Teaching Prepositions to EFL Learners Using Contemporary Methodologies of Teaching

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Abstract

The aim of the Master Thesis is to investigate the effectiveness of using contemporary methodologies of teaching as a learning medium in boosting students' mastery of preposition of time, the impact of Albanian language in students' acquisitions of prepositions, and also some effective methods in teaching English prepositions. This study is an action research with the Elementary students of ZAS Trade school in Prishtina.

Participants in this study are 40 students over 18 years old, 22 males and 18 females. For this research study it is used a quasi experimental design and the students were divided into a control group and an experimental one. The qualitative data was gathered through a pre-test and a post-test which was only the reshuffled version of the pre- test. Also, a translation test was conducted at the end of the course to both groups of students which aimed to investigate the negative influence of students' native language. The study showed that contemporary methodologies of teaching help learners acquire better knowledge regarding prepositions of time.

The data from pre-test and post-test indicated that the students got better achievement after having learnt through contemporary methodologies of teaching. The results from the pre- test of both groups showed that students did not have much knowledge for time prepositions while the results of the post test showed that the experimental group performed better at the end of the course.

The use of contemporary methodologies in teaching English prepositions is very effective in students' mastery of time prepositions. Unlike traditional methodologies, contemporary methodologies involve students in learning through fun activities and playing. Students perform better when they are relaxed and feel comfortable within the environment they learn.

Key words: **prepositions, contemporary methodologies, language interference**

Abstract in Albanian

Qëllimet parësore të tezës së magjistraturës janë hulumtimi i efikasitet të përdorimit të metodave bashkëkohore të mësimdhënies si një mjet mësimor për nxitjen e zotërimit të parafjalëve të kohës, ndikimin e gjuhës shqipe në mësimnxënien e parafjalëve, si dhe sygjerimin e disa metodave efektive në mësimdhënien e parafjlëve angleze. Ky studim është një hulumtim me nxënësit e shkollës së gjuhëve të huaja ZAS Trade në Prishtinë.

Pjesëmarrës në këtë studim janë 40 studentë mbi 18 vjeç, 22 meshkuj dhe 18 femra. Për këtë studim hulumtues përdoret një dizajn pothuajse eksperimentues dhe studentët u ndanë në një grup kontrolli dhe një eksperimentues. Të dhënat cilësore u mblodhën përmes një test paraprak dhe një post-test i cili ishte vetëm versioni i riorganizuar i testit paraprak. Gjithashtu, në fund të kursit u krye një test përkthimi për të dy grupet e studentëve që synonin të hetonin ndikimin negativ të gjuhës amtare të nxënësve. Studimi tregoi se metodologjitë bashkëkohore të mësimdhënies ndihmojnë nxënësit të fitojnë njohuri më të mira në lidhje me parafjalët e kohës. Të dhënat nga testi i organizuar në fillim të kursit dhe testi final treguan se studentët arritën rezultat më të mirë pasi mësuan përmes metodave bashkëkohore të mësimdhënies. Rezultatet nga testet fillestare të të dy grupeve treguan se studentët nuk kishin shumë njohuri për parafjalët e kohës, ndërkohë që rezultatet e testit përfundimtar treguan që grupi eksperimentues ishte me i suksesshëm në fund të kursit.

Si përfundim vlenë të ceket që përdorimi i metodologjive bashkëkohore në mësimdhënien e parafjaliëve angleze është shumë efektiv në mësimnxënien e parafjlëve të kohës dhe zotërimin e tyre. Ndryshe nga metodat tradicionale, metodat bashkëkohore iu mundesojnë studentëve përfshirjen në mësim përmes aktiviteteve zbavitëse dhe lojës. Nxënësit tregojne rezultat më të mirë kur janë të relaksuar dhe ndihen rehat brenda mjedisit ku ata mësojnë.

Fjalët kyçe: parafjalët, metodologjitë bashkëkohore, ndikimi i gjuhës amtare

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Today, English has emerged as an important means of communication across the world including Kosova. In Kosova, it enjoys the status of a foreign language as it is offered as a compulsory subject from primary level up to higher classes. In their efforts to acquire the languages students inevitably make mistakes. One of the most problematic categories that students encounter in learning English is the use of prepositions, which is considered to be a major source of errors (Richards, 1974). Due to the problems stated above, the present study is designed to investigate whether the contemporary methodologies of teaching have any significant effects on the learning of the prepositions among Kosovar EFL learners.

In addition to that the research study tends to show also the negative influence of Albanian language in using English prepositions.

1.1 The Aim of the Research

This research work is focused on the teaching of prepositions through contemporary methodologies of teaching to Kosovar learners who study English as a Foreign Language. Since the preposition is an essential component in writing and speaking English as well, it will be valuable to the teachers to be familiar with types of errors that learners make in order to reduce, if not eliminate problems in the use of appropriate prepositions based on context. Moreover, the study may make the teacher realize to modify prepositions with existing teaching strategies and techniques according to the needs of the students. Besides, this study may make the students conscious of the wrong usage of prepositions.

1.2 Research Questions

The study is designed to analyse the usage of contemporary methodologies in learning English prepositions. Since the notion of prepositions is really extensive, the study is focused on three main time prepositions: At, In and On. This study intended to shed some light on the following objectives:

- Do contemporary methodologies of teaching have any significant effect on the learning of the prepositions among Kosovar EFL learners?
- To what extent does the negative transfer of their native language affect the use of English prepositions?
- What are some effective teaching methods used to learn prepositions?

1.3 Hypotheses

In order to answer the research questions, the following hypotheses are set up:

H1-Contemporary methodologies combined with traditional ones help students to acquire better knowledge regarding prepositions.

H2- Albanian language negatively influences students' acquisition of prepositions.

H3- Using the appropriate methodologies improves teaching effectiveness by helping teachers carry out relevant tasks and activities which encourage learners to learn English prepositions better.

1.4 The importance and impact of the study

This Master Thesis is focused on analysing the usage of contemporary methodologies in learning English prepositions. It is very important for teachers to see if contemporary methodologies combined with traditional ones help students to acquire better knowledge regarding prepositions. Moreover the study tends to analyze the extent that Albanian Language affects the use of English preposition in EFL students. Also, the study intends to raise teachers' awareness on finding some appropriate methods that can help students learn prepositions

better. As it is pointed out the study is focused on the most frequent errors made by learners when using prepositions. Additionally, findings will show to what extent L1 (Albanian) affect the use of prepositions in L2 (English).

1.5 Outline of the Study

I.   Introduction

This chapter introduces the thesis of the study explaining the statement of the problem and also the reason why this topic was chosen. Moreover, this section explicates the aim of the research and also the research questions which are the target points for this study.

II.   Literature Review

This chapter provides the reader with information on different studies and relevant literature which is done in the same field of study, concerning the problems and difficulties caused by the English prepositions of time to foreign learners, in particular to Kosovar learners of English. Also, this section compares and contrasts other researchers' views on the same issue and describes some methods and techniques which are used by previous researchers with the intention to master usage of prepositions correctly.

III.   Methods

This chapter deals with the methods and instruments used to investigate the role of using contemporary methodologies of teaching to Kosovar EFL learners. Moreover the research shows the difficulties that Kosovar learners of English face when using time prepositions. In order to test the hypotheses of the study, a quasi-experimental design it is used to gather the data.

IV.   Results

In this chapter all results and findings are going to be interpreted through charts and graphs. Since the data is collected on the basis of a pre-test and a post-test, the results of each instrument will be elaborated in a separate section. In addition, methods, techniques that work best in mastering prepositions are analyzed in the researcher's desk study.

V.   Conclusion

This chapter restates the effect of using contemporary methodologies in teaching prepositions to Kosovar EFL learners. Also this chapter summarizes the key findings of the study along with some suggestions on some useful techniques and activities for acquiring English time prepositions.

1.6 Methodology

In order to find whether contemporary methodologies help students acquire better knowledge regarding prepositions, 40 students from Prishtina, 22 males and 18 females, took part in the study. The main methods and instruments used to collect the data is a quasi-experimental design where the researcher manipulated one variable and controlled the rest of the variables. The instruments in this study are: a general test of prepositions as a pre test which is going to identify the students' abilities of using prepositions, and a post-test which is the reshuffled order of the pre-test and it is administrated in order to be compared with pretest and measure the effectiveness of using contemporary methodologies in teaching prepositions. Furthermore, students have to take a translation test which will show the influence of their native language in their acquisitions of prepositions. In the end, a desk study is made in order to provide teachers with some effective methods used by other researchers.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Definition of preposition

Using prepositions is challenging not only for Albanian learners but also for speakers of other languages. Richards (1974) and Ravina (1982) (as cited in Castro, Maria Corazon Saturnina A, 2016, p, 97) describe prepositions as one of the most problematic categories that students encounter in learning English, likewise the use of prepositions is considered to be a major source of errors. Kucera & Francis (1967) (as cited in Abas, Suriati, 2012, p,1) state that among the twenty most frequently used words, eight are prepositions: *of, to, in, for, with, on, at* and *by* .Being one of the grammar categories that is more often used by speakers, learners inevitably make mistakes.

Learners often see prepositions as a major problem. According to Parrot (2000), the reason why students make mistakes in using prepositions lies in these facts:

- There are so many prepositions in English (many more than in a lot of other languages) and learners often have to make choices and distinctions that are not necessary in their own language.

- Many choices have little or nothing to do with meaning, and are therefore particularly difficult to remember (Parrot, 2000, p, 83).

In order to avoid such mistakes learners must know the meaning and the usage of each preposition. For the purpose of understanding the notion of prepositions many different explanations are going to be considered in the study. According to Essberger (2009) the word preposition means "place before" which indicates that prepositions usually come before another word, usually a noun or noun phrase: noun, pronoun, noun phrase or gerund (Essberger, 2009, p, 6). Next, Esserberg adds that is difficult to produce a definitive list of English prepositions. In his e-book he lists 94 simple prepositions (which are unlikely to change

or be added to), and 56 complex prepositions (which may possibly be added as the language evolves). Moreover, Esserberg states that this compilation of 150 prepositions is comprehensive at the time of writing, and represents all the prepositions found in a good English dictionary.

Bennet (1975) examined the characteristics that are often required of prepositions. According to Bennet, a preposition syntactically combines one complement phrase, most often a noun phrase, which in English is generally a noun called the object of the preposition, together with its attendant modifiers. Next, he states that a preposition establishes the grammatical relationship that links its complement phrase to another word or phrase in the context. In English, it also establishes a semantic relationship, which may be spatial (in, on, under, etc), temporal (after, during, etc.), or logical (via ...) in nature (Bennet, 1975, cited in SASA, 2013, pg 258).

