Iraqi EFL Learners' Recognition of Speech Acts Expressed by English Interrogatives

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تمييز متعلمي اللغة الأنكليزية لغة أجنبية من العراقيين لأفعال الكلام المعبر عنها بالجمل الأستفهامية

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Abstract:

English interrogative sentences are used to express a wide range of illocutionary forces (henceforth: IFs) in different contextual situations. Recognizing these IFs may be a problem for foreign English learners. The present research paper aims at investigating the recognition of Iraqi EFL learners of the various IFs expressed by English interrogative sentences. To fulfill the purposes of this study, 50 senior students were chosen to represent the sample of this study. To collect the data for the study, the researcher designed a multiple-choice questionnaire to include all the kinds of interrogative IFs mentioned in the theoretical part and their respective individual forces. These kinds were classified as direct and indirect. The questionnaire comprises 30 different situations from real-life encounters, each of which comprised an interrogative utterance. For each situation, some IFs were given as options to choose from. The findings indicated that the learners' performance in recognizing the direct force of English interrogatives is better than

ملخّص:

تستعمل الجمل الاستفهامية في اللغة الانجليزية للتعبير عن عدد كبير من المعاني ضمن سياقات متعددة وتراكيب متباينة، وقد يكون الاستدلال على المعاني مشكلة بالنسبة للمتعلمين في مراحلهم الأولى، وخطواتهم المبكرة؛ لذا يهدف هذا البحث إلى تمكين المتعلمين للغة الاجنبية الجديدة التمييز بين الجمل الاستفهامية، وتركيبها الوظيفة داخل اللغة، وتذليل الصعاب أمام استعمالها المتداخل في التراكيب المختلفة.

ولتحقيق هذه الغاية العلمية تم اختيار (٥٠) طالبا وطالبة من طلبة المرحلة الرابعة في قسم اللغة الانجليزية في كلية التربية جامعة الكوفة، ليمثلوا عينة الدراسة. ومن أجل جمع البيانات صمم الباحث استبيانا متعدد الخيارات، ليشمل معاني الجمل الاستفهامية المذكورة في الجزء النظري كلها، ومعنى كل واحدة منها بشكل منفصل. وتم تصنيف هذه المعاني على سماطين: الأول ـ مباشرة، والثاني ـ غير مباشرة. و يتألف الاستبيان من (٣٠) موقفا من مختلف المواقف الحياتية اليومية ، وكل موقف منها يتألف من جملة استفهامية ، وعدد من معاني هذه الجملة ، بوصفها خيارات ، يتم اختيار واحدا منها فقط أشارت النتائج إلى أن أداء المتعلمين في تمييز أفعال الكلام المباشرة للجمل الاستفهامية هو أفضل من أدائهم في الاستدلال على أفعال الكلام غير المباشر للجمل نفسها ، فضلا عن أن مستوى استعمالهم للغة من جنبة التواصل مع الآخرين هو مقبول بنسبة (٥٠ ـ ٥٩) ، ومن الملاحظ وجود فهم غير دقيق للمواقف و الحالات التي يتعرضون لها في حياتهم اليومية .

their performance in recognizing the indirect ones. Moreover, they are modest users to communicate with others but often have inaccurate understanding.

Keywords: Speech acts, EFL learners, English interrogatives, Recognition, L2 pragmatics

1. Introduction

A native speaker of a language can use his communicative competence to interact with others in real-life encounters (Canale,1983: 6), i.e., they rely on their pragmatic competence to successfully communicate at the recognition level. Thus, for instance, they can identify the different kinds of speech acts conveyed by an interrogative sentence in different situations.

The theory of speech acts was first initiated by Austin (1962: 16). Within his discussion of this theory, he was the first to identify and distinguish between the "locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary forces" of utterances. The "locutionary force refers to the actual act of saying the utterance" which is, in most cases, in accordance with the phonological, grammatical, and semantic rules of the language used. While the illocutionary force indicates what the addressor intends to do or convey through his/her utterance. On the other hand, the perlocutionary force shows the effect of the utterance upon the hearer.

