

Iraqi EFL Learners' Performance of English Grammatical Morphemes

Rana Abdelwahid Fadhil*, Abeer Adil Sahab

Department of English Language, College of Education for Humanities, Ramadi, Iraq

* ranoshlight@uoanbar.edu.iq

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ABSTRACT:

The performance of grammatical morphemes is an important part of language use because it focuses on the shape of the gained language. When compared to bound morphemes, it is widely assumed that free morphemes are performed with greater ease. The gaining of grammatical morphemes in the English language comes an expected sequence. However, for Iraqi learners, an acquisition of grammatical Morphemes in English may present challenges due to differences in the structure of their native language. For example, Arabic is a Semitic language that has a different grammatical structure than English. As a result, Iraqi learners may struggle with the order in which they acquire English grammar morphemes. The current study examines how Iraqi EFL learners develop their performance in {-D pp}, {-ING vb}, {-D pt}, {-ER cp}, {-EST sp}, {-S sg ps}, {-S 3d}, {-S pl}, {-S pl ps}, over one academic year. The study also examines whether Iraqi EFL learners comply with the identical sequence of performance at comparable ages and educational terms. It also aims to differentiate between Iraqi males and females' English language learners based on grammatical morphemes. The study was based on an essay writing test administered to 20 third-year students. The students study English as a foreign language at the Department of English, College of Education for Humanities, University of Anbar in the academic year 2022-2023. The conclusions reveal the percentage of identifying the relevant grammatical morphemes. The percentages display that the performance of {-Spl} more fulfilled, with (%55.8), than {-S 3d} (%9.08), {-S sg ps} (%2.4), {-S pl ps} (%0), {-D pt} (%41.49), {-D pp} (%11.28), {-ING vb} (%14.8), {-ER cp} (%3.1), {-EST sp} (%1.6) respectively. Furthermore, the findings indicate that Iraqi females' English language learners outperform males in these grammatical morphemes. According to the study, Iraqi EFL students should write various articles that include all grammatical morphemes as well as try different exercises and examples of grammatical morphemes in order to develop and improve their performance.

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1-Introduction:

Language learners are a diverse group of individuals who are learning a new language. This may include students learning a second language in a school setting, individuals preparing to live or work in a new linguistic environment, or anyone seeking to expand their linguistic abilities. These learners come from various language backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, and nationalities, making them a tremendously diverse group. Language acquisition is a multistage process, and language researchers have developed a general outline to explain the steps that language participants take in developing foreign language skills. Effective language learning necessitates dedication, determination, and diligent work, as well as are methods that can assist learners in studying more successfully, such as developing a study schedule which increases each of the three aspects of language development: comprehending (participation), production (results), and recognizing and fixing errors (review/feedback). Whether it's through formal courses, individual coaching, or independent learning, language learners seek to become more efficient and effective in their new language, regardless of the learning method.

This is critical to understand the way second languages are acquired, that refers to learning a language other than one's native language. Second language acquisition (henceforth SLA) is an inquiry of the way learners develop new language systems despite limited contact with a second tongue. According to Ellis (1986:60), learners of second languages do not reach the exact same stage of comprehension as well as competency as native language speakers. Furthermore, SLA is concerned with the number of theories that students form about the system of the second language.

Since it deals with the structure of the language acquisition, grammatical morphemes are the most important aspect of language acquisition. Many people believe that free morphemes are easier to learn than bound morphemes.

The present study aims to investigate whether Iraqi EFL learners, according to Collins dictionary "is the teaching of English to people whose first language is not English" and EFL is an abbreviation for English as a Foreign Language whose native language is Arabic, acquire English morphemes of grammar in the same order, and whether there is a significant difference in morpheme acquisition among Iraqi male and female EFL learners. This study raises research questions about the sequence that grammatical morphemes are learned and the potential differences between male and female learners. It is proposed that Iraqi EFL learners fail to pick up English grammatical morphemes in the identical pace, and that male

EFL learners learn these morphemes differently than female EFL learners. The male EFL learners learn these morphemes differently from female EFL learners. The current study implies the ideas proposed by Kh. Khalaf. (2017) and Abdulaziz B Sanosi (2018) and A. Akande (2003) and A. Alotaibi (2016) who every one pointed out the necessary contexts in which they obtained their data. They were worried about the ordering of grammatical morphemes, {-s pl.}, {-s 3d}, {-s sg ps}, {-s pl ps}, {-d pp}, {-d pt}, {-ing vb}, {-est sp} and {-er cp}. Their proposals represented the quantifiable phase of the participants' grammatical morpheme sequence. Furthermore, the participants demonstrated various patterns of acquisition. K. Khalaf (2017) dealt with the sequence of grammatical morpheme acquiring among Anbar university students, third stage, from the perspective of foreign language acquisition, whereas Abdulaziz B Sanosi (2018) chose Sudanese English learners to assess their performance with grammatical morphemes in English. The present research addresses the following objectives:

- 1- Do Iraqi EFL learners learn English grammatical morphemes in the same order as suggested by Kh. Khalaf (2017), A. Alotaibi (2016), A. Akande (2003), Abdulaziz B. Sanosi (2018)?
- 2- Do Iraqi EFL learners learn grammatical morphemes at the identical age with identical educational circumstances?
- 3- Are there differences in the acquisition of {-s pl.}, {-s 3d}, {-s sg ps}, {-s pl ps}, {-d pp}, {-d pt}, {-ing vb}, {-est sp} and {-er cp} among Iraqi male and female EFL learners ?

2-Literature Review:

Several scholars have published work concerning the relationship between the formal linguistics and EFL, as well as various approaches to analyzing foreign language data, each with its own set of objectives, data collection methods, and analytic tools.

In his longitudinal study on the progress of foreign language learning, Khalaf (2017) used a grammaticality judgment test given to 30 participants earlier than the last day of an academic year, especially in May (2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016). The analysis results show the average percentage of correctly identified grammatical morphemes. Furthermore, according to research findings, Iraqi male and female EFL students learn grammatical morphemes in a similar order. However, the averages differ, indicating that female Iraqi EFL students learn these grammatical morphemes more effectively than males. According to the findings, Iraqi EFL students should take following English grammar the lessons and rearrange their knowledge by reviewing their previous mistakes.

A. Alotaibi (2016) conducted another study on grammatical morphemes when studying English as a foreign language, with the goal of identifying the primary causes of errors made by Kuwaiti EFL students. It also determines whether the participants' proficiency in English influences their test results. A multiple-choice examine was adopted to assess the participants' capacity to employ suitable inflected morphemes in English. Following analysis of the data, the findings show that Kuwaiti students of EFL are somewhat aware of the proper usage of inflecting morphemes throughout the English language (65.5%). In addition, the results of the test indicates that the participants' proficiency in English level impacts their

comprehension of these morphemes. ALs provide more correct answers than ILs. It has been suggested that the majority of obvious mistakes committed by participants are due to first language (L1) negative transference and the erratic nature of particular kinds of inflectional morphemes in English. Lastly, the study discusses some educational implications and research suggestions for improvement.

A. Akande (2003) conducted a study to investigate the occurrence and improper use of those morphemes in the English essays by certain Yoruba learners of the English language. The study involved sixty senior high school one (SSS1) students from Oke-Igbo township. The study's data included English-written compositions and a grammar activity. The subjects' written assignments were evaluated for different events and misuses of inflectional morphemes. The research discovered a significant gap in the subjects' mastery of inflectional morphemes. Certain recommendations were made as a result of this discovery.

Abdulaziz B Sanosi (2018) chose Sudanese students to look into the sequence in which Sudanese EFL learners obtain English grammatical morphemes. It additionally investigates what factors affect such an order, in addition to the challenges scale applied by the research community when learning grammatical morphemes. The descriptive quantitative approach was applied in this study of 482 Sudanese college and high school pupils. The study was conducted during the course of the academic year 2016–2017. The information gathered for analysis reveals that the participants learned the chosen grammatical morphemes in a particular order. The order was established by how accurately they used the chosen morphemes, which consisted of progressive plural -S, possessive -S, third person singular -S, -ing, past -ed, and articles. It was also found that, in spite of using the exact same acquisition order, each participant's level of skills influenced the quality of their use of grammatical morphemes. In terms of the elements that influence the formation of an acquired pattern, it was found that the frequency with which grammatical morphemes show up in the SPINE series has a significant impact on how they rank. Further variables that could affect the order involve L1 transfer and saliency. As a whole, grammatical morpheme usage was weak to moderate, but participants of all levels were struggling with articles that were both definite and indefinite. These results consist of instructional suggestions for teaching grammatical morphemes, textbook design, and additional study instructions.

The study of grammatical morphemes has been inspired by the realization that their application is needed in particular contexts, as well as the percentage of morphemes provided for these contexts offers exactly what many investigators consider as not merely an accepted framework but additionally a purposeful and realizable measure of acquiring. The present study is different from previous studies since it deals with acquisition of all grammatical morphemes and it has been achieved recently in the academic year 2022-2023 with a developed course in teaching morphemes.

3-Methodology:

3.1 Research Design

The layout of the study relates to the general plans and procedures for conducting research that determine the different kinds of inquiry within research approaches and therefore provide guidance for the research procedure (Kumar, 2011). In order to accomplish the

research goals, the quantitative method was selected due to it is most appropriate for the present research. As a result, the present study demands a quantitative research approach.