Moreover, Bennet explains further that a preposition determines certain grammatical properties of its complement (e.g. its case). In English, the objects of prepositions are always in the objective case. He also states that prepositions are non-inflecting or "invariant"; i.e., they do not have paradigms of forms (for different tenses, cases, genders, etc.) in the same way as verbs, adjectives, and nouns in the same language (Bennet, 1975, cited in SASA, 2013, pg 258).

According to Frank (1972) preposition can be categorized into two types. They are prepositions that indicate physical relationships and preposition that indicate semantic relationships (Frank, 1972, pp 164-168).

1. Prepositions that indicate physical relationships show the relationships in time and place. a) Time

     There are three categories of preposition that show the relationships in time: prepositions that indicate one point of time (*on, at, in*), prepositions that indicate extended time (*since, by, from-to, for, during, in or within*), prepositions that indicate sequence of time (*before, after*).

     b) Place

There are three categories of preposition that show the relationships in place: prepositions that indicate the point itself (*in or inside, on, at*), prepositions that indicate higher or lower than a

point (*over, above; under, underneath, beneath, below*), prepositions that indicate neighbouring the point (*near, next to, alongside, beside, between, opposite*).

(2) Prepositions that indicate semantic relationships show the relationships between ideas.

For example:

Because of his cleverness he has many friends – cause and reason.

They went to the baker's *for* bread – purpose.

She is living like a millionaire – comparison.

The study is focused on the three main temporal or time prepositions at, in and on since they are used more frequently than other prepositions, and another reason is that they have different usages.

According to Woodward English "IN" is used in two different ways, the first way of usage is when it denotes a period of time:

IN+Months ⟶ My birthday is in January.

IN+Years ⟶ Shakespeare was born in 1564

IN+Decade ⟶ There were many hippies in the '60s.

IN+Century ⟶ We are living in the 21st century.

IN+Season ⟶ There are many flowers in spring.

Whereas the second usage of "IN" is when it denotes duration such as length of time e.g.:

IN+ Time Period   The meeting starts in ten minutes.

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) 'at', "on" and 'in' are prepositions of 'time when' because they are used to answer the question 'when'? Although in the time sphere there are only two "dimension-types"; point of time, and period of time. AT is used for points of time, mainly for clock –time (*at 10 pm, at noon*) and for holiday periods (*at the weekend, at Easter*) and for phrases *at night, at that time* (Greenbaum, 1973, pg, 154).

AT+ Specific Time ⟶ I get up at 7 o'clock.

AT+ Holiday Period ⟶ Come and visit us at Thanksgiving.

ON is used with phrases referring to days of the week and dates, e.g.:

ON+ Days ⟶ Where were you on Friday?

ON+ Dates ⟶ His birthday is on March 27th.

According to Abkhoo et al., (2014) prepositions are the second category of the most frequent error after pronunciation. They also add that prepositions don't have a definite usage and meaning as well. It is natural that they have different meaning in different languages. As the aim of this study is to find out the difficulties that Albanian learners face when placing time prepositions it is necessary to analyze also the source of prepositional errors which can be caused by both student's mother tongue interference and the influence of the target language itself (Abkhoo, F., Gorjian, B., & Pazhakh, A, 2014 p, 445).

2.2 Language interference

Albanian learners of English face difficulties when it comes to learning English as a foreign language, particularly when it comes to prepositions' usage. As it is mentioned above prepositions are one of the most problematic parts in the process of teaching and learning English. "The source of these problems comes from the very nature of prepositions, which are usually mono-morphemic words which belong to the closed class of lexical items"(Đorđević, 2013, p. 25). But prepositions can also perform other syntactic, semantic functions as well. The fact that they can have other meanings makes non-native learners encounter difficulties when facing them. Many research studies are done in this area, with both genders and with different ages.

According to SASA (2013) prepositions pose major problems when translated from English into Arabic. The study was focused in identifying the difficulties in translating the English prepositions: *at*, *in* and *on*. As a result of not being familiar with prepositions, Saudi EFL students encountered problems related to the usage of prepositions when translating from English into Arabic (256). It is very important for every teacher to make strategies and adopt appropriate teaching materials to be used in teaching prepositions. However, it is unavoidable for foreign students to use their mother tongue when they acquire a foreign language. Very often the errors that they make are attributed to their mother tongue interference. Mother tongue interference means the effect of the learners' native language in the acquisition of a foreign language.

According to Lado (1964), interference is the negative impact of the native language (L1) on the performance of the target language (L2) (as cited in Fatima Salamh Albalawi, 2016, p, 185). However, Norrris (1987) stated that the differences between first language (L1) and second language (L2) structures will result in negative transfer due to the transfer of old habits into new one. By this saying it is understood that students will always tend to make comparisons or find similarities between L1 and L2. The effect of interference can be on any aspect of language such as: grammar, vocabulary, accent, spelling etc (cited in Nada Salih Abdul Ridha,2012, p, 25). Language transfer which is also known as L1 interference, linguistic interference, and cross meaning refers to the ones applying knowledge from their native language to a second language. This interference can be positive and negative. It is considered a positive interference when   L1 helps improving L2, and the opposite it is called the negative interference when the influence of L1 doesn't help but complicates the understanding of L2 (Dulay et al., 1982, p, 98). Furthermore, according to Lott (1983) there are three main factors that cause the interference: The first one is defined as the **Interlingual Factor** (cited in MRA Alonso (1997, p, 9).

This group consists of the grammar or vocabulary errors students make because a word distinction, either lexical or grammatical, which is made in the L2 does not exist in their native language. In the case of Albanian learners of English, students have difficulties in understanding that in English the adjectives usually go before the noun which modify: e.g. *Shtepia e vogël pranë lumit. – House small near river.* Albanian learners make such mistakes when using adjectives in a sentence because they rely on their mother tongue which has a different structure and adjectives have different position in the sentence.

The second factor according to Lott is **the Over Extension of Analogy**, which occurs when the students misuse a vocabulary item because it is similar, either phonetically, orthographically, semantically or syntactically to another form in the Ll. For example the word *library* in English refers to the place or room containing collections of books, periodicals that can be used or borrowed by the public, meanwhile in Albanian language it refers to the place where books are sold, in other words it has the same meaning of a bookshop. So, it happens very often to hear

constructions of sentences by students such as "I am going to buy some books in the "library",

which should be "I am going to buy some books in the bookshop".

The third factor that causes interference according to Lott is the **Transfer of Structure**. These happen when students commit grammar errors because the mother tongue rules are followed, mainly in the structure of sentences.

So, as explained above by many researchers language interference can easily influence learning a new language. It also has positive and negative effects. The greater the differences between the two languages, the more negative the effects of interference are likely to be.

2.3 Contemporary Methodologies of Teaching

Teaching styles have changed significantly over the years. The traditional way that education was delivered was called the Grammar-Translation Method and it may be still in use by a number of teachers today. The traditional approaches to language teaching emphasised the grammatical competence as the basis of language proficiency. These approaches were based on the idea that grammar could be learned through direct instruction and through a methodology that made much use of repetition drills. This approach to the teaching of grammar was a deductive one; students were shown the grammar rules and then given opportunities to practice using them. The opposite of the deductive approach is the inductive approach in which students are given examples of sentences containing a grammar rule and asked to work out the rule for themselves.

According to Richards (2005), the practitioners of this method assumed that language learning meant building up a large repertoire of sentences and grammatical patterns and learning to produce these accurately and quickly in the appropriate situation. As the author explains further, once a basic command of the language was established through oral drilling and controlled practice, the four skills were introduced, usually in the sequence of speaking, listening, reading and writing (Richards, 2005, p, 10).As he stated in his book the techniques that were mainly used included memorization of dialogs, question-and-answer practice, substitution drills, and various forms of guided speaking and writing practice. Great attention to

accurate pronunciation and accurate mastery of grammar was stressed from the very beginning stages. The main goals of this method were that learning a foreign language will mean being able to read literature written in the target language. In order to do this, students need to learn about the grammar rules and vocabulary of the target language (Diane Larsen Freeman, 1999, p, 17). Other methodologies used in the past focused their education on learning through recitation and memorization techniques, for example students would sit in silence, while one student after another would recite the lesson in turns, until each one had been called upon.

The old methods or traditional methods were taught in such a way as ensuring that students were rewarded for their efforts, used class periods efficiently and exercised clear rules to manage students' behaviour.

They were based on established habits that had been used successfully in schools over many years. The teachers communicated the knowledge and enforced standards of behavior. Considering the fact that traditional techniques used repetition and memorization of information to educate students, it meant that they were not developing their critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making skills. Besides that, these conventional methods lacked on preparing students gain good communication skills so this fact made many linguists seek other methods which would prove to be effective in learning a new language.

However, the growing need for good communication skills in English has created a huge demand for teaching English around the world. A great number of people today want to improve their mastery of English or to ensure that their children achieve a good mastery of English. And chances to learn English are provided in many different ways such as through formal instruction, travel, studying abroad, as well as through the media and the Internet. The demand for English all over the world has created an enormous demand for quality language teaching and language teaching materials and resources.

Nowadays, learners set themselves demanding goals. They want to be able to acquire a new language properly and to a high level of accuracy and fluency. Another factor for mastering English stands to the point that employers nowadays are seeking their employees to have good English language skills, and fluency in English is a prerequisite for advancement and success in many fields of employment in today's world. So, the demand for an appropriate teaching

methodology is therefore as strong as ever, and requires contemporary teaching methodologies which will be focused more on the individual student's needs rather than assuming all students are at the same level of understanding. The contemporary way of teaching is more activity based and it uses more questioning, explaining, demonstration and collaboration techniques.

One modern method whose focus is on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language, by using a variety of activities and games such as: authentic materials, language games, scrambled sentences, picture strip stories, role plays and other fun activities is the Communicative Language Teaching, or CLT. When it first appeared as a new approach to language teaching in the 1970s and 1980s, Communicative language teaching made a great influence, and language teachers and teaching institutions all around the world soon began to rethink their teaching, syllabuses, and classroom materials. In designing language courses within a communicative approach, grammar was no longer the starting point. New approaches to language teaching were needed.

