

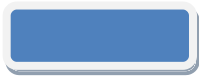
An Analysis of Errors Committed by Iraqi EFL Teachers for the Intermediate Stage in Public Schools in Al-Najaf, in Recognizing and Producing - ING Forms

Assistant Lecture

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Abstract

The first requirement of using any foreign language is to be informed with the fundamentals of that language. Grammar is one of these fundamentals that every foreign language learner or user should be guided by its rules in order to be skillful in using this language. This research is mainly attempted to draw attention to the different kinds of -ing forms (verbs, adjectives and nouns) due to the fact that each form represent a significant part of English Grammar classification that the whole language is based on; on the one hand, and as a problematic area for English foreign users on the other hand. The -ing form is remarkable in many ways according

to its various grammatical functions so that its varying functions can be confusing and complicated to be distinguished. The current study aims at (1) Introducing a material about idiosyncrasies of types of -ing forms which are valuable for English users to recognize those types; (2) Exploring the ability of Iraqi English Foreign Language (for short, EFL) teachers to utilize correct -ing forms at the recognition and production levels and (3) Investigating the types and reasons of errors which Iraqi EFL teachers commit in the use of -ing forms. To achieve the aims stated above, three hypotheses are set: first, the -ing forms are to some extent difficult to be identified by Iraqi EFL teachers in both levels:

recognition and production. Second, both males and females have the same ability in distinguishing each type of -ing forms. Third, it is assumed that most Iraqi EFL teachers can recognize and use the -ing form as verbs rather than nouns and adjectives. The correctness of the mentioned hypotheses have been approved through adopting a diagnostic test of two questions which has been applied to a sample of 30 Iraqi EFL teachers for intermediate stages in Al- Najaf Al-Ashraf public schools.

Keywords: -ing form, progressive aspect, present participle, gerund, errors

reasons, errors analysis

1. Introduction

Using English as a foreign language is somehow a complex process, since the non-native language users, as far as Iraqi EFL teachers are concerned, are required to cover all the aspects of the language such as various grammatical subjects, structures and the culture of that foreign language. The -ing form is considered as an important grammatical subject which may cause certain conceptual grammatical difficulties for English foreign users through recognizing its functions. Moreover, many factors and difficulties play their part in leaving effects on language using

which lead to commit a number of errors such as interlingual errors (errors are caused due to the influence of the native language), intralingual errors (errors are caused by linguistic differences between the native and foreign language) involving: overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, false concepts hypothesis, incomplete application of rules.

In addition to the explanatory purpose, a diagnostic test of two questions is designed. The first question is intended to measure the Iraqi EFL teachers' performance at the recognition level in which they are given complete sentences and they have to identify whether the highlighted words are verbs, adjectives or nouns . The second question is made to measure the teachers' performance at the production level by giving a number of -ing forms and they have to use them in complete sentences. The test has been given to a sample of 30 Iraqi EFL teachers in Al- Najaf public schools who teach students of intermediate stages, during the academic year 2019-2020. Then, the teachers' responses have been gathered and analyzed to draw the findings of this study. Finally, error analysis is performed by the researcher to obtain information on common difficulties faced by Iraqi EFL teachers in language using in

general and -ing forms in particular, on one hand, and to explore how a language is acquired and what strategies influence the participants uses, on the other hand.

2. Literature Review

2.1. -ing Form

The -ing form as an important grammatical subject is used extensively in English and it causes certain conceptual grammatical difficulties for English foreign users since sometimes the same form works differently in different situations. As a matter of fact, -ing forms can occur in a verbal, adjectival and nominal positions, i.e. they can do three different functions. First, the -ing suffix can be attached to a verbal base making a verbal function. Second, when the -ing morpheme can be affixed to a verbal base, a new word is formed that is functionally identical to an adjective. Third, the -ing suffix enables certain verbs that cannot be altered into a noun bringing nominal function. Generally speaking, it is widely accepted that -ing addition to a base verb can represent three distributions that are parallel to that of verbal function (the progressive aspect), adjectival function (present

participle) and nominal function (gerund) (Kamayana 79-80)¹.

2.2. Verbal Function (The Progressive Aspect)

According to Quirk (188-189), English tenses generally are classified into two forms; simple and progressive. The progressive forms are also known as continuous. The progressive forms always form out of the auxiliary verb (to be), followed by the present participle. Moreover, there are also two aspects to be distinguished in English language; progressive and perfective. The term 'aspect', as a grammatical category, refers to the way in which the verb action is performed with respect to time. Concerning the main difference between progressive and perfective aspects, they determine whether a specific action is already complete or not. To clarify the idea, the progressive aspect, in contrast to the perfective aspect, refers to the action which is still in progress and it is not finished yet. Thus, it is called "durative or continuous aspect". However, these two aspects can occur simultaneously in one verb phrase.

1. I read a book that evening.
2. I was reading a book that

¹ The researcher has followed the MLA style (2017) in in-text documentation and in references.

evening.

3. I have been reading.

The example (1) refers to the action which is already complete. This indicates that the reader already knows what the book is about since all its pages are read. However, the sentence (2) shows that the action of reading the book is still incomplete. It means that the reader did not read the whole book and there are still some pages left. Nevertheless the reader has already a general idea of this book. In sentence (3), the example shows the progressive and perfective aspects are used simultaneously (Ibid 197).

