

Gender Difference in Phrasal Verbs Comprehension by Iraqi EFL Learners at Secondary School Level

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Abstract

English phrasal verbs caused certain challenges for Iraqi EFL learners. Comprehending phrasal verbs necessitated special attention since their meaning could not be inferred by combining the meaning of the individual words. The study aimed to examine potential gender differences in phrasal verbs comprehension Iraqi EFL learners. The study included 50 secondary school students, 25 male and 25 female. A test, as a research instrument, was distributed to students. The test included two parts; the first part focused on placing the phrasal verb in the correct order, whereas the second one focused on circling the choice that had a similar meaning to the phrasal verb. The data of the study were (20) sentences selected purposively from the books of English Phrasal Verbs by Booth and Davies (2021) and Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary by Merriam-Webster Inc (2004). The data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively by using (SPSS) program. The results showed that the wrong answers committed by participants were higher than the correct ones. Based on these results, the study concluded that participants

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committed two errors related to syntactic and semantic features of phrasal verbs. Syntactic errors represented by separability scored the highest percentage while semantic errors represented by idiomaticity were the lowest. In addition, the statistical analysis revealed no significant variance in phrasal verbs comprehension between males and females.

Keywords: phrasal verb, EFL, idiomaticity, separability, syntactic errors, semantic errors

Introduction .1

Understanding phrasal verbs is considered as one of the difficulties encountered by Iraqi learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). Since they are less subjected to such kinds of verbs, EFL learners usually commit errors when using them. Numerous perspectives have been used to discuss phrasal verbs. Since the topic of phrasal verbs is so wide in scope, no one can cover every aspect. Thus, they have been the subject of many studies by researchers such as (Schmitt and Redwood, 2011; Al-Qudah, 2012; Riguel, 2014; Hameed and Jassim, 2015; Bendjedid, 2016; Barkindo, 2017; Azmar, 2019; Mohammed, Mujiyanto and Faridi, 2020; and Monika, 2020). Hameed and Jassim (2015) investigated the ability of Iraqi fourth-year EFL students to recognize as well as produce phrasal and prepositional verbs. In addition, they also attempted to find out what kinds of multi-word verbs students found most difficult. A descriptive-analytical method was adopted. To collect data, a test was distributed to (50) participants. Among the findings that the researchers arrived at was that the testees performed better on the whole recognition level than the production level. In addition, they found that poor performance was demonstrated by EFL learners in using the suitable particle or preposition when recognizing or producing multi-word verbs.

It is plausible to start with the phrasal verb structure as a starting point

to trace the problem that EFL learners face. As mentioned by various scholars, Thim (2012:10) indicates that “phrasal verbs are made up of two components: a verb and a particle which is typically homonymous with an adverb or a preposition”. Palmer (2003:95) also states that “a phrasal verb consists of a main verb combined with another word to make a new main verb”. Similarly, Anmol (2020:306) explains that “a multi-word verb consisting of a verb plus one or more particles and operating syntactically as a single unit”. Because they are governed by particles, learners cannot catch them easily. Therefore, their meanings, according to Pearce (2007:120), cannot be obtained by combining the meanings of the lexical verb and the accompanying adverbial particle.

Formulating phrasal verbs by particles may cause readers difficulty understanding them, EFL learners are no exception. Such structure is termed Verb-particle construction which is, according to Feng-Checkett and Checkett (2013:371), classified as “difficult for nonnative speakers of English. Many of them are idiomatic expressions, and they need to be studied or memorized”. This is in line with Luo’s (2019:2) view: “The semantic and syntactic complexities of particle verbs make them notoriously difficult for learners of English to acquire, especially for an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) student”. Swan (1997:243) uses the term ‘turn up’ as an expression meaning ‘arrive’ to assert that a phrasal verb “can be difficult to understand because its meaning is different from the meanings of the separate words in the expression”.

Schmitt and Redwood’s (2011) study aimed to analyze whether there was a relation between a group of learners’ receptive and productive knowledge of some of the most commonly used phrasal verbs and the frequency of those phrasal verbs. In addition, they looked at factors that may have affected the learners’ phrasal verb knowledge. (68) EFL/ESL learners, enrolled at

three private language schools in the areas of Eastbourne and Nottingham, participated in the study, (21) of whom were males and (47) of whom were females with an age range of (14 to 55) years old. The instruments were two receptive and productive tests as well as a biodata questionnaire. Results reveal that there was a relation between learners' knowledge and the frequency of phrasal verbs. Results also showed that exposure to English-language TV programs and films, as well as extensive reading, might help students acquire phrasal verbs. In addition, results indicated that the differences in scores were not statistically significant although males scored higher in both tests, and gender for these participants did not appear to be a factor in their knowledge of phrasal verbs.

Al-Qudah (2012) targeted English major undergraduate students at the Department of English at Yarmouk University during the academic year 2002/2003. She aimed to identify the errors that (33) male and (87) female students committed in the acquisition of some chosen English phrasal verbs. A grammaticality judgment test was administered to assess the proficiency of the students of phrasal verbs in four associated areas: collocations, semantics, structure and phonology. Among the results that the researcher arrived at was that there was no gender-related significant statistical differences between English major students at the (0.05) level.

