

# THE DIFFICULTIES OF UAE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN THE USE OF PREPOSITION

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## Abstract

Prepositions are functional words that present the relationships between groups of words. EFL students find difficulty in using prepositions correctly in their writing tasks. The present study is an attempt to identify the errors made by UAE University students in the Engineering College in the use of prepositions. The participants of the study are 30 Arabic students attending UAE University aged between 18 -23 years old. A test on English preposition was developed which contained thirty multiple choice questions, and distributed to the students. Errors have been pinpointed and results have been analyzed using discourse analysis. This study is expected to be valuable to EFL students, teachers and translators.

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**Keywords:** EFL Students, education, preposition

## Introduction

Preposition is “a word governing, and usually preceding, a noun or pronoun and expressing a relation to another word or element in the clause” (1) Prepositions are existed in both Arabic and English language. Therefore, the Arabic learners of English might use the literally translation to Arabic or English to understand and apply the prepositions which may result in making syntactic and semantic errors.

The problems which could confuse the Arabic learners of English in using the English prepositions are: there are some verbs take a preposition and other verbs don't take a preposition after them in English but, they are different in Arabic; contexts use different prepositions in Arabic and English, and contexts which two or more prepositions could be used in the same plot of a sentence in both languages.

The different parts of speech in sentences could confuse the learners and let them make some prepositional errors such as omission, addition or selection the wrong preposition in English. Also, the occurrence of these

errors could be as a result of the idea which learners think of. Additionally, using the prepositions in idioms complicates learning these prepositions.

## Methodology

The focus of this preliminary study was primarily on analyzing the difficulties of the Arabic learners in the use of English prepositions. A quiz on English preposition was developed which contained thirty multiple choice questions ( See Appendix A and B).

## Respondents

The respondents of the study are 30 Arabic students attending UAE University aged between 18 -23 years old. Their majors are Environmental System Engineering, Civil Engineering, Petroleum Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Architectural Engineering and Electrical Engineering.

## Analysis of the difficulties of the Arabic learners in using prepositions

\* My best friend lives \_\_\_\_\_ Boretz Road.

- a) in
- b) on
- c) at

Substitution the preposition wrongly is the most common error for the Arabic learners. For example, some participants chose the preposition “in” wrongly which is used as an equivalent of the Arabic preposition “fi” instead of “on” because of the first language interference. The students were not sure what to choose for that answer; therefore, they compare it with its Arabic equivalence and translated literally to the Arabic preposition. They avoid choosing the preposition “on” because in Arabic , it indicates the meaning of “ on a surface “ or “ touching a surface or being supported by a surface” .They did not select the preposition “at” because there is no equivalent for “at” in the Arabic language. Additionally, the main verb “live” is inherently intransitive which is a verb has a subject “my best friend “but does not need an object. It could be followed by a preposition. In Arabic language, they use the preposition “in” before a noun which refers to a place. However, they use the preposition “on” to express an idiom such as “He lives on the bread” which means that “he is a poor man”. However, using “on” in English indicates a place which is in a particular place such as “Boretz Road”.

\* The child responded to his mother's demands \_\_\_\_\_ throwing a tantrum.

- a) with
- b) by
- c) from

\* He usually travels to Philadelphia \_\_\_\_\_ train.

- a) by
- b) at
- c) with

The students answered these two questions correctly because they know the usage of the preposition ‘by’ which indicates the means or method someone uses to do something. It has an Arabic equivalent ‘bi’ which has the similar meaning and usage. Therefore, the translation from English to Arabic helps in answering these questions which is considered positive interference of the first language. In the first question, they used the preposition ‘by’ because they have memorized the grammatical rule which is the preposition ‘by’ is usually followed by a gerund.

\*I was visiting my cousin ----- the hospital.

- a) of
- b) at
- c) in

\*He will see Ahmed ----- home when he gets there.

- a) in
- b) by
- c) at

Choosing the preposition “in’ which is the equivalent to the preposition “في” emphasizes that “I went to the hospital’ but, using the preposition “at’ which the students thought is the equivalent to the preposition’ب’ , it emphasizes that my cousin is sick so , he is in the hospital.

