process. It depends on many factors including: the students' perceptual mechanism and extra-linguistic knowledge, their level of English and motivation, the purpose for which the students need the language, etc. all these leading the teacher to different manners of presentation. Syaiful Bahri Djamarah States that "*Kerelevansian metode mengajar dengan prinsip-prinsip belajar akan dapat membangkitkan gairah belajar anak didik dalam mencapai tujuan pembelajaran*".<sup>34</sup>

When a teacher teaching English, he/she must have a method and techniques in order to excite the students. So, as to achieve the desired learning objectives.

One the main goals in teaching English is to help students develop their communication ability and this is what the writer has tried to do by presenting a variety of methods and techniques in teaching prepositions communicatively, and interactively.

The material; used in class should be structured from easy to difficult, simply to complex, and concrete to abstract. Pair and small groups work are

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<sup>33</sup>Elan Dwi Winarno, *Belajar Menyusun Kalimat Bahasa Inggris*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2000), p. 166–169

<sup>34</sup>Syaiful Bahri Djamarah, *Guru dan Anak Didik Dalam Interaksi Edukatif*, (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, Cet Kedua, 2005), p. 223

interactive activities, increasing motivation, participation in class, and self confidence.

Despite all methods and techniques used to teach new items (in this case prepositions), there is no substitution for constant study and practice in context. Although the exercise presented here are subject to variation, their basic function remains the same: teaching English effectively.

### 1. Methods in Teaching preposition

Naturally, different kinds of prepositional problems require different approaches. First step in teaching preposition is to make students expect them. Then, the teacher has to help them use the correct preposition whenever one is needed.

The problem of omission can be solved by showing the students what to listen for, in this case, prepositions. Once the students learn to listen for and recognize the “link words” they are used to passing over, the only problem is to train them to properly select prepositions, depending on the context, the relations they indicate between various autonomous elements in the sentence, their idiomatic and metaphorical uses.

The “Listen and write”, “Listen and do”, “Listen and draw” set is an active, communicative process enabling students to recognize prepositions in an early stage, then to infer their meanings and finally to use them correctly. In fact, this is a variation of the same exercise.

The teacher may read or play a cassette containing a short text (even a song) in which a certain number of prepositions occur. For beginners, in order to

make this exercise easier, the teacher could hand in the written text in which only the prepositions are missing. The students just have to listen to the cassette and fill in the blanks with the missing prepositions on their activity sheets. For intermediate, advanced students they only hear a text being read and put down the prepositions they hear. It is also a good idea to have the students write every prepositions with its complement/nominal complete (specifying that “complement” represents the nominal sequence with which the preposition forms the prepositional group), since these can be more easily perceived as a unit as they occur together. The students could try to reconstruct the segments containing prepositions, then translate them in the context and finally write their own examples with recently learnt items.

The “Listen and do” variation of this exercise implies the students’ doing something active, such as raising a hand, clapping their hands, repeating the preposition aloud, whenever they hear a preposition.

The “Listen and draw” method is effective with young students and it can be used successfully in teaching prepositions with less abstract reference. For example, the teacher may read short, simple sentences of the kind: The ball is *on* the table and the ring is *in* the box. And the students can draw a ball on a table, a ring in a box, etc. This leads us to another methodological suggestion concerning the use of: Schematic pictures/icons/visuals.

The previous method (“Listen and draw” in particular) requires active participation on the part of the student mainly. But the teacher can use visual. Yet,

these aids cannot be considered a substitute for drills; they just make these drills more meaningful.

When teaching preposition, there are many tried and true methods. A combination of methods including a couple of the more popular form mentioned below will probably product the best result.

Of course the classic method is to tech preposition with a song which is always popular probably because it works so well.

Preposition set of the tune of ‘Jingle bell’s,’ ‘Row Your Boat or Yankee Doodle’ are easy and fun plus, most importantly, memorable

Other way work really well to depending on how much time and energy you are willing to spend like a **preposition walk**. This include physically walking around, through, over, under, etc., object can be limited in a classroom setting so it works best for those who can take their kids on a short walk around on school yard.

Or you might want to try teaching preposition with a game of **preposition charades**. As the name implies, it involves acting out the meaning of a preposition and having the class guess with preposition it is.

Lets’ no forget that preposition take their meaning from the phrase or sentence in which they are used; so same prepositions have more than one meaning depending on how they are used in the sentence. For example “The clock is over the door.” “Over, here, show location. There bird flew over the river.” “Over, here, show direction.