2.2.1. Verbs in Relation to Progressive Forms

There are a large number of verbs in English while not all of them can occur with the progressive aspect. On the one hand, there is a relationship between the meaning of the verbs that affect their using in the progressive form. On the other hand, there are also verbs which can be used in both simple and progressive forms. These verbs are consequently divided into specific categories, stative and dynamic. This classification can help a speaker to decide whether to use the progressive form or not (Corcikova 5).

Concerning '*stative verbs*', they are rarely used in the progressive forms because of their relation with some

unchangeable state, condition or situation. it does not mean that stative verbs cannot exist in progress but these verbs express an action which is in progress by using simple forms. Such category involves the verbs that characterize states as emotion, cognition, perception and so on. Examples of verbs represent these states are: love, hate, think, feel, remember, understand, want, need, exist and so many other verbs (Quirk 198-199). The second group of verbs are '*dynamic verbs*' that refer to the verbs are usually related with a changing situation or states and thus these verbs portray activities, events or processes. Such verbs are basically utilized in progressive forms. In addition to this group of verbs also more verbs are included that describe activities realized by inanimate forces and verbs that express an activity with a specific goal. Furthermore, verbs describing events or actions which are in progress for a short period of time also belong to this category. Certain examples of this group of verbs are: look, play, work, live, sing, come, cook, run, walk, fly, go, say and so on (Ibid 207-209).

2.2.2. Progressive Tenses (Form and Use)

There are six cases in which the progressive verb is used:

First, the past progressive tense is structured of an auxiliary verb 'to be'

of the past tense and the -ing form of the verb. The past progressive is used for describing the action that occurs in progress for a period of time in the past. Furthermore, when two or more actions were in progress at the same time in the past then it is necessary to use the past progressive tense. This parallelism is emphasized by using 'while' or 'at that time'. If there is an action that took place in progress and it was interrupted by another one, the past progressive tense also is used. The words 'when, as, just, while' in the sentence indicate that the action occurred in the past. The speaker can use this tense to inform the listeners about his/her plan in the past which was however usually not implemented by using the phrase 'was/were going' (Thomson & Martinet 163).

Moreover, the past progressive is used typical for actions or events whose time of realization is known. The past progressive is further used in story-telling since it makes the narration more realistic and provides the speaker a good way how to gain attention of listeners. The past progressive tense is required when something took place often or too many times in the past. The words 'always' or 'constantly' are used for these expressions. Additionally, it is appropriate to use the past progressive tense for making a polite request or suggestion that is linked

with verbs like 'wonder' or 'think'. Finally, when a speaker intends to interpret somebody else's idea in the past, the past progressive tense is used (see examples 12(a) and 12(b)). The following examples demonstrate the use of the past progressive:

4. John was writing a letter yesterday evening.
5. While I was cooking the lunch, my sister was cleaning our house.
6. When I was taking a shower, someone knocked on the door.
7. David was going to go out, but he got ill.
8. She was dancing at 6 p.m. yesterday.
9. It was getting darker. The wind was rising.
10. Peter was always losing his pens.
11. I was wondering if you could advise me.
- 12.(a) My mother said: "It is raining".
- 12.(b) My mother said that it was raining. (Thomson & Martinet 163-164)

Second, the past perfect progressive tense is formed with the construction 'had+ been' and the -ing form of the verb. The past perfect progressive focuses on the progress and the duration of an action in the distant past. This tense is utilized for events that occurred in the distant past and finished before

happening of something else in the past. Accordingly, one sentence is used in the past perfect progressive tense, another one in the past simple tense. Furthermore, when a speaker aims to express that an event took place in the past regularly, the past perfect progressive tense should be used. To describe actions in the distant past with results from the past this tense also should be utilized by the speaker. Additionally, the results are still obvious at the time of speaking. The given examples clarify the past perfect progressive tense and its use:

13. She had been sleeping for an hour when a dog suddenly started to bark.

14. John has been trying to solve the problem.

15. Her hands were dirty. She had been working in the garden. (Ibid 179)

Third, the present progressive tense which comprises of the auxiliary verb 'to be' of the present tense and the -ing form verb. The most frequent function of the present progressive tense is to describe an event that is in progress at the moment of speaking. However, the present progressive tense is utilized to talk about some temporary actions which are in progress for longer period of time whereas not necessarily at the moment of speaking. Furthermore, this tense is

also used for repeated actions which can irritate a speaker. The speaker can use the present progressive for planned actions in the future. As in the following examples:

16. What is she doing right now?
She is sunbathing.

17. We are using bottled water until the pipeline is repaired.

18. Everyone is making jokes about it. He is always snoring.

19. We are flying to Egypt next summer. (Thomson & Martinet 154-155)

Fourth, the present perfect progressive is the tense which consists of the construction 'has/have + been' and the -ing form of the verb. This tense is utilized to describe actions started in the past with consequences in the present. There are verbs such as 'learn, lie, live, rain, sit, sleep, stand, study, wait, work' which are usually connected with the continuity of actions. However, these verbs can be used in both simple and progressive forms of this tense. This tense is typically connected the prepositions 'for' and 'since' since such prepositions closely determine the time when an action happened. The present perfect progressive is also used for repeated actions. Look the following examples:

20. My friend has been studying in London since 2011.

21. He has been swimming professionally for 10 years.

22. She has been asking me almost every day.

23. She has been studying all night long. (Alexander 177)

Fifth, the future progressive tense which is formed of the construction 'will' and the auxiliary verb 'to be' at the present tense and the -ing form of the verb. This tense is used to describe planned actions in the future in general and 'travel planning' in particular. Moreover, the future progressive tense is utilized to show what will happen in the future whereas this action is usually unintentional. Another use of the future progressive tense is for polite requests.