Since it was first proposed in the 1970s, this method has greatly influenced approaches to language teaching today. According to Richards (2015), since its inception in the 1970s, CLT has served as a major source of influence on language teaching practice around the world. Many other methodologies that have developed after that were regarded as logical development of some of the core principles of CLT, for example: The Natural Approach, Cooperative Language Learning, Content-Based Instruction and Task-Based Language Teaching which is as a recent version of communicative methodology and seeks to reconcile methodology with current theories of second language acquisition (Richards, 2005, p, 10).

As mentioned above, many of the issues raised by a communicative teaching methodology are still relevant today, though teachers who are relatively new to the profession may not be familiar with them. The modern methodologies of teaching have made learning easier, fun and more enjoyable than the traditional "chalk and talk" method of teaching which has persisted for hundreds of years. The above mentioned method is now acquiring inferior results when compared with the more modern and revolutionary teaching methods that are available for use in schools today. By using contemporary methodologies of teaching greater student interaction

is encouraged, the boundaries of authority are being broken down, and a focus on enjoyment over grades is emphasized. Another thing which is common for traditional ways of teaching is that teachers try always to be in accordance with textbooks and use them entirely from instructions till recommendations they suggest. In modern methodologies the teacher is free to modify the materials according to students' needs and make them more engaging for students in order to increase L2 acquisition.

In addition to that, teachers should promote learning through western styles and minimize traditional ways of teaching which consider textbooks as the only source of supporting the processes of learning and teaching. Besides, a modern teacher can use a number of resources, i.e. textbooks handouts, pictures, hand-written explanations, videos, tapes, internet sites, computer programs, and so on, to maximize the processes of learning and teaching. Furthermore, the contemporary methodologies of teaching promote the use of other approaches like Student Centered approach rather than Teacher Centered approach. The teacher is seen mainly like a tutor and instructor in EFL classes, and is not the most active person in the room and doesn't do most of the talking, but the teacher engages and activates students 90% of the time and uses the rest for explaining and instructing.

All in all, modern learning encourages students to collaborate and therefore to be more productive. Considering all these factors, traditional and modern teaching methods are both effective and useful in today's education. However, as with most things, it's all about balance. So, teachers need to understand when a traditional method works best and when it's right and necessary to try new and innovative methodologies.

2.4 Summary of Desk Study on the Latest Methods of Teaching English Prepositions

Since the preposition is an essential component in writing and speaking English, it was considered essential to carry out a desk study in order to find out the most effective methods and models of activities to teach prepositions of time. Furthermore, this desk study will be valuable to the teachers to be familiar with types of errors that learners make in order to reduce, if not eliminate problems in the use of appropriate prepositions based on context. The findings of this desk study are divided into best approaches considered by many researchers in the field of prepositions and also some effective activities that teachers should consider while teaching time prepositions. Moreover, the study may make the teacher realize to modify prepositions with existing teaching strategies and techniques according to the needs of the students. Besides, this study may make the students conscious of the wrong usage of prepositions.

From my experience as a teacher I dare to say that teaching prepositions through **traditional approach** (based on grammar instructions where the students focus on learning prepositions individually and not within context) is not sufficient especially for EFL learners of Kosova. In order to determine what pedagogical methods are most effective in teaching prepositions, other researchers' studies are analyzed. According to a research done by Lorincz, K and Gordon, R, (2012) the **collocation approach** and the **prototype approach** seem to be the most effective ones used in learning prepositions. These methods were supported by various researchers who stated their reasons for considering these methods successful in teaching prepositions (Lorincz, K and Gordon, R. 2012, p, 2).

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2.4.1 The Collocation Approach

This approach suggests learning prepositions through collocations. According to it, students can be taught by using "chunks", or words that occur together, which in the case of prepositions are called phrases. In addition to that, students can better perform if they are taught to use phrasal verbs like to *wait on*, to *work on* or *pick on*, rather than teaching them a single entity (Mueller, 2011, pp. 480-481). According to Mueller, this method is effective for several reasons. Among them, the most interesting one is that the collocation approach gives priority to frequency-based learning, which is built upon the idea that people naturally process groups of words as a single unit. Next, this method is thought to be a precursor step to linguistic pattern analysis. Researchers believe that such forms can be preserved initially as chunks, but after repeated exposure, they are analyzed more closely by the learner.

Another benefit of this approach is that teaching prepositions through collocations easily allows for the use of corpora and concordancing lines. Koosha and Jafarpour (2006) (as cited in Lorincz, and Gordon, 2012, p, 2) defined it as a method of analyzing language by studying structures and lexical patterns found in digital databases. As it is explained in the article, learners who used concordancing lines in a language-corpora were exposed to more authentic input and more opportunities to notice grammatical patterns. According to Koosha and Jafarpour, this method proved to be successful because it made students become pro-active participants in their learning of prepositions (Koosha and Jafarpour, 2006, p, 196).

2.4.2 The Prototype Approach

The next method which is considered to be effective is the prototype approach. Considering the fact that prepositions have multiple meaning, this method focuses on learning one prototype of each preposition which is thought to be the most dominant meaning of it. For example, the preposition 'on' has multiple meanings, but the prototypical definition is "contact of an object with a line of surface" (Lindstromberg, 1996, p. 229). The prototype theory contends that the polysemous nature of prepositions can be explained through analysis of the prototypical

meaning; all non-prototypical meanings are thought to be related to the prototype, often through metaphorical extension (p, 228). Furthermore Lindstromberg (1996) explained that non-prototypical meanings like "come on" can be understood by extending the prototypical meaning which means that teachers should first teach the prototypical meaning, often through the use of Total Physical Response (TPR), and only then begin to branch out to more abstract meanings. To develop the semantic mapping even further, comparison and contrast to other prepositions can be useful. In his research study Lindstromberg explained the concept of "come on" by contrasting it with come back (Lindstromberg 1996, p. 230). Semantic-based approaches unify different meanings of each preposition, but they also provide connections between prepositions that are otherwise considered only individually. Another advantage of using this approach is that teaching prepositions through a semantically-based approach affects positively on both the immediate knowledge and the retention of that knowledge. So, Lam (2009) in his research study revealed that "*learners in the experimental groups were more confident in their answers, signifying that they had a profound understanding of the prepositions and how they are used*" (Lam, 2009, p. 11).

 These are some of the effective methods suggested by researchers in teaching prepositions. Teachers should combine these methods in order to come up with best results in teaching prepositions to foreign learners of English. Besides these methods mentioned above, the exposure to prepositions can be a successful way of acquiring prepositions, because prepositions are difficult to translate from any language to a target language. Also, their usage depends on the context in which is used.

2.5 Effective models of activities that can be used in teaching prepositions of time

There is no point in work unless it absorbs you like an absorbing game if it doesn't absorb you, if it's never any fun don't do it!   D. H. Lawrence.

Toys and games play an important part in children's development. They are connected with playing, and almost everyone likes to play and such a desire continues throughout an individual's life. According to Games and Toys in the Teaching of Science and Technology, psychologists inform us that games are not just leisure activities for filling empty periods, or just relaxation but they comprise important learning experience.

Games can be fun not just for children, but also adolescent students enjoy learning something new through games and activities. So, the idea was to teach prepositions of time through different activities involving playing, music and technology, too. Some of the activities may not be proper to their age but they enjoyed playing bingo, domino, board game, watching videos, listening to songs, rolling the dice, or taking online quizzes. These relaxing activities, in which students are comfortable with, could be easily used by the teachers to teach different aspects of grammar in a foreign language. The activities used in this study for teaching prepositions may make the teachers re-appraise their teaching approaches and styles, and where appropriate, incorporate some of the ideas mentioned in this section into their teaching, in order to create a more suitable learning environment for their students.

 During the pedagogical intervention I have used a variety of interactive methods such as:

2.5.1 Board Game

Board games are such important tool in providing active engagement skills and knowledge development for people of all ages on all subjects. These well designed games not only create an engaging atmosphere but they also provide a nonthreatening, playful, yet competitive

environment in which to focus on content and reinforce learning. According to Skehan (1998) many board games encourage players to:

- detect patterns;

- plan ahead;

- predict the outcome of alternative moves;

- learn from experience;

- task performance can be assessed in terms of the outcome(Skehan ,1998, p, 95).

While having taught prepositions I realised that this type of activity turned to be very effective and challenging for students. Next, a description of the activity from different points of view is presented in the lesson plans.

Aim: The development of the ability of producing an oral message

Competence/ objective: to practice prepositions of time

Task: Make up sentences according to the picture using the prepositions of time:

Materials: Students, board game, counters, dice

Level: Elementary

Time: 25 min

Interaction: Group Work

Procedure:

- The teacher divides the class into groups of three or four.

- The teacher gives each group a copy of the board game, a set of time preposition cards, a dice and counters.

- The students choose a counter and in turns roll the dice and move their counter along the board. When a player lands on a time expression square, they look at the cards in their hand and find a time preposition card that matches with the time on the square, e.g. on Saturday, at Christmas, etc. If the answer is correct they move ahead two more spaces.

  If the player is unable to make a question, they take the card back and go back to their previous square.

2.5.2 Dominoes

There are a variety of ways you could use dominoes in your teaching methodology. Being such a versatile teaching tool in the classroom, teachers can use them in different aspects such as teach counting, addition, subtraction, fractions, and also teach prepositions, or other parts of grammar. Playing dominoes also helps students work on social emotional skills like waiting for a turn, or familiarizes them with group work and lessons to teach new concepts and for follow up practice. This activity involving dominoes proved to be a fun way of practicing English, and it can be a really motivating way to learn a language.

Games, such as domino, are also great for children who are shy or worried about making mistakes. It can give them an opportunity to communicate in English in a safe and fun way.

Aim: To match the prepositions of time 'in', 'on' and 'at' with time expressions and then to use each prepositional time phrase in a sentence.

Competence/ objective: to practice repositions of time: in, on, at, time expressions and prepositional time phrases

Task: Produce sentences containing time expressions

Materials: Students, dominoes, pen, paper

Level: Elementary

Time: 25 min

Interaction: Group Work

Procedure:

- The teacher divides the class into groups of three.
- The teacher gives each group a set of dominoes, and a pen and a paper for keeping score.
- The students shuffle the dominoes and deal out five each, leaving the rest in a pile of face down.
- The teacher tells the groups to pick up the top domino from the pile and put it face up on the table. The first player puts down one of their dominoes on either side of the

domino on the table, making sure that the preposition of time matches with the time expression or vice versa. If the player matches the preposition of time successfully, he or she scores a point. For an extra point, the player then uses the prepositional time phrase in a sentence. If the prepositional time phrase is wrong, the player must take back the domino and play passes to the next student. When a player has got rid of all their dominoes, the game ends. The students then add up their scores. The player with the most points wins the game.