3.1.1 The Participants

The study involved 20 Iraqi EFL students learning the English language at the Department of English, College of Education for Humanities, University of Anbar in the academic year 2022-2023 / 2nd year. Their ages ranged from 20 to 27. There were ten men and ten women among the students.

3.1.2 The Instrument of the Study

The result of the test served as a means for gathering data for the study. The researchers used the test to classify students as male or female. Students were assigned to write an essay of 120-150 words. The test lasted about 15 minutes and included the use of the nine grammatical morphemes to determine how well they learned and acquired them.

The variation in results from one student to the next demonstrated the test's reliability⁽¹⁾. The jury was then tasked with assessing the content's validity. The exam was controlled and achieved for both reliability and content validity.

3.1.3 The Procedure of the Study

The present study targets to identify the degree of acquisition of grammatical morphemes such as {-s pl.}, {-s 3d}, {-s sg ps}, {-s pl ps}, {-d pp}, {-d pt}, {-ing vb}, {-est sp} and {-er cp} by Iraqi English as a foreign language student, as well as to distinguish between male and female EFL learners. The participants, from the 2nd year in Department of English, College of Education for Humanities, University of Anbar, were selected to guarantee consistency in learning circumstances, level, syllabuses, and the instructor. In the first year, they studied English grammar using Raymond Murphy's book English Grammar in Use (1985) and An Introduction to English Grammar / Norman C. Stageberg (1981) In the second year would be studied. The participants were given 15 minutes to compose an essay of 120-150 words involving the rules of grammar to assess their knowledge of grammar use in addition to the number of times they used every morpheme and whether they were used properly. The examination was administered to ten males and ten females to determine the difference in their scientific proficiency in using and writing morphemes.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

The present study needs to descriptive analysis to meet the objectives proposed.

The data is statistically analyzed and discussed in the study's subsequent section. Males exhibit greater development and use of the {-S pl} morpheme compared to females. {-D pt}, {-D pp}, {-ING vb}, {-S 3d}, {-S sg ps}, {-ER cp}, {-EST sp} and {-S pl ps}. The average of the identification of {-S pl} is (53.8%) whereas {-D pt} is (20.09%), {-D pp} is (5.58%), {-ING vb} is (9.1%), {-S 3d} is (2.28%), {-S sg ps} and {-ER cp} have the same average,

(1) Prof. Dr. Ala'a Ismael Challob, Asst. Prof. Dr. Juma'a Qadir, Asst. Prof. Meethaq Khamee, Ins. Awham Rasheed

the average is (1.8%), {-EST sp} is (1.3%), while the {-S pl ps} is not developed the average is (0%) as described in the table (1):

Grammatical morphemes	Average of identification
{-S pl}	53.8%
{-D pt}	20.09%
{-D pp}	5.58%
{-ING vb}	9.1%
{-S 3d}	2.28%
{-S sg ps}	1.8%
{-ER cp}	1.8%
{-EST sp}	1.3%
{-S pl ps}	0%

Table (1): The average of acquiring grammatical morphemes by male

Females have more developed acquisition of the {-S pl} morpheme compared to {-D pt}, {-S 3d}, {-D pp}, {-ING vb}, {-ER cp}, {-S sg ps}, {-EST sp}, and {-S pl ps}. The average verification rate for {-S pl} is 57.8%, {-D pt} is 21.4%, {-S 3d} is 6.8%, {-D pp} and {-ING vb} have a comparable average (5.7%), {-ER cp} is 1.3%, {-S sg ps} is 0.6%, and {-EST sp} is 0.3%. Although {-S pl ps} remains undeveloped, the average is 0%, as shown in table (2).

Grammatical morphemes	Average of identification
{-S pl}	57.8%
{-D pt}	21.4%
{-S 3d}	6.8%
{-D pp}	5.7%
{-ING vb}	5.7%
{-ER cp}	1.3%
{-S sg ps}	0.6%
{-EST sp}	0.3%
{-S pl ps}	0%

Table (2): The average of acquiring grammatical morphemes by female

The collected data is also statistically analyzed in male and female groups using Microsoft Excel. There are ten men and ten women among the attendees. Iraqi male and female EFL students learn grammatical morphemes in the same order but with different averages, as shown in tables (1) and (2) below; {-S pl}, {-S 3d}, {-S sg ps}, {-S pl ps}, {-ING vb}, {-D pp}, {-D pt}, {-EST sp} and {-ER cp}.

