

The Identification of Sentence Fragments and Run-on Sentences: The Case of Translation Students at the University of Basra

**Dr. Juliana Y. Dawood
(Lecturer) and
Isra' M. Salman
(Assist. Lecturer)**

Abstract

Good Writing entails the student's constant ability to write well-structured and complete sentences. However, EFL students tend to produce some problematic sentences in their written assignments. The sentence fragment and the run-on sentence are among the problematic structures that recur in their writing in English. This study aims at identifying the types or patterns of these two faulty constructions which English-Arabic-English translation students face difficulty with. A recognition type of task is assigned to (76) female and male students in their second -year and fourth -year of study at the Dept. of Translation, University of Basra. The task comprises two tests including varied patterns of these errors presented and discussed in the practical side of the study. The study shows that all the students encountered difficulties in identifying complete sentence structures but in various percentages. For Test One, the female subjects of the second-year and fourth-year outperformed their male counterparts of both years. For Test Two, the fourth-year males encountered more difficulty in comparison with the rest of the subjects.

تمييز الجمل الناقصة والجمل الممتدة من طلبه الترجمة في جامعة البصرة • الخلاصة

تستوجب الكتابة الجيدة من الطالب الاهتمام المتواصل في كتابة جمل كاملة ذات تراكيب سليمة، إلا إن دارسي اللغة الأجنبية يميلون أحيانا إلى كتابة بعض الجمل المشككة في واحائهم كالإنشاء مثلاً. وتعد الجملة الناقصة (Fragment sentence) وهي الجملة التي حذفت بعض أجزائها) والجملة الممتدة (Stringy sentence or run-on) (وهي الجملة الطويلة التي تتكون من عدة جمل مترابطة بأداة عطف مكررة) من الأساليب المعيبة في التعبير الكتابي في اللغة الإنجليزية.

تروم هذه الدراسة كشف الأنماط السائدة لهذين الأسلوبين التي تتسم بها كتابة الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من خلال اختبار اجري على ستة و سبعين طالبة و طالب في المرحلتين الثانية والرابعة في قسم الترجمة في جامعة البصرة. يتضمن الاختبار تراكيب متنوعة من هذه الأخطاء التي عرضت و نوقشت في الجانب العملي. ويستخلص البحث الصعوبة التي يواجهها الطلبة عامة في تمييز الجمل السليمة حيث يعكس الاختبار الأول أفضلية أداء الطالبات في المرحلتين المذكورتين على أداء أقرانهم من الطلاب في كلتا المرحلتين بينما يعكس الاختبار الثاني ضعف أداء طلبة المرحلة الرابعة من المذكور حصراً بالمقارنة مع أقرانهم الآخرين في عينة الدراسة.

1. Introduction

Language is a formal system governed by grammatical rules combining particular signs with particular meaning that is used as a tool by humans to communicate thoughts, feelings and desires. Writing, as one form of language, is yet seen as a basic tool of civilization without which the world could not exist (Fromkin, 1990:342).

Writing has a significant place in the field of foreign language teaching and learning. Cohen and Riel (1989:143) consider writing as a communicative act a way of sharing information, observations, thoughts and ideas with ourselves and others. It is also a skill that is neither easy nor spontaneous and it requires conscious mental effort and a long time to be mastered (Bryne,1979)as quoted in Skripsi (2000:4).

Widdowson(1978:2) holds that learning a language involves the ability to compose correct sentences. Warriner (1982:243) recommends language learners to develop sentence sense in writing and feel when sentences begin and where they end.

In the same vein, translation researchers do not undervalue the importance of sentences when undertaking an activity of translation. Newmark (1988: 65) regards the sentence the natural unit of translating, exactly as it is a unit of comprehension and recorded thought (writing), that is big enough to include five possible sub-units of translation. Similarly, Zhang (1994), as cited by Zhu (1999,431) holds that the sentence is the "core unit" in translation. Such units occupy the minds of most translators in the normal process of translation because written language organizes, controls and concentrates information by using sentences(Belinda,1996:4).

This implies that grammar and organization including the writing of correct English sentences are essential for good writing and the lack of these will result in employing incorrect forms and syntactic structures. Both good writing and good translation come from the right choice of words and word order but except for the fact that in translation this right

choice is restricted additionally by the existing source language text and those available in the target language.

Errors of writing in English are difficult to avoid. Two of these problematic aspects which are connected to good sentence structure and sentence clarity found in student's composition and translation materials are the use of the fragmentary sentences (incomplete sentences or sentence fragments) and the use of run-on sentences (fused sentences or run-ons).

Adams (1964:164), Hairston (1986:186), Guinn (1987:418), Oshima and Hogue (1991:179), and Azar (1992:86) report sentence fragments and run-ons as major sentence structure problems in writing that result in syntactic errors which makes writing unclear.

In an error analysis of run-ons and fragments falsely taken by native speakers of English as complete sentences, Kagan (1980:32) arrives at the conclusion that her learners do not only misperceive sentences wholeness but only seem to abstract rules regarding the structure of complete sentence by creating some "typical" patterns while judging the completeness of a variety of run-ons and sentence fragments.

The purpose of this paper is:

- 1- To identify types or patterns of sentence fragments and run-ons that wrongly affected sentence boundaries;
- 2- To trace rules which learners of English use in judging the completeness of sentence;
- 3- To measure students' writing competence at two levels of learning namely, second-year students; fourth-year students); and
- 4- To investigate gender differences in sentence misjudgments.

2. Hypotheses of the Study

The present study is based on the following hypotheses:

1. Because English and Arabic differ in their syntactic systems, a considerable number of Iraqi Arab learners of English tend to

- produce incorrect English sentence structures which can be either of fragmental types or run-ons types.
2. Some of these fragmental types or run-on types are patternized in the students' perception of written language.
 3. Sex as a factor plays a role in the identification of both the fragmental and run-ons sentences.
 4. The academic year (level of study) factor plays a role in the identification process.
 5. Poor writers may simply have misperceived examples of written language and thus have abstracted incorrect rules regarding the structure of complete sentences.

3. Procedures of the Study

- 1- Sentence fragments were constructed using fifteen different combinations of syntactic structures and five complete sentences were randomly ordered and administered to subjects in Test One. Subjects were instructed to indicate which items were complete sentences and which were not complete.
- 2- Test Two was constructed by using eleven different combinations of syntactic structures and four complete sentences were randomly ordered and administered to subjects. Each run-on was constructed according to specific syntactic patterns. Subjects were instructed to indicate which items express one sentence or more.

4. Limits of the Study

The study is limited to written sentences. Only the visual patterns of written language were presented to subjects. All items in both the fragment and run-on tests were written in the active voice, past tense, third person, with no punctuation and only the first letter of the first word was capitalized. The terms 'fragment' and 'run-on' were not used in the instructions of the tests and 'part of a sentence' and 'more than one sentence' were used instead.

5. What is a Sentence?

One of the linguistic concepts that linguists have paid repeated attention to is that of the sentence. The concept of "sentence" appears to be both simple and basic but research in linguistics has proven that it is difficult and not straightforward to decide on one inclusive definition for it. According to Vajda (2000:5), there are over (200) definitions of sentence, but none of these definitions seems completely adequate.

Traditional grammarians tend to define the sentence either in terms of its meaning as an expression of a complete thought or more restrictively in terms of its form as a unit composed of two components: a subject and a predicate (Marcella, 1972: 220).

Palmer (1971:71) has earlier referred to this definition of the sentence as "an expression of a complete thought" adapted by traditional grammar and its literature. Webster's Dictionary (1971:2018) agrees on the traditional definition of the sentence and see that every sentence must have a complete thought or sense.

The definition that traditional grammar gives for the sentence is notional and it has been liable to criticism on various grounds. One is how we know what a complete thought is; another is that a sentence may express two thoughts, not necessarily one single thought, for instance,

- They pushed him because he insulted them.

The sentence above expresses two thoughts and yet it is one sentence (Vajda, 2000:6).

To Bloomfield, a sentence is an independent linguistic form, not included by virtue of any grammatical construction in any larger linguistic form (major-theoretic.narod.ru/English/SENTENCE-definitions). This definition of sentence as the largest unit to which syntactic rules can apply is under question. Some sentence types make no internal

structure. For example, small talk phrases such as "Good morning" (Vajda, 2000:6).

Modern grammarians view a sentence as a clause or utterance. Leech and Svartvik (1975:211) think that a clause is "the principal structure of which sentences are composed". Clauses may be explained in terms of their construction, or from the verb phrase structure in the clause. Therefore, there are "finite clauses", "non-finite clauses", and "verbless clauses". Crystal (1997:62) states that some models of grammar define a clause as the unit of grammatical organization smaller than a sentence, but larger than a phrase or a word.

