

Infinitive and Gerundial Constructions: A Problematic Area for Iraqi University Students

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This study aims at investigating the students' level of performance and some syntactic problems of the use of infinitival and gerundial constructions. Five hypotheses have been formulated in this study. In order to verify these hypotheses and achieve the aims, a diagnostic test has been constructed and administered to the selected sample of sixty two EFL 3rd year students in the college of Arts at Al-Iraqia University during the academic year 2018-2019. The outcomes demonstrate that the students' general performance is poor to a certain extent in using infinitive constructions and very weak in using gerundial constructions in spoken and written forms of English at the recognition and production levels. This means that they have syntactic problems related to applying infinitive and gerundial constructions to express themselves.

Keywords: Infinitive construction: infinitive with 'to', Bare infinitive, Gerundial constructions, Gerund. Present participle

المستدلال

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى دراسة مستوى اداء طلبة الجامعة في بعض المشكلات النحوية في استخدام المصدر المؤول والمصدر الصريح . وضعت خمس فرضيات في هذه الدراسة . من اجل التحقق من هذه الفرضيات وتحقيق الاهداف ، تم انشاء اختبار تشخيصي ونطبيقه على عينة مختارة من اثنين وستين طالب وطالبة من متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في كلية الآداب بالجامعة العراقية/ المرحلة الثالثة خلال العام الدراسي ٢٠١٨-٢٠١٩ . وبعد تفسير النتائج وجد بان الاداء العام للطلاب ضعيف الى حد ما في استخدام في استخدام المصدر المؤول واداء ضعيف في استخدام المصدر الصريح بأشكالها المنطقية والمكتوبة على مستويات الاداء و الادراك . وقد اثبتت الدراسة ان طلاب هذه المرحلة لديهم مشكلات في بناء الجملة تتعلق بتطبيق المصدر المؤول والمصدر الصريح للتعبير عن انفسهم وقد اختتم الباحثان ببعض التوصيات المهمة لتنزيل صعوبات التعلم .

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem and the Significance of the Study

The use of the infinitive and gerundial constructions (sometimes called gerundive) constitute a problem to Iraqi learners at the university level in both speech and writing. The researchers have identified the learners' errors and deficiencies as well in their use. The problem of linguistic and pragmatic knowledge is attributed to partial lack of syntax in general and their incapability to use the infinitive and gerundial constructions in particular. Such a problem leads to committing grammatical mistakes and then to misinterpreting the intended meaning. So, this study investigates Al-Iraqia university student's problems in applying the infinitive and gerundial constructions.

The significance of this research lies in the study of syntax of the infinitive and gerundial constructions expressed by incorrect linguistic utterances. This means the study of the relationships between linguistic forms to overcome the learners' errors and difficulties while using the infinitive and gerundial constructions.

1.2 Aims of the Study

This study aims at:

1. Finding out the student's level of performance in using the infinitival constructions, namely, the infinitive with 'to' .
2. Finding out the student's level of performance in using the infinitival constructions, namely, the bare infinitive without 'to' .
3. Identifying the students' level of performance in using gerundial constructions with certain present participle contextually
4. Finding out the students' level of performance in using the total constructions communicatively.
5. The fifth aim is to find out the statistically significant difference between the difficulties of student's level of performance in using (gerund , Infinitive with to , Infinitive without to)

1.3 Hypotheses

The above stated aims are supposed to be achieved through verifying the following hypotheses:

1. The students cannot use the infinitival constructions with to in a correct manner both on the spoken and written levels.

2. . The students cannot use the infinitival constructions without in a correct manner both on the spoken and written levels.
3. The students cannot use the gerundial constructions in a correct manner both on the spoken and written levels.
4. The students cannot use the gerundial nor the infinitival constructions in a correct manner both on the spoken and written levels.
5. There is no statistically significant difference between the difficulty of a student's level of performance in using (gerund , Infinitive with to , Infinitive without to)

1.4 Value of the Study

It is hoped that this study will be of pedagogical value for both the learners and teachers of English. It attempts to help Iraqi EFL learners improve their English competence by focusing on the confusing area of the infinitive and gerundial constructions.

This study is also expected to draw learners' attention to the problems they face when expressing such utterances in order to understand them, and to know how to select specific act that contains the infinitival construction and gerundial ones.

Furthermore, the current study is believed to be valuable for Iraqi teachers to draw their attention to the important role of the functions of language that are conveyed by the infinitive and gerundial constructions.

Therefore, it is hoped that the researchers in the field of linguistics and pragmatics will get benefit from this study.

1.5 Limits of the Study

This study is limited to:

- 1- Third year students in college of Arts at Al-Iraqia University for the academic year 2018-2019.
- 2-The main grammatical aspects concerning the use of the infinitival and gerundial constructions Procedures.