أنا كنت أزور ولد عمي في المستشفى  
أنا كنت أزور ولد عمي بالمستشفى

While , all the students answered the second question correctly because when they translated the sentence into Arabic

هو سيري أحمد في البيت عندما يصل هناك

The preposition “في” appeared in the translation which is the equivalent to the preposition ‘in’ so, it was so easy to answer in this case.

\* The soldier defends ----- his country.

- a) on
- b) zero
- c) about

Choosing the preposition “on” wrongly in this sentence indicates the semantic Arabic interference impact because some students understood the sentence as “The soldier fights on his land country” when they tried to translated literally in their minds. In addition, the verb “defend” is used intransitively in Arabic language which means take action against attack so, it will not be followed by a noun or pronoun, and it might be followed by a

preposition. Some students chose the preposition “about” which might be translated into Arabic as “an, عَنْ”. They feel that “about” is the right answer when they do a whole translation to the sentence as “يُدَافِعُ الْجُنْدِيُّ عَنْ وَطَنِهِ”

\* The fortune smiled ----- him

- a) **on**
- b) to
- c) from

This preposition error occurs because of the translation from Arabic where the prepositions “*la*” and “*ela*” are in most situations translated as “to”. Using the preposition “*la*” in Arabic refers to the *possession* ( ابْتَسَمَ الْحِظُّ لِي ) which means that in this specific occasion , the person becomes lucky . While, the preposition “*ela*” means that *finally* the fortune smiled on him ( ابْتَسَمَ الْحِظُّ إِلَيْهِ ) after having many experiences of bad luck and longing for the good luck.

\* The professor \_\_\_\_\_ South Africa amazed the American students with her stories.

- a) **from**
- b) of
- c) in

The prepositions “from and of” have the same Arabic translated preposition “من”, which confuses the Arabic learners of English if they try to differentiate among them. However, they are different in meaning in English. Sometimes, using the preposition “from” refers to a place of birth or work where someone was born, live or work. On the other hand, the preposition “of” could be used to refer to where a group of people comes from such as “the people of China”. Also, it uses to specify general thing like “the University of Chicago”. Using some abstract nouns after “the professor of” implies a meaningful expression such as “The Professor of Desire” which is a 1977 novel by Philip Roth. It describes the youth, the college years and the academic career of Professor David Kepesh, and beside that, his sexual desires” (2)

\* Alia chops the onions----- a sharp knife.

- a) **with**
- b) by
- c) zero

Generally speaking, the Arabic learners of English will definitely choose a preposition in this context because of the existence of the transitive verb “chop” and in Arabic they need to put a preposition before the indirect object to specify the mean of chopping. Some students selected the preposition” by” wrongly because it is the equivalent of the Arabic preposition “bi” when they translated to Arabic “علياء فرمت البصل بسكين حاد”. It refers to the mean or method of using or doing something. However,

translating the preposition “with” into Arabic will mostly function a different meaning “two or more people or things are together in the same place” (3) . The students’ lack of linguistics knowledge in using the preposition affects their preposition use. They do not know that the preposition “with” in English could have a similar meaning to “by” in some contexts.

\* ----- my last spring break I visited California.

- a) In
- b) **During**
- c) On

In Arabic, the prepositions “in and during” could be used in this context because it implies similar meaning. Therefore, some students chose the preposition “in” which is an equivalent to the Arabic preposition “ *Fi* , في ” when they translated to:

في عطلة الربيع الماضية ، قمت بزيارة ولاية كاليفورنيا

However, other students selected the preposition “during” which is equivalent to the Arabic preposition “ *khelal* , خلال ” when they translated to :

خلال عطلة الربيع الماضية ، قمت بزيارة ولاية كاليفورنيا

Therefore, the negative interference of the first language makes the students confused when they try to choose the most suitable preposition. The students avoided choosing the preposition “on” totally which is equivalent to “*ala*, على ” which means “above” because it doesn't make a meaningful sentence when they translated to Arabic