24. This time tomorrow I will be working on my essay.

25. He will be washing the dishes tomorrow.

26. Will you be using your textbook? I wondered if I could borrow it. (Ibid 180)

Six, The future perfect progressive tense is constructed from the construction 'will+has/have + been' and the -ing form of the verb. This tense is utilized for describing events which will be in progress in the future and they will be still continuing in the future (Thomson & Martinet 194). Examples:

27. 'By this time next week, I will have been working for this company for 24 years.'

28. She will have been living in Pilsen for 20 years this month. (Alexander 181)

2.3. Adjectival Function (Present Participle)

The present participle is observed as a non-finite construction which means that it cannot represent the grammatical tense of the sentence in which it is used. This construction is formed by adding the -ing morpheme to the verbal base performing the adjectival function. Moreover, the present participle is substantial for constructing all the progressive tenses and it can be either active or passive voice. The present participle as adjective has two specific functions: attributive and predicate. As with the attributive function, the -ing form modifies a noun in a noun phrase (NP, for short) construction. Thus, this function is dealt with on the level of phrase instead of a clause. Notice:

29.a. the inspiring teacher

29.b. The teacher who is inspiring.

In the example mentioned above, the word *inspiring* in (29 a) modifies the noun *teacher* ,i.e. the NP can be paraphrased as in (29 b). A caution must be taken into consideration that paraphrasing the NP in the sequence 'Be + V-ing' within the NP does not represent progressive aspect. This

case is obvious by using the verb in predicate position, for instance, "*the teacher is inspiring*". However, that is not always the case (Kamayana 82-83).

Moreover, using the present participle, as a modifier, refers to some typical feature of a word which is intimately described by this thus it represents an attributive participle. The attributive participle can be replaced by a depending relative clause however such possibility is not often utilized since the shorter form is preferred. It is usually used in front of the modified verb but it occurs in the postposition too. The attributive participle cannot occur in the past form.

30.a. the sleeping child

30.b. The child who is sleeping.

In the example (30 a), the word *sleeping* occurs in an attributive position which is paraphrased in (30 b). However, unlike the former example, the sequence 'Be + V- ing in *the child who is sleeping* certainly shows the progressive aspect which indicates that the act of sleeping is in progress. This can be made obvious by using the same verb in predicate position "*the child is sleeping*" in which the sleeping is mainly being used as verbal, not adjectival. Consequently, the verb *sleeping* performs adjectival function when used pronominally, otherwise, it has

verbal function (i.e. when it is paraphrased)(Kamayana 83).

Besides the progressive case, some participles seem to become syntactically reanalyzed and established themselves as true adjectives. This case is marked by the use of modifiers such as adverbs including very, utterly, more and most (followed by than), not as ... as and etc. Other participants can occur in between verbs and adjectives. Grammatically, it is possible to say: the very inspiring teacher, the most inspiring teacher and the more inspiring teacher. But, it is not correct to say: the very sleeping child, the most sleeping child and the more sleeping child. As a result, such grammatical distinction may become a reasonable basis to consider some -ing forms whose distributions are parallel to that of adjectives are more adjectival than the others (Ibid).

2.4. Nominal Function (Gerund)

Nominal usage is generally identified as gerund. Gerund is classified into two sorts: verbal gerund and nominal gerund. The difference between the two is in the degree of verbal force they carry: verbal gerund is more verbal than the nominal one since it processes more verbal characteristics. Basically, gerund is derived from a verb by morphological process thus it is very often as a verbal noun.

Hence, it does not really mean a gerund which is originated from a verb. Actually, it points out to a verb come from a noun although the appropriate definition would be a gerund which present more verbal qualities. Furthermore, the term nominal gerund proposes a double naming of the same thing as both essentially indicate a noun. Accordingly, nominal gerunds have less verbal features than verbal gerunds although they absolutely are still more verbal than the common nouns (Kamayana 83).