The procedures adopted in this study are:

1. Constructing a diagnostic test concerning the specific speech acts of the infinitival and gerundial constructions to show how learners can use them properly in the context;
2. Exposing the test to a number of specialized jurors to agree on its content and validity;
3. Administering a pilot study by giving a test to EFL students chosen randomly from a sample to determine the reliability , the difficulty of the items and their discrimination power;
4. Analyzing the collected data statistically by using t-test formula and failure percentage; and
5. Applying the final form of the test on the third year students in the College of Arts at Al-Iraqia University to investigate their performance in using the infinitival and gerundial constructions.

Results are computed and stated along with conclusions and recommendations.

1.6 Definitions of Basic Terms

Infinitival construction: Refers to the verb form that is not inflected. It is identical with the simple present tense except that it does not have the third person singular marker. Infinitives appear in two shapes: non-finite verb form infinitive used with "to", as opposed to an infinitive used without "to" (Leech, 2006: 15).

Infinitive is seen as a form of verb that is not limited by person, number or tense (Stageberg, 2000:225).

Gerundial construction or gerundive or gerund: Gerunds are words that are formed with verbs but act as nouns. The problem here is that the present participle ends with the suffix- ing. The difference between a gerund and a present participle is not easy to get recognized. Instead, they act as modifiers or complete progressive verbs (Aarts et al., 2014:179) (Huddleston & Geoffery,2007:32).

The '- ing' form of a verb has both noun and adjectival or adverbial uses. In either case it may function as a non-finite verb (taking direct objects), or as a pure noun or adjective. It is called a gerund in the noun case when it behaves as a non-finite verb and a present participle in the adjectival or adverbial case. Uses as pure nouns or adjectives may be called deverbal uses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section deals with the theoretical background of infinitive and gerundial constructions and their syntactic functions. It is intended to delineate what the researchers see essential for the Iraqi university

students' understanding upon which this study rests and consequently, to be able to analyze and discuss its findings.

2.1 The Infinitival construction

The syntactic term "infinitive construction or infinitive" refers to the verb form that is not inflected. This is used for "the base form of the verb; the form which is also the primary form used for representing the verb when it is put in a dictionary" (Leech, 2006: 15,55). As far as the "infinitive" is concerned, it is identical with the simple present tense except that it does not have the third person singular marker (Parrott,2000:170).

It functions as a noun of action, but it has much verb force as well. This is presented by the fact that it can take an object and adverb, as well as it possesses a perfect aspect and a passive voice (as a verb). On the other hand, it has the functional quality of a noun since it can stand as a subject, object (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002: 280 ; Rozakis, 2003: 102-104).

The infinitive could be formed from any full verb in the English language. Infinitives appear in two shapes: with marker 'to' such as "elderly people have 'to sleep'",, and without 'to' marker which is called bare infinitive as in "we let her 'sing', etc. In other definition, infinitive is seen as a "form of verb that is not limited by person, number or tense" (Stageberg, 2000:225).

2.2 Types of Infinitival Construction

Depending on the syntactic construction, infinitives are used with or without 'to'.

2.2.1 Infinitive With 'To'

According to Jesperson (2006: 284), the 'to' is often felt as fitting closer to the earlier verb than to the infinitive because of the possibility of using 'to' by itself instead of an uncomfortable repetition of the full infinitive, as in:

- (1) a- Will you study?
b- Yes, I asked you to = asked you to study.

The same could be applied as in:

- c- Yes, we will.

The 'to' of the infinitive is used in short responses to questions and also in short clause endings:

- (2) a- Why did you go fishing
b- I wanted to
- (3) a- She was stunned when she got an "A" on his composition.
b- Yes, she hadn't expected to.

Furthermore, 'be' should be added if the question or statement is in the passive voice, as in:

- (4) a- He seemed to be troubled by someone
b-Yes, he seemed to be.

Quirk et al. (1985: 687), among others, have also obviously stated that "the infinitive marker 'to' may be reckoned as relevant to the spatial preposition 'to' through metaphorical connection". Considering its origin as a preposition, 'to' is seen as a signal of motion.

To clarify this point, it has basically the same meaning as in its prepositional use as a movement toward a specific point (Duffley, 1992 : 16-17).

Just as the noun 'gym' being the destination here, sentence (5) defines the end point of the movement in:

- (5) She is going to the gym.

The infinitive construction 'to play' in (6) indicates the result that appears at the end of the movement as in:

- (6) She is going to play.

However, there is one difference between the two uses, which is owing to the nature of the infinitive. The infinitive construction

denotes the actualization of all that is involved in the verb, ('to' as movement toward the actualization of an event).

This implies that the starting point of the movement signified by 'to' is equivalent to the former point in time with respect to the infinitive's event (ibid:16-20).