على عطلة الربيع الماضية، قمت بزيارة ولاية كاليفورنيا

\*I called ..... the police department

- a) for
- b) by
- c) **zero**

The verb “called’ in English is ditransitive . In this sentence, it is used transitively because the verb “called “followed by an object ‘the police department” which means ‘telephone the police department and ask them to come to you’; however the verb “called’ used in Arabic intransitively. Some students basically thought that they need to use a preposition in this sentence because when they translated the sentence into Arabic “ *atvlat* بالشرطة ”, they recognized an existence of a preposition so , they avoided choosing the third distracter which is exactly the right answer. On the other hand, some students chose the preposition “by” because they thought it might be the equivalent of the Arabic preposition “ *bi* ”. Some students selected the preposition ‘for’ because in Arabic it is accurate to use the preposition “ *ela* , الى or ل ” which is an equivalent to the preposition “for” .

اتصلت بالشرطة or اتصلت الى الشرطة

\*----- my way to college , I wish that I would have taken all the benefits offered me in high school.

- a) In
- b) ***On***
- c) During

Some students selected the preposition ‘in’ because when they translated the sentences into Arabic

في طريقي إلى الكلية ، أتمنى أني كنت اتخذت جميع  
المزايا الممنوحة لي في المدرسة الثانوية

the Arabic equivalent preposition which occurs is ‘في’ .On the other hand , some students understood the context as it happens in the period of the college which is not in this context. Therefore, they chose the preposition ‘during’ " خلال " which specifies the events which happens in the college time. However, the meaning of this context is a wish from a student who hopes that she / he has benefit from the high school period.

Here are some different idiomatic expressions using ‘way’ with different prepositions :

- My father drove *all the way* from the UAE to Egypt.  
“all the way” means in this context that ‘ he drove all the distance from the beginning (the UAE) to the end( Egypt ) completely.
  - *By the way*, I will not go to my brother’s wedding.  
‘By the way’ is an adverb which means incidentally , and used to introduce a different topic ( 4 )
  - *In a way*, you are wrong.  
“In a way” means from one point of view.
- \*Don’t speak ----- a loud voice in the library, please?

- a) by
- b) ***in***
- c) at

Some students chose the preposition “by” which is the wrong preposition because when they translated the sentence into Arabic لو سمحت لا تتكلم بصوت عالي في المكتبة , the Arabic preposition ‘ب’ which is connected to an object in Arabic and occurs as the equivalent to the preposition ‘by’” . However, some students did not choose the preposition ‘in’ because it seems odd when they translated into Arabic

لو سمحت لا تتكلم في صوت عالي

The verb “speak” in this context used here intransitively. Also, it can be used intransitively with the preposition “at” which indicates a different meaning such as

\* Ahmed spoke at the students’ annual graduation ceremony.  
In this sentence, it means that Ahmed made a formal speech.

\*I think Nora spent the entire night ----- the phone.

- a) **on**
- b) in
- c) by

Some students chose the preposition ‘on’ which is the right answer because when they translated the whole sentence literally into Arabic أعتقد نورة قضت الليل كله على الهاتف

It appears in the Arabic translation. However, some students understand the sentence as ‘I think Nora **spoke** the entire night ----- the phone’. They have changed the verb ‘spent’ into ‘spoke ,talked’ as a collocation between ‘speak , talk’ and ‘phone’ which will be translated to أعتقد نورة تكلمت طول الليل بالهاتف

Therefore, they selected the preposition ‘by’ as an equivalent to the Arabic preposition ‘ب’ as they thought. No one chose the preposition ‘in’ because it seems odd in its meaning ‘Nora in the phone’ . It will mean that Nora inside the phone in Arabic which is impossible to happen. It will be understood as a space.

\*The police caught the thief-----the corner of Cascade and plum Street.

- a) in
- b) **at**
- c) from

Some students chose the preposition ‘in’ which depends on their intended meaning of the sentence. They imagined that the thief hid himself inside something in the corner. so, they translated the sentence to الشرطة قبضت على اللص في الزاوية.....