Gerund similar to the present participles is one of non-finite constructions which is formed by adding the suffix -ing to the infinitive form of a verb thus non-native speakers face difficulties in recognizing gerund or present participle within a sentence. Although both of them are mainly used to express action or a state of being but their function within the sentence differs. The distinction between the gerund and the present participle is that, on one hand, the gerund is a verb with substantial value, i.e. a verb form with a noun-like role in the sentence holding the characteristics of both verbs and nouns. On the other hand, the present participle is considered as a verb with adjectival value. The former can follow prepositions,

possessive articles or possessive noun phrases but not the latter. Gerunds can construct a plural or a genitive form (mainly before *sake*). Furthermore, gerunds, like nouns, can take adjectives and being like verbs, they can take adverbs as they are shown in the following examples:

- 31. his comings and goings
- 32. reading for reading's sake
- 33. Brisk walking is recommended for younger people.
- 34. Walking slowly is recommended for older people. (Jespersen 261)

For Duskuva 2006, gerund takes place in function of subject. It is employed rather than an infinitive whereas unlike an infinitive it expresses general validity. In such case, gerund can be replaced by a depending clause with 'that'. It can also be used as a part of verbal or adjectival phrase as well. In this occurrence, an agent of action is either expressed or not. When the agent of action is not expressed in the sentence, it is usually exchanged by Saxon genitive or object. However, using Saxon genitive is not admitted with the plural or inanimate subjects. Moreover, the gerund can be utilized as a modifier of nouns and in adverbials. Notice the following examples:

- 35. a. His having talked so loud made me angry.

35.b. The fact that he has talked so loud made me angry.

36. She admits watching TV all night long.

37.a. She does not want to hear a single word of his being a liar.

37.b. I have never heard anything about your brothers living in the USA.

38. 'Washing machine, boiling point, selling price.'

39. The way of dealing with this problem.

The examples shown in (35 a, b) describe the fact that the gerund can be exchanged by depending clause. The sentence (36) indicates the gerund usage as a part of a verbal phrase. The examples (37 a, b) clarify the appropriate use of the Saxon genitive. Finally, the sentences (38 and 39) represent using the gerund form as a modifier of nouns and its appearance in adverbials (qtd. in Corcikova 16).

2.5. Error reasons

Before discussing the reasons behind committing errors, it is necessary to clarify the definition of the concept 'error'. As a matter of fact, error is defined by James (1998) as "an unsuccessful bit of language". Grammaticality represents the main criterion that declare a segment of language is unsuccessful, that is to say it indicates whether the segment follows the rules of grammar or not.

Corder (1967) states that the concepts of 'competence and performance' have also been explored in the definition of error. Competence errors are related to the lack of knowledge in the language whereas performance errors are caused by external factors, for instance lack of attention, stress or fatigue. However, this distinction is theoretically relevant, it is practically impossible to distinguish competence errors from performance errors (Garnier & Saint-Dizier 192). There are diverse reasons behind committing errors such as, mother tongue interference, overgeneralization and errors due to the effect of teaching, omission, redundancy and so on. Moreover, Ellis (51) classifies the errors into two main types: interlingual and intralingual. Interlingual errors are done by the structure of the native language (first language). The non native speakers of language employ their knowledge of first language in learning or using the foreign language. These errors are caused by linguistic differences between the first language and the second language thus such errors are interpreted as interference errors. Besides, intralingual errors are committed by the structure of second (foreign) language. These errors are clarified below:

2.5.1. Intralingual errors

Interlingual errors deal with the differences and similarities between the native language of the speaker or learner and the target language. Such errors are assigned to the influence of the first language on the second language. When the patterns of the first language differ from those of the second language, these errors take place. They are also known as interference errors since the language users blend the rules of both languages. In other words, interlingual errors occur according to the negative influence of the mother tongue. The users of language encounter difficulty in producing grammatical sentences. Consequently, they attempt to apply the rules of their native language on the target language (Ellis 48). Moreover, the mother tongue intervenes in the organization of foreign language which can bring proactive inhibition of the learning or using characteristic of English. The features of the mother tongue, most of the time, are transferred by the non native speakers to the target language thereby causing errors. In spite of the great roles English plays, various changes in social functions of English have influenced the way and manner English is utilized (Wayar & Saleh 50).

2.5.2. Intralingual errors

The influence of the first language does not represent the only reason for committing errors. The language users face difficulties in using the target language since they do not know the target language very well. The complex structure of the target language plays the main role in causing intralingual errors. These errors take place within the second language itself because of misinterpreting its grammatical rules. Such errors happen at both recognition and production levels. The intralingual errors increase when the non native speakers progress in learning and using the foreign language since the prior knowledge of this language is utilized to ease the burden of recognizing and producing its rules (Tayler 394). Richard (120) classifies the intralingual errors into four factors involving: overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of the rules and false concept hypothesis. These factors as the main reasons for intralingual errors are shown in the following:

a. Overgeneralization

As with Littlewoods (1984), some errors particularly intralingual errors are attributed to overgeneralization. These errors are caused by the fact that non-native speakers or learners employ what they already know about the language but they decide to make sense of new experience. In other words the previous learned knowledge of the target language could be the root of committing the error by its usres (qtd. in Wayar & Saleh 50). Further, overgeneralization refers to the incorrect application of the previous learned material to a present foreign language context (Ellis 171). Actually, the teachers attempt to overgeneralize a pattern or a grammatical rule that leads to irregularity of the structure in English language which in turn will cause an error.

a. Ignorance of rule restrictions

Ignorance of rule restriction refers to an error caused by ignoring the rule restrictions of existing structures. Such errors may result because of analogy or rote learning of grammatical rules. The learners apply a learned rule to a category which is incorrect which results in committing errors, i.e. the language users neglect how they should use the grammatical rule (Ellis 171). The

influence of such errors can be noticed in production level.

a. False concepts hypothesis

This kind of errors may result from faulty or partial understanding of distinction in the target language (Ibid 171). It is a well-observed phenomenon in the field of second language since the language learners and users try to adopt the wrong hypothesis or build rule about the second language (Richard et al 178).

b. Incomplete application of rules

Regarding this factor, the deviancy of structures occurrence refers to the degree of development of the rules required for producing correct or acceptable utterances. Accordingly, the language users fail to apply complex rules since they are complex and hard in learning and use. Instead, they tend to use simple constructions to achieve effective communication (Richard 120).