It is possible to say that the 'to' is used to express the conception of futurity. Such a notion in turn is considered a goal in the coming time (Duffley, 1992: 17).

The infinitive with 'to' is one of the more complicated aspects in English syntax. The following are the main functions in which this kind of infinitive occurs syntactically:

a. It occurs as a subject before a verb. This function,

however, is not common. Instead, the impersonal pronoun 'it' is used as a subject in an extra position to the real subject-position of the sentence that is the delayed infinitive (Parrott, 2000:173)

(7) To learn is not difficult

(8) To escape is absurd

In the examples (7, 8), the infinitives with 'to' are syntactically the subjects that means "which described as" and the adjective is considered as a modifier of the subject. They follow the syntactic pattern "SVA:

subject + verb + adjective" (Stageberg, 2000 : 198; Quirk et al , 1985 : 167, 311).

Yet it would sound more natural to use 'It' as subject instead, e. g.

(9) It is not difficult to learn.

(10) It is absurd to escape.

The verbs that are usually followed by the infinitive are:

(hope offer fail agree forget manage learn afford arrange ask expect would like decide plan promise want invite)

2.2.2 The Infinitive Without 'To':

Infinitives without 'to' or what it is called 'bare infinitives' are common in English but the scope of utility of the bare infinitives has been gradually restricted so that they are occurring chiefly after:

a. The modal auxiliaries "can, could, , dare, may, might, must, shall need, should, will, would." are helping verbs or the operators that are the first or only the auxiliary in the verb group of the sentence.

(11) Can you take out the garbage?

(12) Could I send the letter for you? (Azar, 2003:190)

b. The primary auxiliaries "do, does, and did" or what are called "the dummy operator" precede infinitives in the negative, interrogative and emphatic expressions. The auxiliary 'do' in these sentences is a dummy operator because it is introduced to perform the functions of an operator in the absence of true operators such as 'can' and 'will' used in: (Quirk et al ,1973: 322)

(13) The students did not answer the first question.

(14) Do you want tea?

(15) He did go to school.

At this point, these types of sentences may convey communicative purposes as the modal auxiliaries may be used. (Greenbaum & Nelson,2009:126-133).

For the former two sections the verb group of 'operator plus the bare infinitive' is a verb group that asserts an action or a state according to Stageberg (2000: 115-118) and comes after the opening noun phrase. It normally occurs in a verb position to be labeled as verbal.

Jespersen (2006) has a different point of view, he says that the bare infinitive may be the object of a verb and this is only found after the auxiliaries "can, may, must, will, shall, do", and a limited number of verbal phrases, namely, 'had better'. Thus, for him it will occupy a nominal not a verbal position.

To make it clear, in classification by function, it means the grammatical job that any group of words does in its specific position 'subject', 'verb', 'object', 'noun complement', etc. On the other hand, in classification by position, it means the part of speech that accompany certain position. For instance, the positions that accept the functions of 'subject', 'n

oun complement', 'object', 'noun complement', 'subject complement', 'indirect object' and 'object complement' are usually occupied by a noun. As a result, any word occupies these positions will be called nominal. In the same way, any word occupies locations typically filled by a verb, adjective, adverb is called a verbal, adjectival, adverbial by positional classification (ibid: 271-272).

c. Infinitives without 'to' come after the verbs of perception and sensation and causation as: "feel, hear, notice, observe, see, smell, watch, help, let, bid, make" (Downing & Locke, 2006:111)

(16) We felt the child move in his bed.

(17) I saw the teacher talk with our monitor.

(18) They watched the car disappear.

In these sentences, notice that the infinitive is preceded by either a noun or an object pronoun. Such nouns or pronouns 'the child', 'the teacher', 'the car' are the subjects of the infinitives which in turn have the syntactic function as the object of the main transitive verbs 'felt', 'saw', 'watched'.

The term 'transitive' comes from the notion that a person who is represented by the subject of the sentence, performs an action that affects other persons or other things. There is a transition of the action from one to the other. Actually, the direct object typically refers to a person or thing that is directly affected by the action described in the sentence. Therefore, the examples (23, 24, 25) follow somehow the sentence pattern:

"SVO: subject + (transitive) verb + (direct) object ". (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2009: 26,151).

d. If two infinitives are joined by 'and', the 'to' of the second infinitive is generally dropped:

(19) -I intend to sit in the garden and write letters.

'But' take the bare infinitive when it follows ' do + anything/ nothing/ everything'

(20)- He does nothing but complain.