Riguel's study (2014) aimed at analyzing the use of phrasal verbs in written productions of both native and non-native students. Data were obtained by giving multiple-choice tests to (132) French-speaking students and (29) English-speaking students who enrolled at the University of La Sorbonne Nouvelle and New York University respectively. Data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Results revealed that non-native English learners often had trouble using phrasal verbs, which caused errors and misinterpretations like (style deficiency, semantic as well as syntactic

errors, incorrect and inappropriate phrasal verbs, and lack of collocational awareness) in their written productions.

Bendjedid's (2016) study aimed to investigate the phrasal verbs used by Algerian EFL learners at Guelma University. Additionally, it aimed at identifying the semantic and syntactic properties of phrasal verbs which caused difficulty for such learners to use them. A descriptive-analytical method was adopted. A test as well as a questionnaire as two instruments were administered to (60) participants to collect data. Among the findings that the researcher arrived at was that most learners were unaware of the significance of using English phrasal verbs. Because phrasal verbs had an idiomatic meaning and learners had a limited vocabulary, they were unable to use them frequently. Results showed that the most challenging syntactic kinds for learners were phrasal verbs that needed an object after the verb or particle, as well as those with two objects-one after the verb and one after the particle

Barkindo (2017) aimed to investigate the semantic and syntactic features of the English phrasal verbs and assess undergraduate students' comprehension of these features. The participants of the study were (684) fresh undergraduate students of Federal College of Education. A test of three sections was used to obtain data. Based on the obtained results, the study came out with a conclusion 56.14% of the (684) students who took part in the study received a semantic knowledge of phrasal verb scored below 50, while 43.85% of them had a score of 50 or higher. Concerning syntactic knowledge, 50.58% of participants were able to comprehend how English phrasal verbs were syntactically structured, while 49.41% had difficulty with this aspect. In addition, 39.91% of the students were able to distinguish between phrasal verbs and prepositional phrases, while 60.08% found it difficult.

Azmar (2019) aimed to find out the difficulties encountered by third-year undergraduate students in understanding English phrasal verbs. (25)

students at the English department of Ar-Raniry State Islamic University were chosen as a sample. To achieve the aim, a random sampling technique was used. In this study, the researcher used two instruments those were: a test and a semi-structured interview. The study revealed two results; the test result showed the mastery of the students to the phrasal verbs was weak and the interview result showed that students committed semantic and syntactic errors in understanding and learning phrasal verbs.

Mohammed, Mujiyanto, and Faridi (2020) targeted Libyan students of English, aiming to explore the presence of syntactic and semantic problems those learners face and clarify the relation of syntactic problems to semantic ones when utilizing phrasal verbs in their writing of English texts. (10) students who studied in the universities of Indonesia, Central Java, and Semarang, were the participants of the study. A descriptive qualitative method was used to analyze (10) English papers. Results showed that Libyan students encountered three syntactic problems: particle placement, fronting particles, and adverb insertion when employing phrasal verbs. In addition, they faced two semantic problems related to realizing and comprehending the meanings of the semantic classes of phrasal verbs and to distinguishing the fully compositional phrasal verbs from the non-compositional ones. Finally, the researchers found that the semantic (non-)compositionality of phrasal verbs affected the syntactic behavior of particles.

Monika (2020) aimed at identifying the errors, committed by the students enrolled in IAIN Bengkulu's English Study Program in their fifth semester, when using phrasal verbs concentrating on categories such as addition, misordering, misformation, and omission. A descriptive qualitative method was applied to analyze the errors made by (28) students. The researcher depended on a test, semi-structured interview, and observation checklist to collect data. Based on the obtained results, the majority of students' errors

were misinformation errors (47,02%), followed by misordering errors (42,55%), and addition errors came in third place (8,03%). Next, with a percentage of (2,38%), came omission errors. In addition, errors were committed because of inattention to phrasal verb learning and insufficient knowledge of phrasal verbs in addition to lack of anxiety and concentration

The above studies were some samples of the studies that dealt with phrasal verbs. However, no study or a little literature has dealt with comprehending phrasal verbs by Iraqi EFL learners enrolled at the secondary schools in Ramadi, Al-Anbar Government. Unlike the present study, Schmitt and Redwood's (2011) study looks at factors that may have affected the learners' phrasal verb knowledge. Hameed and Jassim's (2015) study is compatible with the present study since the number of participants participated in the study is equal

Al-Qudah (2012) looks for the errors major undergraduate students committed in university, whereas the present study looks for the errors EFL students committed in secondary schools. Although both studies look for errors, the methodology of Al-Qudah is different from the current study, as Al-Qudah adopted a grammaticality judgement test, while the current study adopted an achievement test. The number of participants who participated in that study was different, too. Like Al-Qudah (2012) and Schmitt and Redwood (2011), the present study shares some results regarding gender differences, that is there were no gender-related significant statistical differences between students. Finally, the present study is in accordance with the results of Azmar (2019) who ascribed the difficulty of understanding English phrasal verbs to semantic and syntactic aspects, while inconsistent with Riguel's (2014) methodology which implies multiple-choice tests

This study differs from the previous studies in that it was conducted in two secondary schools. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, none of the

researchers conducted such a study in the 6th grade at the secondary schools in Al-Anbar Government therefore, this study aimed to fill this gap. To this end, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

1-What are the types of errors committed by Iraqi EFL learners when dealing with phrasal verbs?