From the perspective of sentence linguistics, a sentence is an essential grammatical unit and a fundamental dynamic unit of communication. Functionally, it constitutes a relatively complete information structure in the form of a proposition (a proposition may include some subsidiary propositions) which can be liable to thematic analysis and for topic-focus assessment. Orthographically, the sentence has its completeness certified and acknowledged in written text by the use of full stop, which notifies the "contextualization" of the information that the item braces. Communicatively, it contains at least one illocution to be incorporated into the text in spite of its independence marked by the relative degree of connectedness (cohesion) between it and the text that surrounds it (Zhu, 1999:439).

Although a sentence cannot be considered a universal unit, it does represent a complete syntactic form embracing independent information structure which as a speech act has been found to be "identifiable across languages".

To sum up, sentence is a construction that can stand alone as a complete thought. It is a basic unit of English syntax but it is also a unit of communication especially in written language communication of English. Looking at the sentence from different angles has yielded into various definitions that reflect this or that characteristic. It is one of the functional elements of writing and cannot be overlooked in the context of formal college essays and translations or other formal writings.

6. Sentence Errors

6.1 Sentence Fragment (Incomplete Sentence)

A sentence fragment (SF) is considered to be one of the major sentence errors. According to [/www.you-can-teach-writing.com/](http://www.you-can-teach-writing.com/), sentence fragments are every English teacher's nightmare.

Warriner (1982:244) defines a fragment as "a separated sentence part that does not express a complete thought". In other words, a fragment sentence is an idea that has been incorrectly cut off from the sentence it belongs to, e.g., (as we were running towards it) when separated from the host sentence (The bus drove off as we were running towards it). According to (faculty.washington.edu/eznrt/imsc.htm/), sentence fragments are problematic because they are disjointed and confusing to the teacher.

A sentence fragment has nothing to do with size or amount of words. Therefore, a very short structure with a complete idea is not a sentence fragment. A sentence fragment is a sentence that is not complete. It is incomplete because it is either a phrase or a clause (www.myenglishteacher.net/sentencefragments.htm/).

To (languagearts.pppst.com/sentencefragments.htm/), a sentence fragment is not a sentence because it misses the two key elements which a sentence always has : a subject, and a verb, or because it is dependent on something else to complete its meaning and this explains why sentence fragments are difficult to be understood because they are almost always continuations of preceding sentences (Ibid). In fact, according to this website's belief, the term "sentence fragment" is by itself a misnomer since this kind of construction is not actually a sentence.

Regis (2003:6) states that a sentence fragment looks like a sentence, with the first letter capitalized and a full stop at the end, e.g., (No matter what she does), but in reality it is just a component of a larger sentence. More specifically, it is a phrase or a clause that is punctuated and capitalized as a sentence (www.grammarly.com).

Nagatsugu (2010:2) defines a sentence fragment as a linguistic expression with a sentential interpretation which lacks the form of a full sentence, or in a narrow sense, consists of a (minor) part of a sentence, e.g., "bread and butter" as an answer to the question "what did you have for breakfast?". The phrase "bread and butter" has the same meaning as "I had bread and butter for the breakfast", although the descriptive content is not fully expressed explicitly. Figuratively, a sentence is a house, and a sentence fragment is only one of its components, such as a bathroom or a roof (Ibid: 32).

Some researchers also attempt to classify sentence fragments into types or patterns. Most literature on fragment sentences identifies three main types of such fragments. These are:

- 1- Subjectless: A sentence with no identifiable subject e.g., Planned leaving the country. The imperative sentence e.g., "Behave yourself" is excluded here because the subject is identifiable, and thus, it is not a fragment.
- 2- Verbless or Predicateless: A sentence with no verb or predicate, e. g., (Einstein, for example). This type of fragment lacks the verb, which is necessary to express what action is taken by the subject. Another example is "People beings less likely to tolerate."
- 3- A fragment sentence that starts with "danger", or "cliff-hanger" terminology, such as "if", "When", "because", as in :
 - If you stop smoking
 - When I decide
 - Because I left early

Such words begin a statement but leave it "hanging" without a finish. The danger words include almost all subordinating expressions, "such as", "although", "as if", "even if", "since", "so that", "even since", "while" and others.

According to Warriner (1982:37) there is another type of fragment in which a preposition, for example, (above, at, before, during and others) introduce a phrase, as in:

- They all passed. In addition to Ali.

Simmons (1997:4) lists six types of fragments or incomplete sentences. Besides, the four earlier types he adds the following two:

- 4- An infinitive phrase fragment like:
 - To explain why he bought the T-shirt.
- 5- Appositive fragments, in which a word or group of words that rename a noun earlier, is set off from the noun that it stands in opposition to, for instance,
 - When Mike pulled into the drive way, his wife, his flashy new car, a red convertible with fancy rim hanging from the nearer view mirror.

Moreover, on the practical level, experienced language teachers, especially those of writing, offer general guidelines to help students remedy this kind of failure in sentence structure. These technical suggestions include tying the sentence fragment into the sentence before or after it or change the fragment itself into a complete sentence by adding whatever words that support its position in the written text.

However, using a sentence fragment is not always erroneous because such sentences occur in informal writing such as conversation in media and fiction and many of them are used for stylistic effect, not accidentally.

In brief, sentence fragment is an error that occurs when a group of words does not make sense unless it is incorporated in a larger text such as that of a sentence. It is a faulty type of sentence although it appears orthographically as a sentence with all its necessary punctuation. Moreover, it cannot be tolerated in academic and professional papers where formal written English is most eligible when abiding by the use of grammatically complete sentences.

6.2 Run-on Sentences

Run-on sentences are other common error recognized in students' writing. According to Heffernon and Lincoln (1986:279) the run-on sentence is "a sentence which joins two independent clauses or sentences with no punctuation or conjunction between them". Below is

an example:

- My brother saw an accident no one was hurt.

The sentence above consists of two sentences (My brother saw an accident) and (no one was hurt) that are combined as if they were one sentence starting with a capital letter and ending in one independent clause. The two sentences, in other words, are joined improperly and considered, together as a faulty sentence.

Wyatt(2009:4) believes that writing run-on sentences is one of the most common mistakes in the English language from the time a person learns how to put sentences together to the time a person writes essays and papers for class.

Run-on sentences are opposite of fragment sentences. When a sentence ends too quickly, it is called a sentence fragment, but when a sentence has too many ideas and runs-on too long, it is identified as a run-on.(www.myenglishteacher.net/runonsentences.htm). In this sense, run-on sentences can be normally lengthy sentences because they may contain many subjects and verbs.

However, a long sentence which runs on and on is not grammatically wrong: books often contain correctly structured sentences of (50) words or more, and in fiction, writers use sentences overloaded with words: in Mansfield Park, for instance, Jane Austin uses a sentence composed of (90) words (www.ourlanguage.gc.ca). Still, long sentences can be a problem for writers and run-on sentences as their frequent "stumbling blocks".(writercentre.missouristate.edu/assess/writing Centre).

Altay (2007:2) attributes the existence of run-on sentences to the misuse of punctuation marks. The sentence (I love cheese cake, my husband prefers cupcakes) is faulty because a comma is used incorrectly to join the parts of the sentence.

In his book Grammar and the Teaching of Composition, Nouguchi as cited in the writing center of Carolina (www.unc.edu/depts/weweb/), draws a comparison between the run-on sentence and the non run-on sentence, i.e., the grammatically correct sentence. He added that, a run-

on sentence cannot either be turned into yes-no question nor into a tag-question.

A sentence like (My favourite dish is fish and chips) is a non run-on sentence because it can be turned into a question with yes-no answer (Is my favourite dish fish and chips?); and equally, a tag-question can be formed out of it (My favourite dish is fish and chips, isn't it?). On the other hand, a sentence like (My favourite dish is fish and chips it is very cheap) cannot be transformed into either of the two types of questions mentioned above. So, neither (Is my favourite dish fish and chips it is very cheap?) nor (My favourite dish is fish and chips it is very cheap, isn't it?) is grammatically possible and this is because the initial sentence is a run-on.

Composition researchers also attempt different classifications for the run-on sentence. Most assign them to one of these two types: fused sentences and comma splice. A fused sentence contains two sentences written back-to-back without proper punctuation used between them, for example, (I will bring the cake you bring the coke). The comma splice type occurs when a comma is used wrongly to join these two example sentences (I bring the cake, you bring the coke).

