Assessing the Performance of Iraqi EFL University Students in Using Wish Expressions

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1.1 The Problem

Expressing wishes is an important aspect of language. A wish is a desire. It is to want something or to long for doing something. In general, a wish is not related to reality (Filipovic, 1984:200).

Wishes, in English, can be expressed either explicitly or implicitly. Explicitly, wishes are expressed by the main verb **wish** which may occur as a monotransitive, ditransitive, or complex transitive verb.

(1) They **wish** they didn't have to repeat the course.

(Aronson, 1984:58)

(2) **Wish** me good luck. **(**Close, 1979:203)

(3) I **wish** you to leave now. (Schibsbye, 1969:32)

Implicitly, wishes may be expressed by different constructions: main verbs other than **wish** such as: **hope, would like, would prefer, want, love,** and **desire**, auxiliary verbs such as **will** and **shall.** Imperatives may be used to express wishes. Furthermore, some constructions like **would rather** and **it's time** may convey wishes. Wishes may also be conveyed by some types of **nonsentences** such as: **irregular subordinate clauses**, **optative subjunctive,** and **verbless clauses**.

(4) I **hope** it doesn't rain tomorrow.   (Murphy, 1994: 44)

(5) I**'d prefer** you not to do it.   (Alexader et al.1975:163)

(6) I **want** to tell you how much we enjoyed last night.

(Quirk et al. 1985:148)

(7) I**'d love** to be able to travel round the world.

(Murphy, 1994: 114)

(8) **Shall** we go?   (ibid. 42)

(9) **It's time** you went.   (Close, 1979: 130)

(10) **So help me God**!   (Onions, 1978:43)

There are two types of wishes: fulfilled and unfulfilled. The fulfilment and nonfulfilment of wishes are indicated by the time reference.

(11) Mike **wishes** he had a job.   (fulfilled**)**   (Leech, 1989: 546)

(12) I**'d rather** you had helped them.   (unfulfilled)   (Baily, 1996: 47)

The problem arises when the Iraqi EFL university students fail to recognize implicit wish expressions, and consequently they express them explicitly, i.e. by the verb **wish**. Moreover, the lack of linguistic knowledge about wish expressions may lead these learners to use the wrong tense with the verb **wish** which should be followed by past tense.

1.2 Aims of the Study

The study aims at:

1- Presenting the theoretical background about the syntactic constructions of the explicit and implicit wish expressions in addition to the semantic and pragmatic functions of these expressions.

2- Identifying the Iraqi EFL university students' performance in   recognizing and producing wish expressions by conducting a diagnostic test.

3- Finding out the causes behind committing errors in recognizing and producing such expressions.

1.3 Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

1- Iraqi EFL university students are expected to face more difficulty in recognizing and producing the implicit forms of wish expressions.

2- Such learners tend to use explicit wish expressions mostly.

3- The learners are expected to use the wrong tense in the nominal clause that follows the verb **wish**, i.e. they may fail to use the past tense.

4. The learners' performance at the recognition level is better than that at the production.

1.4 Procedures

The steps adopted to fulfil the aims of the study are as follows :

1. Presenting a theoretical part about wish expressions depending on different publications available in the field.

2. Administering a diagnostic test to find out the difficulties they may face in using the various expressions of wish.

3. Analyzing the results of the test in order to reveal the difficulties they face and the sources of their errors.

1.5 Limits

The sample of the study is limited to university fourth year students at the Department of English, College of Education, University of Babylon during the academic year (2010 – 2011). The reason behind choosing the fourth year students is that they have been taught this subject and supposedly they possess the ability to understand and produce such expressions.

1.6 Value

The findings of this study may be of benefit in the following aspects:

1. The theoretical part may provide information about explicit and   implicit wish expressions that can be useful for other researchers.

2. The practical material may have a pedagogical importance to teachers in that it may draw their attention to the areas of weakness in the students' performance in using wish expressions.

3. This study could be of benefit to translators in drawing their attention to different expressions of wish in order to have better insight and wider scope of view of what the writer or the speaker means. The results of the study could be useful to syllabus designers in taking remedial actions.

2.1 The Concept of Wish

According to The New Webster Dictionary of the English Language (1984:s.v.wish), wishing is to have a desire or to long for something. One may wish himself to be or to have something, to wish something to someone, to imprecate, or to invoke (to wish evil) someone. A "wish is an expression of desire; a request; a petition" (ibid).

(1) I **wish** I owned a yacht.   (Chalker, 1984: 137)

(2) I **wish** I were as handsome as he is.

(Eckersley and Eckersley, 1980: 229)

(3) They **wish** her success in her new career.

(Hornby, 1982: 310)

(4) **God bless you!**   (Eckersley, 1963: 54)

(5) **Heaven destroy him!**   (Finney, 2002: 37)

(6) I**'d like** you to hold the door open for me.