2-Is there any significant variance in the recognition of the meanings of phrasal verbs between males and females?

Theoretical Framework .2

Structure of Phrasal Verb 2.1

Verb-particle constructions, two-part verbs/words, compound verbs, verb adverb combinations, three-part verbs/words, and multi-word verbs are all different terminologies of phrasal verbs presented by Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, and Finegan (1999, as cited in Kharitonova, 2013:33). Phrasal verbs are used by native English speakers in everyday communication (Hui, 2023:3). Such verbs represent a challenge for learners who cannot predicate their meaning. This is in line with Biber, Conrad, and Leech (2002:123) who assert that “their meaning cannot be predicated from the meaning of each individual word”. Luo (2019:3) explains that a phrasal verb can be defined syntactically and semantically. From a syntactic point of view, some scholars define it as a verb plus particle combination which functions as a single verb. Other scholars attempt to define it semantically, emphasizing the idiomaticity feature of phrasal verbs. For instance, Dirven (2001:5) observes “the whole of the phrasal verb has a meaning which is more than the sum of its parts”. Hampe (2002:15) regards “any lexicalized combination of an intransitive or transitive verb with an adverbial particle” as a phrasal verb. Mordaunt and McGuire (2020:1) define a phrasal verb as “a grouping of at least two words (usually a verb and a particle) that, once grouped, has a

different meaning than the words would have by themselves”. It should be noted that a phrasal verb according to DeCapua’s (2008:146) view: “can have one, two, or even three prepositions/adverbs”. In addition, Liao and Fukuya (2004), as cited in Götz and Mukherjee (1996: 56), define a phrasal verb as “a structure that consists of a verb proper and a morphologically invariable particle that functions as a single unit both lexically and syntactically”.

Meaning and Idiomaticity of Phrasal Verb 2.2

It is worth mentioning that the meaning of the phrasal verb represents an obstacle to learners of English as a second language. Meanings of literal, idiomatic, and semi-idiomatic are the result of the combination of the phrasal verb constituents. Thus, literal phrasal verb meaning according to Güzel (2014:22), is not only predictable but also easy to understand as ‘walk across’ in “he walked across the square”. This implies that the meaning of literal phrasal verbs is compositional (Dagut & Laufer, 1985:74). For Lee (2015:29), such type of phrasal verbs should be easier for learners of the English language to understand since the meaning can be derived from the verb as well as the particle itself.

Furthermore, Güzel (2014:22) points out that different meaning is created in the case of idiomatic phrasal verb. Idiomatic, according to Hart (2017:13), means that the verb and particle can never be understood together by understanding their meanings. He further adds that one cannot figure out the meaning of ‘get off on’ by adding the meanings of the individual words. In the same vein, Tanabe (1999:124) explains that the meaning of the phrase is not predictable and analyzable. This is in line with Magnusson and Graham’s (2011:35) view: “the meaning of the phrasal verb was not easily deducible from its parts”. For Lee (2015:29), this kind would be challenging for L2 learners to comprehend because a new meaning is being constructed.

Last but not least, Rundell and Gwyneth (2005, as cited in Schwieter, 2013:225) indicate that a phrasal verb can have both a literal as well as idiomatic meaning like 'break into' as for example "Burglars had broken into their house while they were away". Thus, the literal meaning of the phrasal verb 'broken into' denotes a physical action of getting into a building by force to thief something and the idiomatic one implies burglars violated the privacy as well as sanctity of the householders' personal place and properties. In addition, Prado-Alonso, Gomez-Garcia, Pastor-Gomez, and Tizón-Couto (2009:73-74) explain that when the meaning of the phrasal verb cannot be inferred from both the verb and its particle, a semi-idiomatic phrasal verb can be constructed as in 'drink up'. Although the meaning of the verb 'drink' is completely transparent, the particle 'up' loses its basic meaning of location. Finally, the lexical verb in semi-idiomatic combinations keeps its idiomatic or literal meaning, whereas the particle acts as an aspectual marker to express certain notions like completion, starting-point, and high intensity or end-point of an event (Downing, 2015:308).