2.5.3 Personal Calendar

Making a personal calendar is a good way of revising important dates in one's life. Students complete their personal calendars with important events in their lives such as birthdays, anniversaries, and all the celebrations they have throughout the year. Many calendar activities encourage students to:

- Revise dates
- Memorize months of the year
- Practice days of the week
- Use the appropriate time prepositions that go with dates, months, years, celebrations etc.

Aim: To match the appropriate prepositions of time with important dates, events.

Competence/ objective: to practice prepositions of time which are used with dates, months, days and celebrations

Task: Produce sentences containing time expressions

Materials: Students, one copy of the worksheet for each student, a pen

Level: Elementary

Time: 25 min

Interaction: Individual Work

Procedure:

- The teacher encourages students to talk about personal and public celebrations they have throughout the year, brainstorm types of celebrations with the class and write students ideas on the board, e.g. birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas Day, Easter, etc.

- Provide each student with a copy of the calendar worksheet and encourage them to write down all the celebrations they have throughout the year in the monthly calendar and make notes on how they celebrate each one.

- When the students have finished, divide them into pairs, and encourage them to take turns to interview their partner about the celebrations, e.g. "Do you celebrate anything in January?" Afterwards the teacher asks students to give feedback to the class on one of their partner's celebrations**.**

2.5.4 Picture Sequencing

Since we live in a world which is visually oriented it is believed that visual materials such as pictures, videos, movies, TV programmes, cartoons, or other visual arts can be used as great stimulus to enhance the students ability acquire a new language, develop their creativity and critical thinking as well (Hyland, 2003, pp, 9-15).Students may face different problems when performing tasks in foreign languages and very often those problems include arranging information, using the proper vocabulary, the correct use of grammar and also reviewing their writing. Most of the information that we can process comes from non-verbal stimuli (images) and even verbal information is better processed when is accompanied with visual stimuli. Since learning is a complicated process and the visual aids, especially pictures, can be a great help in stimulating the learning of a new language.

Another important thing related to pictures and other visuals is that they engage adult learners, students, and people in general, in their pathways to self-discovery and their ideas of belongings.

Aim: To create a story out the picture and tell it by using time expressions and prepositions.

Competence/ objective: to practice prepositions of time, time expressions and prepositional phrases from the story created from pictures.

Task: Students have to order the photos and then create a story based on them

Materials: Students, one copy of the picture sequencing worksheet for each student, a pen, paper

Level: Elementary

Time: 20 min

Interaction: Individual Work

Procedure:

- The teacher gives each student a copy of the picture sequencing worksheet and asks them to order the picture in chronological order. In each picture is illustrated a part of the story which happens in one period of time.
- The students have to create their one imaginative story and tell it with the use of time prepositions.
- Students can give feedback at the end of the activity and choose the most interesting story in the class.

2.5.5 Video Clips

Technology nowadays offers flexibility and many different choices to education. Learning can be a real fun if teachers incorporate technology in their classes. Common tools used for teaching are video clips which are very useful multimedia tool that has both visual and audio content. Teachers can create their own videos by using different multimedia equipment such as mobile phones, animation software, websites, and cameras. Various creative videos facilitate the learning process and arouse the interest of learners. Sometimes an animated video would be more helpful than a mechanical fill in the blanks exercises in the textbooks. However, while using videos, the attention should be paid to the selection of videos, and nature of the language. Zhu (2012) demonstrated that *"English teachers should be very clear that multimedia is one of the means of assistance for English teaching but not the whole teaching"* (p. 135). According to Motteram (2011) the video must be used to achieve a learning goal, not just coloring the lesson (pp, 303-327). Moreover, Tomlinson (2011), believed that the material

should be carefully selected based on the learners' level, age, background, and interest. If videos are used carefully, and with purpose, they can provide opportunities to use language correctly; videos with their variety, flexibility, and productivity have a lot to offer for language learning processes of the learners (p, 357).

Aim: Revising time prepositions

Competence/ objective: to practice prepositions of time

Task: Produce oral messages by using prepositions of time or expressions of time about characters they see on the video

Materials: Students, laptop, projector, pen, paper

Level: Elementary

Time: 25 min

Interaction: Group Work

Procedure:

- The teacher plays on a 3 minutes video about time prepositions. The first time they watch it students focus only on the characters and the things they do and what they perform at a particular time.

- In the second time, students are advised to take notes while watching the video and write down the time prepositions that characters used to describe their events, such as "*Hana closes her shop at midnight and then goes home*."

- After they have finished watching the video they take time to organize their notes and present to the class.

To sum it up, there are many opportunities for teachers to use the best methods when teaching prepositions. There is no single approach that can satisfy different needs and requirements of the individuals, but teachers should adapt them properly in their teaching procedures. According to Rivers (1981) an eclectic approach allows language teachers to absorb the best techniques of all the well known language teaching methods into their teaching, using them for purposes which they are more appropriate(p,55). So, a combination of the above mentioned approaches and activities including multiple tasks, high interaction, lively learning and enjoyment lead to better results and acquiring prepositions in an easier and effective way.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This chapter deals with the methods and instruments used to investigate the effectiveness of using contemporary methodologies of teaching to Kosovar EFL learners. Moreover the research intends to show the difficulties that Kosovar learners of English face when using time prepositions. In order to test the hypotheses of the study, a quasi-experimental design is used to gather the data. This experimental design is an experiment where the researcher manipulates one variable and controls the rest of the variables. This means that students are divided into a control group and an experimental group. Participants are 40 Elementary learners from Prishtina who attend an English course in a private school called ZAS Trade. All of the participants are native speakers of Albanian, and attend English classes three sessions per week, each for an hour and a half. The reason why this school is chosen for the study, lies in the point that I work there as a teacher, and the difficulties they have with prepositions were encountered since the beginning of the course. Moreover, the researcher made a desk study by which are provided some effective methods, activities and tasks used by other researchers in the usage of prepositions. In order to find out whether contemporary methodologies of teaching help students learn prepositions better, the following instruments are used to gather the data: a pre- test and a post- test. Moreover, the researcher made a desk study by which are provided some effective methods used by other researchers in the usage of prepositions.

3.1 Participants

The subject for this research study, are forty students from ZAS Trade school in Prishtina. The students are in the elementary level of English. The students are twenty-two males and eighteen females of over 18 who learn English in ZAS Trade school.   The students were informed in advance about the research in which they took part. The time is measured and it

took approximately 20 min for the pre-test test. As for the translation of 20 sentences from Albanian into English, it lasted more than 15 minutes.

The instruments mentioned above are used for each of the research questions in the study. For the first resarch question analysing whether contemporary methodologies combined with traditional ones help students to acquire better knowledge regarding prepositions, a quasi-experimental design is used to gather the data, comprised of a general test and a post-test. In order to find out to what extent does Albanian Language affect the use of English prepositions the instrument of translation is being used. By this instrument learners had to translate 20 sentences containing time prepositions, from their native language into English langauge. As for the last research question concerning some effective teching methods used to learn prepositions, a desk study is used to suggest some teaching methods and techniques which can help the students overcome the difficulties when using prepositions.

3.2 Measuring instruments

3.2.1 Pre-test

One type of instrument used in this research study(See Appendix 1) especially used in language and assessment, is a general test of prepositions as a pre test which is going to identify the students' abilities of using prepositions. The pre-test was conducted on 15th of October and the two groups of students took it on the same day. The pre-test consists of cloze in the gap sentence or cloze items. This test is thought to be an appropriate one to analyse students' ability to acquire and produce a written message using prepositions, and to detect the usage of which preposition they make mistakes and with which one do they mistaken. This cloze test consisted of 30 sentences (with blanks replacing *at*, *in* and *on*) and they were randomly presented to students to avoid bias. The sentences were randomly mixed and the test contained 10 sentences for each time preposition. Participants were asked to fill out gaps with the appropriate preposition that express time. In all of the sentences a word was extracted and students had to complete it with one of the prepositions *at, in* and *on.*

3.2.2 Translation Test

The other instrument used in this study is translation, where students had to translate 20 sentences (See Appendix 2), which contained time prepositions from Albanian language into English. This instrument aimed to show the extent that the Albanian Language affects the usage of time prepositions or the interference of Albanian language in using English prepositions. The researcher was interested to find out how the students translated these particular phrases into English language by using time prepositions at, in and on. As we can see from the sentences below the main prepositions in Albanian language which are going to be translated in English are: **Në, Më, Të** which have the same meaning as AT, IN, ON. The preposition **Në**, when translated in English, has the meaning of all **AT, IN** and **ON,** for example:

1. **Në** mëngjes … ⟶ **In** the morning.. …
2. …**në** orën 8**.**   ⟶ **… at** 8 o'clock.
3. **… në** të njëtën ditë**.**   ⟶ **…. on** the same day.

But it is very likely that learners make mistakes relating to **Në** as they might think that the only adequate meaning of it is **IN**. **Të** is mainly translated in English as **On** like in the following sentences, and is usually used when denoting days of the week. Just as **Të** which has the meaning of **On**, also **Më** is translated as **On** and is constantly used when expressing the date. For example:

- …**më** 26 gusht 1910… ⟶ …**on** August 26, 1910.
- … **më** 23 maj**.**   ⟶ … **on** May 23rd.

As it is mentioned above, translating prepositions from Albanian into English Language is considered to be a very difficult part for Albanian learners, and by the use of this instrument it is shown the extent of Albanian language into English when translating time prepositions.

3.2.3 Post-Test

The post-test was conducted after three months of attending a course in ZAS trade school, which means that students were about to finish the elemntary level when they took the post-test (See Appendix 1). The post test was conducted on January 21st and it was used as a part of their final assessment. In order to check students' progress of both acquiring and producing messages regarding the prepositions a post test is used in both experimental and controlled group. Students in the two groups took the post-test on the same day. The post-test is the reshuffled order of the pre-test and it is administrated in order to be compared with pre-test and likewise measure the effectiveness of using contemporary methodologies in teaching prepositions. Both pre-test and post-test contain 30 multiple choice items, and in each sentence a word was extracted where students had to complete it with one of the prepositions of time *at, in* and *on.*

To sum it up, this chapter deals with methods and instruments used to find whether contemporary methodologies help students acquire better knowledge regarding prepositions. The participants are 40 students from Prishtina, 22 males and 18 females. The main methods and instruments used to collect the data is a quasi-experimental design where the researcher manipulated one variable and controlled the rest of the variables. The instruments in this study are: a general test of prepositions as a pre test which is going to identify the students' abilities of using prepositions, and a post-test which is the reshuffled order of the pre-test and it is administrated in order to be compared with pretest and measure the effectiveness of using contemporary methodologies in teaching prepositions. Besides, students had to take a translation test which shows the influence of their native language in their acquisitions of prepositions. In the end, a desk study is made in order to provide teachers with some effective methods used by other researchers.