<div align="right">(Eastwood, 2000: 153)</div>

Leech (1989: 545) states that "To wish is to want what is not happening, or what did not happen". Long (1962: 151) says "wishing may involve rejection of possibility".

(7) I **wish** I were a good mechanic.

Filipovic (1984: 200) points out that a wish" represents something not as a reality or fact; but only as a desire or something we hope". Similarly, Praninskas (1975: 329) remarks that a wish" often refers to the unreal, the contrary to fact. We wish for things we do not have, for events which can- not happen".

(8) Jack **wishes** he had a car.

(9) Miss Liu **wishes** that she had studied English in high   school.

Azar (2003:432) asserts that wishes are made when reality is wanted to be different. Swan (2005: 99) sees wish as "wanting something that is impossible or that does not seem probable, or being sorry that things are not different".

(10) I **wish** I could fly.

(11) I **wish** I had more money.

(12) **If only** I knew more people.

2.2 Types of Wish Expressions

2.2.1 Explicit Wish

Wishes are expressed explicitly by the verb **wish**. According to Quirk et al. (1985: 1196), **wish** is a volitional verb. The New Webster Dictionary of the English Language (1984: s. v. wish) defines volition as "having the power to will; originating in the will; used in expressing a wish".

The verb **wish** is a transitive verb. It may function as a monotransitive or ditransitive verb. According to Biber et al. (1999: 696) the verb **wish** is a cognition verb, thus, it may function as a complex-transitive verb.

2.2.1.1 Wish as a Monotransitive Verb

As a monotransitive verb, **wish** may be followed by different constructions, each of which conveys certain meaning with certain time reference.

First, the verb **wish** may be followed by the construction **(that+ past subjunctive)**. The subjunctive is used in the nominal clause that follows the verb **wish** to indicate the remoteness from reality (Bing, 1989: 102). Onions (1978: 108) remarks that the **past subjunctive** does not refer to the past but it refers to the unreality of a present situation

House and Harman (1950: 11) state that: "the meaning of the past subjunctive form is not, as a rule, past, but present or future". Graver (1971: 97) points out that the past tense is used to express a present un-real situation. Leech (1989: 546) says that the use of the past form of the verb in the nominal clause **that** reflects a situation that does not exist in the present. According to Quirk et al. (1985: 158) the subjunctive **were** is used with singular and plural, which breaks the concord rule. On the other hand, the indicative **was** may also be used in such constructions (ibid.1013):

(25) I **wish** I **were** a millionaire.   (Leech, 1989: 546)

(26) Mike **wishes** he **had** a job.   (ibid.)

(27) I **wish** she **was** not married.   (Quirk et al. 1985: 1013)

Cook et al. (1977: 51) demonstrate that the past continuous may be used in **that clause** to convey future meaning; while, it denotes the non-fulfilment of the wish:

(28) I **wish** you **were coming** tomorrow.

The speaker believes that the addressee is not coming tomorrow which makes the wish unfulfilled.

Leech (1989: 546) points out that the use of the past perfect in **that-clause** indicates regret about past situation or action:

(29) I **wish** I **had gone** to that party last night.

(30) Do you ever **wish** you**'d remained** single instead of   marrying?

Second, the verb **wish** may be followed by the construction **(that)+would….**This construction implies the wisher's desire to make a change in someone's behaviour, a desire for an event to take place, or it expresses a polite request or dissatisfaction with the present situation (Eastwood, 2000: 321).

(31) I **wish** people **wouldn't leave** this door open.

(32) I **wish** Simon **would reply** to my letter.

(33) I **wish** you **wouldn't smoke.**

Hornby (1982: 195) states that this use of wish shows that the speaker does not expect obedience. Thomson and Martinet (1986:262) illustrate: "I wish you would" is used as an answer to an offer with no implication of dissatisfaction.

(34) A: Shall I help you check the accounts?

B: **I wish you would.**

Jespersen (1962: 283) says that: "would is further used in wishes not only when the fulfilment depends on the will of the subject". Leech (1989: 546) points out that **would** is used when the verb of that-clause is an action verb and the time reference is future.

(35) I **wish** the weather **would get** warmer.

According to Werner et al. (1985: 273), wishes about the past can be constructed by using **would (could)+ have+ past participle.**

(36) She **wishes** she **could have come.** (ibid.)

(37) I **wish** you **would have told** me about this.

(Finney, 2002: 19)

Gordon and Krylova (1974: 116) show that **might** may be used in that-clause instead of **would** or **could:**

(38) I **wish** I **might go** round the world.

2.2.1.2 Wish as a Ditransitive Verb

Wish may occur as a ditransitive verb, i.e. it may take an indirect object and a direct one. This construction conveys the wisher's desire for something to happen. This construction is mostly used to imply good wishes (Praninskas, 1976: 329).