Categories of Phrasal Verbs 2.3

Phrasal verbs can be categorized into two main types based on their word order (Hui, 2023:8). They are separable and inseparable phrasal verbs. With separable category, the verbs and particles can be detached or together, as shown in the following examples: "They have called the meeting off" and "They have called off the meeting". This is in accordance with Praninskas' (1957:217) as cited in Umarova (2020:846) view: "separable two-word verbs permit the object between the two parts in a [sic] certain cases and require it there in others". Hui (2023:8) also adds that separable phrasal verbs must be separated whenever a personal pronoun is used, like the following example: "I will pick you up from the railway station at 8 PM". On the

other hand, in Celce-Murcia (2016 cited in Anggraeni, Sobarna, Maulia, and Sujatna, 2020:43), an inseparable phrasal verb is “a verb and particle that cannot be separated, and objects cannot be placed halfway between verbs and particles”. Such a definition is in agreement with Cowan’s (2008:172) view that the phenomenon of “particle movement is not possible” in inseparable phrasal verbs, as well as Hui’s (2023:9) view that “the verbs and the particles remain together” as in “He fell off the bridge”.

Separability 2.4

Separability is a distinctive feature of transitive phrasal verbs, as described by Schröder (2011:83). Miestamo, Sinnemäki, and Karlsson (2008:60) note that mastering the rules of separability is crucial for learning phrasal verbs, as they must be memorized over time. Furthermore, Thornbury (1997:244) proposes a rule for separability: “all transitive phrasal verbs allow the particle to come either before or after the object, except when the object is a personal pronoun, in which case the particle must come after the object”. Thus, this feature, as noted by Lippmann (2008:52), allows someone to syntactically reorganize a sentence like “we put off our trip” into “we put our trip off”, providing two acceptable syntactic formulations. However, with a pronominal object, only one formulation is accepted, such as “we put it off”. This is in line with Miestamo et al. (2008:60), who mention that “a pronominal direct object must always be put between the verb and the preposition”. This flexibility in English word order is presented by Trask (2014: 163) as the phenomenon of particle movement. Such phenomenon is regarded as a defining characteristic of separable phrasal verbs. Finally, the placement of the particle is a source of difficulty for non-native speakers, who may struggle to distinguish whether it functions as a preposition or a particle (Johnson, 2018:27).

Methodology .3

This section is dedicated to the presentation of the research method of this study including details concerning the following aspects respectively: research design, criteria and procedures for data collection, participants, and test.

Research Design 3.1

The objectives of the current study are to identify the common phrasal verbs-related errors made by Iraqi EFL learners and examine potential gender differences in phrasal verb comprehension among the learners. Fifty participants, enrolled in the academic year 2023/2024, participate in the current study. Data were collected by using a test (Appendix A) with a purposive sampling of twenty English sentences. The test consists of two questions. The first question includes 10 sentences. Each sentence contains a phrasal verb placed between slanting lines. The participants were asked to rewrite the sentences correctly. The second question also contains ten sentences. Each sentence contains an underlined phrasal verb with three choices. The participants were asked to circle the choice that is similar in meaning to the underlined phrasal verb. The study adopted mixed methods of analysis. Finally, the data were analyzed using (SPSS) program and the frequency and .percentage were tabulated manually

Criteria for Data Collection 3.2

Data collection is conducted through a test constructed following the objectives of the study. The data include (20) English sentences taken from the books of English Phrasal Verbs by Booth and Davies (2021) and Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary by Merriam-Webster Inc (2004). Such books have been chosen purposefully for many reasons: regarding the dictionary,

new definitions and terms from a range of fields, such as technology, entertainment, health, science, and society are included in the book. As for the book, firstly, it helps readers to learn, understand as well as remember the most frequently used phrasal verbs in English. Secondly, it enables readers to repeat each phrasal verb as they listen to the free audio. Thirdly, every unit in the book consists of two parts: a practice spread with exercises to reinforce what one has learned, and a teaching spread on a subject or theme with illustrated sentences to put the phrasal verbs in context. Finally, the back of the book contains the answers to every exercise. Last but not least, none of the previous studies has investigated the realization of phrasal verbs by Iraqi EFL learners in these books yet. After reading the books well, the researcher needs to choose the phrasal verbs. The data have been collected from (50) participants using a test

Procedures for Data Collection 3.3

Data collection procedures pass through four stages. First, the researcher is requested to read the books as well as the phrasal verbs accurately. Then, the criteria for selecting the phrasal verbs are followed to be applied to choose the required number of phrasal verbs. Second, the researcher administers the test, which included twenty items. Third, the researcher communicates with the participants in the classes to describe the test. Fourth, the test is distributed to participants during the official attendance hours. Finally, the researcher receives answers and collects them

Participants 3.4

The participants are 50 (25 male and 25 female) aged between (18-20) years. They are divided into two groups (Group A and Group B). They study English as a foreign language at Al-Mughira Bin Shu'bah Preparatory

School for Boys and Al-Zawraa Secondary School for Girls in Ramadi for the academic year 2023/2024. Both of them not only take notes about the phrasal verbs mentioned in their curriculum but they are examined by their teachers, .too