However, other students understood the sentence as there is more than one corner so; the police caught the thief from a specific corner. Students imagined that they are pointing to that specific corner to show someone the corner the police caught the thief. They translated the sentence to

الشرطة قبضت على اللص من الزاوية.....

Few students chose the preposition ‘at’ because they saw the word ‘street’ and recognized that they could collocate ‘at’ with ‘street’ as a grammatical rule for them as I think. In this sentence, ‘at’ denotes place as a point of orientation.

\*My fingers were injured so my brother had to write the note ----- me.

- a) **for**
- b) with
- c) to

Some students selected the preposition “for” because they understood the sentence as a cause and effect relationship. Also, the sister here is considered as the beneficiary of that action because her brother will help her in writing the note. In translating this sentence into Arabic

أصابعي كانت مجروحة لذلك أخي اضطر ليكتب الملاحظة لي .

The Arabic preposition “ ل ” is appeared as the equivalent to the English preposition “ for”. On the other hand, 13 students chose the preposition ‘to’ because I think they focus only in the dependent clause of this sentence “my brother had to write the note ----- me” which they understood the semantic context of the sentence as the brother write the note especially to his sister and send it to her to see how her fingers or health now. Translating this sentence into Arabic with this meaning will be أصابعي كانت مجروحة فكتب أخي ملاحظة لي

Therefore, the students chose the preposition “to” which is equivalent to the Arabic preposition “الى”. Few students selected the preposition “with” because they understood the meaning of this sentence as that the brother were sitting with his sister physically, and helping her in writing the note. He was giving her ideas to write the note. In translating the sentence into Arabic, it will be

أصابعي كانت مجروحة فكتب أخي الملاحظة معي

As a result, the students chose the Arabic preposition “ مع ” which is equivalent to “with” in this case.

\*What are the main ingredients ----- this cake?

a) zero

b) to

c) *of*

Some students chose the preposition ‘to’ because when they translated the sentence into Arabic

ما هي المكونات الأساسية لهذه الكعكة ؟

The preposition ‘ل’ is appeared in the translation which is considered as the equivalent to the preposition “to”. Also, the reason of the occurrence of the preposition “to’ here is the existence of the adjective “main” in this sentence when the students translated into Arabic. However, if the sentence translated into Arabic without the adjective ‘main’ ما هي مكونات هذه الكعكة ؟

It will not need to have a preposition in this case so, few students chose ‘zero’ because of that. Other students selected the preposition “of” because they memorized ‘ingredients of’ as I think.

\*My best friend , Ali , is named -----his great – grandfather.

a) *after*

b) on

c) to



Some students chose the preposition 'on' because in translating this sentence into Arabic

أفضل أصدقائي علي سمي على جده العظيم

The Arabic preposition " على " is appeared in the translation which is equivalent to the preposition 'on'. On the other hand, some students selected the preposition "after" which indicates that the grandfather is dead so, he is named Ali as the same name of his grandfather after the grandfather's death. The translation into Arabic will be

أفضل اصدقائي علي سمي بعد جده العظيم

The preposition "بعد" is appeared here which is the equivalent to the preposition "after"

Some students selected the preposition "to" because the intended meaning of the sentence as they understood is "Ali is given that name to honor the memory of his grandfather" which is translated to

أفضل أصدقائي علي سمي اكراما لذكرى جده

So, the preposition "ل" is the equivalent to the English preposition "to" according to this intended meaning.

\*You frequently see this kind of violence ----- television.

- a) with
- b) in
- c) on

In Arabic, it is accurate to use the prepositions 'in' and 'on' in this context.

انت بالعادة ترى هذا النوع من العنف في التلفزيون

انت بالعادة ترى هذا النوع من العنف على التلفزيون

Using the preposition 'in' could give the meaning of a place 'television station'. However, they do not use the preposition 'with' in this context

\*انت بالعادة ترى هذا النوع من العنف مع التلفزيون

because it will personify the television which will seem odd. Therefore, no one of the students chose the preposition 'with' which is equivalent to the preposition 'مع'.