The average percentage of identification indicates that participants' acquisition of {-S pl} is more fulfilled and developed than others. as shown in Table (3)

Grammatical morphemes	Average of identification
{-S pl}	111.6%

{-S 3d}	9.08%
{-S sg ps }	2.4%
{-S pl ps}	0%
{-D pt}	41.49%
{-D pp}	11.28%
{-ING vb}	14.8%
{-ER cp}	3.1%
{-EST sp}	1.6%

Table (3): The average of identifying; { -S pl } , { -S 3d } , { -S sg ps } , { -S pl ps } , { -ING vb } , { -D pt } , { -D pp } , { -EST sp } and { -ER cp }

Conclusions:

The main aims of present study are examining how Iraqi EFL learners develop their performance in grammatical morphemes, examining whether Iraqi EFL learners comply with the identical sequence of performance at comparable ages and educational terms and showing a difference between Iraqi male and female learners in acquiring grammatical morphemes.

The results show that Iraqi EFL learners have the same order of acquiring grammatical morphemes with high percentages for (-S pl, -D pt, -S 3d). Also there is no significant difference in the acquisition order between male and female.

Thus, it is that Iraqi EFL learners performed well in some grammatical morpheme acquisition assignments but poorly in others. This poor level necessitates some pedagogical procedures:

- 1- Examine the errors made by students in their answers and instruct them to compose it in the correct way so that they can reorganize their knowledge effectively.
- 2- To improve their learning acquisition, they will be trained to write various articles that include all Grammatical Morphemes. In addition, to improve performance, work through various exercises and examples of grammatical morphemes.

أداء العراقيين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للمقاطع النحوية الإنجليزية

رنا عبد الواحد فاضل*، عبير عادل سحاب

قسم اللغة الإنكليزية، كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية، جامعة الأنبار، الرمادي، العراق

* ranoshlight@uoanbar.edu.iq

الكلمات المفتاحية: المقاطع النحوية، الاختلافات، اللغة، التركيب النحوي، متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

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ملخص البحث:

يعتبر أداء المقاطع النحوية جزءاً مهماً في استخدام اللغة لأنه يركز على شكل اللغة المكتسبة. وعند المقارنة مع المقاطع المقيدة فمن المفترض أن المقاطع الحرة يتم إدائها بسهولة أكبر وعلى نطاق واسع. إذ يأتي اكتساب المقاطع النحوية في اللغة الإنجليزية بتسلسل متوقع. وبالرغم من ذلك، بالنسبة للمتعلمين العراقيين، فإن الحصول على المقاطع النحوية باللغة الإنجليزية قد يمثل تحدياً بسبب الاختلافات في بنية لغتهم الأم فعلى سبيل المثال، اللغة العربية هي لغة سامية لها بنية نحوية مختلفة عن اللغة الإنجليزية. ونتيجة لذلك، قد يعاني المتعلمون العراقيون من الترتيب الذي يكتسبون به المقاطع النحوية باللغة الإنجليزية. حيث تبحث الدراسة الحالية في كيفية تطوير المتعلمين العراقيين لأدائهم لـ {D pp}، {ING vb}، {D pt}، {ER cp}، {EST}، {S sg ps}، {S 3d}، {S pl ps}، {S pl ps}، خلال سنة دراسية واحدة. كما وتبحث الدراسة أيضاً في ما إذا كان متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية العراقيين يمثلون للتسلسل المطابق للأداء بحسب الفئات العمرية والشروط التعليمية المماثلة. وتهدف الدراسة إلى التمييز بين الذكور والإناث العراقيين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بناء على التشكلات النحوية. اعتمدت الدراسة على اختبار كتابة المقالات الذي تم إجراؤه لـ 20 طالباً في السنة الثالثة. إذ يدرس الطلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية، جامعة الأنبار في العام الدراسي 2022-2023. تكشف الاستنتاجات النسبة المئوية لتحديد المقاطع النحوية ذات الصلة. وتظهر النسب المئوية أن أداء {S pl} هو الأكثر بنسبة (55.8%) وتعد هذه النسبة أكثر من {S 3d} (9.08%)، {S sg ps} (2.4%)، {S pl ps} (0%)، {D pt} (41.49%)، {D pp} (11.28%)، {ING vb} (14.8%)، {ER cp} (3.1%)، {EST sp} (1.6%) على التوالي. وعلاوة على ذلك، فإن النتائج تشير إلى أن متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية من الإناث العراقيات يتفوقن على الذكور في هذه المقاطع النحوية. ووفقاً للدراسة، فعلى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من العراقيين كتابة مقالات مختلفة تشمل جميع المقاطع النحوية بالإضافة إلى تجربة تمارين وأمثلة مختلفة من المقاطع النحوية من أجل تطوير وتحسين الاداء.