Test 3.5

Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen and Razavieh (2010:201) indicate that a test is a valuable measuring instrument constructed to “elicit responses” in educational research. To collect data, the researcher constructs an achievement test comprising of a purposeful sampling of 20 English sentences containing phrasal verbs. Such a test is designed to assess (50) secondary school students’ recognition of the meanings and the word order of the phrasal verbs. The test is distributed on 30/11/2023. The test consists of two parts: the first focuses on placing the phrasal verb in the proper position and the second one focuses on circling the right choice. Before conducting the test, participants are given examples regarding placing the phrasal verbs in the proper places and circling the choices that have similar meanings to the underlined phrasal verbs. The test concerns the comprehension of (20) phrasal verbs collected by the researcher from the books of English Phrasal Verbs by Booth and Davies (2021) and Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary by Merriam-Webster Inc (2004). The test statements contain literal, idiomatic, separable, and inseparable phrasal verbs. To ensure its validity, the test is rated by two experts. They approve it with a modification. It is amended and .then distributed

Validity 3.6

Soori (2024:77) defines validity as “the degree to which a measure or test accurately measures what it is intended to measure”. Among the six

types of validity, face validity has applied. The test has rated by two experts specialized in linguistics to ensure its validity. They have approved it with a .modification. They have suggested a stylistic modification

Pilot Study 3.7

A pilot study is a smaller-scale version of a proposed larger study. It is a complete research project in its own right, often conducted to find out the feasibility, acceptability, and logistics of the planned larger-scale investigation. In addition, the participants in the pilot study shouldn't take part in the subsequent, larger-scale study (Ananthakrishnan, 2007:50). Before gathering the final data, the researcher has distributed the test to 30 participants on two different occasions specifically on 5/12/2023 and 31/12/2023. This has done to make sure the statements in the test are clear, that the items are appropriate for gathering data related to the study's objectives, and that the test would take a reasonable amount of time to complete.

Reliability 3.8

Reliability, according to Creswell (2012:627), means that "individual scores from an instrument should be nearly the same or stable on repeated administrations of the instrument and that they should be free from sources of measurement error and consistent". In other words, an instrument is considered reliable if its scores are constant and reliable. When researchers administer the instrument more than once at various times, the results should be almost consistent. Consistency in scores is required. When a person provides one response to a topic, that person should always provide the same response to questions that are closely connected. Thus, the researcher has used the test-retest reliability procedure on the same participants, giving them the test twice at separate times. Finally, the results of the SPSS analysis

have showed that the test is consistent based on the value of the Pearson correlation coefficient, (0.553). Such value has denoted a strong positive correlation between the variables

Results and Discussion.4

The data utilized to accomplish the objectives of the study had been collected using the test. The fifty participants' answers to the test were later collected and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using (SPSS) program. In the first part, the participants were asked to place the phrasal verb in the proper position. In the second part, they were required to read 10 sentences and circle one of the choices that have similar meanings to the underlined phrasal verbs. In light of this, the percentage of participants' answers represented in the sample is provided in figure (1)

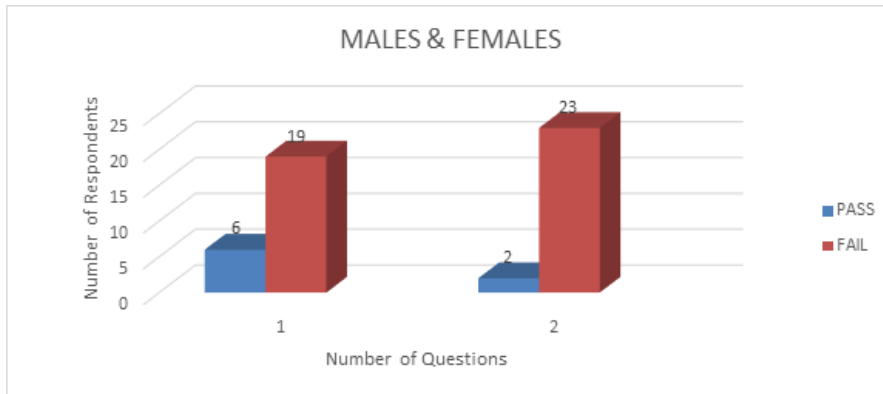


Figure 1: Percentage of Participants' Answers to Right and Wrong Answers

The results in the figure above reveal that out of the 50 participants who participated in the test, 8 representing 33.6 % scored 50% and above as compared to 42 participants representing 66.4% who scored below 50%. This

without doubt indicates that 66.4% of the participants have less semantic and syntactic knowledge of phrasal verbs than 33.6 %.

Frequency of the Individual Differences among the Participants 4.1

This section is concerned with accounting for the frequency and percentage of the male and female participants when they responded to the test's items. The table below reveals the total frequency and the percentage.