Pragmatically speaking, scholars including Austin (1962: 4), Searle (1972: 54), and Levinson (1983: 227) recognize the association of some IFs with some grammatical structures. They identify three main types of sentences: interrogative, declarative, and imperative, with which the illocutionary forces of stating, asking, and ordering are associated respectively. These illocutionary forces have become traditionally termed

the primary or direct speech acts of the above-mentioned grammatical structures.

However, some pragmatic analyses conducted by such scholars show that several other illocutionary forces can be performed by the grammatical structures in question, and they are as important as the direct ones for communication. Such illocutionary forces are termed by Searle as "indirect speech acts" (Yule, 2000: 55). The current study focuses on the range of illocutionary forces that can be conveyed by English interrogatives. The term "speech act" in this study is used in its narrow sense to represent illocutionary acts.

2. Speech Acts Classification

Searle (1979: 13) proposes five major categories of illocutionary acts:

1- Declarations: They are acts which in their uttering a state of affairs comes into being. In other words, illocutions which in their production alter the world. Examples are quitting, declaring, nominating, appointing, christening, naming, etc.

2- Commissives: They are acts that "commit the addresser to do something in the future."
Examples: vowing, swearing, committing, promising, etc.

3- Directives: They are acts that "attempt to get the addressee to do something, i.e., advising, warning, begging, requesting, inviting, commanding, etc.

4- Representatives: They are acts that describe states or events in the world, i.e., stating, affirming, reporting, assessing, describing, concluding, complaining, etc.

5- Expressives: They are acts that the addressor expresses sentiments, emotions, and feelings towards a state of affairs to which the speech act presupposes. Examples are apologizing, condemning, congratulating, welcoming, thanking, etc.

The authors will adopt this taxonomy since they believe it is the most widely accepted and more economical. It is also " more oriented towards reality" (Mey,1993, p.169).

3. Direct and Indirect Speech Act

Searle (1975: 60) distinguishes between indirect and direct speech acts. Indirect speech acts are utterances "in which one illocutionary act is performed indirectly by way of performing another". The interesting thing about the indirect speech act is that someone can mean more than what he says. He (1975: 60) argues that "indirect speech acts are utterances in which the speaker's intended meaning is different from the literal meaning". In utterances with two illocutionary forces, the direct speech act is also realized via a sentence type that is usually associated with it and it consists of the literal meaning of the words that are uttered. It is usually of secondary importance for the speaker. In two illocutionary force utterances, an indirect speech act is the additionally performed speech act. The addressor means more than the force conventionally associated with the utterance, for example:

- Can you pass the mayo?

This utterance is conventionally associated with the force of asking a question about the speaker's ability to do something. The speaker may indirectly employ it with the request to pass the mayonnaise. Yule (2000: 54-55) states that there are three major constructions associated conventionally with three speech acts (or forces). They are as follows:

Construction	Force
declarative	statement
interrogative	question
imperative	command

He (2000: 54-55) points out that whenever construction is used to perform a conventional force, a direct speech act takes place, while an indirect speech act occurs whenever construction is used to perform a force that is not conventionally associated with it.

4. Interrogative Sentence Terminology

Quirk et al. (1985: 803) define the interrogative as a sentence that is formally marked in one of two ways:"

(i) yes-no interrogative: the operator precedes the subject:

- Did Ahmed buy Peter a laptop for his new job?

(ii) wh-interrogative: the interrogative wh-word is placed initially:

- What did Ahmed buy Peter for his new job? (See also Leech, Deuchar & Hoogeraad, 1982: 80-81)

According to Allan (2014: 205), interrogatives are questions when they are used to obtain a verbal response. For Leech and Svartvik (1994: 110), an interrogative is a sentence whose addresser attempts to inquire about some information from the addressee.