(39) We **wish you a happy New Year.**

2.2.1.3 Wish as a Complex Transitive Verb

As **wish** is considered as a cognition verb, it may occur as a complex transitive verb. According to Quirk et al. (1985: 1196), the verb **wish** takes an

adjective phrase as an object complement. In addition, the complement may be an adjunct.

(40) He **wished** them **at the bottom of the sea.** (ibid. 1202)

(41) He'll **wish** himself **dead.** (Close, 1979: 204)

In formal style, **wish** may be followed by **to infinitive** to convey the meaning of **want.** This construction has the force of order (Crowell, 1964: 422).

(42) I **wish** him **to visit** me again.

2.2.2 Implicit Wish

Wishes may be implicitly expressed by using different devices such as **main verbs, auxiliary verbs, imperative, other constructions** in addition to **the non-sentences.**

2.2.2.1 Main Verbs

There are some lexical verbs which imply the meaning of wishing, these are used as expressions of desire. These verbs include: **hope, would like, would prefer, want, love,** and **desire.** According to Leech and Svartvik (1994: 74), all these verbs refer to state of mind or feeling. Biber et al. (1999:696) remark that these verbs are cognition verbs which "represent mental states or attitudes, often indicating the epistemological status of the information" (ibid. 706). Below is a brief discussion of each.

2.2.2.1.1 Hope

The verb **hope** conveys the meaning of **wish** with an implication that the wisher expects the fulfilment of the wish (Bing, 1989: 103). Leech and Svartvik (1994: 159) indicate that **will+ bare infinitive** may be used in that clause, the wish then has future reference:

(45) I (very much) **hope (that**) he **will arrive** on time.

The verb **hope** may be followed by an infinitive or by a clause when both the main clause and that-clause have the same subject, otherwise, **hope** is followed by a clause (Crowell, 1964: 423). Hornby (1982: 214) shows that **may** or **might** may be used in formal style; while **will** or **would** may be used in a less formal style.

(46) a- I **hope to see** him again.

b- I **hope I will see him** again. (Crowell, 1964: 423)

(47) I **hope that he will visit me** again. (ibid.)

(48) I **hope** he **may** succeed.   (Hornby, 1982: 214)

On the other hand, when **hope** occurs in the past perfect, the construction reflects the non-fulfilment of the wish. Dart (1982: 209) denotes that the use of **would+ the base form of the verb** in that-clause expresses an unfulfilled wish. Moreover, Hornby (1982: 217) indicates that, **hope** may be followed by the preposition **for.**

(49) I **had hoped** that Jennifer **would become** a doctor but she wasn't good enough in science.

(50) Ferdinand Magellan **hoped that** he **would go** around   the world.

(51) I'm **hoping for** news of his safe arrival.

2.2.2.1.2 Would like

The verb **would like** is followed by **to infinitive**. In addition, it is used mostly in conversation (Crowell, 1964: 422). Close (1979: 72) and Leech (1989, 547) agree that **would like** is used to express wishes with future reference:

(52) We'**d like** the meeting **to take** place as soon as possible.

Would like is a polite way of conveying the meaning of **want.** A question with **would like** implies invitation and a statement with **would like** implies a polite command (Praninskas, 1975: 240-1).

(53) The doctor said "**Would** you **like** to come in now"? (ibid.)

(54) I'**d like** two kilos of tomatoes, please. (Swan, 2005: 305)

According to Leech and Svartvik (1994: 162), **would like** is used not only to express one's wishes but also to ask about wishes of others:

(55) I **would like** to stay in an inexpensive hotel.

(56) **Would** you **like** me to open these letters?

On the other hand, Close (1979: 72) says that the construction **would+ have+ liked+ to infinitive** has past reference:

(57) I **would have liked** (then) **to have** seen it.

According to Allen (2004: 377), **should** may be used with **like** in stead of **would** and both of them are contracted as '**d**:

(58) I **should like** to come too.

(59) I **should have liked** to come too.

2.2.2.1.3 Would Prefer

Would prefer is used to express one's own wishes or to invite wishes of others (Leech and Svartvik, 1994: 162):

(60) We'**d prefer** there to be an adult in charge.

(Eastwood, 2000: 153)

(61) **Would** you **prefer** to start early? (Hornby, 1982: 217)

For Hornby (ibid.), **should** may be used instead of **would** and both of them are contracted as **'d**. **Would prefer** may occur as a monotransitive, ditransitive, or complex transitive verb:

 (62) I **should prefer** you to start early.

(63) **Would** you **prefer** to stay at home this evening?

(64) **Would** you **prefer me** not to come tomorrow?