3. Methodology

Quantitative method of data analysis is followed in the current study which is concerned with investigating things that could be observed and measured. The quantitative technique tells the researcher how often for instance a participant has committed an error. To check the validity of the hypotheses of the study, a test is designed as a means of checking the

Iraqi EFL teachers' performance through the analysis of their responses. The test comprises of two questions and each question involves fifteen items (5 verbs, 5 adjectives and 5 nouns). Regarding the first question, it is designed to measure the teachers' performance at the recognition level in which they are provided complete sentences and they have to identify whether the highlighted -ing forms are verbs, nouns or adjectives (See Appendix 1). As with the second question, it is put to measure the teachers' performance at the production level in which the teachers are given fifteen -ing forms and they have to use each five -ing forms in complete sentences as verbs, adjectives and nouns (See Appendix 2). The items of the test are selected from the grammar sources. This process is followed to determine the precise area of difficulty faced by Iraqi EFL teachers of intermediate stages at Al-Najaf public schools in recognizing and producing English -ing forms. Additionally, error analysis strategy has been conducted to track the reasons behind errors committed by non-native English teachers in order to obtain information on common difficulties in language using. Finally, errors are significant to be analyzed since they help the researcher to explore how a language is acquired and what

strategies influence the participants uses.

3.1. Procedures

To make a valuable investigation and reach results for this study, the test is handed to teachers who particularly teach intermediate stages in various public schools at Al-Najaf governorate. The test was conducted on 16-23/9/2019. The questions have been answered in about (20-25) minutes. The total number of the participants are 30 Iraqi EFL teachers in public intermediate schools who were chosen randomly. Among them 15 are males and 15 are females, their teaching service ranged from 2 to 13 years. They answered the test according to their knowledge and experience. So, the process of analyzing the data is by designing the test, answering, collecting and writing down the results obtained after checking the responses.

3.2. Results and Discussion

The data was analyzed by percentages (%) and the analysis is shown in the form of tables. Each table has been organized according to the related field, and also the frequency of occurrences and percentage are used to analyze it and describe the results. Thus, in the following subsections, the results of the Iraqi EFL teachers' performance on each part of the test (Recognition

& Production) are presented. These results are of great importance since they prove whether the researcher's hypotheses will be verified or not.

3.2.1. Recognition of -ing Forms Test

Analyzing the teachers' responses at the recognition level, the following

table displays the results of the first part of the test which is used to test the teachers' performance:

Table (1) Teachers' Performance at the Recognition Level

No. of item	No. of correct Responses	%	No. of incorrect Responses	%
1.	21	70	9	30
2.	14	46	16	54
3.	12	40	18	60
4.	9	30	21	70
5.	22	73	8	27
6.	20	67	10	33
7.	11	34	19	66
8.	26	87	4	23
9.	13	43	17	57
10.	2	7	28	93
11.	17	57	13	43
12.	15	47	15	53
13.	21	70	9	30
14.	5	17	25	83
15.	3	10	27	90
Total	211	47	239	53

As it is seen in Table (1), the total number and percentage of the correct

responses are (211, 47%), whereas those of the incorrect ones including

avoided items represent (239, 53%). The rate of incorrect responses reveals that the EFL teachers are insufficient in distinguishing between the three types of -ing forms.

3.2.2. Production of -ing Forms Test

Concerning the production level of the test, the results obtained after analyzing the teachers' responses on each item in the second part of the test are pointed out in the following table:

Table (2) Teachers' Performance at the Production Level

No. of item	No. of correct Responses	%	No. of incorrect Responses	%
1.	19	63	11	37
2.	17	57	13	43
3.	16	53	14	47
4.	14	47	16	53
5.	21	70	9	30
6.	9	30	21	70
7.	7	23	23	77
8.	12	40	18	60
9.	11	37	19	63
10.	12	40	18	60
11.	10	33	20	77
12.	9	30	21	70
13.	6	20	24	80
14.	8	27	22	73
15.	5	17	25	83
Total	176	39	274	61

According to the results shown in Table (2), it can be concluded that most of the EFL teachers are

incompetent in producing -ing forms in complete sentences since the total number and the percentage of their

incorrect responses that represent (274, 61%) is higher than that of their correct ones which constitute (176, 39%).

3.2.3. Recognition and Production Levels Throughout the Whole Test

To improve the validity of the first hypothesis which states that "

The -ing forms are difficult to be identified from each other by Iraqi EFL teachers", the results obtained after analyzing the teachers' responses on each item in recognition and production levels are shown in the following table:

Table (3) Teachers' Performance at the Recognition and the Production Levels Throughout the Whole Test

Level	No. of correct Responses	%	No. of incorrect Responses	%
Recognition	211	47	239	53
Production	176	39	274	61
Total	387	43	513	57

The analysis of EFL teachers' responses in Table (3) illustrates that the highest rate of the incorrect responses (including avoided items) is (513, 57%) as compared with their correct ones (387, 43%). This mirrors that Iraqi EFL teachers face difficulties in mastering the three functions of -ing forms at both recognition and production levels. Nevertheless, they face more difficulty at the production level since the total number of their correct responses (176,39%) is lower than that of their correct responses at the recognition level (211, 47%). These results confirm that teachers' receptive abilities override their

productive ones, and it is easier for them to recognize an item than producing it.