CHAPTER 4

Data, analysis and discussion of findings

This chapter deals with the effectiveness of contemporary methodologies of teaching in teaching time prepositions to Kosovar learners of English. The chapter analyses the data gathered from the two groups of students, the controlled group and the experimental one. After conducting the pre-test and the post- test, the following formula is used to measure the mean of the students' test result:

$$M1= \frac{X1}{N} \quad and \quad M2= \frac{X2}{N}$$

Where,

M1 = the mean score of pre-test

M2 = the mean score of the post test

N = the number of the students

X1 = the number of the pre-test score

X2= the number of the post test score

4.1 The description of the procedure

This research study used a quasi-experimental design where the researcher manipulated one group of students and controlled the other group. This means that in the very beginning students are divided into a control group and an experimental group. In the beginning of the elementary level on October 15th, both groups conducted the pre-test on the same day. So, the pre-test was administrated at the beginning of the course and the post-test was administrated at the end of the course. The whole course lasted 3 months. The two groups of students had classes three times a week; each class was about an hour and a half. For the experimental group the researcher used a variety of methods, including also combined conventional methodologies, techniques, different activities, games, videos, songs, pictures etc. All the activities used aimed to boost the students' knowledge of time prepositions and

they included a variety of tasks such as: identifying prepositions, completing sentences with prepositions, matching sentences with correct prepositions and finding prepositions. In the traditional class (controlled group) the students were taught prepositions through conventional methods only. However, none of the activities mentioned above is used with the controlled group. The instructor provided explanations about each preposition, used examples of prepositions in order to clarify the use of prepositions. The lesson was given on the same day for the two groups. The control group took the lesson first in an ordinary classroom, and immediately after them the experimental group took place in a classroom which was equipped with TV, projector and which had access to Internet. At the end of the level, the students were required to take a post-test which assessed their preposition knowledge via the same test used. The results of the groups were recorded and the data taken from them was subjected to statistical analysis.

4.2 The effectiveness of using contemporary methodologies of teaching in learning English time prepositions

4.2.1 The Results of Pre-Test

The results from pre-test were pretty much the same regarding the experimental group and the control group. The students marked with the code C are from the control group whereas those marked with the code E are from the experimental group. The results of the pre-test for both groups can be seen in the tables below:

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Table 1.Control group results of the pre-test

No	Students' Code	Score
1	C#1	16
2	C#2	14
3	C#3	5
4	C#4	12
5	C#5	10
6	C#6	12
7	C#7	7
8	C#8	6
9	C#9	8
10	C#10	10
11	C#11	11
12	C#12	3
13	C#13	8
14	C#14	12
15	C#15	7
16	C#16	8
17	C#17	7
18	C#18	8
19	C#19	7
20	C#20	10
Total		181
Lowest Score		3
Highest Score		16

The mean score of the controlled group was:

$$M1 = \frac{X1}{N} = \frac{181}{20} = 9.05$$

As it is seen from the table the mean score of the control group was 9.05; the highest score in the group was 16 while the lowest score was 3. In general students weren't so familiar with the time prepositions and during the test they were unsure about their usage in different occasions and their meanings as well. Some of the students weren't sure about which prepositions to use so majority of the sentences were left blank.
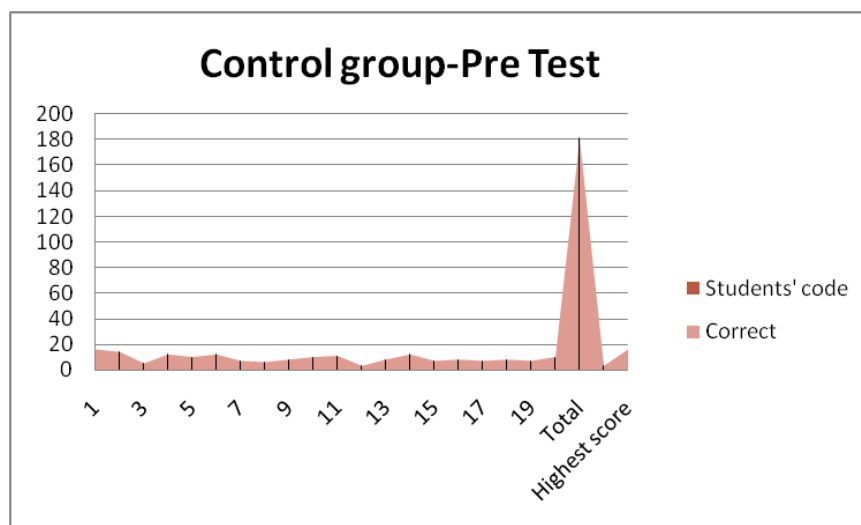
Figure 1Graphic display of the Control group results' of pre-test

Like in the control group also in the experimental group students' knowledge about prepositions was poor. They had no knowledge of the prepositions and were also doubtful about what they already knew. As it can be seen below the mean score of the experimental group is 9.2 whereas in the control group was 9.05.

Table 2 Experimental group results of the pre-test

No	Students' Code	Score
1	E#1	9
2	E#2	10
3	E#3	7
4	E#4	4
5	E#5	12
6	E#6	9
7	E#7	8
8	E#8	9
9	E#9	8
10	E#10	17
11	E#11	14
12	E#12	4
13	E#13	10
14	E#14	11
15	E#15	7
16	E#16	8
17	E#17	8
18	E#18	13

19	E#19	11
20	E#20	5
Total		184
Lowest Score		4
Highest Score		17

Table number 2 showed the results of the experimental group. The mean score of this group was $M2 = \dfrac{X2}{N} = x = \dfrac{184}{20} = 9.2$

So as it can be seen in the second table the results of the two groups were very similar with each other. The mean score of the experimental group was almost the same which meant that the both groups were in the same level of knowledge regarding this challenging field of grammar, prepositions. In this group the number of students who possibly passed this test is only one student scoring 17.
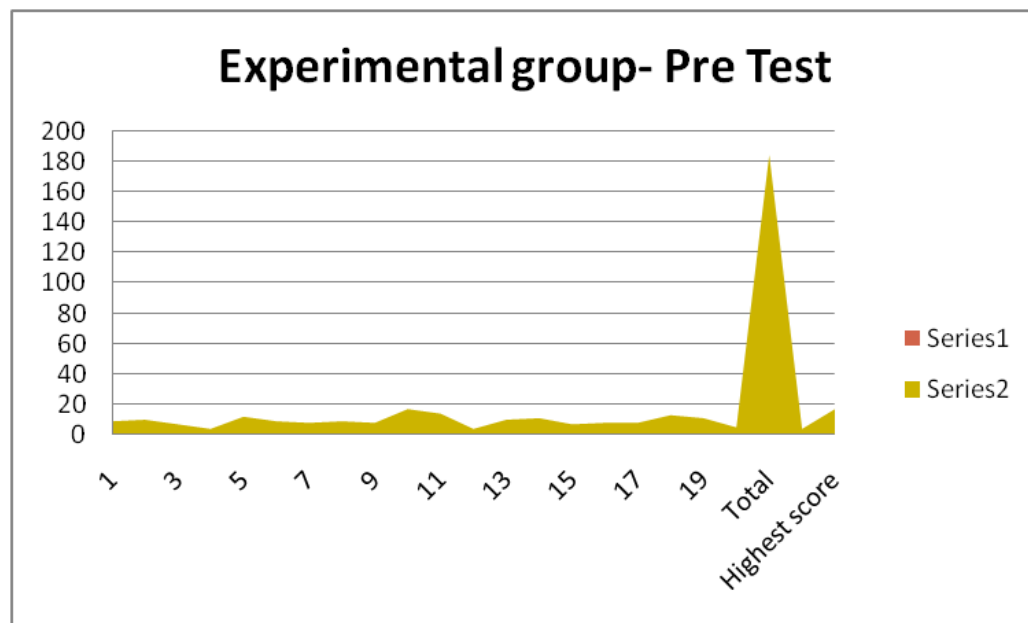

Figure 2Graphic display of Experimental group results of the pre-test

4.2.2 The results of Post Test

As it is explained in the methodology section of the research study the post-test is conducted after three months of attending the elementary course. The pre-test was administered on the 15th of October, and the post-test is conducted after three months, exacly on the 21st of January.In order to measure the effectivenes of both groups the post-test was only reshuffled in order to be compared easier with the results of the pre-test.

a) Control Group

The table below shows the students' results of the post-test in the controlled group of students. It is important to state that in this group students were taught using only conventional methodologies of teaching, using only books and teacher's explanations. The mean score of the post- test of the control group is 12.1 which mean that compared with the pre-test control group had only a little improvement in acquiring prepositions. The data below show that from 20 students who took part in the control group only 2 students scored 20 points and 2 other students reached to score 15 out of 30 points. The lowest score was 6 and that was scored from 1 student. According to the results 18 students got the score under the criteria mastery of learning or about 90% of the students failed the test. It could be said that only 2 students out of 20 or 10% of the class fulfilled the criteria mastery of learning.