2.2.2.1.4 Want

The dominant meaning of **want** in current usage is "to desire or wish for" (Allen, 2004: 603). It expresses a fulfilled wish when the present tense is used but when the past tense is used, it conveys an unfulfilled wish (Lains, 2003: 151). **Want** is one of the cognition verbs; therefore, it may occur as a complex transitive verb (Biber et al. 1999: 696).

(65) Your landlady **wants** you to post these letters.

(Eastwood, 2000: 151)

(66) We **wanted** to establish peace.   (Wallman, 1993:64)

2.2.2.1.5 Love

Close (1979:199) and Leech (1989: 547) mention that **would love+ to infinitive** has future reference. Similarly, Gramley and Patzold (1992: 172) state that the construction **love+ to infinitive** indicate a desired action in the future. The preposition **for** may follow the verb **love** having the same reference.

 (67) I **would love** her **to come.**   (Close, 1979: 199)

(68) I **love to sit** there. (Gramley and Patzold, 1992: 172)

(69) I **love** him **to sit** there.   (ibid.)

(70) I **love for** him **to sit** there.   (ibid.)

2.2.2.1.6 Desire

The verb **desire,** according to Oxford Student's Dictionary of English (2001: s. v. desire), conveys the meaning **to want** or **to wish for**. Similarly, The New Webster Dictionary of the English Language (1984: s. v. desire) indicates that the verb **desire** is used to express wishes. **Desire** is one of the cognition verbs ;therefore, it may occur as a complex transitive verb (Biber et al. 1999:696). The verb **desire** may be followed by **that-clause** or **to-infinitive** to convey the wisher's desire which has the force of request (Schibsbye, 1969: 32):

 (71) He **desires that you should see him.**

(72) She **desired** me **to write** a poem.

Willis (1984: 81) explains that the indicative mood may be used with the verb **desire** for nonfactual situations.

 (73) We **desire** that this application form **be** filled out in   triplicate.

2.2.2.2. Auxiliary Verbs

Some auxiliary verbs can be used to express wishes. The auxiliaries **will, shall** and **should** are used to express implicit wishes.

2.2.2.2.1 Will

Swan (2005:630) says "Will is used mostly in 'interpersonal' ways, to express wishes that affect other people through orders, requests, offers, promises":

 (74) **Will** you open the window?   (request)

According to Thomson and Martinet (1986: 190) **would like** can be replaced by **will:**

 (75) a- **Would** you **like** a drink?

　　　b- **Will** you have a drink?

2.2.2.2.2 Shall

Hornby (1982: 216) states that "Shall with a noun or a third person pronoun asks about the wishes of the person to whom the question is put". To consult someone's wishes **shall I/we** may be used. It expresses an offer for help. **Shall I/we** may give the same meaning of **would you like**, (see 2.4.2.1.2).

 (76) **Shall** the messenger wait?

(77) **Shall** he carry your suitcases upstairs?

(78) **Shall I** thread the needle for you?

(79) **Shall we** carry the box into the house for you?

2.2.2.3 Imperatives

Quirk et al. (1985: 803) define **imperatives** as "sentences which normally have no overt grammatical subject, and whose verb is in the imperative". Leech (1989: 166) and Swan (2005: 536) state that some commands can be used in sending **good wishes**. Such wishes have present or future reference; therefore, they are fulfilled.

(80) **Have a good time!** (Leech, 1989: 166)

Baily (1996: 52) points out that wishes can be conveyed by using the verb **be** in its base form followed by a continuous verb form. In addition, Bolinger (1977: 168) remarks that the perfect tense may be used in commands to convey the meaning of a wish. For Finny (2002: 18), some commands that convey wishes have an overt subject:

(81) Please, **be thinking** about me. (Baily, 1996: 52)

(82) Please, don't **have come** now. (Bolinger, 1977: 168)

(83) Please, **Robert, be doing** something for me. (ibid.)

As for Wallman (1993: 39), imperatives with **let** may express wishes. First person or third person may be used with **let.** Hornby (1982: 65) points out that wishes can be conveyed by using the passive form with **let:**

(84) **Let** us proceed! (Wallman, 1993: 39)

(85) **Let** anyone know that. (ibid.)

(86) **Let** justice be done. (Hornby, 1982: 65)

2.2.2.4 Other Constructions

Wishes may be implicitly conveyed by some constructions like **would rather, it's time,** and, **I'm dying for.**

Would rather means "the speaker imagines a NON-FACT to be a reality"(Close, 1979: 47). The 'non-fact' is reflected in the use of the subjunctive **were** even with third and first person (ibid.). Gethin (1983: 29) states "Would rather expresses a wish in the form of a comparison or preference although the phrase introduced by **that** may be left out if the comparison is understood from the context".

The use of past tense or the subjunctive reflect the non-fulfilment of the wish in the present. To express unfulfilled wishes, the past perfect is used in 'that clause' that follows **would rather**.