When teaching prepositions, you need to be sure to maintain the meaning you want to communicate in the sentence.

Another way to teach prepositions effectively is to write a sentence on the board and have your kids replace the prepositional phrase, thereby changing the sentence. For example the jogger ran **around the track**. (Down the road, over the bridge, through the park, along the river, etc.)

With each re-write have students point out what the object of the preposition is a well. (By making a game of it, the students will like it and remember the prepositions that much more.)<sup>35</sup>

In teaching English, an English teacher is encouraged to have some skills that can support and help him/her in his/her activity. The skills are various beginning from skills of choosing method, choosing media, until using standard competency. Diane Larsen – Freeman, said, an English teacher use eight (8) methods.<sup>36</sup>

#### a. Grammar Translation Method

Grammar translation method usually is used for the purpose of helping students read and appreciate foreign language literature. It was also hoped that, through the study of the grammar of the target language, students would become more familiar with the grammar of their native language and that this familiarity would help them speak and write their native language better. Finally, it was thought that foreign language learning would help students grow intellectually, it

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<sup>35</sup><http://www.advanced-english-grammar.com/teaching-prepositions.html> Saturday, December 11th, 2010

<sup>36</sup>Diane Larsen – Freeman, *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 1

was recognized that students would probably never use the target language, but the mental exercise of learning it would be beneficial anyway. There are some techniques used in the grammar translation method they can be applied by English teacher in the classroom such as: Translation of a literary passage, reading comprehension questions, antonyms/synonyms, cognates, deductive application role, fills in the blanks, memorization, used word in sentence, and composition.

b. Direct Method

Direct method is used a foreign language to communicate. The direct method has one very basic rule: No translation is allowed. In fact, the direct method receives its name from the fact that meaning is to be connected *directly* with the target language, without going through the process of translating into the students' native language. There may be some techniques of direct method you can adapt to your own approach to teaching, as follows: reading aloud, question and answer exercise, getting students to self-correct, fill in the blank exercise, dictation, map drawing, and paragraph writing.

c. The Audio Lingual Method

While communication in the target language was the goal of the direct method, there were at the time exciting new ideas about language and learning emanating from the disciplines of descriptive linguistics and behavioral psychology. These ideas led to the development of the Audio Lingual method is used to make students be able to use the target language communicatively. There may be techniques described below that you already using or can adapt to your approach in teaching, such as: dialog memorization, backward build-up

(expansion) drill, repetition drill, chain drill, single-slot substitution drill, multiple-slot substitution drill, transformation drill, question- answer drill, use of minimal pairs, complete the dialog, and grammar game.

d. The Silent Way

The silent way is used to make students be able to use the language for self expression, to express their thoughts, perception and feelings. In this method the teacher does not speak, he only points something and then the student responds. He only speaks when the students needs help. There are some techniques can be used in silent way, as follows: sound-color chart, teacher's silence, peer correction, rods, self-correction gestures, word chart, Fidel chart, and structured feedback.

e. Suggestopedia

Suggestopedia, the application of the study of suggestion to pedagogy, has been developed to help students eliminate the feeling that they cannot be successfully and, thus, to help them over-come the barriers to learning. There may be some elements you could usefully adapt to your own teaching style, as follows: classroom set-up, peripheral learning, positive suggestion, visualization, choose a new identity, role-play, first concert, second concert, primary activation, and secondary activation.

f. Community Language Learning

Community language learning method is used to make students use the target language communicatively, there are some techniques can used, as follows: tape recording students conversation, and transcription.



#### g. The Total Physical Response

The total response method is used to make their students enjoy their experience in learning to communicate in a foreign language. The teacher plays an active and direct role in this method. In the total physical response method, students listen and respond to the target language commands of their teacher. There are some techniques can be used in total response method as follows: using commands to direct behavior, role reversal, and action sequence.

#### h. The Communicative Approach

The communicative approach is used to have one's students become communicatively competent. Furthermore, since communication is a process, it is insufficient for students to simply have knowledge of the target language forms, meanings, and functions. Students must be able to apply this knowledge in negotiating meaning. It is through the interaction between speaker and listener (or reader and writer) that meaning become clear. The listener gives the speaker feedback as to whether or not he understands what the speaker has said. In this way, the speaker can revise what he has said and try to communicate his intended meaning again, if necessary. There are some techniques can be used in communicative approach, as follows: authentic materials, scrambled sentence, language games, picture strip story, and role play.