Demirezon(1993:158) identifies a third kind of run-on sentence: the stringy sentence. This one results from "stringing", i.e., joining too many independent clauses together with conjunctions often "and", but also with others like "but", "or", "so", and "because". The following sentence is stringy:

- Many students attend lectures most of the day and then they hang around in the evening, and because they usually watch television or check their e-mails at night, so they are exhausted by the end of the day and forget about their homework.

The sentence above is exceptionally long because of the big number of ideas coordinated and subordinated in one single sentence. A stringy sentence results from writing the way people speak; they go on and on talking in strings without ends; but, in writing sentence length does not serve the reader in comprehending because he/she usually forgets the

beginning of the sentence when he/she finally reaches the end of such a sentence (understand sentence problem.htm).

On the practical level, most composition experts agree on four remedies that can be used to correct run-ons. These are as follows:

Remedy One: using a full stop or any other end punctuation between the two sentences. For example, the run-on sentence,

(Can you believe she told him that it is like she never told him she loved him) can be rendered into (Can you believe she told him that?. It's like she never told him she loved him) with question mark separating the two parts.

This kind of remedy is specially practical with lengthy sentences and /or unrelated sentences. (Gateway to English-Language Portal of canada.hmt).

Remedy Two: using a semicolon, for example, the sentence (I bring the cake, you bring the coke) can be fixed into (I bring the cake; you bring the coke). This remedy works best if the two sentences are short and related in meaning (Ibid).

Remedy Three: Making one of the sentences dependent on the other. For example, the run-on sentence (It was a very beautiful day, the students went for a picnic) can be fixed by shaping a dependent (subordinate) clause of the first idea and make it rely on the other idea of the sentence. This results in this non run-on version (Since it was a very beautiful day, the students went for a picnic). Using a complex sentence is a very good solution for fixing the run-on sentences.

(web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/courses/sample/advanced/g5/g5-5)

Remedy Four: Using a comma and a conjunction after the first sentence. A sentence like (The current was swift he could not swim to shore) can be fixed into (The current was swift, and he could not swim to shore). Wyatt (2009:8) thinks that either this remedy or the previous remedy can especially work for run-on sentences in which one sentence is a reaction or response to another.

Hacker (2003:5) proposes an additional way to remedy such a type of sentence errors. He suggests using a long dash between the two parts of the run-on sentence, and he names this kind of device an "em-dash", i.e., a long dash for emphasis. For example, the run-on sentence (My best Mediterranean starter is hummus it is very garlicky) can be fixed into (My best Mediterranean starter is hummus___ it is very garlicky), by separating it into two components with a dash in between used for emphasis.

In short, run-on sentences are equally faulty as fragment sentences because grammatically sentences should never run-on and on without proper punctuations connecting them. They also fall in types and can be easily fixed by following some basic steps common in books on grammar and composition.

7. The Syntactic Structure of English and Arabic Sentences

A complete sentence must contain both a subject and a verb. The subject identifies who or what is performing an action. The verb identifies the action being performed. Additional information can be added to a sentence. Sentences may vary in length from a few words to many lines of a text; however, length is not a reliable indicator of a complete sentence.

Aziz (1989:200-201) presents six points in which simple sentences are compared both in English and Arabic. They are as follows:

- 1- The minimum elements of a sentence in both English and Arabic can be recognized in terms of two things, namely, the subject and the predicate. The absence of one of these elements make the sentence incomplete as in: "In the garden".

Accordingly, in English the minimal sentence has the structure SV. Whereas, in Arabic the minimal clause may be one of the three alternatives: VS, SC or SA.

- 2- Arabic allows a greater freedom in the arrangements of the elements in a sentence S, V, O. The unmarked order is VSO as in:

الولد كتب, SVO. Other possible arrangements are : SVO, كُتِبَتِ الرسالة, كُتِبَ الولد رسالة, OSV, رسالة كتب الولد, OV, الرسالة, كُتِبَ الولد. English on the other hand, normally allows one pattern, SVO as in "The boy wrote the letter" and sometimes allows the pattern OVS as in "A letter wrote the boy".

- 3- Three subtypes of objects are common in Arabic, namely, the cognate object: صاح صيحة قوية (He shouted loudly), the object of accompaniment: ماشتك وأخاك (What have you to do with your brother?), and the object of purpose: فعل ذلك حبا في المال: (He did that for the love of money). Some of these objects have their English equivalents in adverbial constructions, as the aforementioned examples show.
- 4- In the SVO (or its alternative VSO) pattern the verb is transitive and the object may be transformed into the subject of the passive as in: كُتِبَتِ الرسالة (The boy wrote the letter), كُتِبَ الرسالة (The letter was written).
- 5- In patterns involving two objects: VOO, English normally allows two transformations, Arabic allows one. For instance,

-I will give Zayed a present.	سوف أعطي زيدا هدية
-Zayed will be given a present.	سوف يعطي زيد هدية
-A present will be given to Zayed.	هدية سوف يعطي زيد
- 6- Arabic allows more elements in the basic pattern of a sentence than does English: VSOOC, أبليت زيدا عليا صادقا. The equivalent of such clauses in English is a complex sentences as in: I told Zayed that Ali was honest.
- 7- Subordination and coordination are also syntactic features that are employed in both English and Arabic. It is often, however, said that the two languages differ in preference for either syntactic relations. English makes use of more subordination than

coordination, while Arabic favors coordination rather than the subordination(Aziz,1989:214).

8. Error Analysis

Error analysis is a kind of linguistic analysis which is based on working on the students' incorrect responses by describing and categorizing them. Researchers are interested in this kind of analysis because they see errors that the learners of a foreign language make as significant suppliers of information on the strategies which they apply to learn that language (Abi Samara,2003:6).

Although a traditional classroom activity, error analysis took a new turn with Pit Corder's publication of "The Significance of Learners' Error" in 1967 because the errors that students make were marked as 'important in and of themselves'(ibid). Pit Corder(1967,1971) and James (1998) draw a clear distinction between an error and a mistake, the core issue of error analysis : a mistake is an error or slip that can be self-corrected whereas an error is a linguistic deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker but which the learner cannot self-correct.

Corder's(1967 and 1974) research identifies a three -phase model for conducting error analysis: data collection(recognizing of idiosyncrasy); description (accounting for idiosyncrasy); and explanation (real target of error analysis). This model is worked out in detail by Brown(1994,207-211) and Ellis(1995, 51-52).Other researchers, for example, Grass and Selinker(2001:67) propose a six -phase model for conducting an error analysis: collecting data; identifying errors; classifying errors, quantifying errors; analyzing source of errors; and remediating for errors.

Ancker(2000:1) states that errors can be attributed to various reasons: interference from the native language; an incomplete knowledge of the target language; and the complexity of the target language. Earlier studies report some additional reasons in detail: Richards and Simpson (1974:40) and Dulay and Burt (1974:22). The former researchers have included 'age', for instance, as one source of error: learning capacities vary with age and some errors are peculiar of the students' performance at some period of their life.

Pedagogically, Wilkins (1972:207) asserts that error analysis does assist in the development of teaching strategies, and in this regard, Johnson (1975:248) presents five advantages of error analysis. They are as follows:

- 1- It helps in discovering and identifying errors.
- 2- It classifies errors.
- 3- It systematically interprets these unacceptable forms.
- 4- It corrects errors.
- 5- It suggests a remedial work for students.

In short, error analysis is helpful in two ways: first, it provides researchers with some understanding of causes of errors that learners make in the process of learning the language, may it be first language or second language; second, it makes teaching tasks easy for teachers in the classroom in preparing materials which are suited to the learners needs.

9. Test

9.1 Subject

The subjects of the study represent two groups of undergraduate students studying English-Arabic-English translation at the University of Basrah, for the academic year 2010-2011. The first group (Group A) consists of (51) students (34 females, and 17 males), whereas the second group (Group B) consists of (25) students (16 females, 9 males). Their ages average between (20-24) years and all of them are native speakers of Iraqi Arabic. Because the Department of Translation program is fixed, both groups have studied English grammar and composition as courses of this department's program. However, their English proficiency, including writing capabilities, cannot be identical since Group B are exposed to more English and has practiced more of it, being at the final year of their study.

9.2 Description

The study bases its findings on a test conducted on the

mentioned students. The test consists of two parts and each part includes a number of sentences in English.