\*It's ----- time you told him the truth.

- a) on
- b) about
- c) in

The students chose different answers for this question. Using different prepositions with the word "time" will give different meanings and they are considered idioms such as

➤ *about time*

It means "far past the desired time"

Ex. Our food has finally arrived. *About time* too, if you ask me!  
We've been waiting for about 45 minutes for it! (5)

➤ *on time*

It means 'according to schedule; punctually'

Ex. My parents came to the school meeting *on time* (6)

➤ *In time*

It means "without being tardy"

Ex. We made it to the party *in time* (7)

➤ *against time*

It means "with a quickly approaching time limit".

Ex. I have to work against the time to finish the research paper before the deadline (7)

\*Being a nurse is hard work, especially if you are -----call all the time.

a)in

b) with

c) **on**

All the students chose the preposition "on" because when they translated the sentence into Arabic

أن تكون ممرض معناته العمل الشاق خاصة اذا كنت على اتصال كل الوقت

The preposition "على" appeared in the translation which is the equivalent to the preposition "on". In this sentence, it means "available when summoned for service or use". Also, there is another idiom "within call" which means "close enough to come if summoned" such as "The nurse is within call if you need him"(8)

\* You shouldn't pick \_\_\_\_\_ him just because he's different.

a) **on**

b) to

c) with

All the students chose the correct answer because when they translated the sentence into Arabic

أنت يجب ان لا تمسك عليه فقط لانه مختلف

The preposition 'on' appeared in the translation which is "على". "Pick on" is a phrasal verb which means "to tease or bully". There are other phrasal verbs which use the same verb "pick" with different prepositions and have different meanings such as:

➤ *pick apart*

It means "to refute or find flaws in by close examination"

Ex. The lawyer *picked* the testimony *apart*.

➤ *pick off*

It means "to shoot after singling out"

Ex. The hunter *picked* the ducks *off* one by one.

- *pick out*  
It means “to choose or select’  
Ex. You picked out a nice watch.
- *pick over*  
It means “to sort out or examine item by item”  
Ex. My mother picked over the apples before buying them.
- *Pick up*  
It means “to take up (something) by hand”  
Ex. He picks up a book (9 )

\* Good always prevails ----- the evil.

- a) On
- b) **Over**
- c) Upon

This sentence is an idiomatic expression. Choosing the accurate answer among the three distracters is hard for the Arabic learners because the distracters have similar meaning when they are translated literally into Arabic “ala, على”. The prepositions “on and upon” could be used before the intransitive verb “prevail” which will imply a different meaning such as appealing to or persuading somebody to do something such as:

- I will prevail *upon* her to attend the meeting.
- My father prevailed *on* some friends to let us stay with them for a few days.

Upon is formal and less commonly used than on (10)

\*My mother stayed up----- two in the morning.

- a) for
- b) since
- c) **until**

Some students chose the preposition ‘until’ which is the right answer in this context. They translated the sentence into Arabic

أمي بقت حتى الساعة الثانية صباحا

which meant that the mother did not sleep until 2 am. The Arabic preposition ‘حتى’ is equivalent to the English preposition “until”. Other students selected the preposition “for’ which translated into Arabic as

أمي بقت الى الساعة الثانية صباحا

which has a similar meaning to the first context but, they use different prepositions. Some students chose the preposition “since” which indicates a different meaning “the mother waked up at 2 am and did not sleep” so, it shows the starting time which the mother stayed up. The translation into Arabic will be

أمي بقت منذ الساعة الثانية صباحا

The preposition “منذ” is the equivalent to the preposition “since”.

\*Another way of saying ‘old fashioned ‘ is “-----  
--- the times’.

- a) beside
- b) ***behind***
- c) outside

Some students chose the preposition “behind” because they make a connection with the adjective ‘old’, and they knew the meaning of the word “behind’. However, the students who select the preposition “beside’, they do not know the exact meaning of the word” beside” which means in Arabic ‘بجانب”

\* \_\_\_\_\_ our visit to Japan, we saw a lot of interesting places.