3.2.4. Recognition and Production of -ing Forms Test by Males and Females

To check the validity of the second hypothesis mentioned in the abstract which states that " Both males and females have the same ability in distinguishing each type of -ing forms", the results obtained through analyzing teachers' responses (both males and females) in recognition and production levels are presented in the following tables:

Table (4) Recognition of -ing Forms Test by Males and Females

Gender	No. of correct Responses	%	No. of incorrect Responses	%
Males	110	52	117	49
Females	101	48	122	51
Total	211	100	239	100

Table (5) Production of -ing Form Test by Males and Females

Gender	No. of correct Responses	%	No. of incorrect Responses	%
Males	119	68	106	39
Females	57	32	168	61
Total	176	100	274	100

3.2.5. Recognition and Production of Functions of -ing Forms Throughout the Whole Test

The -ing forms have three main functions occupying verbal, adjectival and nominal positions. To check the acceptability of the third hypothesis of the study which says that " Most non-native EFL teachers can recognize and use the -ing form as verbs rather than nouns and adjectives", the statistical findings of each function are displayed in tables below:

Table (4) and (5) exhibit that male teachers record the large number and percentage of correct responses which represent (110, 52%) in recognition level and (119, 68%) in production level, in contrast with females who divulges the least number of correct responses representing (101, 48%) in recognition test and (57, 32%) in production one. The provided results reflect that males have more ability than females in using -ing forms including both levels: recognition and production.

Table (6) Recognition of Functions of -ing Forms

Functions of -ing Forms	No. of correct Responses	%	No. of incorrect Responses	%
Verbal	100	47	50	21
Adjectival	52	25	98	41
Nominal	59	28	91	38
Total	211	100	239	100

Table (7) Production of Functions of -ing Forms

Functions of -ing Forms	No. of correct Responses	%	No. of incorrect Responses	%
Verbal	87	49	63	23
Adjectival	51	30	99	36
Nominal	38	21	112	41
Total	176	100	274	100

The results presented in Table (6) and (7) demonstrate that the verbal function has more prominent numbers than the other functions throughout the whole test. Thus, through the analysis of teachers' responses in recognition level, it is found that there are (100, 47%) verbal function, (52, 25%) adjectival function and (59, 28%) nominal function respectively, as compared with production level in which there are (87, 49%) verbal function, (51, 30%) adjectival function and (38, 21%) nominal

function. It is concluded that verbal function records the highest occurrences which indicates that the participants are more familiar with -ing forms as verbs rather than adjectives and nouns. However, it is noticed that the most used tenses within the teachers' responses of the production level are the present continuous and past continuous tenses neglecting other four tenses. Further, the obtained statistical findings display that the participants' knowledge about adjectival and nominal functions occurs in between

since in production level, the adjectival function comes next to nominal function whereas in production level the occurrence is vice versa.

3.2.6. Errors Analysis

Error analysis is utilized to identify strategies which learners or language users employ in language learning and using. It is defined as a way for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language or using any of foreign language principles and procedures (Crystal 112). The technique of error analysis is utilized to group and categorize the errors as they are identified and collected into particular grammatical, syntactic and semantic areas (Wayar & Saleh 50). As with Richards et.al (96), error analysis is considered as a study of errors made by the second and non-native

speakers of English. Thus, it is followed to find out to which extent language users know a language, find out how someone learned a language, and gain information on common difficulties faced by non-native language users in language learning and using, as an aid in finding necessary solutions for reducing common repeated errors. Furthermore, errors analysis is systematic since various errors may occur repeatedly and not recognized by the language users. Hence, only the teachers or the researchers would recognize them. It is in this case that the researcher chose to focus on participants' errors. Finally, the frequency and percentage of the reasons of errors including the interlingual errors, intralingual errors and avoided items of the whole samples are presented at the following table:

Table (8) Errors Reasons

Kinds of Errors	Frequency of Errors	%
Intralingual Errors	276	54
Intrerlingual Errors	124	24
Avoided items	113	22
Total	513	100

Investigating the responses of Iraqi EFL teachers from the angle of

reasons of committing errors, it is reflected in Table (8) that the low

frequency of the interlingual errors takes place. The intralingual errors comes next to the interlingual errors. Accordingly, the errors committed due to the interlingual reasons (i.e, errors that belong to the mother tongue interference) yields the least number and percentage which represent (124, 24%). Such result reflects that the participants encounter challenges in recognizing and producing grammatical sentences. That is why they attempt to apply the rules of their native language on the target language. such strategy is utilized by some of the teachers to answer the items (2, 5, 7, 12 and 15) in Question One and items (6, 7, 11 and 14) in Question Two. Therefore, it is obvious that the participants commit these errors at both recognition and production levels.