2.3 The Syntactic function of the infinitive constructions

The infinitival constructions can take the following syntactic positions:

a. Subject :

(21) To err is human.

b. Subject complement:

(22) His aspiration is to be a pilot.

c. Direct object:

(23) I want to sell my old car.

d. Adjective:

(24) They have the courage to fight.

e. Adverb:

(25) We are eager to work. (see Aarts et al., 2014:215, Quirk et al. 1973 and Quirk et al.,1985)

3.1 Gerundial Constructions

Gerund is a syntactic term which is composed of the base form plus the suffix '-ing'. It can be a word like in "calling ,reading, living, etc. or the principal part of a phrase like "living in England it is sometimes called "gerundial construction" or gerundive.(see, Blevins, 1994 and Siegel, 1998)

In syntax ,the gerund overlaps with the present participle "-ing" form used in progressive tenses.That is why Iraqi students could not distinguish between the gerundial construction and the present participle as a form of nonfinite verbs.

Students might differentiate between the gerunds and present participles in sentences, the first act as nouns, whereas the latter is one of the five forms of verb inflections" -ing" present participle.

Gerunds have a lot of syntactic functions in sentences as illustrated below:

a. Subject :

(26) Seeing is believing.

(27) Being altruist is a feature of a good and gentle man.

B. Direct object :

(28) I like teaching English.

c. Subject complement:

(29) The hardest thing in learning is understanding the gerund.

d. Appositive:

(30) The fact, telling the truth, is unbelievable.

e. A prepositional complement:

(31) I am tired of hearing bad news.

f. Adjectival complement:

(32) My son is busy doing his homework. (See Kollen & Robert, 2012:168-70)

3.2 The Uses of the Gerundial Construction

The gerundial construction are used as a common noun as in (33), adjectives as in (34), nouns or deverbal adjectives as in (35)

(33) Waiting is killing

(34) Swimming pools are safer than swimming in rivers.

(35) This hotel has a swimming pool in its backyard.

3.3 The gerundial constructions are used after certain expressions .

The following expressions illustrate such cases

a. It's no use + -ing:

(36) We cannot persuade her. It's no use worrying about.

b. It's no good + -ing:

(37) It is no good doing such risky movements.

c. It's worth + -ing:

(38) I told you to write this point. it's worth nothing.

d. It's not worth +- ing:

(39) We live a few minutes from here. it's not worth taking a bus.

e. Have difficulty + -ing:

(40) Do you have any difficulty getting a visa for Britain.

f. Have trouble + -ing:

(41) She always has no trouble having a place to stay.

g. Be busy + -ing:

(42) Our kids were busy building sandy castle .

h. Spend time + -ing:

(43) He spent a lot of time repairing the house .

i. Waste time + -ing:

(44) My wife wasted long time chatting with her neighbor.

J. Can't help /can't stand + -ing: (45)We can't stand waiting for a queue for a long time.

The gerundial constructions are also used after certain phrasal verbs including preposition "to" e.g.:

(46) We are looking forward to hearing from you soon.

(47) She was used to getting up early.

(48) They didn't actually take to reading English.

(49) When shall we get around to watering the garden.

The syntactic distinction between the gerundial constructions and the present participles

The most problematic area in syntax is the 'ing' form for its multiplicity in use. Let's consider the following examples:

(50) Seeing is believing.

In this sentence, 'seeing' and 'believing' which are traditionally termed gerundial constructions are syntactically dependent, non-finite nominal -ing clauses acting as nouns. The first functions the 'subject' of the main verb 'is,' whereas the second the subject complement. 'Believing' in the clause 'SVC' is confusing to the Iraqi students. The confusion is most likely to arise when the inflectional suffix '-ing' follows a verb. In such a case, for them, it sounds like a present participle since it is preceded by the verb to 'be'. Yet, it is, in fact, a gerund in the position of a subject complement . (Eastwood, 2013)

Sentence (51) shows two gerundial forms of '-ing'. The first gerund is 'reading comprehension' and the second 'learning foreign languages'. both take objects.

(51) Reading comprehension is one of the basic skills of learning foreign languages.

(52) Trying to get over the fence, she broke her arm.

Here trying is a present participle; the verb phrase trying to get over the fence has the function of an adverb in the main clause.

Confusion is most likely to arise when the -ing word follows a verb, in which case it may be a predicative adjective and hence a participle, or a direct object or predicative nominative. Gerunds and present participles are two different kinds of non-finite verbs; the syntactic difference lies in that gerunds can act as a noun phrases and participles functioning as an adjectival or adverbial phrases. Consider the following examples:

(53) Our children usually like eating chocolates.

The gerund 'eating' with the word 'chocolates' or what is called the verb phrase serves as a noun phrase functioning the object of the main verb like. The pattern of this sentence is represented in SVO.

(54) I saw the children eating chocolates.

In this sentence 'eating' is a present participle of the verb phrase 'eating chocolates' which functions as an adjectival phrase modifying the object 'the children'. This dependent, non-finite ing-clause is the outcome of deleting the wh-relative word with its auxiliary verb 'who are'. Hence, the pattern which represents SVOC is totally different from the above- mentioned example.

