

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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THE DIFFICULTY OF USING IRREGULAR SENTENCE BY IRAQI EFL STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF BABYLON

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Abstract

The objective of the study is to investigate the difficulty of using irregular verbs in the students writing an essay at the University of Babylon.

The design of this study is descriptive qualitative research. The sample of the study comprised 25 students in their fourth year, and it was selected randomly. The findings of the study showed that 70% of the students were unable to use irregular cases such as verbs and adjectives incorrectly. Also, the findings show that the students use both regular and irregular verb (past) in their students' writing essays. The most dominant verb past written by the students in their students' writing essay is an irregular verb. Regular verbs are verbs that can change according to tense and change it regularly. Regular verbs are verbs whose changes comply with normal rules, that is with add the letter -d or -ed to the verb first-form/verb-1 (infinitive) so that it becomes a verb form second/verb-2 (past tense). Several things must be considered in the way of forming regular verbs by adding the letter -ed suffix or -d in the basic verb/verb-1 (infinitive). Irregular verbs are verbs that change according to the tense and do not comply with normal compliance. The past tense Irregular verbs are not formed from basic verbs/verb-1 (infinitives) plus letters -d or -ed letters to form verb-2/past tense. Irregular verbs form their past tense differently (through) not always) through a vowel and consonant change. This study recommends students should be well-trained on how to use irregular verbs in the past tense case or changing the form of the regular adjective, and also must be memorized by the learners/students because of the difficulty to distinguish the irregular verbs among the sentences.

Keywords Simple past tense, Irregular verbs, EFL, writing.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem

Irregular Sentence is a type of sentences which doesn't match the regular patterns of clause structure, that have a full meaning. The problem is that irregular sentences are difficult to understand and use by Iraqi EFL students at Babylon University because it is always used in non-formal colloquial language, and it is semantically correct but syntactically odd, so we talk about the history

of the rules of sentences of this type.

1.2 Aims

The study aims to clarify the importance of irregular sentences in the language where the sentence consists of noun, verb (the verb is either regular or irregular) , subject , auxiliary verb and complement to the sentence where the study and knowledge of irregular verb is important to know the type of sentence if it is regular or irregular , as

the verbs in general are important in all sentence, whether in English or Arabic because they simply give a clear and understandable meaning to the sentence. There for, the presence of anomalous verb in the irregular sentence makes them know the type of sentence.

1.3 Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that the difficulty of understanding and using the irregular sentence for the Iraqi EFL students is one of the biggest problems that can be faced by them.

1.4 Procedures

The following steps will be followed:

1. Presenting a comprehensive study about irregular sentences.
2. Selecting a random sample of students to have a test in irregular sentences.
3. Analyzing encounter in using irregular sentences in English.

1.5 Limits

The paper is limited to irregular sentences in English and the test will be applied to a random sample from the fourth-year students in the Department of English/ College of Education for Human Science/University of Babylon during the academic year (20122-2023).

1.6 Value

This paper will be value for further research in this regard.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Irregular Sentences

Irregular sentence is any sentences that doesn't have at least one in dependent clause, doesn't follow predictable grammatical patterns and often are 'frozen 'forms which cannot be altered to show changes in time tense or number. Idiomatic, expressions proverbial sayings and

interjections are examples of irregular sentences.

There are a lot of Irregular Verbs in English. We can divide them into four groups:

1. Verbs which have the same base form, past simple and participle. For example: -

Cast – cast – cast

Hurt – hurt – hurt.

2. Verbs which have the same past simple and past participle. For example:

breed – bred – bred

feel – felt – felt

3. Verbs which have the same base form and past participle. For example:

Come - came -come

4. Verbs which have a different base form, past simple, and past participle. For example:

Choose – chose – chosen

eat – ate – eaten

Irregular verbs are those whose shape completely changes with changing times , for example, from present tense to past we don't put (ed) at the end of the verb and They are limited verbs , whereas the standard is its difference only by adding (d-ed) at the end of the word where if the verb ends with (e) add (d) only to get past and third conjugation if it ends with letters other than (e) we add (ed). Quirk (1973:30)

For example:

Like – liked – liked

Irregular sentences can consist of single words, sentences parts, objections, or a group of expressions (such as expression and proverbs, including single phrase.

In English language of conversation, we often use single words to obtain the required information in response to another person, these words are

known by the phrase “one – word sentences “or “only sentences “ , for example:

A-Where did you meet again?

B-Moscow

C- I think it is better not to get involved

B- agreed

A-When do you need to complete these reports?

B - Tomorrow.

