An Analysis of the Errors Made by Jordanian Second Secondary Students in learning English Verb Tenses

By

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Abstract

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This study aimed at investigating the second secondary students' errors in learning English verb tenses.

The sample of this study consisted of (587) students from public schools and (172) students from private schools. Both male and female students in scientific and literary streams were involved in this study. Students were selected randomly from secondary schools in the city of Irbid for the academic year 1994/1995.

Basically, the study attempted to answer the following questions:

- Are there any significant differences in the occurrence of the eight types of errors (the forms of the verbs in English) in learning English verb tenses taken together due to the stream of the students (scientific and literary)? And Which errors account for the differences (if there were any), between the two streams?

- Are there any significant differences in the occurrences of the eight types of errors in learning English verb tenses taken together due to the sex of the students (male and female)? And
which errors account for the differences (if there were any) between the sexes?

- Are there any significant differences in the occurrences of the eight types of errors in learning English, verb tenses taken together due to the type of the students’ school (public and private). And which errors account for the differences (if there were any) between the two types of schools?

- What are the sources of making such errors?

Analysis of variance was used in analyzing the data of this study, then means for each variable were found in order to answer the aforementioned questions.

The findings of this study were as follows:

1. There were statistically significant differences between public and private students with respect to their errors in using the English verb tenses.

2. There were statistically significant differences between male and female students with respect to their errors in using the English verb tenses.

3. There were statistically significant differences between scientific and literary students with respect to their errors in using the English verb tenses.

The researcher attributed the errors made by the students undertaken in this study to the following reasons: mother tongue interference, overgeneralization, the complexity of the structures of the English verb tenses, a strategy of parallel structure, and ignorance of grammatical rules.