Table 1: Frequency of Male and Female Differences

| No of sentence | MALES & FEMALES | | | | MALES & FEMALES | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|----|------------|----|-----------------|----|------------|----|
| | QUESTION 1 | | | | QUESTION 2 | | | |
| | True | % | False | % | True | % | False | % |
| 1 | 36 | 72 | 14 | 28 | 15 | 30 | 35 | 70 |
| 2 | 26 | 52 | 24 | 48 | 19 | 38 | 31 | 62 |
| 3 | 25 | 50 | 25 | 50 | 21 | 42 | 29 | 58 |
| 4 | 5 | 10 | 45 | 90 | 16 | 32 | 34 | 68 |
| 5 | 12 | 24 | 38 | 76 | 22 | 44 | 28 | 56 |
| 6 | 5 | 10 | 45 | 90 | 17 | 34 | 33 | 66 |
| 7 | 4 | 8 | 46 | 92 | 21 | 42 | 29 | 58 |
| 8 | 5 | 10 | 45 | 90 | 19 | 38 | 31 | 62 |
| 9 | 19 | 38 | 31 | 62 | 16 | 32 | 34 | 68 |
| 10 | 11 | 22 | 39 | 78 | 22 | 44 | 28 | 56 |
| Total | 148 | | 352 | | 188 | | 312 | |

As can be seen in the table above, the researcher calculated the percentages of correct and wrong answers by dividing the total number of everyone by the total number of (Sentence Sum X Participants Sum) and then multiplying the result by 100%. Thus, the following formula is used to determine the proportion of participants who commit errors:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Total number of wrong answers}}{\text{Total number of (S.S. X P.S)}} \times 100\%$$

The total number of incorrect responses from both genders = 352+312 = 664

Where S.S. represents sentence sum and P.S. represents participants sum 20 X 50 = 1000

The total number of correct responses from both genders = 148+188 = 336

Thus, the percentage of the total participants who answer correctly is calculated according to the following equation:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{336}{1000} \times 100\% = 33.6$$

The percentage of the total participants who answer wrongly is calculated according to the following equation:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{664}{1000} \times 100\% = 66.4$$

So, the highest frequency for correct and wrong answers is (33.6%) and (66.4%) respectively. Regarding question one, when one checks table (1), he notices that sentence 7 is the most difficult one, whereas sentence 1 is the easiest one. In addition, sentences 4, 6, and 8 occupy the second order of difficulty. Sentence 10 occupies the third order of difficulty. Sentence 5 occupies the fourth order of difficulty, whereas sentence 9 occupies the fifth order of difficulty. Moreover, sentence 3 occupies the sixth order of difficulty and sentence 2 occupies the seventh order of difficulty.

Concerning question two, it is evident that sentence 1 is the hardest, whereas sentences 5 and 10 are the simplest. Furthermore, the second order of difficulty is occupied by sentences 4 and 9. On the third order of difficulty is sentence 6. Sentences 2 and 8 are in fourth place on the difficulty scale, while sentences 3 and 7 are in fifth place. Additionally, sentences 5 and 10 are in the seventh order of difficulty.

Frequency of Syntactic Errors Committed by the EFL Learners 4.2

Phrasal verbs have a precise set structure that should not be violated. One of the most frequent errors is placing the verb as well as the particle in the wrong order. Another error is separating the verb and particle with another word, which disrupts the correct phrasal verb form. It's also significant to include the particle- leaving it out entirely results in an imperfect phrasal verb construction. Using the wrong particle is another frequent error, as each phrasal verb requires a specific particle that can't be replaced. Pronoun placement is also crucial - the pronoun should go between the verb and particle, not after the full phrasal verb. Errors can also occur with the noun or pronoun serving as the object of the phrasal verb

Table 2: Frequency of Participants' Answers to Question One

| No of sentence | Phrasal verb | MALES | | | | FEMALES | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------|----|-------|----|---------|----|-------|----|
| | | True | % | False | % | True | % | False | % |
| 1 | turned on | 19 | 76 | 6 | 24 | 17 | 68 | 8 | 32 |
| 2 | pick up | 14 | 56 | 11 | 44 | 12 | 48 | 13 | 52 |
| 3 | throw away | 17 | 68 | 8 | 32 | 8 | 32 | 17 | 68 |
| 4 | fill up | 4 | 16 | 21 | 84 | 1 | 4 | 24 | 96 |
| 5 | woke up | 8 | 32 | 17 | 68 | 4 | 16 | 21 | 84 |
| 6 | take in | 3 | 12 | 22 | 88 | 2 | 8 | 23 | 92 |
| 7 | look up | 3 | 12 | 22 | 88 | 1 | 4 | 24 | 96 |
| 8 | cut down | 4 | 16 | 21 | 84 | 1 | 4 | 24 | 96 |
| 9 | picking up | 11 | 44 | 14 | 56 | 8 | 32 | 17 | 68 |
| 10 | called in | 4 | 16 | 21 | 84 | 7 | 28 | 18 | 72 |

As can be seen, the participants' responses revealed two types of answers with different percentages. Table (2) shows that sentence 7 is the most difficult one among others which had the highest score. It is answered wrongly by (46) participants, whereas other sentences such as (4) and (8) have the same score and are selected by (45) participants for each. In sentence 4, a participant deforms the phrasal verb construction by placing the particle before the verb. This is in line with Monika (2020:56) who finds that "not all students can put a particle in the correct position". Finally, the results display that the wrong answers surpass the correct answers. This might be due to the misuse of the particle in addition to their ignorance of phrasal verb separability. Finally, results indicate that the male students are more knowledgeable of the syntactic nature of phrasal verbs than the female ones.