The first part (Test One) consists of a total of (20) sentences: (15) sentence fragments of various syntactic structures and (5) grammatically correct sentences acting as distracters, all mixed and administered together. The table below (Table 1) illustrates the types of these sentence fragments which were administered to the subjects:

Table(1): Types of fragments used in Test One

Fragment sentences	Type
1-Janet cleaning her husband's car	Noun +participle phrase
2-A man who became a king	Noun+ relative clause
3-A silly place because full of very silly people	Noun+ subordinate clause
4-Cinema ticket in order to see the Indian film	Noun +infinitive phrase
5-Was running hugging a stolen bag	Verb+ participle phrase
6-Disguised herself as a maid	Verb +direct object
7-Collected his photos in a chocolate tin	Verb+ direct object+ prepositional phrase
8-Cried bitterly because her husband abused her for neglect	Verb +subordinate clause
9-Moving furniture up and down untiringly	One participle phrase
10-Who was injured in the last explosion	One relative clause
11-In the kitchen above the shelf	Two prepositional phrases
12-As soon as they saw the train	One subordinate clause
13-Spicy meat and sweet potatoes	Two nouns +two adjectives
14-Above the line	One prepositional phrase
15-Listened and took notes	One compound verb

The second part of the test (Test Two) consists of a total of (15) sentences: (11) run-on sentences of various syntactic combinations and (4) sentences that do not run-on used as distracters and placed at random in the test. The following table (table2) illustrates run-on sentence types used and the sentence given to the subjects.

Table (2): The run-on sentences and their types used in Test Two

Run- on Sentences	The Type of Run- on Sentences
1- He bought a car it did not cost him a lot	Short simple sentence +short simple sentence
2-Because he had lost his suitcase he did not leave the airport he checked with the lost baggage claim	Long sentence with subordinate clause +short simple sentence
3-She was very unhappy her 21st birthday was postponed because her grandfather was seriously ill	Short simple sentence+ longer sentence with subordinate clause
4-The prisoner decided to escape he managed breaking the door of the prison which was burning	Short simple sentence + longer sentence with relative clause
5-Sledding down the hill Billy lost his sheep kin	Long sentence with participle phrase+ short

hat his friend looked for it every place	simple sentence
6-It was an excellent plan the criminal did not answer police's questions pretending deafness	Short simple sentence+ long sentence with participle phrase
7-Roses and carnations of all colours filled the front garden it was amazing	Long sentence with compound subject +shorter simple sentence
8-The house which they bought was white it was quite old	Long sentence with relative clause+ shorter simple sentence
9-All bought a camera worth \$100 his wife and sister thought it was worth much more	Short sentence +longer sentence with compound subject
10-Her grandmother bought scaled cooked fish she enjoyed doing that all by herself	Long sentence with compound verb+ shorter simple sentence
11-The airplane captain made a smooth safe landing the passengers shouted and clapped loudly	Short simple sentence+ longer sentence with compound verb

Both types of test are modeled after two tests used by Kagan in an error analysis research published in *Research in the Teaching of English*. (See the bibliography for full information).

9.3 Administration

Both tests were given in one package but the subjects were asked to work on Test One first. The test altogether was conducted in one class hour, i. e., a period of (50) minutes with an interval of (5) minutes between the two parts.

The subjects were informed partly about the nature of the test materials and how to respond, respectively. For Test One, they were asked to indicate which items were complete sentences and which were fragments by using the symbol (V) for a complete sentence and the symbol (x) for an incomplete sentence (sentence fragment). The term "sentence fragments" itself was not used in the directions of the test in order to avoid the subjects' perplexity over the term and the term 'sentence part' was used instead.

For Test Two, the subjects were asked to indicate which items expressed one sentence and which expressed more, again by using the symbol (V) for a one-sentence item and the symbol (X) for more than a sentence. The term run-on sentence was likewise not used in the directions given to the students for the same reason mentioned earlier.

9.4 Test Scoring

The scoring scheme adopted in the first test is the use of the two

symbols (✓) and (x). The symbol (✓) is a sign of a correct answer, whereas (x) is a sign of an incorrect identification. Thus, the scoring method was one mark (score) allotted to each sentence. The total number of the sentences in the first question was (15) so, there were (15) marks in Test One; whereas, the scoring scheme adopted in Test Two is that if the item expressed one sentence the symbol (✓) is used, if more the symbol (X) is used. Accordingly, there were (11) marks in Test Two since there are (11) sentences. Accordingly, the whole test (Test One and Two) scored (26). The minimum (average) score given for each item in Test One is (7.5) and (5.5) in Test Two. Thus, when analyzing the sentences in Test One, for instance, we get the following: Sentence No.1 represents the sum of the correct answers which was produced by the subjects (Second-year learners and Fourth-year learners).

10. Analysis and Discussion of Results

10.1 Second -Year Learners' Performance in Test One

Table(3) shows the second-year learners' performance in Test One and their percentages. Both females and males face difficulties in identifying the fragment sentences; however, their responses vary according to the fragment sentence type. The percentage of the females' correct answer is calculated as follows:

$$F\% = \frac{\text{The sum of correct answers of the females} \times 100}{\text{The total number of the second-year females}}$$

Sentence No 1, in Test One, the percentage is calculated as follows:

$$1-F\% = \frac{3 \times 100}{34}$$

8.82%

2- Similarly, the males' percentage can be obtained as follows:

M% = $\frac{\text{The sum of correct answers of the males} \times 100}{\text{The total number of the second-year males}}$

The total number of the second-year males

$$M\% = \frac{6 \times 100}{17}$$

M% = 35.29% for sentence No.1

10.2 Second -Year Females' Performance in Test One

The females faced difficulty in identifying the following types of the fragments and in this hierarchy:

- 1- Noun+ participle phrase.
- 2- One compound verb
- 3- Verb +direct object +prepositional phrase
- 4- Verb+ subordinate clause

The fragments above which are mistaken for complete sentences are arranged according to their average (from top to bottom). The first type of the sentence fragment (noun+ participle phrase) represents a problem to the females in the sense that only three females (8.82%) out of the (34) could identify it correctly. This difficulty can be attributed to language transfer since Arabic has zero copulas (a verb like verb 'to be') which connects the subject and the predicate.

The second type of difficult fragment is (one compound verb). Twelve females (35.29%) out of the (34) ones could identify this type of the fragment. Next, comes this pattern (Verb +direct object +prepositional phrase). Last, is (verb+ subordinate clause). The subjects tend to equate the verbal aspect of the verb-noun sequence with the concept of 'a complete written sentence'. To interpret the difficulty in these last two patterns, it is well-known that the normal Arabic sentence is verbal i.e., it starts with a verb.

Table (3): The performance of the second-year subjects in Test One and their percentages

Sentence Fragment	Type	The sum of female s' correct answer s	Female s' %	The sum of the males' correct answer	Males' %	Total	Total%
1- Janet cleaning her husband's car	Noun +participle phrase	3	8.82	6	35.29	9	17.64
2- A man who became a king	Noun+ relative clause	24	70.58	12	70.58	36	70.58
3- A silly place because full of very silly people	Noun+ subordinate clause	19	55.88	8	47.05	27	52.94
4- Cinema ticket in order to see the Indian film	Noun +infinitive phrase	24	70.58	10	58.82	34	66.66
5- Was running	Verb+ participle	31	91.17	16	94.11	47	92.15

hugging stolen bag	a	phrase						
6-Disguised herself as maid	a	Verb +direct object	20	58.82	11	64.70	31	60.78
7-Collected his photos in a chocolate tin	a	Verb+ direct object+ prepositional phrase	13	38.23	9	52.94	22	43.13
8-Cried bitterly because her husband abused her for neglect		Verb +subordinate clause	14	41.17	9	52.94	23	45.09
9-Moving furniture up and down untrungly		One participle phrase	23	67.64	8	47.05	31	60.78
10-Who was injured in the last explosion		One relative clause	18	52.94	11	64.70	29	56.86
11-In the kitchen above the shelf		Two prepositional phrases	31	91.17	11	64.70	42	82.35
12-As soon as they saw the train		One subordinate clause	21	61.76	13	64.70	32	62.74
13-Spicy meat and sweet potatoes		Two nouns +two adjectives	24	70.58	10	58.82	34	66.66
14-Above the line		One prepositional phrase	28	82.35	12	70.58	40	78.43
15-Listened and look notes		One compound verb	12	35.29	5	29.41	17	33.33

10.3 The Second- Year Males' Performance in Test One

The males' responses to sentence fragments in Test One tend to be similar to that of the females except in two patterns which are (Noun+ subordinate clause) and (One participle phrase). The males could not identify the following sentence fragment types:

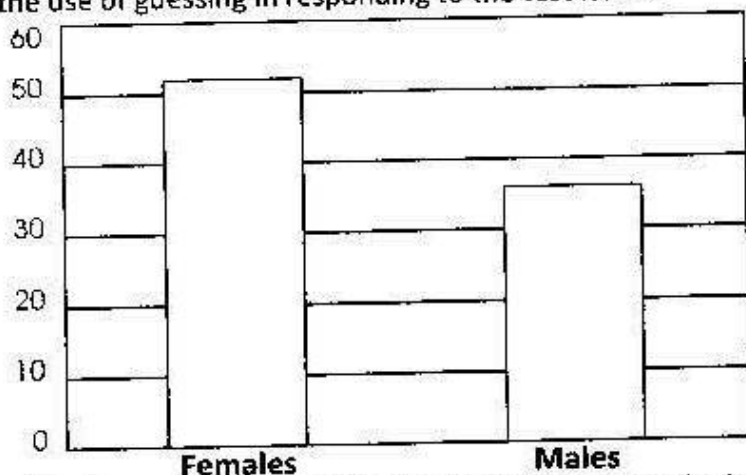
- 1- One compound verb
- 2- Noun+ participle phrase
- 3- Noun+ subordinate clause
- 4- One participle phrase

These sentence types are arranged according to their hierarchy of difficulty. The first type which is (one compound verb) is the most difficult type of the fragment because only five (29.41%) out of the (17) males could identify it correctly. Next, comes (noun +participle phrase), only six (35.29%) out of the (17) males could recognize it correctly. Obviously, the difficulty of these two patterns is reversed for the male

students. The other two patterns namely, (noun+ subordinate clause) and (one participle phrase) scored equally, eight (47.05%) out of (17) males identified it correctly. To interpret the last pattern, it seemed that subjects were actually searching for part of (noun-verb-noun) sequence and confused it with a prepositional phrase or there was something inherent in the prepositional phrase as syntactic structure that drew the attention of the subjects.

To sum up, both of sentences No.1 and No.15 in Test One which have the following syntactic types (noun+ participle phrase and one compound verb) represent a great difficulty to both the male and the female subjects as their scores indicate. The reason behind their failure in identifying the above types of sentence fragment can be ascribed to one of these reasons:

- a- Language transfer.
- b- The unavailability of clues.
- c- Unseriousness of some of the subjects to respond to the test or the use of guessing in responding to the test items.



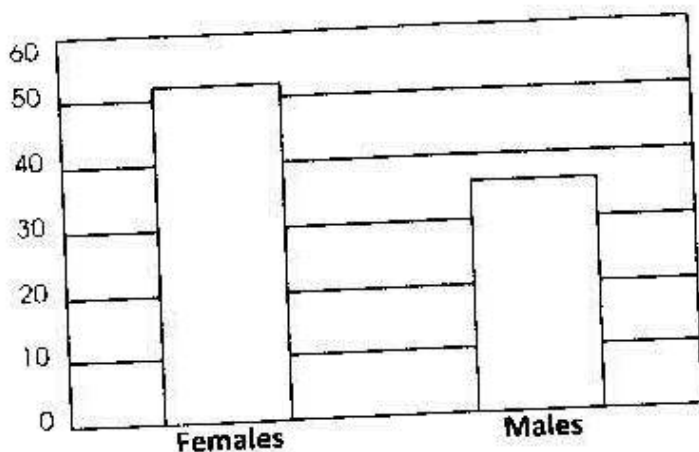
Figure(1): The performance of the second -year subjects in Test One

10.4 Second –Year Performances in Test Two

Table (4) reveals that the performance of both the females and the males in Test two is better than in Test One. This is ascribed to the availability of clues to the subjects with the presence of at least one complete sentence if not more in every item. All the females of the second-year subjects succeeded in identifying the run-on sentences since all of them scored above the average. Likewise all male subjects scored above the average.

Table (4): Second -year subjects correct answers of Test Two

Run on sentences	The sum of females correct answers	The Female %	The sum of males' correct answers	The Males%	Total	Total%
1- He bought a car it did not cost him a lot	33	97.05	13	76.47	46	90.19
2-Because he had lost his suitcase he did not leave the airport he checked with the lost baggage claim	29	85.29	16	94.11	45	88.23
3-She was very unhappy her 21st birthday was postponed because her grandfather was seriously ill	28	82.35	16	94.11	44	86.27
4-The prisoner decided to escape he managed breaking the door of the prison which was burning	27	79.41	14	82.35	41	80.39
5-Sledding down the hill Billy lost his sheep kin hat his friend looked for it every place	31	91.17	15	88.23	46	90.19
6-It was an excellent plan the criminal did not answer police's questions pretending deafness	22	64.70	13	76.47	35	68.62
7-Roses and carnations of all colours filled the front garden it was amazing	17	50	11	64.70	28	54.90
8-The house which they bought was white it was quite old	27	79.41	14	82.35	41	80.39
9-All bought a camera worth \$100 his wife and sister thought it was worth much more	31	91.17	15	88.23	46	90.19
10-Her grandmother bought scaled cooked the fish she enjoyed doing that all by herself	30	88.23	15	88.23	45	88.23
11-The airplane captain made a smooth safe landing the passengers shouted and clapped loudly	32	94.11	16	94.11	48	94.11



Figure(2): The performance of the second -year subjects in Test Two

10.5 Fourth-Year Females' Performance in Test One

Table (5) exhibits the responses as well as the percentages of fourth - year subjects in Test One. The percentage of the females' and the males 'of fourth-year is calculated as such:

$$F\% = \frac{\text{The sum of the females' (fourth-year) correct answers} \times 100}{\text{The total number of the females}}$$

$$F\% \text{ for Sentence No.1 in test One} = \frac{2 \times 100}{16}$$

12.5%

Similarly, the percentage of the males is obtained:

$$M\% = \frac{\text{The sum of the males' (fourth-year) correct answers} \times 100}{\text{The total number of the males}}$$

$$M\% = \frac{6 \times 100}{9}$$

M%=66.66% for sentence No.1 in Test One

The females could not identify the fragment sentences that have the following patterns:

- 1- Noun+ participle phrase
- 2- Noun+ subordinate clause

- 3- (Verb+ subordinate clause)+(One compound verb)
- 4- Two nouns + two adjectives

The patterns above are arranged also according to their average decreasingly from high to low. Patten No.1, which has the syntactic combination (noun+ participle phrase), represents the most difficult pattern in the sense that only two females (12.5%) out of (16) could assign it as an incomplete sentence; whereas, the rest mistook it for a complete sentence. The reason behind this difficulty can be attributed to language transfer. The second pattern (noun+ subordinate clause) tends to be perceived as a fragment only by (5) females (31.25%); the other females considered it as a complete sentence. This can be ascribed to language transfer since Arabic language tends to use coordination more than subordination in its structure. The third fragment type includes two patterns (verb+ subordinate clause) and (one compound verb), the first pattern is recognized by six females only (37.5%) as a fragment, while the others perceived it as a complete sentence. This can be traceable to the fact that the subjects search for verb-noun sequences and view it as a complete sentence. Similarly, the second pattern of (one compound verb) scored also six: only (37.5%) of the females recognize it as a fragment, while the rests perceived it as a complete sentence. Pattern No. 4 (two nouns + two adjectives) is the least difficult because seven females (43.75%) out of the (16) could identify it correctly. This is because the pattern contains four lexical words (two nouns +two adjectives) that furnish the items with a load of information enough to be perceived as a complete sentence.

10.6 Fourth-Year Males' Performances in Test One

The males responses to Test One seem to be more complicated and varied in the sense that male subjects face a great difficulty in recognizing fragment sentences that have the following patterns:

- 1- (Noun+ subordinate clause), (Verb+ subordinate clause).

2- (Verb+ direct object), (One participle phrase), (One relative clause),(Two prepositional phrases), and (Two nouns+ two adjectives).

The first pattern (noun+ subordinate clause) scores below the average since only three males(33.33) out of nine identify it correctly: the same is true regarding pattern (verb+ subordinate clause).The following five syntactic combinations (verb+ direct object), (one participle phrase), (one relative clause), (two prepositional phrases) and (two nouns+ two adjectives) scored equally by the male subjects because only four males(44.44%) out of the nine could identify them correctly while the rests classify these structure as complete sentences. The reason behind some failure can be ascribed to aforementioned reasons.