Table 3.Control group results of the post-test

No	Students' Code	Score
1	C#1	20
2	C#2	20
3	C#3	10
4	C#4	15
5	C#5	12
6	C#6	10
7	C#7	9
8	C#8	11
9	C#9	9
10	C#10	13
11	C#11	6
12	C#12	9
13	C#13	11
14	C#14	14
15	C#15	13
16	C#16	9
17	C#17	15
18	C#18	10
19	C#19	14
20	C#20	12
Total		242
Lowest Score		6
Highest Score		20

For the control group the mean score of the post test was:

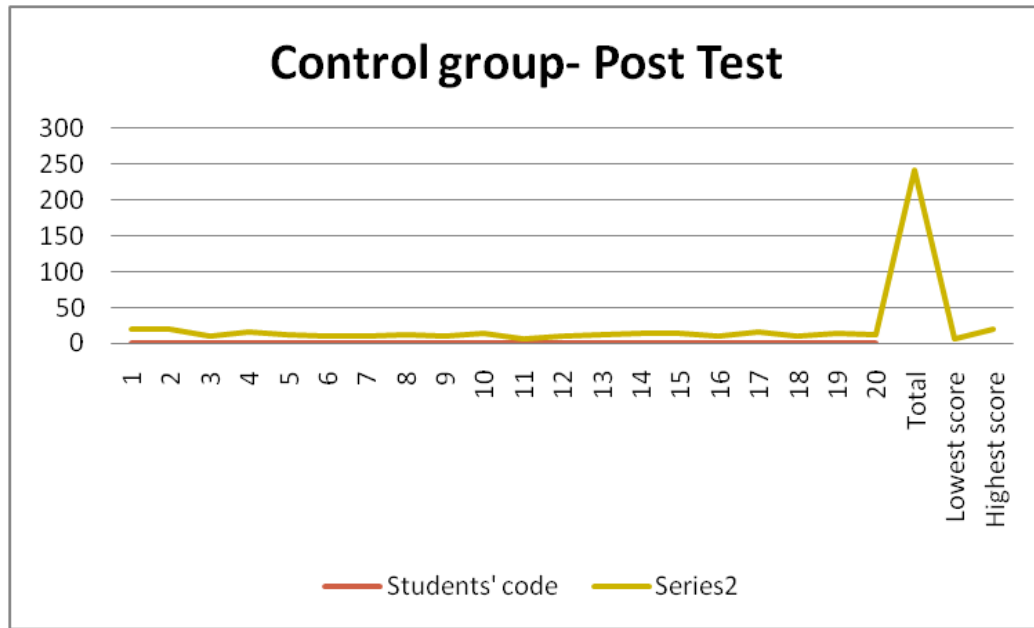$$M1 = \frac{X1}{N} = \frac{242}{20} = 12.1$$

According to the results above, it can be seen that the students still had low understanding of time preposition and the methods used in the control group didn't help that much in their mastery of prepositions. In fact they were not offered sufficient examples or activities in order to practice the use of prepositions correctly. This group of students had not succeeded yet in learning preposition of time because the outcome was not satisfying and it shows that the scores are not the ones that a teacher aims to have in a successful class.
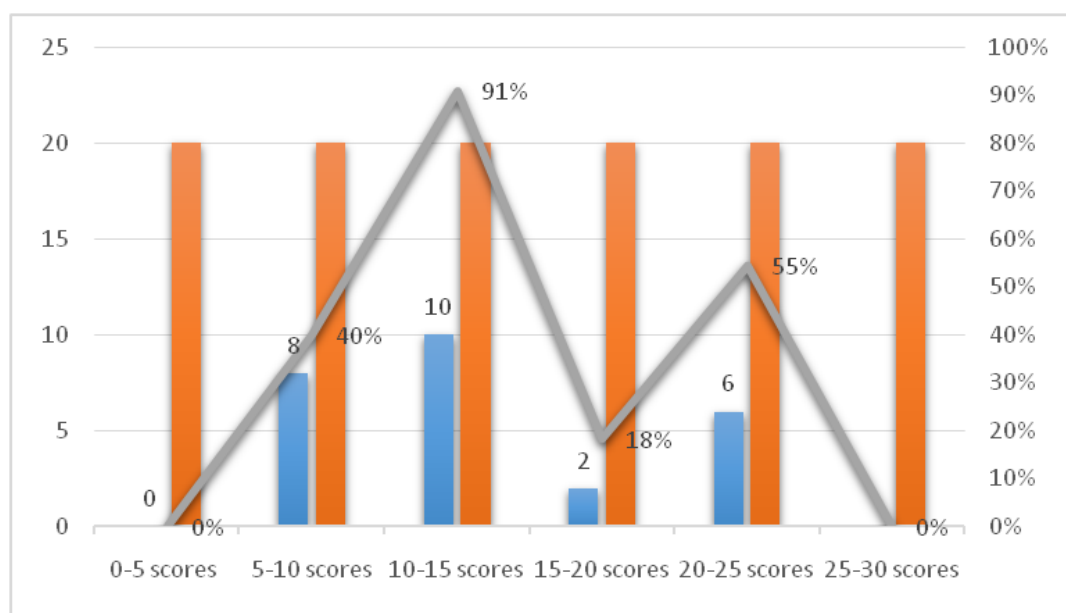
Figure 4.The graphic presentation of the highest scores achieved in the control group-Post Test

b) Experimental group

The collected data from the post- test of the experimental group shows that the performance of the experimental group was better compared with the pre-test and also the post-test of the control group. As it can be seen in the graphic display, 14 students from the group or about 70% of them completed the criteria of mastering English time prepositions. However, 6 students from this group or 30% of the class did not fulfill the criteria mastery of learning prepositions.

Table 4.Experimental group results of the post-test

No	Students' Code	Score
1	E#1	22
2	E#2	18
3	E#3	19
4	E#4	21
5	E#5	14
6	E#6	18
7	E#7	25
8	E#8	17

9	E#9	12
10	E#10	26
11	E#11	14
12	E#12	10
13	E#13	20
14	E#14	25
15	E#15	26
16	E#16	21
17	E#17	17
18	E#18	23
19	E#19	13
20	E#20	14
Total		375
Lowest Score		10
Highest Score		26

The mean score of the experimental group for the post test was:

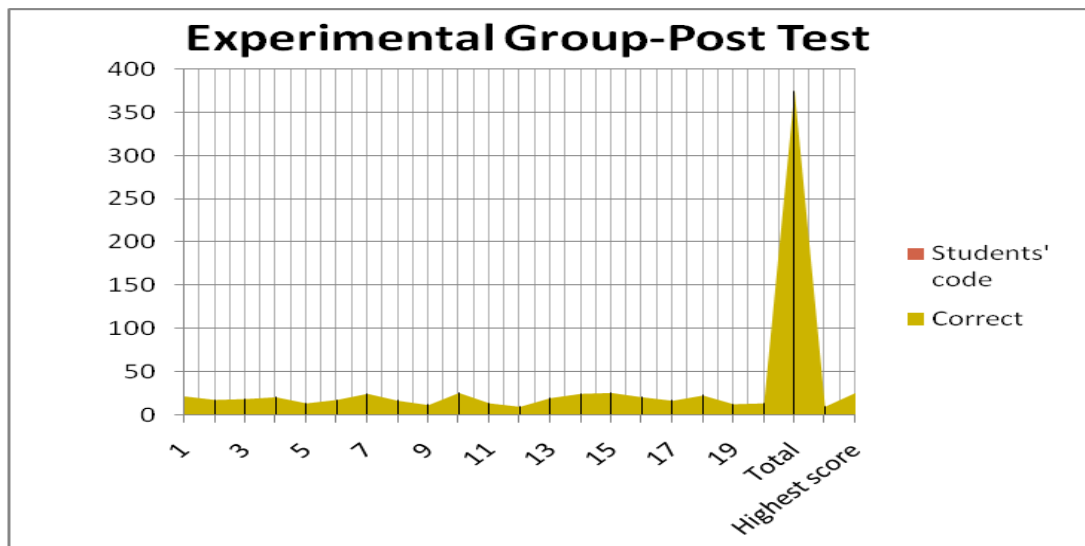$$M1 = \frac{X1}{N} = \frac{375}{20} = 18,75$$

Figure 5.The graphic display of Experimental group post-test results

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The graphic presentation shows that majority of students showed great results in the post test because of the variety of methods and techniques used while learning. The combination of traditional methodologies of teaching and also contemporary methodologies of teaching made learning prepositions easier and more effective. As it is seen in the figure above the line in the graphic display goes to increase from the lowest score with 10 scores until 26 scores reached by 2 students.
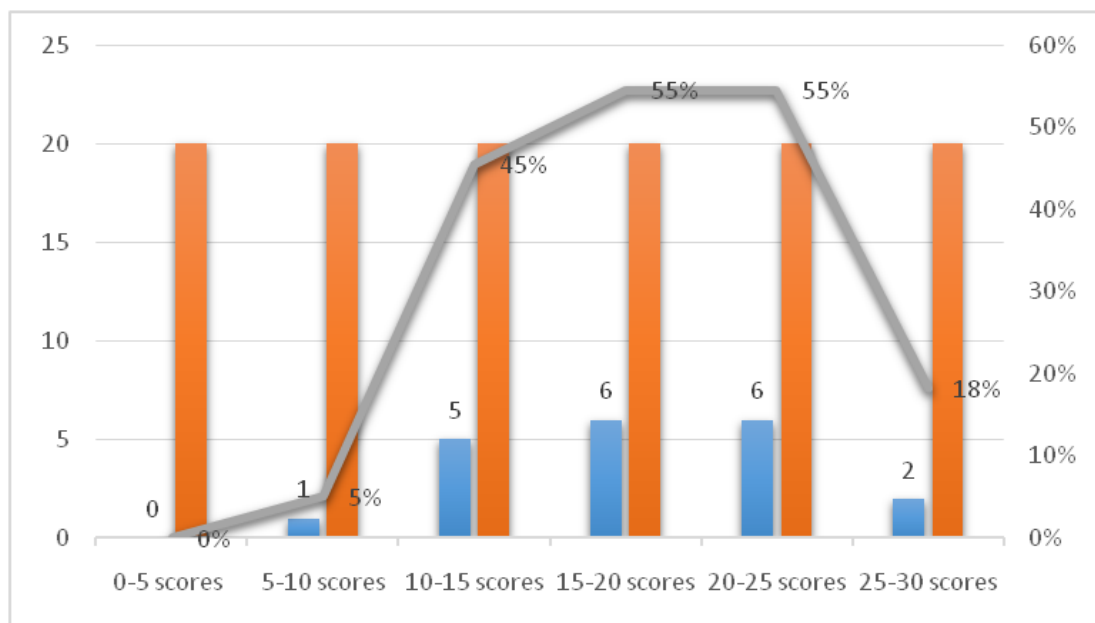
Figure 6.The graphic presentation of the highest scores achieved in the Experimental group Post-Test