We find in this conversation, although the response of the second speaker consists only of one word in each of this convention, but it contains all the conversation.

2.2 Fragments of the sentence:

We also use parts of the sentences (phrases, incomplete phrases, or dependent phrases) as separate sentences, again these are usually used in English language for conversation when we are calling someone else. Murphy (1985:292), for example:

A-Will you have lunch soon?

B- In about an hour (preposition)

A-Do you want to come to a movie with me later?

C-It looks good (incomplete item)?

B-When did you realize that you wanted to pursue the police?

A-When I was in college (dependent item)

2.3 Interventions

Single words and short phrases are also commonly used as interjections (also known as exclamation points) to express strong emotions such as surprise, attention, excitement, dread, etc.

These are divided into primary and secondary interventions:

2.1.3 Initial interventions

The main interventions are single words that are derived from sounds instead of existing word categories, and with that they still have a widely recognized meaning.

Some of the common initial interventions are:

(expression of frustration) ... argh

(expression of cold) ... brr

(expression of anger) ... grr

Interventions are often associated with the primary key with a comma sentences, but it can also standalone secondary camel, and in this case punctuated by an exclamation mark in general, for example:

“ooh this is a beautiful dress “

“brr it’s freezing here “

2.2.3 Secondary Interventions

They are single words or short phrases that belong to other word categories. some common secondary provinces are:

(god bless you)

(congratulations)

(good sorrow)

(hell)

(hey)

(hello)

(my country)

(oh my god)

Usually permeate secondary interventions exclamation marks.

“Oh my god! we won the lottery! “

“Gorgeous! what a great achievement! “

However, we can have weaker secondary entrances, interrupted by periods or interrogation that use question marks, for example: -

“Good sorrow. I didn’t see this coming “

“Okay? Are we going to watch a movie? “

“What? Don’t you like coconut? “

2.4 Expressions, proverbs, and set expressions

The English language contains a large number of expressions that have a fixed and specific understanding, even if they aren’t grammatically complete or literally meaningful, many of these terms are (expressions that have a non-literal meaning) or proverbs (short sayings that love a fact or basic principle), although other expressions with specific meanings are used frequently and also broadly . Quirk (1973:205).

2.5 Idioms

Idiomatic expressions are phrases whose meaning cannot be extracted from the literal words that compose them and often have a unique grammatical structure and because of this they are used repeatedly in ways that conflict with the rules of traditional rules and among them are often used as sentences for themselves in the conversation. Quirk (1985:846), for example:

Hello, How are you?

Hi Jeff ! Long time no see !

How can you expel us from such a house ?

Requests are orders

When is this report ready for me ?

B-Any minute now !

2.6 Proverbs

Proverbs are stand – alone sentences that express the truth based on common sense or shared experience, many of whom have become divided into simple sentences over time. For example: (you should try and shape better habits than your daily routine). Quirk (1990:244).

METHODOLOGY

The design of this study is quantitative research. A random sample of 25 students is taken from the fourth-year level in the Department of English/ College of Education/University of Babylon during the academic year (2022-2023) to apply a diagnostic test in order to investigate their performance in using irregular sentences. They are all similar in terms of their age, social background, gender, and speak Arabic as their first language. In this research, the researcher collected the data through a test as the research instrument. The test includes 20 items distributed over two questions. The first question consists of 10 items, this question is designed to test the student’s ability at the recognition level. Students are given some sentences and ask to tick the simple past form of some verbs. The second one also consists of 10 items designed to test the student’s ability at the production level in which they are asked to fill the blanks with the appropriate past simple form of the verb in parentheses. The total number of questions given in the test is 20 questions. The Participants were given one hour time to complete the test which is the normal timing of a classroom.

According to the findings of the test, the number and percentage of incorrect responses for the whole test are more than those of the correct responses which indicates that the students encounter difficulty in using and understanding irregular sentences.

CONCLUSION

In English language the forms of sentences fall in one of the patterns of sentence structure but there is another type which does not match the regular patterns of clause structure, called irregular sentences that have a full meaning.

This study recommends students should be well-trained on how to use irregular verbs in the past tense case or changing the form of the irregular adjective and must be memorized by the learners/students because of the difficulty to

distinguish the irregular verbs among the sentences.

There for 70% of Iraqi EFL Babylon University students find difficulty in using irregular verbs in writing their essays because irregular sentences are more complicated and often need to study individually because they don't follow one pattern. So that, Center of attention was given to the students to develop their skills and knowledge to use the irregular verbs correctly by identifying these verbs, focusing on who use them to refer to the past and putting them within a table to facilitate studying them.

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