Frequency of Semantic Errors Committed by the EFL Learners 4.3

A major semantic error occurs when a phrasal verb is used with a meaning entirely different from what is intended. Furthermore, errors may arise from taking a phrasal verb literally rather than understanding its idiomatic or figurative meaning. Additionally, the meaning can be altered by selecting the incorrect particle to go with a verb. Another frequent semantic error is using a phrasal verb incorrectly when its meaning is altered.

Table 3: Frequency of Participants' Answers to Question Two

| No of sentence | Phrasal verb | MALES | | | | FEMALES | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------|----|-------|----|---------|----|-------|----|
| | | True | % | False | % | True | % | False | % |
| 1 | let in | 10 | 40 | 15 | 60 | 5 | 20 | 20 | 80 |
| 2 | looks after | 6 | 24 | 19 | 76 | 13 | 52 | 12 | 48 |
| 3 | took out | 12 | 48 | 13 | 52 | 9 | 36 | 16 | 64 |
| 4 | came into | 15 | 60 | 10 | 40 | 7 | 28 | 18 | 72 |
| 5 | turned up | 10 | 40 | 15 | 60 | 12 | 48 | 13 | 52 |
| 6 | driving off | 6 | 24 | 19 | 76 | 11 | 44 | 14 | 56 |
| 7 | puts in | 12 | 48 | 13 | 52 | 9 | 36 | 16 | 64 |
| 8 | ran away | 10 | 40 | 15 | 60 | 9 | 36 | 16 | 64 |
| 9 | showed around | 11 | 44 | 14 | 56 | 5 | 20 | 20 | 80 |
| 10 | go with | 15 | 60 | 10 | 40 | 12 | 48 | 13 | 52 |

Table 3 presents the test results on participants' semantic knowledge of phrasal verbs. It reveals the frequency and percentage of the semantic errors committed by the participants of the study. Results indicate that sentence 10 is the easiest one with (27) frequencies which form a percentage of (54%) followed by sentences 4 and 5 which appear (22) times with a percentage of (44%) for each. Sentences 3 and 7 occupy the third rank, which appear (21) times, with a percentage of (41%) for each one. In addition, sentence 2 which appears (19) times with a percentage of (38%) is equal to sentence 8 which

has the same frequency and percentage. Whereas (34%) was the percentage of sentence 6 which appeared (17) times. Moreover, sentence 1 obtained the lowest score among other sentences. Nonetheless, the wrong answers, according to Navas-Brenes (2017:31), maybe because “knowing the parts of the phrasal verb does not equal knowing the whole phrasal verb”. Finally, results imply that the male students are more knowledgeable of the semantic nature of phrasal verbs than the female ones.

Accordingly, the study's results have been addressed in light of the answers to the research questions posed above. It is important to see if there have been significant differences among male and female students. T-test, SPSS test version 26 (software program), has been adopted to compare the means of male and female students. This test is utilized to see if there is a significant difference between the two groups. The following table shows this:

Table (4) Descriptive statistics for male and female groups

Group Statistics

| | Gender Type | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|-------------------|-------------|----|-------|----------------|-----------------|
| Achievement Score | Male | 25 | 38.80 | 18.556 | 3.711 |
| | Female | 25 | 30.40 | 17.555 | 3.511 |

As indicated in Table 4, for the males, the mean score was (38.80) and the Std was (3.711). The deviation was (18.556) and for the females, the mean score was (30.40) and the Std. Deviation was (17.555). Thus, it appears there was a variance between genders. To be certain, the independent-sample t-test was carried out to ascertain if this variance between the genders was

significant or not. Table (5) displays the results of the independent samples of the t-test in the following.

| Independent Samples Test | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------|-------|--------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------|
| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | | | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Achievement Score | Equal variances assumed | 254 | .817 | 1.644 | 48 | .107 | 8.400 | 5.109 | -1.872 | 18.672 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | 1.644 | 47.853 | .107 | 8.400 | 5.109 | -1.873 | 18.673 |

As shown in Table (5), there was no statistically significant difference between males and females, $t = (1.644)$, $df = (47.853)$, $p = (0.107)$. Therefore, there is no significant variance between Iraqi EFL male and female students concerning comprehending English phrasal verbs. This might be because male and female students might be exposed to similar teaching and learning contexts.

Conclusions .5

According to the results obtained, the study revealed that EFL learners committed two types of errors when dealing with phrasal verbs. It has provided answers to the two research questions. The first research question is: What are the types of errors committed by Iraqi EFL learners when dealing with phrasal verbs? is answered depending on the findings. The findings showed that the males have a higher recognition of the word order of phrasal verbs since their syntactic errors are less than those of females. Sentences 1 and 3 were answered correctly by the majority of the participants with the rates (76%) and (68%) respectively. Conversely, sentences 6 and 7 were answered wrongly by the majority of the participants with a rate (of 88%) for each. Similarly, sentences 4 and 8 were answered incorrectly by the majority of the

participants with the rate (84%) for each. This may be because they are unaware of the syntactic features of the phrasal verb, separability is no exception. This is inconsistent with Celce-Murcia, Freeman, and Williams (1999:428) who state that separation is required if the direct object is a pronoun.