The common verbs followed by an -ing object are:

(admit, avoid, begin, dislike, enjoy, finish, like, hate, start, suggest)

Adjectives used in front of a noun are:

boring surprising exciting terrifying
shocking annoying amusing disappointing

an interesting story yesterday.

an exciting **4.1 Population and** match on Sunday.

action

The total population of the study consists of 62 third year university students of Department of English/ college of Arts/ Al-Iraqia University for the academic year 2018-2019. They are selected randomly to present the sample of this study.

4.2 Construction and Description of Diagnostic test

Test construction refers to the process of producing a test. It includes planning for the test preparing its items and instructions putting them together and reproducing the test. The test includes objective questions (see Appendix 1) It consists of 30 items. The whole mark given to the test is 30 distributed among the questions.

4.2 Validity of the Test

One of the qualities to be considered when selecting or constructing a research instrument is validity. Validity is a reflection of how well an instrument measures what is designed to measure ((Isaac & Michanel, 1977:82;and Madeson, 1983:178)

The test has been exposed to a jury of specialists in the field of linguistics and methods of teaching English to ensure its face validity.

Percentage formula has been used to measure the agreement of the specialists to the test items. The jurors agree on the test and the scoring scheme as being appropriate for measuring the performance of students.

4.3 Pilot Study

The pilot administration of the diagnostic text has been carried out on the 7th of February, 2019 and after ensuring its validity .a sample of twenty five EFL third year students in the College of Arts has been chosen randomly from the population if this study. This administration has been conducted in order to check the clarity of the instructions, compute the test reliability, estimate the time allotted for responding to the test items and determine the effectiveness of the test items in their difficulty level and discrimination power in the light of the testers' responses

Consequently, no serious ambiguity is found concerning the test items. Concerning the time allotted for answering the test, it has been found that EFL college students need less than 45 minutes to answer the test

4.4 Item analysis

Item analysis is the process of evaluating the test items in respect to certain characteristics. It usually involves determining the difficulty level and the discrimination power.

Item Difficulty

Item difficulty measures the level of difficulty of an item. The satisfactory method is simply to ascertain the percent of the sample who answers each item correctly.

It has been found out that the difficulty level ranges between (0.29 - 0.53), as shown in Table (1) . Bloom et al. (1956) state that “a good spread of results can be obtained if their average difficulty of item is from 20-80 percent.

TABLE 1

Item No.	Group	Incorrect	Correct	difficulty	Item No.	Group	Incorrect	correct	difficulty
1	Upper	11	20	0.45	16	Upper	9	22	0.50

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	lower	23	8			lower	22	9	
2	Upper	12	19	0.44	17	Upper	15	16	0.32
	lower	23	8			lower	27	4	
3	Upper	9	22	0.52	18	Upper	13	18	0.40
	lower	21	10			lower	24	7	
4	Upper	12	19	0.45	19	Upper	16	15	0.32
	lower	22	9			lower	26	5	
5	Upper	13	18	0.42	20	Upper	9	22	0.53
	lower	23	8			lower	20	11	
6	Upper	13	18	0.40	21	Upper	13	18	0.42
	lower	24	7			lower	23	8	
7	Upper	11	20	0.40	22	Upper	17	14	0.29
	lower	26	5			lower	27	4	
8	Upper	12	19	0.42	23	Upper	14	17	0.32
	lower	24	7			lower	28	3	
9	Upper	9	22	0.47	24	Upper	15	16	0.31
	lower	24	7			lower	28	3	
10	Upper	12	19	0.42	25	Upper	12	19	0.42
	lower	24	7			lower	24	7	
11	Upper	12	19	0.45	26	Upper	16	15	0.29
	lower	22	9			lower	28	3	
12	Upper	10	21	0.50	27	Upper	13	18	0.37
	lower	21	10			lower	26	5	
13	Upper	16	15	0.31	28	Upper	13	18	0.34
	lower	27	4			lower	28	3	
14	Upper	16	15	0.31	29	Upper	15	16	0.31
	lower	26	4			lower	28	3	
15	Upper	16	15	0.31	30	Upper	14	17	0.35

4.5 Item discrimination power / pretest

4.5.1 Item discrimination

It is also called discriminating index (D.I) the discriminating power can be defined as "measuring the extent to which the results of an individual item correlate with the results of the whole test" (Alderson ,1995:80). After scoring the papers, they have been arranged from the high to the low scores , separating the two subgroups of the test papers into an upper group and a lower group, each consisting of 50 percent of the total group .

