

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I presents the background of the study, research problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, hypothesis of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of the key terms.

A. Background of the Study

To be able to communicate in English, individuals learn not only the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), however they conjointly learn the aspects of it. One in every of necessary aspects in English is part of speech. As one of elements of speech, prepositions play a very essential role in language. Even though there are only a small number of English prepositions, thus appear frequently: in English, one in every eight to ten words is a preposition. English may therefore be considered to be a language of prepositions (Song, 2013). English prepositions are also characterized by multi-function. Most central uses of English preposition typically express spatial or temporal relations (e.g. *in, under, toward, before*). Moreover, the prepositions are not strictly used to describe a spatial relationship between two entities (e.g. *She is in the class*) but also to describe time (e.g. *I was born in 1997*) and situations that are usually abstract (e.g. *I'm in love*). Wijaya, D., & Ong, G., (2018) believe that this multiple uses have traditionally been regarded as arbitrary, unrelated and unsystematic.

Although English prepositions are very high in frequency in every day conversations and therefore also display frequently in English language

textbooks, students show rather low learning achievements. As the evidence, the researcher did preliminary study and found that many cases of students can not distinguish the same prepositions for different meanings. So far, the strategy commonly employed by teachers is teaching the multiple senses of prepositions by rote (Kong, 2010). Rote learning still lacks comprehensive analysis of the different senses of prepositions and causes unstable improvements. Without understanding the distinction between different prepositions as well as between different meanings of the same preposition, students have to repeat the correct sentence over and over again. In short, during rote learning, the learners acquire knowledge by simple memorization and make no effort to integrate new knowledge with relevant prior knowledge held in cognitive structures. Not only does this procedure make learners lose their interest, but also they only learn fixed and relatively isolated structures rather than flexible items within an associated cognitive structure. According to (Wijaya, D., & Ong, G., 2018) this difficulty indicates that L2 learners need pedagogical treatments to assist them to make better prepositional choices. In line with Tyler (2012) there is a need to apply a usage-based approach to language and language pedagogy, and research should be conducted to investigate the effect of such approach on learners' acquisition of prepositions.

New findings in Cognitive Linguistics (CL) suggest a different approach to teach prepositions and thus might have a strong impact on the methodologies of foreign language teaching and learning on the aspects of meaningful learning. Song (2013) believes that CL teaching materials are based on cognitivist and

constructivist insights with the aim of exploring how learners process and use information during the cognitive procedure. In addition, the CL approach as one application of meaningful learning would integrate the new concepts with related ideas in the cognitive structure and would have a great impact on the methodologies of Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) and learning.

It can be seen from the previous studies applying cognitive linguistics to teaching English prepositions that the study by Tyler (2011) only made a simple data analysis and did not rest on the Domain Mapping Theory. This study was also confined to teaching only three prepositions *at*, *for*, and *at*. The study by Song (2013) did not apply productive tasks (speaking and writing skills) in the class performance. The study by Hung (2017) applied cognitive linguistics to teaching only the metaphors of prepositions and did not rest on the Domain Mapping Theory.

Although a number of studies had applied CL to ELT, this quasi-experimental study applied innovating applications. Firstly, this study attempts to extend previous studies to teach prepositions *in*, *on*, and *at* in three domains; spatial, temporal, and abstract. In addition, the studies by Song (2013) and Tyler (2011) selected European ESL students as the participants, but this study targets Indonesian students. Also, the treatments of both groups in this study include a writing task section.

Therefore, the problem above brings this research to be done as the title "*The Effectiveness of Cognitive Linguistics Strategy in Teaching Prepositions at MAN 4 Kediri*". The current study attempts to investigate the effects of CL

strategy and rote learning strategy. It focuses on the usefulness of CL in teaching the prepositions *in*, *on*, and *at* to adolescent Indonesian EFL learners.

B. Research Problem

The researcher experimentally investigated whether cognitive linguistics strategy may be more effective than rote learning strategy by formulating the following research question:

Do students who are taught by using CL strategy have better achievement in using prepositions than students who are taught by using rote learning strategy?

C. Objectives of Study

Based on the problems of the study, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of CL strategy in teaching the target prepositions.

D. Significance of Study

The researcher hopes the result of study have some benefits to be significant in three ways; theoretical, practical, and developmental.

a. Theoretical benefit

The researcher hopes the result of the study are going to enrich the theory of teaching English using strategy.

b. Practical benefit

The researcher hopes the result of the study can be used by students, teachers, and researcher.

1. The result of the research is expected to be helpful for the students to understand prepositions English easily.

2. For the teachers, the result of the research is useful to help them giving an alternative solution to teach prepositions.
3. For the researcher, hopefully, it can be useful as input for future research. Therefore, in the next research, the researcher has a reference to do the next research that better than this.

c. Developmental benefit

For the school, the result of the research is expected to increase the quality of English education.

E. Hypothesis of Study

Based on the objective of the study, this research investigate the CL in teaching the target prepositions. Thus, the hypothesis in this study is posted as follows:

H₀: the students who were taught by using the CL strategy would not have better achievement than the students who were taught by using rote learning strategy.

H_a: the students who were taught by using the CL strategy would have better achievement than the students who were taught by using rote learning strategy.

F. Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to find out the effectiveness CL strategy in teaching prepositions. The prepositions is limited (*in, on, at*), this study implemented to eleventh grade of MAN 4 Kediri. XI MIA 1 as the control group and XI MIA 2 as the experimental group.

G. Definition of Key Terms

The definition is intended to avoid misunderstanding and ambiguity in perception of some terms used in study. The researcher is going to define the key terms that related to this thesis.

1. Preposition

Preposition is polysemous—one word having different, yet systematically related and motivated senses. The spatial preposition carries a core sense that is derived from our interaction with physical entities in the world and based on our sensory perception of our surroundings (Langacker, 2008). The other senses (i.e. temporal and abstract senses) are derived from the core sense in a systematic way.

2. Rote learning

Ausubel (1968) defines rote learning as simple memorization: the process of acquiring “discrete and relatively isolated entities” that can be related “to cognitive structure only in an arbitrary and verbatim fashion”.

3. Cognitive Linguistics (CL)

CL is the way of knowledge acquisition applying the prior knowledge to new situations by construction of mental model (Song, 2013)