Minor Types of Interrogative Sentences :

The following types are considered minor types of questions according to a functional criterion (Quirk et al.,1985: 825):

   1- Exclamative Questions:

They argue that " the exclamatory question is interrogative in structure, but has the illocutionary force of an exclamatory assertion. Typically, it is a negative yes-no question with a final falling instead of rising tone", e.g.:

- Wasn't it a marvelous concert! [↓]

   2- Rhetorical Questions:

Brown and Levinson (1987: 223) define a rhetorical question as a question asked: " with no intention of obtaining an answer". The questioner does not seek information, s/he rather seeks agreement (Goody, 1978: 30):

- "Is that a reason for despair? [↑] (Surely, that is not a reason for despair.)"
- "Isn't the answer obvious? [↑] (Surely, the answer is obvious.)"

   3- Declarative Questions:

Quirk et al. (1985: 814) define a declarative question as " a type of question which is identical in form to a declarative, except for the final rising question", e.g.:

- He wants something to eat? [↑]

   4- Echo Questions:

Echo questions may be defined as those utterances which repeat as a whole or in part what has been said by another addresser. However, they

can function as either questions or exclamations   (Quirk et al., 1985: 835):

- A: He is a dermatologist.
  B: What is he? [↑]

5. Classification of Speech Acts Expressed by English Interrogatives

The IFs that can be performed by English interrogatives are mainly categorized as:

- A- Direct speech act: The only illocutionary force that is directly associated with the interrogative sentence is "asking" a question (Yule, 2000: 55). It is issued by the addressers to elicit information from the addressees, e.g.,

- Did you go out last night?
- Where did you go last night?

- B- Indirect speech acts: The IFs that are indirectly associated with the interrogative utterance are the following:

1- Request

Trosborg (1995: 187) defines a request as "an illocutionary act whereby a speaker (requester) conveys to a hearer (requestee) that s/he wants the requestee to perform an act which is for the benefit of the speaker". For example:

- Could you answer this question, please?

Blum – Kulka et al. (1989: 47) state that requesters might employ a conditional interrogative to convey the requested force, as in:

- Would you get me a cup of tea if I asked you?

2- Order/ Command

The term 'command' has been defined by Adler (1980: 1) as an utterance "used to guide, direct or give instructions to others", e.g.:

- Can't you lift your feet off my chair?

For Wierzbicka (1987: 257), "orders are compelling instructions to people that are intended to make them act in a way other people want them to". An interrogative sentence can be exploited by speakers to perform directives, such as orders:

- What are you doing? (an order to stop doing something)

3- Permission

An interrogative sentence may be used to ask for permission which is defined by Thompson (2014: 73) as "the lowest degree of pressure, opening the possibility for other persons to do the action but leaving the decision to them". Here is an instance:

- May I go for a swim this afternoon, mother? (Alexander, 2003: 216)

This instance shows that the addressor seeks the addressee's acceptance to do something. This shows the idea that the addressee has personal authority in relation to the addressor. On the contrary, The addressor does not have authority over the addressee, rather he tries to get permission to do a particular action.

4- Obligation

An obligation is the addressor's intent to oblige someone to do or not to do something. Aarts (2001: 37) states that wh-interrogatives are sometimes used to express the meaning of obligation:

- "How many times do I have to tell you not to lick your plate?"

5- Prohibition

Allan (2014: 246) states that a prohibition is a speech act whereby an addresser forbids someone from doing something. An interrogative sentence introduced by a modal auxiliary may politely denote prohibition (Shakhrayuk, 2004: 2), as in:

- Must you make so much noise? (= stop making so much noise)

6- Blame

Blame is "the act of expressing disapproval, negative feeling, censure, or annoyance towards a past or ongoing action whose consequences are perceived to be the addressee's responsibility" (Williams, 2006: 12). For Trosborg (1995: 318), the act of blame "presupposes that the accused is guilty of the offense. In blaming, the blamer may modify his disapproval of an action for which the accused is responsible":

- "Honestly, couldn't you have been more careful?"