According to the statistical findings in Table (8), the total number of errors that are caused by complex structure of the target language itself tackle (27, 54%) which represents the highest frequency . These errors happen within the second language itself as a result of misinterpreting its grammatical rules. Such errors also can be noticed in both recognition and production levels. Moreover, the intralingual errors increase as the language users progress in foreign language using as they depend their prior knowledge of this language to

ease the burden of its usage. Such errors can be attributed to several factors including: overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, false concepts hypothesis, and incomplete application of rules.

Concerning the overgeneralization factor which deals with the incorrect application of the previous learned material to a present foreign' language context, the participants try to overgeneralize a rule that leads to irregularity of the structure in English language. Such errors can be noticed in items (1, 5, 11, and 12) in Question One in which some teachers identify certain types of -ing forms incorrectly.

As with ignorance of rule restrictions, the participants attempt to apply a grammatical rule to a category which is incorrect that leads to errors committing. The influence of such errors can be seen in items (6, 7, 11and 14) in Question Two in which the participants utilize -ing forms wrongly within sentences.

Taking into consideration another factor of committing errors which is the false concepts hypothesis, the participants attempt to construct a wrong rule about the foreign language. Such errors are done as a result of faulty comprehension of any pattern in the target language. These errors can be found in items (4, 6, 7, and 10) in Question One

when the EFL teachers recognize the types of -ing forms wrongly.

Regarding the incomplete application of rules as a last factor of errors committing, the participants fail to apply complex rules since hard in learning and using. Thus, they tend to use simple rules and constructions to achieve effective communication. This kind of intralingual transfer can be seen in items (1, 3, 10, 11 and 15) in Question Two.

Attempting to overcome a communication problem caused by a lack of or inability to access the foreign language knowledge, the participants avoid to answer certain items throughout the whole test. The total number of errors that might be related to leaving various items without answer represents (79, 13%) of the total number of the participants errors. The influence of avoidance strategy can be recognized in items (4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14 and 15) in Question One and items (2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 14 and 15) in Question Two in which the EFL teachers of intermediate stages left these items without answer.

4. Conclusion

According to the analysis of performance of a number of Iraqi EFL teachers in public intermediate schools at Al-Najaf Al-Ashraf governorate, the current study

concentrates on the three types of -ing forms (the progressive forms, the present participle, and the gerund) as an important grammatical subject. In the light of the analysis and the results discussed in the preceding section, the main points are concluded in the following:

1. Iraqi EFL teachers face difficulty in mastering -ing forms. This is indicated by their low performance in the whole test (Recognition & Production Levels) as the rate of their correct responses (387, 43%) is lower significantly than that of their incorrect ones (513, 57%). Accordingly, it is inferred that the first hypothesis, which states that Iraqi EFL teachers, to some extent, encounter difficulties in identifying the -ing forms in both levels, is correct.

2. The Iraqi EFL teachers' performance in the test has also revealed that EFL teachers face more difficulties in using -ing forms at the production level than at the recognition one. This is due to the fact that the total number and the percentage of the correct responses at the production level (176, 39%) are lower than those of the correct responses at the recognition level (211, 47%).

3. Due to the different rate of males and females performance through the whole test, the correctness of the second hypothesis, which indicates

that both male and females Iraqi EFL teachers have the same ability in recognizing and producing the -ing forms, is not approved. The obtained findings explore that the Iraqi EFL male teachers are more able in understanding the functions of -ing forms who accounts (110, 52%) in recognition level and (119, 68%) in production level while female teachers divulges the least number of correct responses representing (101, 48%) in recognition test and (57, 32%) in production one.

4. Basing on functions of -ing forms, the verbal function records more prominent numbers than the other functions throughout the whole test. Thus, through the analysis of teachers' responses in recognition level, it is found that there are (100, 47%) verbal function, (52, 25%) adjectival function and (59, 28%) nominal function respectively, as compared with production level in which there are (87, 49%) verbal function, (51, 30%) adjectival function and (38, 21%) nominal function. Therefore, the third hypothesis which assumes that, most Iraqi EFL teachers can recognize and use the -ing forms as verbs rather than nouns and adjectives, is verified.

5. The Iraqi EFL teachers' errors in recognizing and producing -ing forms may be traced back to the

following factors ordered hierarchically according to the frequency of errors attributed to each:

a. The highest rate of errors is due to the intralingual transfer which accounts for (276, 54%) of all the participants errors.

b. The second – highest rate of errors cause is the interlingual error which records (124, 24%) of all the students errors.

c. Several errors are committed because of the Iraqi EFL teachers' lack knowledge of the English -ing forms since they are not aware of their responses leaving some items without answers. So, the avoided items have been found to be responsible for (113, 22%) of all the participants errors.

6. Eventually, the statistical findings throughout the whole study may indicate that there are certain grammatical subjects such as types of -ing forms are neglected by Iraqi EFL teachers. The researcher has attributed such phenomenon to three possibilities: first, most of teachers concentrate only on subjects that should be taught to the students inside the classroom. Second, lack of communication among teachers for discussing diverse topics in general

and English grammatical subjects in particular, outside the scope of teaching. Third, lack of training courses specialized for revising various English learned subjects including grammar which is necessary for recognition and production correct grammatical sentences since most of teachers focus on schools' curriculum without improving whatever they have learned through their learning stages.