- a) until
- b) ***During***
- c)Through

The prepositions “during and through” would be translated into Arabic “خلال” which have the similar meaning and function. The most accurate preposition to this context is “during” which indicates a period of time which is from the beginning to the end, and might indicate something that happens within a particular period of time, and specify the time when something takes place ( 11). However, the preposition “through” might not include the beginning period of time. In reading this sentence, someone could think of using the preposition “over” but, it might not suit this context. “Over” could refer to something that has been happening continuously up until the present, or will happen continuously in the future such as “The petroleum company has had a lot of problems *over* the last few years”. The preposition “until” is inappropriate in this context because it means that something will continue up to a particular time (12)

## Conclusion

The first language interference has a significant impact on the Arabic learners of English usage of English prepositions. The difference between Arabic and English prepositions in number, meaning and usage as idioms caused difficulty in learning the prepositions. Not every English preposition has a specific equivalent in Arabic and vice versa caused confusion for the Arabic learners to use. Also, the incomplete knowledge of how preposition are applied makes the students produce some prepositional errors. Their most syntactic errors are addition, deletion, substitution, and redundancy. Therefore, English teachers of Arabic learners should be aware of Arabic students’ difficulties in the use of prepositions.

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## **Appendix A:**

### **The quiz on preposition**

- 1- I called ..... the police department  
a) for  
b) by  
c) zero

- 2- The fortune smiled ----- him  
d) on  
e) to  
f) from
- 3- Don't speak ----- a loud voice in the library, please?  
a) by  
b) in  
c) at
- 4- My fingers were injured so my brother had to write the note ----- me.  
a)for  
b)with  
c)to
- 5- ----- my last spring break I visited California.  
a) In  
b) During  
c) On
- 6- What are the main ingredients ----- this cake?  
a) zero  
b) to  
c) of
- 7- The professor \_\_\_\_\_ South Africa amazed the American students with her stories.  
a) from  
b) of  
c) in
- 8- The police caught the thief-----the corner of Cascade and plum Street.  
a) in  
b) at  
c) from
- 9- My best friend lives \_\_\_\_\_ Boretz Road (13).  
d) in  
e) on  
f) at
- 10- Good always prevails ----- the evil.  
d) On  
e) Over  
f) Upon
- 11- My best friend , Ali , is named -----his great –grandfather.  
a) after  
b) on  
c) to
- 12- My mother stayed up----- two in the morning.  
a) for  
b) since  
c) until
- 13- The soldier defends ----- his country.  
a) on  
b) zero  
c) about

- 14- You frequently see this kind of violence ----- television.  
a) with  
b) in  
c) on
- 15- ----- my way to college , I wish that I would have taken all the benefits offered me in high school.  
a) In  
b) On  
c) During
- 16- I was visiting my cousin ----- the hospital.  
d) of  
e) at  
f) in
- 17- Another way of saying 'old fashioned ' is "----- the times'.  
a) beside  
b) behind  
c) outside
- 18- \_\_\_\_\_ our visit to Japan, we saw a lot of interesting places.  
a) until  
b) During  
c)Through
- 19- Being a nurse is hard work, especially if you are -----call all the time.  
a)in  
b) with  
c) on
- 20- Being a nurse is hard work, especially if you are -----call all the time.  
a)in  
b) with  
c) on
- 21- The child responded to his mother's demands \_\_\_\_\_ throwing a tantrum.  
a) with  
b) by  
c) from
- 22- You shouldn't pick \_\_\_\_\_ him just because he's different.  
a) on  
b) to  
c) with
- 23- I think Nora spent the entire night ----- the phone.  
a) On  
b) In  
c) by
- 24- It's ----- time you told him the truth(14).  
a) on  
b) about  
c) in
- 25- Alia chops the onions----- a sharp knife.  
d) with  
e) by  
f) zero

- 26- The soccer player was ejected because he had done something that was \_\_\_\_\_ the rules.  
 a) without  
 b) outside  
 c) against
- 27- She's the kind of girl who knows everything \_\_\_\_\_ everyone.  
 a) About  
 b) On  
 c) In
- 28- He usually travels to Philadelphia \_\_\_\_\_ train.  
 a) by  
 b) at  
 c) with
- 29- She is, \_\_\_\_\_ a doubt, the best student in the class.  
 a) without  
 b) outside  
 c) about
- 30- He will see Ahmed ----- home when he gets there.  
 a) in  
 b) by  
 c) at

**Appendix B:**

Analysis table of the students answers.