Table (5): Fourth - year subjects correct answers of Test One

Sentence Fragment	Type	The sum of the females' correct answers	The Female s' %	The sum of the males' correct answers	The Males' %	Total	Total %
1-Janet cleaning her husband's car	Noun +participle phrase	2	12.5	6	66.66	8	32
2-A man who became a king	Noun+ relative clause	10	62.5	5	55.55	15	60
3-A silly place because full of very silly people	Noun+ subordinate clause	5	31.25	3	33.33	8	32
4-Cinema ticket in order to see the Indian film	Noun +infinitive phrase	8	50	7	77.77	15	60
5-Was running hugging a stolen bag	Verb+ participle phrase	14	87.5	8	88.88	22	88
6-Disguised herself as a maid	Verb +direct object	8	50	4	44.44	12	48
7-Collected his photos in a chocolate tin	Verb+ direct object+ prepositional phrase	10	62.5	6	66.66	16	64
8-Cried bitterly because her husband abused her for neglect	Verb +subordinate clause	6	37.5	3	33.33	9	36
9-Moving furniture up and down untiringly	One participle phrase	10	62.5	4	44.44	14	56
10-Who was injured in the last explosion	One relative clause	9	56.25	4	44.44	13	52
11-In the kitchen above the shelf	Two prepositional phrases	12	75	4	44.44	16	64
12-As soon as they saw the train	One subordinate clause	11	68.75	7	77.77	18	72
13-Spicy meat and	Two nouns	7	43.75	4	44.44	11	44

sweet potatoes	+two adjectives						
14-Above the line	One prepositional phrase	11	68.75	7	77.77	18	72
15-Listened and took notes	One compound verb	6	37.5	6	66.66	12	48

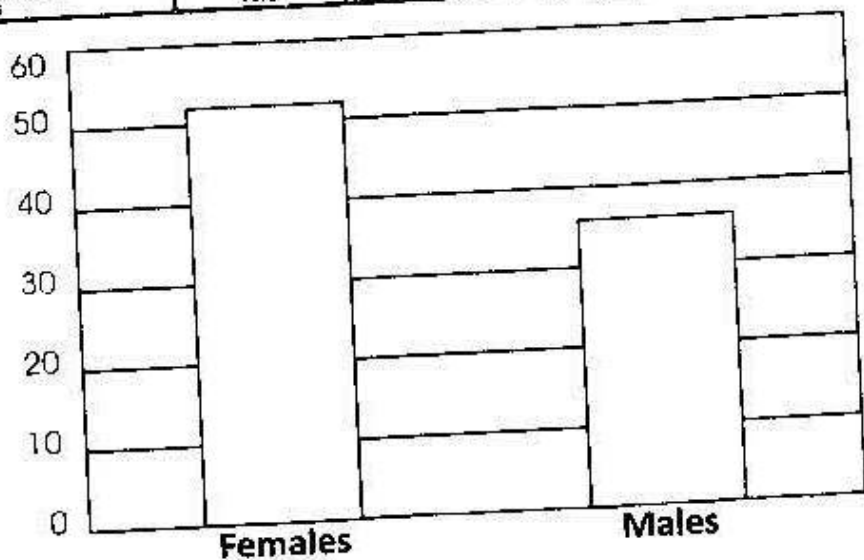


Figure (3): The performance of Fourth-year subjects in Test One

10.7 Fourth-Year Females' Performance in Test Two

A higher percentage of fourth-year female subjects, who are sixteen in number, succeeded in identifying the run-on sentences. The higher score obtained by the females was (93.75%). The lower score is (56.25%), which is above the average. Table (6) shows the fourth-year females scores and their percentages in Test Two.

The following patterns of run-on sentences are arranged according to their difficulty in identification by the females subjects (depending on their scores).

- 1- Short simple sentence + longer sentence with participle phrase
- 2- Long sentence with compound subject + shorter simple sentence
- 3- Long sentence with relative clause + shorter simple sentence
- 4- Short simple sentence + long sentence with compound verb

- 5- Short sentence + longer sentence with compound subject
- 6- Long sentence with compound verb+ shorter simple sentence
- 7- Short simple sentence + short simple sentence
- 8- Long sentence with subordinate clause + shorter simple sentence

Table (6): Fourth - year subjects correct answers of Test Two

Run- on Sentences	The sum of females' correct answers	The females %	The sum of the males' correct answers	The Male s%	Total	Total %
1- He bought a car it did not cost him a lot	13	81.25	5	55.55	18	72
2- Because he had lost his suitcase he did not leave the airport he checked with the lost baggage claim	14	87.5	8	88.88	22	88
3- She was very unhappy her 21 st birthday was postponed because her grandfather was seriously ill	14	87.5	7	77.77	21	84
4- The prisoner decided to escape he managed breaking the door of the prison which was burning	15	93.75	4	44.44	19	76
5- Sledding down the hill Billy lost his sheep kin hat his friend looked for it every place	15	93.75	6	66.66	21	84
6- It was an excellent plan the criminal did not answer police's questions pretending deafness	9	56.25	3	33.33	12	48
7- Roses and carnations of all colours filled the front garden it was amazing	9	56.25	6	66.66	15	60
8- The house which they bought was white it was quite old	10	62.5	7	77.77	17	68
9- Ali bought a camera worth \$100 his wife and sister thought it was worth much more	12	75	5	55.55	17	68
10- Her grandmother bought scaled cooked the fish she enjoined doing that all by herself	12	75	5	55.55	17	68
11- The airplane captain made a smooth safe landing the passengers shouted and clapped loudly	11	68.75	7	77.77	18	72

10.8 Fourth-Year Males' Performance in Test Two

The majority of the males succeeded in identifying the run-on sentences in Test Two; however, only four males (44.44%) could identify the run-on sentence No. 4 which has the pattern: (Short simple sentence + long sentence with relative clause), the other five males failed in recognizing this as a run-on. Besides, three males (33.33%) out of the nine could identify sentence No. 6 that has got the following pattern: (Short simple sentence + long sentence with participle phrase); the other six males(66.66%) could not identify the run-on sentence. The

reason behind their failure in identifying these types of run-on sentences can be viewed in this way: subjects defined complete sentence as unit which exceeded a certain minimal length and contained a verb-noun sequence. In addition, subjects apparently perceived the verb-noun relationship as a complete sentence.

Accordingly, the following patterns of run - on sentences represent the most difficult type to identify on the part of the males subjects. They are scaled from the most difficult to the least difficult.

- 1- Short simple sentence + long sentence with participle phrase
- 2- Short simple sentence + longer sentence with relative clause
- 3- Short simple sentence + short simple sentence; short sentence + longer sentence with compound subject; long sentence with compound verb+ shorter simple sentence. (all these pattern represent the same degree of difficulty since the males score equally in them)
- 4- Long sentence with participle phrase + shorter simple sentence; long sentence with compound subject + shorter simple sentence.
- 5- Short simple sentence + longer sentence with subordinate clause; long sentence with relative clause+ shorter simple sentence; short simple sentence + longer sentence with compound verb
- 6- Long sentence with subordinate clause+ shorter simple sentence

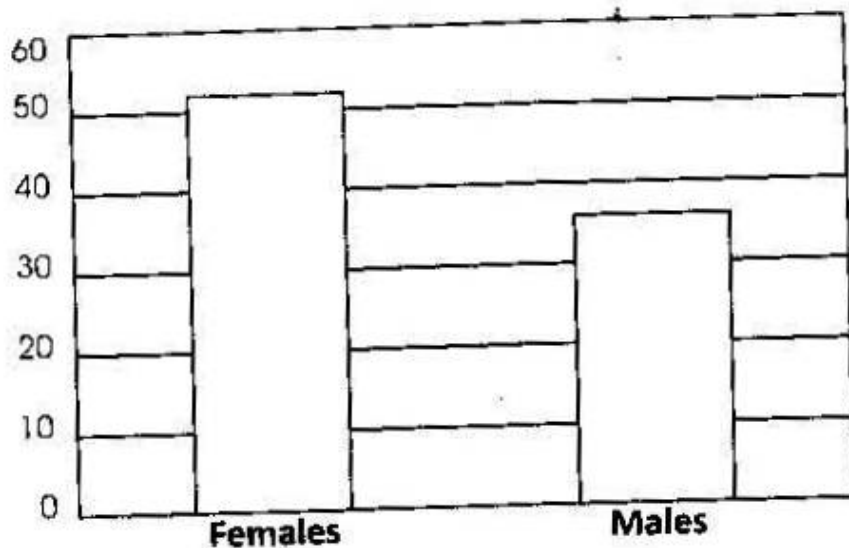


Figure (4): The performance of the fourth -year subjects in Test Two

11. Statistical Interpretation of the Subjects Responses

11.1 Comparing the Second- Year Subjects' Performances in Test One

It is obvious that the females of the second- year subjects performed better than the males as their means displayed in table (7).