It is found out that the discriminating power ranges between (0.32 – 0.48). Ebel (1972:399) signifies that good classroom test items have indicated a discriminating power of 0.30 or more. But when the item has a negative discrimination or less than 0.30, this indicates that there is something wrong with such an item and it should be discarded or modified. This is obviously shown in Table (2) below:

TABLE 2

Item No.	Group	Incorrect	Correct	Discrimination	Item No.	Group	Incorrect	Correct	Discrimination
1	Upper	11	20	0.39	16	Upper	9	22	0.42
	Lower	23	8			lower	22	9	
2	Upper	12	19	0.35	17	Upper	15	16	0.39
	Lower	23	8			lower	27	4	
3	Upper	9	22	0.39	18	Upper	13	18	0.35
	Lower	21	10			lower	24	7	
4	Upper	12	19	0.32	19	Upper	16	15	0.32
	Lower	22	9			lower	26	5	
5	Upper	13	18	0.32	20	Upper	9	22	0.35

Infinitive and Gerundial Constructions:.....

	Lower	23	8			lower	20	11	
6	Upper	13	18	0.35	21	Upper	13	18	0.32
	Lower	24	7			lower	23	8	
7	Upper	11	20	0.48	22	Upper	17	14	0.32
	lower	26	5			lower	27	4	
8	Upper	12	19	0.39	23	Upper	14	17	0.45
	lower	24	7			lower	28	3	
9	Upper	9	22	0.48	24	Upper	15	16	0.42
	lower	24	7			lower	28	3	
10	Upper	12	19	0.39	25	Upper	12	19	0.39
	lower	24	7			lower	24	7	
11	Upper	12	19	0.32	26	Upper	16	15	0.39
	lower	22	9			lower	28	3	
12	Upper	10	21	0.35	27	Upper	13	18	0.42
	lower	21	10			lower	26	5	
13	Upper	16	15	0.35	28	Upper	13	18	0.48
	lower	27	4			lower	28	3	
14	Upper	16	15	0.35	29	Upper	15	16	0.42
	lower	26	4			lower	28	3	
15	Upper	16	15	0.35	30	Upper	14	17	0.39
	lower	27	4			lower	26	5	

4.5.2 Reliability

Reliability is "the stability of test scores- A test cannot measure anything well unless it measures consistently". McNammar, (2000:48) views reliability as the " consistency of measurement of individuals by a test". Furthermore, reliability is defined as " The degree to which a test produces similar conditions". Reliability, as believed can be " enhanced by making the test instructions absolutely clear, restricting the scope for variety in the answers, and making sure the test conditions remain constant ".

The reliability coefficient of the student's performance test has been found out to be(0.76). It has been computed by using the kuder – Richardson Formula. This result is acceptable according to Mehrens and Lehmann(1984).

4.6 The Results

1.The first aim is to find out the student's level of performance in using Infinitive + to construction communicatively , therefore, a test has been administrated to the whole subjects computing their mean scores compared with their theoretical mean by using the one sample t.test formula . The following formula has been used to compute the theoretical mean:

$$\text{Highest score} + \text{lowest score} / 2$$

The student's mean score of student's in using Infinitive + to construction communicatively is (3.581) with a Standard deviation (1.685) while the theoretical mean of performance is (3.5) ,though the difference of the two means by using One sample t.test , the result shows there is no statistically significant difference because the computed t.value is (0.377) which is smaller than the Tabulated t.value (2.000) when the level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom (61). These results show that the mean of the sample is equal with the theoretical mean.

TABLE 3

One sample t. test of the performance in using Infinitive + to construction communicatively

Variable	No	Mean	Standard deviation	theoretical mean	t . test	
					Computed	Tabulated
Infinitive + to	62	3.581	1.685	3.5	0.377	2.000

2.The second aim is to find out the student's level of performance in using Infinitive without to construction communicatively , Therefore, a test has been administrated to the whole subjects

computing their mean scores compared with their theoretical mean by using the one sample t. test formula , The following formula has been used to compute the theoretical mean :
 Highest score + lowest score / 2

The mean score of student's in using the infinitive without to construction communicatively is (1.000) with a Standard deviation (0.958) while the theoretical mean of performance is (2.0) , Though the difference of the two means by using One sample t. test , the result shows there is statistically significant difference because the computed t. value is (- 8.218) which is bigger than the Tabulated t. value (2.000) when the level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom (61). This results show that the mean of the sample is below the theoretical mean.

TABLE 4

One sample t. test of the performance in using Infinitive Infinitive without to construction communicatively

ria	N	de	tic	t . tes
e v	62	0.9	2.8	2.00

3.The third aim is to find out the student's level of performance in using gerund construction communicatively, Therefore a test has been administrated to the whole subjects computing their mean scores compared with their theoretical mean by using the one sample t. test formula , The following formula has been used to compute the theoretical mean

Highest score + lowest score / 2

The mean score of student's in using gerund construction communicatively is (6.081) with an Standard deviation (4.252) while the theoretical mean of performance (9.5) , Though the difference of the two means by using One sample t. test , the result shows there is statistically significant difference because the computed t. value is (- 6.333) which is bigger than the Tabulated t. value (2.000) when the level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom (61). this results show that the mean of the sample is below the theoretical mean.