In general, findings from the post-test indicated that majority of students have problems with the usage of time prepositions, especially with AT, IN and ON. Findings showed that a consider number of Kososvar learners of English are unable to distinguish when they must use 'at' and when to use 'on'. Furthermore, preposition 'in' is frequently used by students to substitute other prepositions because they are not aware of their usage. According to the results almost all of the students use 'in' to tell part of a day as in 'in the afternoon', before years, months and seasons. Meanwhile, the preposition 'on' is solely used to denote a day of the week. As the

figures below show, precisely in the tenth question where students were supposed to write the correct preposition of time denoting dates, nearly half of the students in both groups (40%) use 'on' when referring to dates. In the other hand the rest of the students use "in" to mark dates. This can be explained obviously because of the negative influence of their mother tongue in learning prepositions. Nevertheless, this does not justify the fact of not being familiar with prepositions' usage, for example they are not aware that when a month is used to denote a date, preposition 'on' is used instead of 'in'.
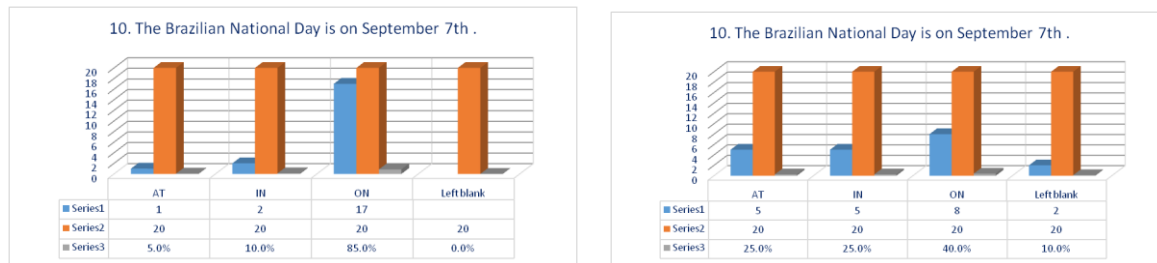

Figure **7 Students' performance when using prepositions to denote dates**

However, in questions where students had to use "in" preposition to tell year, months or any period of the day students showed better results than with "on" preposition. The figure on the left side shows the performance of the experimental group and the figure on the right shows the performance of the control group. As it can be seen in the figures below 85% of the students in the experimental group gave correct response when using prepositions referring to dates.
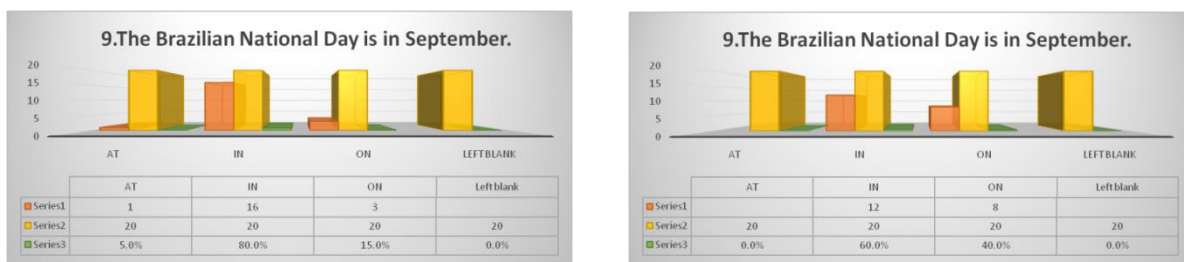

Figure 8 Students' usage of prepositions when referring to months.

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Moreover, 'at' has been used to indicate the specific time on a clock, 'at 4pm' as well as the time of the day, 'at night'. Findings indicated that students face difficulties when using prepositions with holiday periods such as "at Christmas", or "on Christmas Day". The graphs below show the students' performance when using holiday periods.

23. On Christmas Day we prepare for the great evening.

	AT	IN	ON	Left blank
Series1	6	2	12	
Series2	20	20	20	20
Series3	30.0%	10.0%	60.0%	0.0%

23. On Christmas Day we prepare for the great evening.

	AT	IN	ON	Left blank
Series1	10	4	5	1
Series2	20	20	20	20
Series3	50.0%	20.0%	25.0%	5.0%

Figure 9.Students' performance when using holiday periods.

Almost half of the students are not aware that when denoting a particular day of a holiday they should use 'on', instead of 'at'. About 50% of the students face problems when stating a particular period of time in a day such as "on Sunday evening", thus half of the students use it wrongly like in " in Sunday evening ". In general the cloze test indicated that a considered number of students are not aware of prepositions' usage and this is the reason why they make errors when using them in different instances.
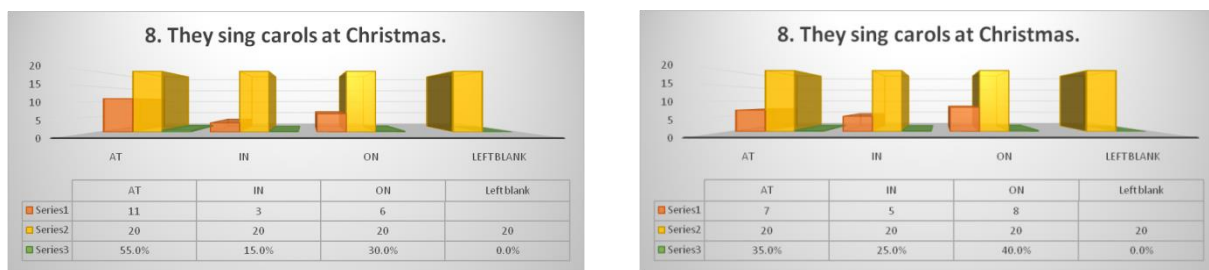

8. They sing carols at Christmas.

	AT	IN	ON	Left blank
Series1	11	3	6	
Series2	20	20	20	20
Series3	55.0%	15.0%	30.0%	0.0%

8. They sing carols at Christmas.

	AT	IN	ON	Left blank
Series1	7	5	8	
Series2	20	20	20	20
Series3	35.0%	25.0%	40.0%	0.0%

Figure 10. Students' usage of time prepositions when referring to holiday periods

4.3 The negative influence of Albanian language in students' acquisition of learning prepositions

 In order to find the answer to the second research question a translation test was used to get the data. The test was done at the end of the course to each group of students and it aimed to find the extent that their native language affects their use of English time prepositions. Students had to translate 20 sentences from Albanian language into English all containing time prepositions and students had to translate them by using prepositions of time **at**, **in** and **on**.

4.3.1 The results of Translation Test

Finding revealed that translating prepositions from Albanian into English language is considered a very difficult part from Albanian learners. The data showed that students make assumptions of semantic equivalence between the first and second language. The students' performance in the translation test showed the impact of negative transfer in English language, particularly it was noticed the **Transfer of Structure** as the dominant one. A considered number of students committed errors because the mother tongue rules were followed. For example as the table below shows, 65% of the students failed to use the appropriate preposition when translating the sentence nr 9 **"**E solli postën postieri **të hënen në mëngjes".** More than half of them translated the sentence by relying in the rules of their mother tongue**.** They translated the sentence wrongly by following Albanian flexible word order. The sentence was translated like this "Brought the mail the postman in Monday morning".

Sentences to be translated	Correct	Incorrect	No translation
1. Në mëngjes	29	10	1
2….të dielave.	25	15	
3… ne fundjavë.	28	12	
4. në të njejtën kohë.	30	7	3
5. Në të kaluarën	40		
6... për Krishlindje.	10	30	
7… në pranverë.	26	14	
8... në të njejtën ditë.	19	15	6
9... të hënen në mëngjes.	13	19	8
10... Në mëngjes	30	10	
11...ne oren 8.	31	9	
12...të mërkurën.	35	3	2
13...më 26gusht 1910 .	15	15	10
14...mbrëmjeve.	22	13	5
15.në shekullin e nëntë.	36	4	
16...në orën 17:00.	31	9	
17...në mes të ditës.	26	8	6
18...më 23 maj.	35	5	
19...në të njëjtën kohë	15	16	9
20...në mesnatë …	20	20	

Other examples of Albanian interference were noticed when translating the sentence nr.6 "Ai gjithmonë qëndron me familjen e tij **_për Krishlindje_**_"_ where all of the students failed to use the appropriate time prepositions, instead they all translated by choosing another preposition which is approximate in their mother tongue. The sentence was translated like this, "He always stays with his family **for Christmas.** Other examples of incorrect translations were noticed in the sentences 8, 17, 20 " in the same day", "in the middle of the day" and "in night". Having analysed instances of how the students used 'in', 'at' and 'on' in the cloze test and the translation test, it is realized that one of the factors that causes the misuse of time prepositions is the negative transfer of their mother tongue L1. Albanian EFL learners cannot separate the two grammatical systems of both Albanian and English. Findings showed that there is negative transfer in using English prepositions by Albanian learners and the prepositions "in" is frequently used by them to substitute other prepositions due to their lack of knowledge for their usage. Needless to mention that, the lack of knowledge of the usage of every single

preposition in both source and target languages (Albanian and English) affects the overall performance of the participants.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Being one of the most difficult fields of grammar for EFL learners, prepositions remain challenging for Kosovar learners as well.

This study examined the effect of the contemporary methodologies of teaching in learning prepositions among Kosovar EFL elementary learners and also investigated the role of Albanian language in learning prepositions of time.

In order to determine what pedagogical methods are most effective, it is very important to first understand what makes learning prepositions so difficult, and this can be attributed to several factors. Because prepositions have different applications, learners always have problems with understanding the meaning of prepositions and using them correctly. So, one of the main teachers' concerns when teaching prepositions, is how to convey their meanings.

The conclusions of the three research questions (RQ) are:

RQ1. Do contemporary methodologies of teaching have any significant effect on the learning of the prepositions among Kosovar EFL learners?

The final data indicated that students got better achievement after having learnt through contemporary methodologies of teaching. In both pre-test the data showed that students did not have much knowledge for time prepositions while the results of the post test showed that the experimental group performed better at the end of the course. The mean score of the experimental group in the post-test was 18.75, which is two times higher than the pre test.

Moreover, the results from the post-test of the experimental group showed that 14 students from the group or about 70% of them completed the criteria of mastering English time prepositions. However, only 6 students from this group or 30% of the class did not fulfill the criteria mastery of learning prepositions.

RQ2. To what extent does the negative transfer of their native language affect the use of English prepositions?

This Master Thesis identified that Albanian language interferes negatively in learners' acquisition of prepositions because they use their old habits from the L1 in English structures. Furthermore, the study indicated that Albanian learners have lack of knowledge about the meaning and the usage of time prepositions, and as a result they misuse them. The study proved that Albanian learners tend to use the preposition 'in' improperly due to the mother tongue interference. Very often, this prepositions substitutes the other prepositions because they are not sure about their usage when denoting specific temporal aspects. Not just prepositions, but they translate also the sentences trying to keep the same structure, or word order as in Albanian.

RQ3. What are some effective teaching methods used to learn prepositions?

This Master Thesis encourages teachers to teach prepositions with their collocations and master properly their prototypical meaning.