5. Recommendation

In the light of the findings of the present study, the following recommendations can be posited:

1- More emphasis should be given to English grammar in general since this area is considered as one of the important skills for EFL teachers to master and more necessary for the structure of the English sentences.

2- Iraqi EFL teachers have to practice language including grammatical subjects especially the -ing forms and their functions by means of communication tasks and real-life situations which provide meaning or in the form of conversations. Therefore, they have to practice language through their communication and working in pair

or through planned seminars. While having conversation, they must be aware of their grammar correctly since incorrect use of grammar leads to misunderstanding.

3- More attention should be given to the functions of -ing forms at different levels of education even it can be included within the school curriculum of advanced stages (preparatory classes).

4- Depending on the factors of errors made by the EFL teachers through this study, the specialist educational supervisors should take these errors into consideration trying to discuss such topics with teachers in training courses or through social media such as public groups on Facebook.

5- English grammar comprises of many rules of which every single rule is used in special time and situation. thus, different grammar books, which contain more details about -ing forms, their use and other various important subjects, should be referred to by specialists in the general directorate of Education to improve Iraqi EFL teachers abilities in mastering whole grammatical subjects particularly -ing forms (verbal, nominal and adjectival).

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APPENDIX (1)
RECOGNITION TEST

Gender:	Male ☐	Female ☐
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Q1. In each of the following sentences, indicate whether the highlighted -ing form is a verb, adjective or noun:

- 1- They're often **losing** the match .
- 2- She was met by a **welcoming** party at the airport.
- 3- My brother'll has been **working** on the project since June 20.
- 4- The main problem today is **rising** prices.
- 5- I couldn't hear the **amazing** music clearly because of the noise.
- 6- He's been **writing** stories all day.
- 7- Jessica really enjoys **bothering** the neighbors with loud music.
- 8- We're **watching** TV ,When the phone rang.
- 9- I listened to the beautiful **singing** of the glee club.
10. Swimming after work is **relaxing**.
11. I'll never forget **going** to school on my own for the first time.
12. It's nice **meeting** friends after school.
13. Lisa'd been **practicing** her English.
14. He saw a woman **lying** on the floor.
15. After **Discussing** the problem with her, I've changed my mind.

APPENDIX (2)
PRODUCTION TEST

Q2. Put the following -ing forms as (verbs, adjectives and nouns), in complete sentences.

No.	-ing forms	Sentences with -ing forms as verbs
1.	looking	
2.	doing	
3.	spending	
4.	discussing	
5.	teaching	
Sentences with -ing forms as adjectives		
6.	working	
7.	standing	
8.	annoying	
9.	frightening	
10.	confusing	
Sentences with -ing forms as nouns		
11.	dancing	
12.	missing	
13.	marketing	
14.	leaving	
15.	feeling	

الخلاصة

على استخدام الصيغة الـ -ing الصحيحة على مستويات التمييز والاستخدام ؛ (٣) فحص و تدقيق أنواع وأسباب الأخطاء التي يرتكبها مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في استخدام اشكال الـ -ing ؛ لتحقيق الاهداف المذكورة أعلاه ، قد تم تحديد ثلاث فرضيات هي : أولاً ، مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية من العراقيين يواجهون الصعاب الى حد ما في تحديد انواع الـ -ing على المستويين: التمييز والإنتاج. ثانياً ، يتمتع كل من الذكور والإناث بنفس القدرة على التمييز بين كل نوع من أنواع الـ -ing. ثالثاً ، يُفترض أن معظم مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية يستطيعون على تمييز واستخدام الـ -ing كفعل بدلاً من الأسم و الصفة. وقد تم التحقق من الفرضيات المذكورة من خلال اختبار تشخيصي مكون من سؤالين تم تطبيقهما على عينة من ٣٠ مدرساً عراقياً اختصاص اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للمرحلة المتوسطة في عدد من مدارس النجف الأشرف .

الشرط الأول لاستخدام أي لغة أجنبية هو معرفة أساسيات تلك اللغة. و علم النحو هو احد هذه الأساسيات التي يجب أن يسترشد بها كل متعلم أو مستخدم لغة أجنبية بقواعده لكي يكون حاذقاً في استخدام هذه اللغة. يهدف هذا البحث بشكل أساسي إلى لفت الانتباه إلى الأنواع المختلفة من صيغة الـ -ing (الأفعال و الصفات والأسماء) نظراً للحقيقة بأن كل نموذج يمثل جزءاً مهماً من تصنيف قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية التي تستند إليه اللغة بأكملها ، من ناحية ، و مجالا من الصعوبة لمستخدمي اللغة الإنجليزية من ناحية أخرى. و يعتبر موضوع إضافة الـ -ing موضوعاً لافق للنظر وفقاً لوظائفه النحوية المختلفة بحيث يمكن أن تكون وظائفه المختلفة معقدة و غير قابلة للتمييز من قبل مستخدمي اللغة. و تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى مايلي : (١) تقديم مادة علمية عن خصوصيات أنواع اضافة الـ -ing التي تعتبر قيمة لمستخدمي اللغة الانجليزية للتعرف على هذه الانواع ؛ (٢) استكشاف قدرة مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية العراقيين