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7- Praise

According to Hornby (2005: 653), praise is a word that shows approval and admiration of somebody or something. A yes-no question in a negative form with a final falling intonation has a meaning of praise, as in:

- Wasn't it a great movie?

The meaning of this interrogative sentence is positive which indicates that the addressor has a powerful feeling and invites the addressee to agree with him (Eastwood, 2002: 36).

8- Suggestion

"The speech act of suggestion is made to the advantage of the hearer" (Al-Aadeli, 2013: 2). Put differently, a suggestion is a type of plan or a proposition that is dedicated to helping others (Thomson & Martinet, 1986: 146). For example:

- How about going to the movies? (Li, 2010: 604)

9- Advice

Advice is "a directive speech act" in which the addressor intends to make the addressee commit her/himself to some future course of action (Searle, 1972: 67). This action is directed to the hearer only (Nakagawa & Nishimura, 1998: 48). When the speaker advises the hearer to do an action, s/he suggests that the hearer performs it while presupposing that it would be good for him/ her to perform it (Wierzbica, 1987: 169). Thomson and Martinet (1986: 250) argue that 'advice' can be realized by using an interrogative sentence, as in:

- Why don't you take a holiday?

10- Agreement

Scholars, like Pomerantz (1984: 329-330) have dedicated a considerable effort to defining the speech act of agreement considering it as one of the most occurring communicative events in everyday interaction. According to Xuehua (2005: 56), an agreement is an act of expressing a similar or identical opinion as that of the initiator. Al-Khanaifsawy (2015: 16) mentions that the speech act of agreement can be expressed indirectly by

utilizing rhetorical questions which do not require an answer (Quirk et al., 1985: 825), as in:

- A: Iraqi security forces have achieved outstanding victories against terrorist groups in Iraqi cities.
  B: Who would ever deny it?

The meaning of utterance 'B': Everybody completely agrees with what you have said.

11- Disagreement

The disagreement speech act can be defined by Malamed (2010: 200) as "a conflicting view offered as a response to an expressed view of a previous speaker". The addresser can use an interrogative sentence to denote the speech act of disagreement, e.g.,

- A: "He is getting too old."
  B: "How old is too old?"   (means: He isn't too old)

12- Refusal

Refusal is a reply to the rejection to a command, request, invitation, suggestion, or offer. It is found in all languages and plays an important role in everyday life situations (Wooffitt, 2005: 207). Speakers may express their refusal indirectly by using an interrogative sentence when addressing the requester:

- Who do you think you are?

13- Offer

Offers are questions that speakers arise to fulfill the addressee's wishes. The addressee does not have the right to refuse or accept (Sadeghi & Savojbolaghchilar, 2011: 603). Swan (2003: 545) points out that when somebody offers to do things for people, he can say:

- Would you like me to post these letters?

14- Condolence

Condolences express the addressor's sadness, and grief at the news of the death of an individual (Lotfollah & Eslami-Rasekh, 2011: 1). For Norrick (1978: 286), the social function of condolence is to share in the feelings as well as experiences of the addressees. Elwood (2004: 52) categorized the

replies to condolence into five kinds. One of which is to offer assistance and help. For instance:

- Is there anything I can do for you?

15- Greeting

Levinson (1983: 46) argues that greeting is present in every culture and considered essential in all ages because it develops and maintains social bonds. Duranti (1997: 66) defines greeting as "a form of social behavior that establishes or confirms social relations and does not necessarily communicate new ideas", for example;

- How do you do Mr. Smith? (Halliday, 1979: 57)

16- Complaint

Complaints are expressive speech acts that could be expressed indirectly or directly. Complaining means " an illocutionary act in which the speaker (the complainer) expresses his disapproval, negative feelings towards the state of affairs describes in the proposition and for which s/he holds the hearer (the complainee) responsible, either directly or indirectly" (Trosborg, 1995: 311-2). According to Fauzan (2020: 10-11), the speech act of complaining could be realized by the act of interrogating, e.g.,

In a loud tone, a parliament member asked some questions the minister of finance, who was responsible for the absence of a large amount of money:

- Where's your report? Is it handled by the finance committee? Who's in charge of this? Where did the money go?