TABLE 5

One sample t. test of the performance in using gerund construction communicatively

ria	N	de	tic	t . test
run	62	0.8	2.5	9.5

4.The fourth aim is to find out the student's level of performance in using total construction communicatively , Therefore a test has been administrated to the whole subjects computing their mean scores compared with their theoretical mean by using the one sample t. test formula , The following formula has been used to compute the theoretical mean :

Highest score + lowest score / 2

The mean score of student's in using the Total construction communicatively is (10.661) with an Standard deviation (5.631) while the theoretical mean of performance (15.0) , Though the difference of the two means by using One sample t. test , the result shows there is statistically significant difference because the computed t. value is (- 6.067) which is bigger than the Tabulated t. value (2.000) when the level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom (61) this results show that the mean of the sample is below the theoretical mean.

TABLE 6

One sample t. test of the performance in using Total construction communicatively

ria	N	de	tic	t . test
run	62	0.6	3.0	15.0

0	2	6	6	3	5	0	0	0
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5. The fifth aim is to find out the statistically significant difference between the difficulty of student's level of performance in using (gerund , Infinitive with to , Infinitive without to) according to the number of students who passed the test successfully , who have gained a score equal or above the theoretical mean , and the number of students who failed to pass the test successfully who have gained a score below the theoretical mean.

-gerund : The number of items is (19) with a theoretical mean of (9.5).

- Infinitive with to : The number of items is (7) with a theoretical mean of (3.5).

- Infinitive without to : The number of items is (4) with a theoretical mean of (2).

the researcher used chi – square (two Independent samples) , since the computed chi – square value is (16.956) which is found out to be bigger than the tabulated chi – square which is (5.990) when the level of significance is (0.05) and degree of freedom is (2).

TABLE 7

Chi-square test result between of student's level of performance in using (gerund , Infinitive with to, Infinitive without to)

lev	gerund			infinitive with to			infinitive without to		
	we wihi - squa		mpula		lly		lly		lly
	Fre	%re	Fre	%re	mpula	lly	lly	lly	lly
cc	12	9.	0	0.0	4	6.5	6	5.99	6.99
ail	50	30.	62	00	58	93.	58	93.	58

The results show that the higher the level of difficulty is in the (infinitive with to) because there are no students who have gained a score equal or above the theoretical mean with a percentage of (0.0) . In the second level the students have gained above the theoretical mean with a percentage of (6.5) in the (Infinitive without to) . The lower level of difficulty is in the (gerund) because the students have gained above the theoretical mean with a percentage of (19.4). and the figure (1) shows that.

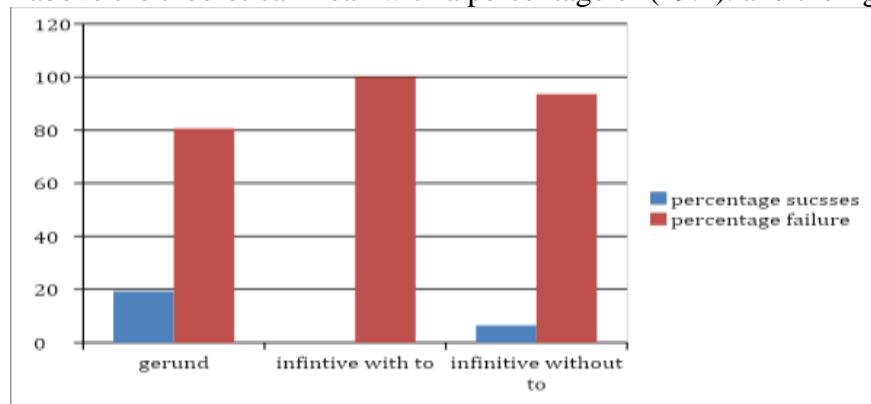


FIGURE 1.

The difference between the difficulty of student's level of performance in using (gerund , Infinitive with to, Infinitive without to)

5. CONCLUSIONS

The researchers have come to some significant conclusions. These conclusions are drawn from the content analysis conducted in section three.

1. The use of the infinitival and gerundial constructions represents a difficult area for EFL learners in general and students of Al- Iraqia University in particular to deal with for being remarkably overlapped within themselves. Although the students use the same linguistic form that are used by the native speakers as examined in the data but the failure has been with the linguistic items within such forms. For example, the bare infinitive (would + bare infinitive) is used after the modals while the full infinitive used after (would like + to infinitive).