### 2. Techniques in Teaching Preposition

In teaching learning process, a teacher must master the ways that produce the interaction among students and teacher as an educator as a process to achieve a goal education. It can be achieved through the right way, a technique influence

and important very much to reach the goal, so the teacher will be able to deliver easier the material to the students. The teacher has freedom of teaching action in order to make the students are interested in delivering materials.

A. S. Hornby in Oxford Advanced Dictionary English states that “Technique is a method of doing something expertly”.<sup>37</sup> J. S. Badudu dan Sultan M. Zain state that “Teknik adalah pengetahuan dan keterampilan membuat sesuatu, cara membuat sesuatu, seni membuat sesuatu.”<sup>38</sup>

So, it can be concluded that techniques is the way which more detailed in the implementation of teaching learning process directly and techniques is the level at which classroom procedure are described.

Some techniques in teaching preposition are:

a. Guided/guiding questions

Students can be trained to use prepositions and prepositional phrases as units to an information questions.

Example: Who are waiting *for*?

I am waiting *for* my classmate.

b. Cloze exercise

This type of exercise requires the selection of the correct preposition; it is a common completion-type exercise. This technique provides a sentence frame into which a blank space has been left. There are several variations of this exercise. The students have to fill in the blank space with the appropriate

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<sup>37</sup>A. S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 887

<sup>38</sup>J. S. Badudu dan Sultan M. Zain, *Kamus Umum Bahasa Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Pustaka Sunan Harapan, 1956), p. 1454

prepositions. For a more controlled exercise, the prepositions are provided, but in alienator order or one dash for each letter in the words is left. For example, fill in the blank spaces with the appropriate prepositions/with the following prepositions: *at, from, in, off, on, through*:

1. He is different.... his brother.
2. The beauty of this town consist... the style of the buildings
3. The picture ... the wall was splendid.
4. She took the ring .... Her finger
5. Be careful! You might fall ....the ladder.
6. The noise was heard ... the wall.
7. I'll meet you .... 5 p.m.

c. Matching exercise

Matching exercises are easily adapted for nouns, adjectives or verbs with obligatory preposition. The students have to match the nouns, adjectives or verbs in column A with the appropriate prepositions in column B.

Example, match the nouns in A with their prepositions in B (some can take two or three prepositions):

Table 2.1. Match the nouns in column A with their preposition in column B

A	B
1. conclusion	a. to
2. affection	b. for
3. sacrifice	c. against
4. disgust	d. from
5. secret	e. towards
6. permission	f. at

d. Recognition exercise

It refers to recognizing/finding synonyms or antonyms of a preposition in context. For example, in the following sentence: “I felt sick *in* the stomach”, *at* is a synonym of *in*.

e. Role play

Role play is very effective with intermediate-advanced students. They could be asked to role play different situations and use certain words with obligatory preposition. For example: imagine you are in court; the prosecuting counsel, the defense counsel and the witness are the roles played by three students who have to use: to accuse of, to charge with, to be sure of, to look at, to agree on, and etc.

f. A schematic picture

A schematic picture by which a teacher can present preposition of place and movement is the ***map***. The learners work in pairs. One does not have the map and wants to get from point A to point B. The other students consult the map and give him detail of the type: Walk *along* the valley until you see a forest, then you go *across* the forest. The teacher can use ***flash cards*** with the preposition on one side and the visual symbol on the other side. After showing the symbol to the students, the teacher elicits the corresponding preposition and an appropriate sentence to illustrate it.

g. Parallel structures

This can be used to teach the more or less numerous relationship a preposition may express, taking into account that some of the common

prepositions may express not only various senses of broad meaning, but also quite different meanings. For example the preposition *in*, *on*, *at* can be presented as prepositions of time (to mark the descending order: year, month, hour) and as prepositions of place (to mark the same descending order: city, street, specific location).<sup>39</sup>

## E. Common Error in Using Preposition

### 1. Preposition Place

#### a. Common error in using preposition place (at)

- 1) We use at to show a specific place or position (particular point and as part of a line).

Incorrect: Someone is on the door/in the door

Incorrect: They are waiting on the bus stop/in the bus stop

Correct: Someone is at the door.

Correct: They are waiting at the bus stop.

- 2) We used at for complete addresses.