Table(7): The means of the second - year subjects in Test One

Sex	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1-Females	52.214	.940	50.295	54.133
2-Males	36.027	.940	34.108	37.946

Table(8): The grand mean for second -year subjects in Test One

Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
44.120	.664	42.763	45.477

In order to see whether the differences between the females and the males of second -year in Test One are significant or not ANOVA test applied in table (9).

Table (9): The application of ANOVA to Test One for the second- year subjects

	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Females/Males of Test One	3930.123	1	3930.123	148.385	.000
Test One	272.816	14	19.487	.736	.724
Sex variation in Test One	2025.790	14	144.699	5.463	.000

R. Square=0.887(Adjusted R square=0.778)

The F calculated value is (148.385) is larger than the tabulated value 0.05, so, the differences between the females and the males of the second- year is significant this is as far as Test One is concerned. Whereas, the F value of Test One (.736) is larger than the tabulated value (0.05) so, the differences are significant. The F value (5.463) of the relation between sex and test one is also significant because it is larger than the tabulated value (0.05).

11.2 Comparing the Second- Year Subjects' Performance in Test Two

The females of the second -year also in Test Two performed better than the males and this is clearly indicated in table (10).

Table (10): The performance of the second -year subjects in Test Two

Sex	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1-Females	54.049	.295	53.437	54.661
2-Males	35.736	.0295	35.124	36.348

Table(11) :The grand mean for Test Two of the second-year subjects

Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
44.892	.209	44.460	45.325

Table(12): The ANOVA application to Test Two for the second -year subjects

	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Females/males of Test Two	3689.099	1	3689.099	1926.054	.000
Test Two	767	10	7.673E-02	.040	.1000
Sex variation in Test Two	106.487	10	10.649	5.560	.000

R. Square=0.887(Adjusted R square=0.778)

The differences between the females and the males of the second - year are also significant regarding Test Two. This is because the F value (1926.054) is larger than the tabulated value 0.05. Whereas the differences in the students' responses' regarding Test Two is insignificant because the F value (0.040) is less than the tabulated value (0.05). In comparing the sex of the students' in Test Two with its relation to the test, it is found out that the differences are significant since the F value (5.560) is larger than the tabulated value (0.05).

11.3 Comparing the Fourth -Year Subjects' Performance in Test One

The females' mean in Test One is larger than the males', and this obviously shown in table (13). This means that the females of the fourth - year subjects performed better than the males as far as Test One is concerned.

Table(13): The performances' of the fourth -year subjects in Test One

Sex	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1-Females	52.454	.258	51.927	52.980
2-Males	38.638	.258	37.841	38.895

Table(14): The grand mean for the Fourth -year subjects in Test One

Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
45.411	.182	45.038	45.783

Table(15): The application of ANOVA test to Fourth-year subjects in Test One

	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Females/males of Test One	2976.090	1	2976.090	1491.399	.000
Test One	193.402	14	13.814	6.923	.000
Sex variation in Test One	3323.749	14	237.411	118.973	.000

R. Square=.991 (Adjusted R Squared =.982)

The differences between the females and the males of the Fourth-year subjects regarding their achievements in Test One are significant since the F value (1491.399) is larger than the tabulated value (0.05). Similarly, the difference regarding their performance in Test One is also significant because the F value (6.923) is larger than the tabulated value (0.05). The same is true regarding the relation between sex and the test is significant as table(15) displays.

11.4 Comparing the Fourth -Year Subjects' Performance in Test Two

It is obvious from the females' response (scores) that the females performed better than the males in Test Two. This is clearly described in the total mean they got in table (16).

Table(16):The performances of the fourth-year subjects in Test Two

Sex	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1-Females	55.756	1.068	53.541	57.972
2-Males	34.263	1.068	32.047	36.479

Table(17): The grand mean for the performance of Fourth-year subjects in Test Two

Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
45.010	.755	43.443	46.576

Table(18):The application of the ANOVA test on the performances of the fourth –year subjects in Test Two

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Females/males of Test Two	5081.740	1	5081.740	202.350	.000
Test Two	431.107	10	43.111	1.717	.140

Sex variation in Test Two	1025.874	10	102.587	4.085	003
---------------------------	----------	----	---------	-------	-----

R. Square=922 (Adjusted R Squared =.848)

The differences between the sex of the fourth-year subjects are significant since the F value (202.350) is larger than the tabulated value (0.05). The same is true regarding both the test and the relation between test and the sex of the subjects.

11.5 Comparing the Performance of the Second-Year Subjects' with the Fourth-Year Subjects' in the Two Tests

In order to examine whether the sex of the subjects has any effect on the entire performance, the results of both sexes in Test One and Test Two are subjected to T-Test. Table (19) exhibits the application of T-Test. Interestingly, the Standard Deviations regarding Test One for both the second and fourth-year subjects appeared to be equal (10.91051 and 10.53896), respectively, this means that the members of each group are homogeneous and therefore, their responses have been close to each other. The aspect of Std. Deviation in each group is necessary in measuring the degree of dispersion of its variance. Whereas the Std. Deviation in Test Two is different, and therefore, their responses are not homogeneous as far as Test Two is concerned.

Table(19): The application of T-Test on the two samples of the test

Tests	Academic year	Mean	N	St.d Deviation	St.d Error Mean
Test One	Second-year	44.1203	60	10.91051	1.40854
Test One	Fourth-year	45.4108	60	10.53896	1.36057
Test Two	Second-year	44.8925	44	9.44813	1.42436
Test Two	Fourth-year	45.0095	44	12.84181	1.93598

Table(20): The two samples correlations

Pairs	N	Correlations	Sig.
Test One Second-Fourth year	60	.813	.000
Test Two Second-Fourth year	44	.838	.000

Table(21): The application of the comparisons of the two samples of T-Test

Pairs	Mean	Paired differences				T
		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95%Confidence Interval of the difference		
				Lower	Upper	
Test One Second +Fourth year	-1.2905	6.57390	.84869	-2.9887	.4077	-1.521
Test Two Second and fourth-year	-.1170	7.12636	1.07434	-2.2837	2.0496	-.109

Despite the fact that there are differences between the two samples of the study, these differences are not significant since the calculated values (-1.521, and -.109) for the two tests are less than the tabulated value (0.05) as table(20) and (21) indicate. Thus, the academic year (stage) is not significant regarding the two tests of the study.

Table(22): Two-tailed comparisons of the subjects of the test

Tests	Academic year	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Test One	Second-and fourth year subjects	59	.134
Test Two	Second-and fourth year subjects	43	.914

12. Conclusions

The results of the study show that translation students have problems with identifying complete sentence structures in English. Their performances demonstrate their inability in applying structural rules in the English language which might be attributed to their failure of acquiring the normal grammatical rules of forming sentences in English and their incompetence in abiding the conventions of some punctuation in English. The study also points to the attempt of students to internalize the rules of the language they are learning. It additionally brings out the interference from Arabic, into English in the performance of these

students who may assume that English and Arabic are similar in composing sentences and coordinating them. The study also identifies what specific and common types of sentence failure students have through two variables: sex and number of years studied.

It has been found out that the performance of second-year females' subjects is better than the males in Test One and this is clearly reflected throughout the statistical treatment. Their calculated value is larger than the tabulated value which is 0.05. Hence, the differences are significant. The same is true regarding the performance of the females' subjects of fourth-year.

Moreover, both females and males second-year subjects and only females fourth-year faced no difficulty in Test Two in the sense that all of them scored above the average. In contrast, the fourth-year male subjects faced a difficulty in responding to Test Two and this is clearly shown through their scores. It is worth mentioning that both the females of the two levels face no difficulty regarding the identification of the items of Test Two.

The following syntactic combinations appeared to be the most problematic for both subjects as far as the fragment sentences are concerned;

- Noun+ participle phrase
- Verb+ subordinate clause
- Noun+ subordinate clause

Whereas only two run-on sentences appeared to be problematic on the part of the fourth-year male subjects. They are as such:

- (Short simple sentence +longer sentence with relative clause)
- (short simple sentence +long sentence with participle phrase)

Statistically speaking, it has been found that academic stage as a factor is not significant regarding its effect on the performance of the subjects in both tests. Although second-year subjects performed better than the fourth-year subjects, from the statistical view points, both of them faced the same difficulty regarding the items of the test.

In effect, this study can make teachers focus their attention on a very basic but necessary skill for the student i.e., the ability to write complete and comprehensible sentences, and make them come with better teaching techniques and materials which can enhance their students' writing skill overall.