1- Question	I called ..... the police department		
Distracters	for	by	Zero
Number of students	11	9	10

2- Question	The fortune smiled ----- him		
Distracters	On	to	From
Number of students	0	30	0

3- Question	Don't speak ----- a loud voice in the library, please?		
Distracters	By	in	at
Number of students	15	7	8

4- Question	My fingers were injured so my brother had to write the note ----- ----- me.		
Distracters	For	with	to
Number of students	11	6	13



5- Question	----- my last spring break I visited California.		
Distracters	in	During	On
Number of students	16	14	0

6- Question	What are the main ingredients ----- this cake?		
Distracters	zero	to	of
Number of students	5	14	11

7- Question	The professor _____ South Africa amazed the American students with her stories.		
Distracters	From	of	In
Number of students	13	10	7

8- Question	The police caught the thief-----the corner of Cascade and plum Street.		
Distracters	in	at	from
Number of students	12	7	11

9- Question	My best friend lives _____ Boretz Road.		
Distracters	In	on	at
Number of students	30	0	0

10- Question	Good always prevails ----- the evil.		
Distracters	on	over	Upon
Number of students	10	9	11

11- Question	My best friend, Ali, is named -----his great – grandfather.		
Distracters	after	on	to
Number of students	9	14	7

12- Question	My mother stayed up----- two in the morning.		
Distracters	for	since	until
Number of students	12	8	10

13- Question	The soldier defends ----- his country.		
Distracters	on	zero	about
Number of students	8	9	13

14- Question	You frequently see this kind of violence ----- television.		
Distracters	with	in	on
Number of students	0	14	16

15- Question	----- my way to college , I wish that I would have taken all the benefits offered me in high school.		
Distracters	In	on	During
Number of students	14	0	16

16- Question	I was visiting my cousin ----- the hospital.		
Distracters	of	at	in
Number of students	0	9	21

17- Question	Another way of saying ‘old fashioned ‘ is “----- ----- the times’.		
Distracters	beside	<b><i>behind</i></b>	outside
Number of students	6	24	0

18- Question	_____ our visit to Japan, we saw a lot of interesting places.		
Distracters	until	during	through
Number of students	0	19	11

19- Question	Being a nurse is hard work, especially if you are -----call all the time.		
Distracters	in	with	On
Number of students	0	0	30

20- Question	Being a nurse is hard work, especially if you are -----call all the time.		
Distracters	in	with	on
Number of students	0	0	30

21- Question	The child responded to his mother's demands _____ throwing a tantrum.		
Distracters	With	by	From
Number of students	0	30	0

22- Question	You shouldn't pick _____ him just because he's different.		
Distracters	On	to	with
Number of students	30	0	0

23- Question	I think Nora spent the entire night ----- the phone.		
Distracters	on	in	by
Number of students	19	0	11

24- Question	It's ----- time you told him the truth.		
Distracters	on	about	in
Number of students	11	9	10

25- Question	Alia chops the onions----- a sharp knife.		
Distracters	with	by	zero
Number of students	9	21	0

26- Question	The soccer player was ejected because he had done something that was _____ the rules.		
Distracters	Without	outside	Against
Number of students	0	0	30

27- Question	She's the kind of girl who knows everything _____ everyone.		
Distracters	about	on	in
Number of students	30	0	0

28- Question	He usually travels to Philadelphia _____ train.		
Distracters	by	at	with
Number of students	30	0	0

29- Question	She is, _____ a doubt, the best student in the class		
Distracters	without	outside	about
Number of students	30	0	0

30- Question	He will see Ahmed ----- home when he gets there.		
Distracters	in	by	at
Number of students	30	0	0