(87) I **would rather** she **came back.**

(88) I **would rather** Brenda **had gone** to London last week.

Bosewitz (1987: 166), Alexander (1997: 225), and Hewings (2005: 170) agree that **would rather** may be followed by a clause. Such construction is used to convey the wisher's desire for someone to do something or the desire for an event to take place:

(89) I**'d rather he had told me about it.**

(90) I feel embarrassed about what happened and **would rather the event were forgotten.**

Graver (1971: 97) and Thomson and Martinet (1986: 259) indicate that **would rather** may be followed by a **bare infinitive** if the subject of **would rather** is the subject of the action that follows; otherwise, **would rather** is used with **past subjunctive**. In negative response I**'d rather not** is used. In addition, **would rather** can be modified by **far** and **very much** (Alexander, 1997: 225).

(91) I**'d rather be** in Paris.   (Werner, 1985: 264)

(92) I**'d rather you told** me frankly what you think.

(Graver, 1971: 97)

(93) I**'d rather** you weren't unhappy. (Alexander, 1997: 225)

(94) I**'d far (**or **much) rather** be happy than rich. (ibid.)

In addition to **would rather,** the phrase **It's time** is used to convey wishes. It implies that the time has come for something to be done. This phrase may be followed by past tense to express a wish that may be unfulfilled in the present or it may or may not be fulfilled in the future (Leipzig, 1987: 174).

(98) **It's time** Kurt went on a diet.

On the other hand, when this phrase is followed by **to infinitive**, it conveys a wish having the force of command (Gethin, 1983: 30).

(95) **It's time** (for you) **to come back.**

Alexander (1997: 343) points out that the **subjunctive** or the **indicative** form can be used to refer to present and future. In addition, **could** can be used sometimes

with this phrase. Thomson and Martinet (1986: 253) illustrate that either **high** or **about** can be added to reinforce the idea.

(96) Isn't **it about time** our baby **could** walk?

<div align="center">(Alexander, 1997:343)</div>

(97) **It's high time** he **was** (or **were)** taught a lesson.

<div align="center">(Thomson and Martinet, 1986: 253)</div>

2.2.2.5 Non-sentences

Non-sentences are "fragmentary", i.e. they do not involve the normal obligatory structure. These structures are **irregular sentences** in the sense they do not "conform to the regular patterns of clause structure" (Quirk et al. 1985: 838). Crystal (1988: 18) terms such sentences as "**minor sentences**": "They use abnormal patterns which cannot be clearly analyzed into a sequence of clause elements". All the types of **minor sentences** are used in every day language. The following forms of such sentences may be used to express wishes:

2.2.2.5.1 Subordinate Clauses

In non-sentences, the subordinate clauses involve the omission of the matrix clause. Wishes may be expressed either by, **to infinitive, if only**, or **that-clause** (Quirk et al. 1985: 841).

A common type of **to infinitive** subordinate clauses is **to think that….**Such expressions are usually end with exclamation mark for they have the illocutionary force of exclamation. Thus, they are called "exclamatory wishes". Usually, these constructions are introduced by the interjection form **oh.**

(98) **To think that** I was once a millionaire**!**

(99) **Oh,** to be free!

Palmer (1976: 45), Hornby (1982: 215), and Eastwood (2000: 321) agree that **exclamatory wishes** can be expressed by **if only** with the form of the verb that is suitable to be used in conditional clauses. Such an expression conveys the same meaning of the verb **wish** but it is more emphatic. Moreover, the same tenses that are used with the verb **wish** can be used with **if only** with the same time reference (see 2.4.1.1). The expression **if only** is used to express regret.

(100) **If only** I **understood** what you are saying!

<div align="center">(Palmer, 1976:45)</div>

(101) **If only** Simon **would (could) replay** to my letter!

<div align="center">(Eastwood, 2000:321)</div>

Yule (1998: 142) terms **if only** as **"exceptional conditions".** The main purpose of this kind of condition is "to draw attention to the very exceptional circumstances required for the situation in the main clause to take place". Alexander (1997: 112) and Eastwood (2000: 321) point out that the present tense may be used with **if only** to express a wish about the future.

 (102) **If only** he **gets** this job, it will make a great deal of difference. (Eastwood, ibid.)

According to Quirk et al. (1985: 841) **just** or **but** may be used instead of **only**:

(103) **If** I could **just** make them understand my point of   view!

(104) **If** I could **but** explain!

Another kind of subordinate clauses is **that clause.** Long (1962: 134) and Onions (1978: 44) agree that **that clause** expresses exclamatory unfulfilled wishes with present reference. Such expressions often begin with the interjection **oh** and end with the exclamation mark. these expressions, involve subject-verb inversion when **oh** stands alone as introducing word.

 (105) **Oh that** I were there!