Concerning the second research question which reads: Is there any significant variance in the recognition of the meanings of phrasal verbs between males and females? The analysis was provided by the second part of the test which showed the frequency of the errors, too. The phrasal verb 'let... in' was the most frequent verb which constitutes (70%) of all the 10 verbs used. After 'let...in', 'showed...around', 'driving off' and 'look after' were found to be among the most frequent verbs that occurred: (68%), (66%), and (62%) respectively. Additionally, there is no statistically significant variance in the recognition of the meanings as well as the word order of the phrasal verbs between genders.

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Appendix A

Test on Phrasal Verb

Dear Students,

I ask you to answer these two questions concerning the word order and meanings of certain English phrasal verbs, which are procedures utilized to conduct my research. Your valuable answers will help me achieve the goals of my research. Bear in mind that your answers will be confidential, and I appreciate your response and full cooperation.

Researcher,

Asst. Inst. Abdulqader Talib Naeem

Secondary School Teacher

Q1. Rewrite the sentences, putting the phrasal verbs in the correct order.

If two answers are possible, write them.

(50

Marks)

1-I /**turned on** /the light.

.....

2-Can you /**pick up**/ that box?

.....

3-You should /**throw away** /those old shoes.

.....

4-I always /**fill up** / it /when it's empty.

.....

5-I was annoyed because he /**woke up**/ her.

.....

6-This dress is a bit too big. We will need to /**take in** /it a little.

.....

7-You will have to **/look up/** it in a dictionary.

.....

8-Your essay is too long, Marcel. You need to **/cut down/** it a bit.

.....

9-He is **/picking up/** it.

.....

10-One of the pipes was leaking, so we **/called in/** a plumber to fix it.

.....

Q2-Circle the correct items that have similar meanings to the underlined words. (50 Marks)

1-I **let** the cat **in** when it started to rain

a)-allow to enter (b). allow to leave (c). stay away)

2-My mother **looks after** my camera while I'm at work.

(a). search (b). examine (c). care for

3-For our first date, Phil **took** me **out** to an expensive restaurant

a). to give shelter (b). lift (c). take someone on a date)

4-My father **came into** the house and took off his coat.

(a). entered a place (b). allowed to enter (c). returned to memory

5-Angelo **turned up** at my house at 6 a.m. I was still in bed!

(a). sent away (b). discharged (c). arrived

-George checked the road for other vehicles before **driving off**.6

(a). leave (b). a drive by shooting (c). carried out from a moving vehicle

.-Lisa **puts** her rabbit **in** its cage each evening before bed7

(a). allocate (b). place inside (c). discard

8-Olly's dog **ran away** last week, while they were at the park.

(a). carried out (b). continued (c). escaped

9-They **showed** me **around** their beautiful home

a). gave someone a tour (b). displayed proudly (c). revealed)

10- Gemma's shoes **go** really well **with** that dress.

(a). advocate (b). proceed (c). look good with another piece of clothing

اختلاف الجنس في فهم الأفعال المركبة من متعلمين عراقيين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية على مستوى المدرسة الثانوية

عبد القادر طالب نعيم
المديرة العامة للتربية في محافظة الأنبار

المستخلص

سببت الأفعال المركبة في اللغة الإنجليزية بعض التحديات لتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في العراق. فهم معاني الأفعال المركبة يستلزم انتباهاً خاصاً لأنه لا يمكن استنباطها من معاني المفردات المكونة لها. هدفت الدراسة إلى فحص الفروق المحتملة بين الجنسين في فهم الأفعال المركبة لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. تضمنت الدراسة ٥٠ طالباً من طلاب المرحلة الثانوية، ٢٥ ذكراً و٢٥ أنثى. ولغرض جمع البيانات وزع اختبار على الطلبة. وتألف الاختبار من جزئين؛ ركز الجزء الأول على وضع الفعل المركب في الترتيب الصحيح، في حين ركز الجزء الثاني على وضع دائرة حول الاختيار الذي له معنى مماثل للفعل المركب. واشتملت بيانات الدراسة على (٢٠) جملة اختيرت من كتاب أفعال الجمل الفعلية الإنجليزية لبوذ ودافس (٢٠٢١) وقاموس مريم - ويستر الجامعي لمريم - ويستر (٢٠٠٤) وتم تحليل البيانات نوعياً وكمياً باستخدام برنامج (SPSS). وقد بينت النتائج أن الإجابات الخاطئة التي أجابها المشاركون كانت أعلى من الإجابات الصحيحة. بناء على نتائج الدراسة، اقترف المشاركون خطأين مرتبطين بالسماة النحوية والدلالية للأفعال المركبة وسجلت الأخطاء المرتبطة بترتيب اجزاء الفعل المركب أعلى نسبة بينما كانت الأخطاء المرتبطة بالتعبيرات الاصطلاحية هي الأقل. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أظهر التحليل الإحصائي عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في فهم الأفعال المركبة بين الذكور والإناث.