2. The infinitival and gerundial constructions are dependent non-finite clauses. They can occasionally be used interchangeably with temporal difference in expressing futurity.

3. The infinitival and gerundial constructions have a lot of nominal, adjectival and adverbial functions. Their syntactic functions depends upon their position and their occurrence in the sentence.

4. The construction of a 'to infinitive' clause cannot be used in the possessive phrase ,whereas the nominal gerund is used. Moreover, the to-infinitive and '-ing' forms clause function as the complement of the main verb in the sentence.

5. Infinitival and gerundial constructions are problematic to the students of Al- Iraqia university. This was statistically validated by the low percentage of success (19.4 %) achieved by the subjects of the test. This result strongly supports the claim that such verbs are problematic. This also reflects that EFLs of this university have not mastered the infinitival and gerundial constructions.

6. Both forms of infinitival and gerundial constructions can occasionally be used and there is no change in meaning, whereas other forms can sometimes be used and there is a change in meaning. So the EFL students are unaware of how to make a distinction between the types of the infinitival and gerundial constructions

7. The difficulties, EFL students of third year at Al-Iraqia university encounter in using language in social occasions, have great effects on their use of language on the participants. This is reflected in that they are not efficient in using the '-ing' forms.

6. Recommendations

Based on the conclusions obtained in this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The EFL university instructors ought to pay more attention to the significance and the differences between the Infinitival and gerundial constructions.
 2. The EFL university instructors ought to teach their students how to recognize the differences between the Infinitival and gerundial constructions in contexts.
 3. The EFL university instructors might attempt to encourage the students to practice the correct uses of the 'to-infinitive' and the infinitive without 'to' constructions with their idiomatic expressions.
 4. The EFL university instructors might focus on the differences between '-ing' forms as a gerund and the present participle and their idiomatic expressions.
 5. Syntactic rules related to infinitival and gerundial constructions should be given attention while using language in different situations to refresh learners' memory and thus developing their communicative and performative competence.

Appendix (1)

The version of the diagnostic test given to the Students

Study the following situations and fill in the blanks with the correct forms:

1. They used ----- the truth.
a. tell b. telling c. to tell d. told

2. She was used ----- cars.
a. drive b. driving c. to drive d. drove

3. Her wish ----- a pilot.
a. be b. being c. is to be d. is being

4. Your flat needs----- and there are no painters. You say to your partner "Let's
a. to be painting b. painting c. to be painted d. painted

5. Would you mind -----for me?
a. wait b. waiting c. to wait d. waits

6. Ahmad's TV has been broken. You want-----him another one.
a. to bring b. bringing c. bring d. be bringing

7. Your brother has arrived to England where you are living. He has stayed at a hotel. You say,
"Could you kindly-----at my home".
a. stay b. staying c. to stay d. stayed

We are accustomed to -----up early.
b. to get b. getting c. get d. gotten

8. Boys enjoy ----- outdoors.
a. Play b. playing c. played d. to play

9. I'd like -----tea after lunch.
a. Have b. having c. to have d. had

10. I like -----a new language every year.
a. Learn b. learning c. to learn d. learnt
11. We are glad ----- you.
a. Help b. helping c. to help d. helpt
12. He is tired of -----treated like a child
a. be b. being c. to be d. been
13. she is looking forward ----- you.
a. hear b. hearing c. to hearing d. heard
14. They tried to avoid -----the teacher's test.
a. answer b. answering c. to answer d. answered
15. The fence is too high -----.
a. Jump b. jumping c. to jump d. jumped
16. We can't imagine ----on his innocence.
a. Insist b. insisting c. to insist d. insisted
17. I am surprised at your -----such a thing.
a. Say b. saying c. to say d. said
18. I suggest ----- a picnic next weekend.
a. Have b. having c. to have d. had
19. He encouraged us -----him again.
a. Visit b. visiting c. to visit d. be visiting
20. This ----- is too faint to read.
a. Write b. writing c. to write d. be writing
21. Let the girl -----.
a. Speak b. speaking c. to speak d. speaks
22. His hobby , -----stamps enjoyed me.
a. Collect b. collecting c. to collect d. collect
23. All I did was ----- off the gas.
a. turn b. turning c. turned d. be turning
24. She heard him-----at the teacher.
a. Laugh b. laughing c. to laugh d. laughs
25. He'd better -----now or he'll be late.
a. go b. going c. went d. to go
26. She said she was innocent .She denied -----anything.
a. do b. doing c. to do d. done
27. I fancy -----hot chocolate.
a. have b. having c. had d. to have
28. He pretended -----the paper.
a. read b. to be read c. to be reading d. to
29. She cannot help -----chocolate.
a. eat b. to be eaten c. eating d. ate