(106) **Oh that** it were not so!

(107) **Oh were** I there!   (Onions, ibid.)

2.2.2.5.2 Optative Subjunctive

The **optative subjunctive**, also called **formulaic subjunctive**, consists of the base form of the verb. It occurs in fixed types of expressions that convey wishes. Such expressions are termed by Greenbaum and Quirk (1990: 244) and Alexander (1997:134) as "**fossilized idioms**". Huddleston (1988: 362) terms them "**jussive constructions**". Baily (1996: 47) states that the **subjunctive formulae** may be used as "**damantory phrases**". Quirk et al. (1985: 158) demonstrate that such expressions have the force of **will**. They may also be conveyed by **let** or **may**.

 (108) **God bless you!**   (Quirk et al. 1985:839)

<div align="center"></div>

(109) **Heaven forbid!** **(**Huddleston, 1988: 362)

(110) **Woe betide sinners.** (Bailey, 1996: 47)

According to House and Harman (1950: 112) and to Quirk et al. (1985: 156), the **passive subjunctive** may be used to express **praise** or **a curse**. In addition, the **optative subjunctiv** may be used with subject-verb inversion to express wishes:

 (111) **God be praised!** (ibid.)

(112) **Family ties be damned!**(House and Harman, 1950: 112)

(113) **Long may she reign!** (Banks, 1983: 76)

Some non-sentences introduced by the auxiliary **may** involve subject-verb inversion. These constructions are used to express **blessings** or **curses** (Miller, 1952: 163) and Quirk et al. (1985: 839). House and Harman (1950: 112) term such constructions as "**modal subjunctive**" or "**potential subjunctive**"

(114) **May** he never know sorrow! (Miller, 1952: 163)

(115) **May** you break your neck! (Quirk et al. 1985: 839)

Ehrlich and Murphy (1976: 40) and Quirk et al. (1985: 839) agree that **would (to God)** is another kind of formula that expresses wishes by the **optative subjunctive**. This construction is followed by a that-clause with the past form of the verb:

 (116) **Would (to God)** that I'd never heard of him!

(Quirk et al. 1985: 839)

(117) **Would** that you made decisions more carefully.

(Ehrlich and Murphy, 1976: 40)

2.2.2.5.3 Verbless Clauses

Verbless clauses may be used to express **exclamatory wishes**. These expressions may be introduced by **now** or the interjection **oh** (Quirk et al. 1985: 842):

(118) **Oh for another glimpse of her!**

(119) **Now for a good hot bath!** (ibid.)

Onions (1978: 44) terms wishes that may involve the omission of the verb as **"elliptical wishes"**. Wallman (1993: 117) mentions that such wishes have future reference therefore they are fulfilled wishes:

(120) **More power to your elbow!** (Onions, 1978: 44)

According to Leech and Svartvik(1994: 174), some wishes can be conveyed by the construction **adjective+ noun** which is used to denote good wishes, seasonal greetings, and congratulations:

 (121) **Good luck!**

(122) **Happy birthday (to you)**.

3. The Test

3.1 Test Design

The test consists of two questions. The first one is designed to measure the subjects' responses at the recognition level. It includes twenty five items, which may or may not express wishes. The subjects are required to tick the items that convey wishes.The second question measures the subjects' production in using wish expressions. It consists of twenty five situations. The subjects are requested to respond to each by using different wish expressions.

3.2 Results of the Test

This section is devoted to discussing the results of the test at both levels: recognition and production.

3.1.1Subjects' Performance at the Recognition Level

The first question measures the subjects' performance at the recognition level. The results obtained on each item are shown in the following table:

Table (1)

The Frequency and Rate of Subjects' Performance in   Question (1): the Recognition Level

Item	No. of correct responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage
1	36	36	64	64

Item	No. of correct responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage
2	90	90	10	10
3	23	23	77	77
4	21	21	79	79
5	53	53	47	47
6	94	94	6	6
7	73	73	27	27
8	32	32	68	68
Item	No. of correct responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage
9	49	49	51	51
11	52	52	48	48
12	28	28	72	72
13	23	23	77	77
14	51	51	49	49
15	29	29	71	71
16	31	31	69	69
17	75	75	25	25
18	95	95	5	5
19	51	51	49	49

Item	No. of correct responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage
20	32	32	68	68
21	32	32	68	68
22	35	35	65	65
Item	No. of correct responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage
23	37	37	63	63
24	53	53	47	47
25	50	50	50	50
Total	1184	47.36	1316	52.64

The table above illustrates that the total number of the correct responses at the recognition level is (1184, 47.36%) whereas the total number of the incorrect responses is (1316, 52.64%).