To sum it up, the use of contemporary methodologies in teaching English prepositions is very effective in students' mastery of time prepositions. Unlike traditional methodologies, contemporary methodologies involve students in learning through fun activities and playing. Students perform better when they are relaxed and feel comfortable within the environment they learn. This MA Thesis suggests that prepositions should be introduced gradually based on the targeted level of learners, and a great importance must be given to the methods and techniques that aid the acquisition of prepositions.

For teachers and students using contemporary methodologies of teaching is great fun and it also facilitates conveying the meaning of the prepositions.

In the end, the paper explains further that besides other approaches mentioned above, visual aids, computer based activities and the regular usage of dictionaries can contribute to learning process.

5.2 Recommendations

Since prepositions are the most difficult filed of grammar for EFL learners, future studies should address this topic in more details.

Teachers should try to make great use of collocation approach and prototypical approach because they show a better performance in learning prepositions.

Teachers should combine a variety of methods and techniques in order to facilitate students' learning of prepositions.

Students must be encouraged to use dictionaries whenever they are not sure which word to use with each preposition. Thus by using the approaches mentioned above, visual aids, computer based activities and the regular usage of dictionaries can contribute to learning process.

Limitations of the study

Like in any other studies also this study is bound to have its own limitations. There are many important factors to take into account and which led to certain limitations of this study. The factors taken into account for the productive results at the end of the research were:

- the contemporary methods applied during the classes blended with the traditional ones;
- the participants' age and individual particularities;
- the class content in accordance with the method's didactical task;
- the students' level of proficiency.

During the entire experiment period I had encountered some difficulties with both groups of students. I noticed that in the control group, where only traditional methods were used, students often got bored while looking up the meanings of new words in the dictionaries,

reading long passages of texts or solving grammar exercises. On the other hand, the experimental group, where both traditional and contemporary methods were used, was pleased and excited about the activities that we used. Most of the time they had fun laughed a lot and enjoyed each activity done together. Due to the pleasant atmosphere they created each class it was sometimes impossible to do all the intended objectives in each class. Moreover, some of the students said that some of the activities were inadequate for their age and they refused to play, for example when doing a board activity with counters and dice. As a closing remark for this research study that I propose to make is that teachers should adapt the modern activities and methods to their age and interests, to use both traditional and modern methods with all classes, and definitely to take into account their preferences, hobbies and interests.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

Cloze Test   Age: Gender: F   M

Fill in the gaps with one of time prepositions **AT, IN, ON.**

1. Her birthday is _____March 5th .
2. He plays basketball _____weekends.   .
3. He does his homework _____ the afternoon.
4. We have exams _____ June.
5. The Titanic sank _____ 1912.
6. I like to read in bed _____ night.
7. Come and visit us _____ Thursday.
8. They sing carols_____ Christmas.
9. The Brazilian National Day is _____September.
10. The Brazilian National Day is _____September 7th .
11. Did you eat too much _____Easter.
12. We are going on vacation _____ a couple of weeks.
13. The children will go jogging _____ Sunday evening.
14. Shakespeare was born_____ 1564.
15. The exam is _____the 16th .
16. The meeting starts _____ ten minutes.
17. _____ Saturdays and Sundays kids don't go to school.
18. I don't want to talk about it _____ the moment.
19. My brother John was born_____ September 3rd .
20. Life was difficult _____the 1960s.
21. We always have a huge celebration_____ New Year's Eve.
22. Halloween is _____ October.
23. _____ Christmas Day we prepare for the great evening
24. Meet me _____ 7:30.
25. Jill was laughing and dancing _____ the same time.
26. Now that my grandfather is older, he no longer drives_____ night.
27. Birds often migrate _____ spring and autumn.
28. Temperatures are very high _____ noon.
29. We are going bowling _____Sunday night.
30. The city gets a wonderful view ____ sunset.

Appendix II

Translation Test   Age: Gender: F M

Translate these sentences from Albanian into English.

1. **Në mëngjes** është koha më e mirë për ti ujitur lulet.

   _____

2. Ai asnjëherë nuk punon **të dielave**.

   _____

3. Djemtë luajnë futboll vetëm **ne fundjavë**.

   _____

4. Vajzat e përfunduan detyrën **në të njejtën kohë**.

   _____

5. **Në të kaluarën** jeta ishte më e vështirë pa teknologji.

   _____

6. Ai gjithmonë qëndron me familjen e tij **për Krishlindje**.

   _____

7. Sezoni më i ri i filmit "Osa mirë" do të shfaqet **në pranverë**.

   _____

8. Dy shoqe të ngushta u martuan **në të njejtën ditë**.

   _____

9. E solli postën postieri **të hënen në mëngjes.**

   _____

10. **Në mëngjes** iu kujtua që nëna e saj sot e ka ditëlindjen.

   _____

11. Udhëtimi fillon **ne oren 8**.

   _____

12. Ndeshja finale do të realizohet **të mërkurën**.

   _____

13. Nëna Tereze u lind **më 26gusht 1910** në Shkup.

_____

14. Asaj I pëlqente të lexonte **mbrëmjeve**.

_____

15. Revolucioni industrial filloi **në shekullin e nëntëmbëdhjetë**.

_____

16. Treni pritet të arrijë **në orën 17:00**.

_____

17. Temperatura më e nxehtë është **në mes të ditës.**

_____

18. Do të të takojë **më 23 maj.**

_____

19. "Fëmijë, mos hani dhe qeshni **në të njëjtën kohë**!" tha Jane.

_____

20. Vjedhja ndodhi **në mesnatë** kur të gjithë po flinin.

_____

Teaching Prepositions to EFL Learners Using Contemporary   Methodologies of Teaching

Appendix III

Students' scores in the post-test- Control group

No	Students' Code	Score	Percentage
1	C#1	20	66.6%
2	C#2	20	66.6%
3	C#3	10	33.3%
4	C#4	15	50%
5	C#5	12	40%
6	C#6	10	33.3%
7	C#7	9	30%
8	C#8	11	36.6%
9	C#9	9	30%
10	C#10	13	43.3%
11	C#11	6	20%
12	C#12	9	30%
13	C#13	11	36.6%
14	C#14	14	46.6%
15	C#15	13	43.3%
16	C#16	9	30%
17	C#17	15	50%
18	C#18	10	33.3%
19	C#19	14	46.6%
20	C#20	12	40%
Total		242	
Lowest Score		6	
Highest Score		20	

Teaching Prepositions to EFL Learners Using Contemporary   Methodologies of Teaching

Appendix IV

Students' scores in the post-test, Experimental group

No	Students' Code	Score	Percentage
1	E#1	22	73,3%
2	E#2	18	60%
3	E#3	19	63.3%
4	E#4	21	70%
5	E#5	14	46.6%
6	E#6	18	60%
7	E#7	25	83.3%
8	E#8	17	56.6%
9	E#9	12	40%
10	E#10	26	86.66%
11	E#11	14	46.6%
12	E#12	10	33.3%
13	E#13	20	66.6%
14	E#14	25	83.3%
15	E#15	26	86.66%
16	E#16	21	70%
17	E#17	17	56.6%
18	E#18	23	76.6%
19	E#19	13	43.3%
20	E#20	14	46.6%
Total		375	
Lowest Score		10	
Highest Score		26	

Appendix V
The materials used for different activities involving prepositions

TEACHTHIS
ESL / EFL RESOURCES

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME
Time Prepositions Quiz

1. Neil Armstrong walked on the moon in/on/at
..... 1967.
..... 1968.
..... 1969.

2. The Titanic sank in/on/at
..... April 1, 1912.
..... April 15, 1912.
..... April 30, 1912.

3. The euro became the official currency of 12 European countries in/on/at
..... January 2000.
..... January 2001.
..... January 2002.

4. The wheel was invented in/on/at
..... 2500 BC.
..... 3500 BC.
..... 4500 BC.

5. You can cook a hard-boiled egg in/on/at
..... 9 minutes.
..... 12 minutes.
..... 15 minutes.

6. The Second World War ended in/on/at
..... September 2, 1943.
..... September 2, 1944.
..... September 2, 1945.

7. You can fly direct from London to New York in/on/at
..... less than 5 hours.
..... less than 6 hours.
..... less than 7 hours.

8. The earth is closest to the sun in/on/at
..... January.
..... July.
..... Decemeber.

9. The first email was sent in/on/at
..... the 1970s.
..... the 1980s.
..... the 1990s.

10. The 9/11 Twin Tower attacks started in/on/at
..... 7:49 a.m.
..... 8:49 a.m.
..... 9:49 a.m.

11. The Berlin Wall fell in/on/at
..... November 1986.
..... November 1987.
..... November 1988.

12. The first personal computer was introduced in/on/at
..... 1970.
..... 1975.
..... 1980.

13. Brad Pitt was born in/on/at
..... December 18, 1961.
..... December 18, 1962.
..... December 18, 1963.

14. The World Wide Web was created in/on/at
..... 1990.
..... 1991.
..... 1992.

15. Most people can walk a mile in/on/at
..... 10 minutes.
..... 15 minutes.
..... 20 minutes.

16. The first Olympic Games were held in/on/at
..... April 6, 1696.
..... April 6, 1796.
..... April 6, 1896.

17. The best time to water plants is in/on/at
..... the morning.
..... the afternoon.
..... the evening.

18. The first car was made in/on/at
..... 1885.
..... 1886.
..... 1887.

Teaching Prepositions to EFL Learners Using Contemporary   Methodologies of Teaching

TEACHTHIS
ESL / EFL RESOURCES

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME
Time Prepositions Board Game

the evening	October	Monday				
noon		**Move ahead 4 spaces**	3 o'clock	Christmas Day	April	midnight
an hour						2018
summer		Sunday	the weekend	**Miss a turn**		5 o'clock
Monday morning		Valentine's Day		a few days		Saturday night
2017		the 1st of April		winter		**Go forward 2 spaces**
Go back 2 spaces		**Finish**		lunch time		spring
autumn				**Oh no! Go back**		night
Friday				Christmas		January
1999	**Miss a turn**	the morning	July	my birthday		**Start**

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night	in	10 minutes	on	Christmas Day	at
9 o'clock	in	2012	on	Friday	at
noon	in	winter	on	January 1st	at
19:30	in	the morning	on	my birthday	at
bedtime	in	a minute	on	the 1st of April	at
half past two	in	1999	on	Tuesday	at
midday	in	summer	on	the 14th of February	at
7 o'clock	in	May	on	New Year's Eve	at

- *Look at the pictures and write a story with them. Then continue to the story using your imagination.*

Multiple Intelligence / Situation 6