An Analysis Of Syntactic Errors In The Composition
Of Jordanian Secondary Students

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ABSTRACT

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This study aimed at investigating the syntactical errors in compositions written by the secondary cycle students, male and female, urban and rural. These errors were identified, classified, and the frequency of errors in each category was counted.

The sample of this study consisted of 96 students of the academic year 1980-1981, selected from four schools (two boys' and two girls') chosen randomly from all the schools in Irbid district.

The hypotheses of this study were:

1. The higher the grade, the fewer the errors committed by the students with respect to Noun-Phrase and Verb-Phrase.

2. There will be significant differences between urban and rural students with respect to Noun-Phrase and Verb-Phrase errors.

3. There will be significant differences between male and female students with respect to Noun-Phrase and Verb-Phrase errors.

4. There will be significant differences among sex X grade, sex X region, grade X region, and sex X grade X region interactions with respect to Noun-Phrase and Verb-Phrase errors.
A three way analysis of variance was performed and the aforesaid hypotheses for each error type were tested at the 0.1 level of significance.

The results of this study are as follows:

1. There were no significant differences among the three grades with respect to Noun-Phrase and Verb-Phrase errors, except for prepositions, particles and tense, where these errors tend to increase as we proceed through the grade and that was rather questionable.

2. There were significant differences between urban and rural students with respect to: the definite article, prepositions, particles, noun formation, number forms, pronoun forms, copula, and the total of Noun-Phrase and Verb-Phrase errors, where rural students committed more errors than urban students. The other grammatical categories were found to be statistically nonsignificant.

3. There were no significant differences between male and female students with respect to Noun-Phrase and Verb-Phrase errors except for the definite article, sentence structure, noun formation, and third person singular, where male students committed more errors than female students.

4. There were no significant differences among the interactions of the main effects regarding Noun-Phrase and Verb-Phrase errors, except for pronoun forms and copula for grade X sex, auxiliary for sex X region, and word order and Pronoun forms for grade X region.

Attempt was made to ascribe these errors to: mother tongue interference, overgeneralization, performance, ignorance of rules usage, restriction, formation and developmental errors.