Surprisingly, some subjects did not recognize the explicit wish expressions in items (6) and (18). The numbers of incorrect responses of items (6) and (18) are (6) and (5) respectively. Accordingly, there are (11) incorrect responses which denote that (0.83%) of the incorrect responses refers that there are some subjects who have failed to recognize explicit wish expressions.

It is hypothesized that the subjects face more difficulty in recognizing implicit wishes. The high rate of incorrect responses validates this hypothesis since the first question consists of twenty five items. Two items are explicit wishes while the others are implicit.

3.1.2 Subjects' Performance at the Production Level

Question Two measures the subjects' performance at the production level. The subjects' responses are illustrated in the following table:

Table (2)

The Frequency and Rate of Subjects' Performance in

Question (2): the Production Level

Item	No. of correct responses	percentage	No. of incorrect responses	percentage
1	27	27	73	73
2	55	55	45	45
3	29	29	71	71
4	26	26	74	74
5	34	34	66	66
6	29	29	71	71
Item	No. of correct responses	percentage	No. of incorrect responses	percentage
7	27	27	73	73
8	25	25	75	75
9	43	43	57	57
10	43	43	57	57
11	29	29	71	71

Item	No. of correct responses	percentage	No. of incorrect responses	percentage
12	21	21	79	79
13	20	20	80	80
14	28	28	72	72
15	36	36	64	64
16	17	17	83	83
17	11	11	89	89
18	35	35	65	65
19	20	20	80	80
Item	No. of correct responses	percentage	No. of incorrect responses	percentage
20	36	36	64	64
21	20	20	80	80
22	55	55	45	45
23	59	59	41	41
24	32	32	68	68
25	43	43	57	57
Total	800	32%	1700	68%

The results presented in Table (2) show that most of the subjects face serious difficulties in producing wish expressions since the total number of the correct

responses is (800, 32%) whereas the total number of the incorrect responses is (1700, 68%).

The subjects' responses also reveal that most of them tend to use the verb **wish** to express wishes more than the implicit constructions. This is illustrated in table (3) which presents the number and percentage of each construction used correctly by the subjects (the percentage is calculated out of the total number of correct responses of the production level which is (800)).

Table (3)

The Frequency and Rate of the Constructions

Used Correctly by the Subjects

The Construction	No. of correct responses	Percentage
Wish+ Past Subjunctive	27	3.375
Wish+ Would (Could)	235	29.375
Wish (Ditransitive)	10	1.25
Wish+ to Infinitive	223	27.875
Wish+ Object+ Complement	0	0
Want	57	7.125
Hope	97	12.125
Would Like	100	12.5
Would Prefer	6	0.75
Love	22	2.75

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The Construction	No. of correct Responses	Percentage
Desire	10	1.25
Will	2	0.25
Shall	3	0.375
Command	5	0.625
Let	0	0
Would Rather	0	0
It's Time	0	0
If Only	3	0.375
Would that	0	0
To Think that	0	0
Verbless Clause	0	0
Passive Subjunctive	0	0
Total	800	100

The table above illustrates that the total number of explicit wish expressions used correctly by the subjects is (495) which represents (61.875%) of the total number of correct responses at the production level, whereas all the other constructions represent (305,38.125%) of the correct responses.

In the second hypothesis, it is hypothesized that most of EFL learners tend to use explicit wish expressions more than the implicit ones. The results obtained from Table (3) validate this hypothesis.

The subjects' responses indicate that most of them tend to use the present tense after the verb wish instead of the past form of the verb. The total number of such incorrect responses is (1022) which represents (60.117%) of the total number of the incorrect responses in the production level which is (1700).

In the third hypothesis, it is hypothesized that most of EFL learners tend to use the present tense after the verb wish in stead of using the past form of the verb. The results obtained from the test and shown above verify this hypothesis.

3.1.3 Subjects' Performance in the Whole Test

The results of the whole test are demonstrated in Table (4):

Table(4)

The Results of the Whole Test

Level	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage
Recognition	1184	47.36	1316	52.64
Production	800	32	1700	68
Total	1984	39.68	3016	60.32

The number and the rate of incorrect responses (3016, 60.32%) reflects that Iraqi EFL university students face difficulty in mastering wish expressions at both levels. The subjects face more difficulty at the production level since the total number of correct responses which is (800, 32%) is lower than their correct responses at the recognition level which is (1184, 47.36%).

In the fourth hypothesis, it is hypothesized that the performance of the subjects is expected to be better at the recognition level than it is at the production level. The results shown in table (4) verify this hypotheses.

4. Conclusions

4.1 Theoretical Conclusions

1- A wish expresses the wisher's desire. It is a desire to do something, to have something, or to wish others something. Wishes are not necessarily good. One could wish evil, i.e. to curse someone. Furthermore, wishes may be expressions of requests. A wish may not represent a reality; it is a hope that is contrary to fact.