Incorrect: I live in 22 Orchard Road, London, England/on 22

Orchard Road, London, England.

Correct: I live at 22 Orchard Road, London, England.

- 3) We say that someone is at an event:

Incorrect: Tom is in a party/on a party

Correct: Tom is at a party

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<sup>39</sup><http://www.univovidius.ro/litere/Anale/Fisiere/02%20volumul%20XIII%202002/01%20Simina%20Badea.pdf>. Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010

- 4) We say at with building when we say where the event(film, concert...) takes place:

Incorrect: The meeting took place in the headquarters/on the headquarters.

Correct: The meeting took place at the headquarters.

- 5) We say at someone's house:

Incorrect: We were in Bill's house last Thursday/on Bill house last Thursday.

Correct : We were at Bill's house last Thursday.

- 6) We say at for a place which is a part of our journey:

Incorrect: We stopped in/on a very nice village. Does the train stop in/on Nashville?

Correct: We stopped at a very nice village. Does the train stop at Nashville?

b. Common error in using preposition place (on)

- 1) We use on to show position on a horizontal or vertical surface.

Incorrect: the cat sat at/in the floor.

Incorrect: The satellite dish is at/in the roof.

Correct: The cat sat on the floor.

Correct: The satellite dish is on the roof.

- 2) We also use on to show position on streets, roads, etc.

Incorrect: I used to live at/in Portland Street.

Correct: I used to live on Portland Street.

- 3) We use on with small islands.

Incorrect: I stayed at/in Maui

Correct: I stayed on Maui

- 4) We say that a place is on the coast/on a river/on a road.

Incorrect: London is at/in the river Thames

Incorrect: Portsmouth is at/in the south coast of England

Correct: London is on the river Thames

Correct: Portsmouth is on the south coast of England.

c. Common error in using preposition place (in)

- 1) We use in to show that something is enclosed or surrounded.

Incorrect: The dog is at/on the garden

Incorrect: She is at/on a taxi

Correct: The dog is in the garden.

Correct: She is in a taxi.

- 2) We also use in to show position within land-areas (towns, counties, states, countries, and continents).

Incorrect: I used to live at/on Nottingham

Correct: I used to live in Nottingham.

- 3) We say in when we talk about a building itself.

Incorrect: The rooms at/on Tom's house are small.

Correct: The rooms in Tom's house are small

- 4) We usually say in with towns and villages

Incorrect: His parents live at/on Banjarmasin

Correct: His parents live in Banjarmasin

Important notes:

1) In / at / on the corner

We say 'in the corner of a room', but 'at the corner (or 'on the corner') of a street'.

2) In / at / on the front

a) We say 'in the front / in the back' of a car.

b) We say 'at the front / at the back' of buildings / groups of people.

c) We say 'on the front / on the back' of a piece of paper.

## 2. Preposition Time

### a. Common error in using preposition time (at)

1) We use at to designate specific times.

Incorrect: The train is due on/in 12:15 p.m.

Correct: The train is due at 12:15 p.m.

2) We used at with noon, night, midnight, and with the time of day

Incorrect: My plane leaves in/on noon

Incorrect: The movie starts in/on 6 p.m.

Correct: My plane leaves at noon

Correct: The movie starts at 6 p.m.

### b. Common error in using preposition time (on)

1) Use on with days of the week, and dates.

Incorrect: We met at/in a Monday



Incorrect: the meeting is at/in the 21<sup>st</sup> of this month

Correct: We met on a Monday.

Correct: The meeting is on the 21<sup>st</sup> of this month.

c. Common error in using preposition time (in)

- 1) In is used with other parts of the day, with months, with years, with seasons:

Incorrect: He likes to read at/on the afternoon

Incorrect: The days are long at/on August.

Incorrect: The book was published at/on 1999

Incorrect: The flowers will bloom at/on spring.

Correct: He likes to read in the afternoon.

Correct: The days are long in August.

Correct: The book was published in 1999.

Correct: The flowers will bloom in spring.

Important notes:

- 1) In the morning, in the afternoon and in the evening because it is considered a period time, but “at night” is an exception this rule.
- 2) When we say last, next, every, this we do not also use at, in, on
  - a) I went to London last June. (not in last June)
  - b) He’s coming back next Tuesday. (not on next Tuesday)
  - c) I go home every Easter. (not at every Easter)
  - d) We’ll call you this evening. (not in this evening)