Bibliography

- Abi Samara, Nada. (2003). "An Analysis of Errors in Arabic Speakers' English Writings". Available at: abisamra03.tripod.com/nada/languageacq-erroranalysis.htm. PP2-8.
- Adams, J. (1964). "A study of Sentence Problem in Writing". Available at: www.teachingenglishonline.net. PP1-20
- Altay, I.F. (2007). "Run-on and Stringy Sentence in Writing". In *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*. Vol.3, No.1. PP1-7.
- Ancker, William. (2000). "Errors and Corrective Feedback: Updated Theory and Classroom Practice". *Forum (online)*, Vol.38, No.4, PP1-7. Available at: exchanges.states.gov/forum
- Azar, Betty S. (1992). *Fundamentals of English Grammar*. London: Regents. Prentice Hall.
- Aziz, Yowell Y. (1989). *A Contrastive Grammar of English and Arabic*. Mosul: University of Mosul.
- Belinda, Maia. (1996). "The Sentence as a unit of Translation". *Maio*. PP1-4.
- Brown, D.B. (1994). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Third Edition. New Jersey. Printence Hall Regents.
- Cohen, Moshe and Riel, Margatret. (1989). "The Effect of Distant Audiences on Students' Writing". *American Educational*

Research Journal Summer. Vol.26, No.2, PP. 143-159.

Corder, S.P. (1967). "The Significance of learner's error". Reprinted in J.C.Richards (ed.) (1974, 1984). **Error Analysis. Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition**. London: Longman. PP.19-27.

.....(1971). "Idiosyncratic errors and Error Analysis". **IRAL**, 9,2, PP147-159.

.....(1974). "Error Analysis". In J.P.B. Allen and S. Pit Corder (eds.). **Techniques In Applied Linguistics (The Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics:3)**. London: Oxford University Press. PP20-28.

.....(1975). "Error Analysis, Interlanguage and Second Language Acquisition". **Language Teaching and Linguistics Abstract**. 8(4) PP.201-217.

Crystal, D. (1997). **A Dictionary of Language and Phonetics**. Oxford: Blackwell.

Demirezon, M. (1993). "From Sentence to Paragraph Structure". In **Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies**. Vol.3, No.1 PP150-158. Ankara: Ad.m Publications.

Dulay, H. and Burt, M. (1974). "You cannot learn without goofing". In **Error Analysis** (ed.) J.C.Richards. London: Longman. P22.

Ellis, R. (1995). **Understanding Second Language Acquisition**. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fromkin, Victoria. (1990). **An Introduction to Language 2nd**. Australian Ed.. Sydney: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Grass, S. and Selinker, L. (2001). **Second Language Acquisition: an introductory course**. Mahwah, N.J.: LEA, P 67.

Guinn.(1987). Available at : teachingenglishonline.net/a-study-on-sentence-problem.

Hacker, Diana.(2003). **A writers' Reference** 5th ed.. Boston: Bedford.
Available on: www.iconlogic.com/pdf/abrams.pdf/

James, Carl.(1998).**Errors in Language Learning and Use: Exploring Error Analysis**. London: Longman.

Johanson, S.(1975). " The Use of Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis ".**ELT**, 29(3),PP.246-253.

Kagan, Dona.M.(1980)." Run-on and Fragment Sentences :An Error Analysis". In **Research in the Teaching of English**.Vol.14, No.2,PP127-136.

Leech, G. and Svartvik.(1975).**A Communicative Grammar of English**. London :Longman.

Marcella, F.(1972).**Modern English :A Practical Reference Guide**. New York : Englewood Cliffs Prentice-Hall.

Nagatsugu,Kento.(2010)."Case Phenomena in Sentence Fragment". In **Graduate School of Humanities**.Yyshu :Yyshu University.PP1- 6.

Newmark,Peter. (1988). **A Textbook of Translation**.Prentice Hall International English Language Teaching.

Oshima, Alice and Houge, Ann.(1991).**Writing Academic English**. London: Longman.

Palmer, F.(1971). **Grammar**. London: Penguin Books.

Regis Writing Centre(2003).Available at : ars.wc.Frags/.

Richards, J. and Simpson P. (1974). "The Study of Learners English". In Jack C. Richards (ed.), **Error Analysis: The Perspective on Second Language Acquisition**. London: Longman. PP3-18.

Simmons, Robin L. (1997). "The Sentence Fragment". Available at www.stlec.edu/student_Resource/Academic./fragment.pdf. PP1-12

Skripsi, J. (2000). "Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Writing Call Capitalization, a translation Blog". Available on: www.cupepskiripsi-analysis-of-grammatical-error-in-writing.mht./PP1-6.

Vajda, E.J. (2000). "Syntax". Available on www.iconlogic.com/pdf/abrams.pdf/.

Warriner, J.E. (1982). **English Grammar and Composition**. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.

Webster, M. (1971). **Webster's Third New International Dictionary**. Vol. III. London: Longman, Inc.

Widdowson, H.G. (1978). **Teaching English as Communication**. London: Oxford University Press.

Wilkins, D.A. (1972). **Linguistics in Language Teaching**. London: Billing and Sons Ltd.

Wyatt, M.B. (2009). "Identifying and Correcting Run-on Sentences". Available at www.unc.edu/depts/weweb/.

Zhu, Chunshen. (1999). "Ut once More: The Sentence as the Key Functional Unit of Translation" In **Meta: Journal des traducteurs/ Meta: Translators' Journal**. Vol. 44, No. 3, PP.429-447.

Internet Links

- major-theoretic.narod.ru/english/SENTENCEdefinitions.
- www.you-can-teach-writing.com.
- faculty.washington.edu/eznrt/imsc.htm/
- www.myenglishteacher.net/sentencefragments.htm
- languagearts-pppst.com/sentencefragments.htm
- www.grammarly.com
- www.myenglishteacher.net/runonsentence.htm
- Language Portal of Canada www.ourlanguage.gc.ca
- Writercentre.missouristate.edu/assess/writingcentre
- Understand sentence problem.htm
- Gateway to English Portal of canad.hmt
- Web2.uvcs.ca/courses/sample/advanced/gs/gs-s

External Links

- Writers' Web. "Sentence Structure and Mechanics". Available at:
www.writeguide.com
- The Writing Center. "Fragments and Run-ons": Carolina: University of North Carolina. Available at
www.unc.edu/depts/weweb
- A Study on Sentence Problem in Writing". Available on
www.teachinglishonline.net.

Appendix

Sex: Stage: Q1/Decide whether each item below is a complete sentence (✓) or just a part of a sentence (X)

- 1- (Janet cleaning her husband's car)
- 2- (A man who became a king)
- 3- (He called her name but she was too busy to answer)
- 4- (A silly place because full of very silly people)
- 5- (Cinema ticket in order to see the Indian film)
- 6- (Was running hugging a stolen bag)
- 7- (Two Robbins sat on the branch chirping flapping their wings and generally welcoming the dawn)
- 8- (Disguised herself as a maid)
- 9- (Collected his photos in a chocolate tin)
- 10- (She tried to sew the curtains herself but she was sloppy and she lacked patience)
- 11- (Cried bitterly because her husband abused her for neglect)
- 12- (Moving furniture up and down untiringly)
- 13- (He tried to put a little money in the bank each month but since the cost of living was so high he was not always successful)
- 14- (Who was injured in the last explosion)
- 15- (In the kitchen above the shelf)
- 16- (As soon as they saw the train)
- 17- (We saw the layers of earth from different epochs, they were like frozen time)
- 18- (Spicy meat and sweet potatoes)
- 19- (Above the line)
- 20- (Listened and took notes)

Q2/ Decide whether each item below is one sentence(✓)or not one sentence(X)

- 1- (He bought a car it did not cost him a lot)
- 2- (Because he had lost his suitcase he did not leave the airport he checked with the lost baggage claim)
- 3- (She was very unhappy her 21st birthday was postponed because her grandfather was seriously ill)

- 4- (He lost his way home when he was first arrived in London)
- 5- (The prisoner decided to escape he managed breaking the door of the prison which was burning)
- 6- (He caught the biggest fish of all to our astonishment)
- 7- (Sledding down the hill Billy lost his sheep kin hat his friend looked for it every place)
- 8- (It was an excellent plan the criminal did not answer police's questions pretending deafness)
- 9- (They did not see the airplane crash from that big distance)
- 10- (Roses and carnations of all colours filled the front garden it was amazing)
- 11- (The house which they bought was white it was quite old)
- 12- (Ali bought a camera worth \$100 his wife and sister thought it was worth much more)
- 13- (Her grandmother bought scaled cooked the fish she enjoined doing that all by herself)
- 14- (On Tuesday the letters arrived quite on time)
- 15- (The airplane captain made a smooth safe landing the passengers shouted and clapped loudly)
- 16- (It rained all day on the radio they announced roads which were closed)