2- Syntactically, wishes can be expressed either explicitly or implicitly. Explicit wishes are expressed by the verb **wish** which can serve as a monotransitive, ditransitive, or complex transitive verb. As monotransitive, the verb **wish** can be followed by **that** clause or **past subjunctive** which reflects non reality, or would (could) with present perfect tense. As a ditransitive verb, **wish** is mostly used to express good wishes. Since **wish** is a cognition verb, it may occur as a complex transitive verb which takes an adjective phrase as an object complement.

3- Different devices may be used to express implicit wishes. These devices can be summarized in the following points:

I- Main verbs: hope, like, prefer, want, love, and

desire.

II- Auxiliary verbs: will, shall.

III- Commands.

IV- Other constructions: would rather, it's time.

V- Non sentences:

1- Subordinate clauses: if only, to think that….

2- Optative subjunctive.

4.2 Practical Conclusions

1- The results of the test at the recognition level denote that the subjects have failed to recognize the implicit wish expressions since the frequency and rate of the

incorrect responses constitute (1316, 52.64%) whereas those of the correct ones constitute (1184, 47.36%). This validates the first hypothesis which is:

The subjects are expected to face more difficulty in recognizing the implicit wish expressions.

2-The subjects' performance at the production level has revealed that Iraqi EFL university students face difficulties in producing wish expressions since the frequency and rate of the incorrect responses are (1700, 68%) whereas those of the correct of ones are (800, 32%). Furthermore, (61.875%) of the correct responses at the production level have been expressed by (I wish…). This validates the third hypothesis which reads:

Most of EFL learners tend to use the explicit wish expressions in expressing their wishes.

3-The results of the present test reflect that Iraqi EFL university fourth year students face difficulties in recognizing and producing different wish expressions. The main test has yielded that the frequency and rate of the correct responses are (1984, 39.86%) whereas the frequency and rate of the incorrect responses are (3016, 60.32%) which is significantly higher than those of the correct ones. The number and rate of the correct responses at the recognition level are (1184, 47.36%) against (800, 32%) at the production level. Such results verify the fourth hypothesis which reads as follows:

It is expected that the subjects' performance at the recognition level is better than it is at the production level.

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Appendix 1

The test

Q1 Tick the sentences that convey a wish:

1-I`d love to go for a swim.
2-Nice day, isn't it?
3-Shall we cancel the order if it's not needed?
4-It`s high time the children went to bed.
5-I would like a quart of milk.
6-I wish I lived nearer my work.
7-No work, no money.
8-I like to clean the kitchen as often as possible.
9-I would prefer to wait till tomorrow.
10-May all your troubles be small!
11-I`d like some information about hotels here.
12-Oh for another glimpse of her!
13-Jack is a great talker. But it's time he did something instead of talking.
14-If only she had asked someone's advice!
15-Let us pray.
16-I would rather stay at home.
17-I`m hoping to get a job.
18-I wish him to come.
19-If I were you I should stop smoking.
20-We would love Jim to say something right now
21-Heaven help us!
22-Would that he were still with us now.
23-I love meeting people.

24-If only the rain would stop!

25-They wanted him dead.

Q2 Respond to the following situations by using wish expressions, try to use different constructions:

1-You have a lot of work to do. You long for some help; therefore, you ask your brother to help you.

2-You are sitting in a restaurant and you want to order for food, tell the waiter that you want to see the menu.

3-The company you are working in faces a problem. Ask your boss if he wants to hold a meeting to discuss the problem.

4-Your friend's wife spends so much time gossiping with the neighbours. He desires his wife not to do so.

5-Your brother lives abroad. You and your family are eager that he would be able to visit

6-Your roommate makes noise and you have to study for the   you.

exam.

7-Your brother is very selfish. He must realize that he is not the most important person in the world.

8-Your neighbour is very ill. You and your family visit him.

9-You are a teacher, your students are going to have their final exam.

10-You are in France but you cannot speak French.

11-Your brother drives so fast and you are concerned about

him.

12-You expect a very important letter but the postman has not come yet.

13-The job couldn't have been done more quickly because your company had some difficulties in getting the right kind of supplies.

14-Your colleague makes rude remarks about you; you desire that he didn't do so.

15-You suffer from explosions; you want them to stop making bombs.

16-The enemies do not understand that we will not hesitate to defend our country.

17-Your younger brother is so timid, you regret that he is as such.

18-You have a guest, offer to make him a cup of coffee.

19-If you are a shop keeper and the customer wants to pay by   check but you think she had better to pay in cash, what would you tell her?

20-An old friend of yours calls telling you that he will visit you. What will you say?

21-Your enemy hurts you a lot. What will you say to curse him?

22-Your family want to go to the theatre.

23-You`ve never been to England and you hope to be there.

24-John studies hard because he wants to be a doctor.

25-You cannot travel this summer because you cannot afford to.