This speech act has a contextual meaning of complaint of non-transparency carelessness.

17- Threat

Pearsal (1998: 1930) defines threat as "a declaration of an intention to cause pain, injury, damage, or other hostile action on someone in retribution for something done or not done." Quirk et al. (1985: 139) propose that 'dare' may be used to denote threatening:

- How dare you do such a thing?

18- Rebuke

A rebuke is an expression or act used to criticize someone for doing a mistake. To invade or threaten a person's face is considered high risk (Susanti et al., 2019: 7). For Quirk et al. (1985: 139), the semi-modal 'dare' can be used to express rebuke, as in the following:

- How dare you talk to me that way?

19- Apology

Apology, an expressive speech act, is "an explanation offered to a person affected by one's action that no offense was intended, coupled with the expression of regret for any that may have been given; or, a frank acknowledgment of the offense with an expression of regret for it, by way of reparation" (Gracia, 1989: 44). One of the strategies used to express an apology is to minimize the degree of the offense. Here, the complainee admits responsibility, but s/he tries to minimize what he has done (a fault) by querying preconditions and arguments. The complainer is only a third party (Wolfson & Judd, 1983: 22): Here is an example:

- The complainer: "You don't love me. The complainee apologizes by saying: What is love then?" (Owen, 1983: 53)

20- Compliment

Compliments, as expressive acts, are the most appropriate methods of expressing solidarity between speakers and hearers and maintaining social harmony (Cohen, 1991: 35). For Searle and Vanderveken (1985: 215), a compliment is used to express the approval of the addressee for something. Here is an example:

- Isn't your bag beautiful?

21- Criticism

Nguyen (2005: 4-5) points out that criticism is an expressive speech act that may addressors use to negatively evaluate what addressees have done or said with an intention to improve the addressees' actions and words. Example:

- Excuse me, could you pick up what you have thrown on the sidewalk?

This example shows that the addressor asks the addressee to do something. The addressor has criticized a stranger for throwing a cigarette butt on the

sidewalk. The addressor first leads the addressee to the topic by uttering "Excuse me", then s/he has requested the addressee to pick up the butt (Al Kayed & Al- Ghoweri, 2019: 10).

22- Opinion

The lexicographer, Hornby, 2005: 589), defines opinion as "someone's thoughts or feelings about somebody or something rather than a fact". For Huddleston and Pullum (2002), interrogatives may be used to express a speech act of opinion, as in:

- How about helping me with the washing-up?

23- Sarcasm

Hancock (2004: 353) argues that sarcasm is "a kind of verbal irony in which the speaker intends the pragmatic opposite of what is said in an effort to convey a negative attitude". For instance: Gary tells his friend, Bob, that he is going to Iceland. Bob says:

- Why would you go there? Don't you know it's dirty and the food is awful?

24- Surprise

Surprise can be defined as causing someone to feel amazed at something unanticipated (www.yourdictionary.com). Besides, Biber et al. (2007: 116) state that echoes questions may be used to express surprise, as in:

- A: And I think she's stealing stuff as well.
  B: She's what?

25- Teasing

For Drew (1987: 225), teasing is mocking but humorous remarks that addressors make with doubled intention, both hateful as well as benevolent, for instance:

- A: I feel bored.
  B: Why don't you go and check if you're in the other room?

6. Research Questions

This paper tries to answer these questions:

1. Can Iraqi EFL students recognize the intended speech act conveyed by the English interrogatives from other related ones in a situation when options are given?
2. Do the contextual factors governing using the speech acts have an important influence on the students' choice of the intended speech acts conveyed by the interrogatives?

7. Methodology

7.1 Participants

This paper involves 50 subjects who agreed to participate in this experiment. The participants are Iraqi EFL senior students from the English Department / Faculty of Education, University of Kufa, Iraq. They are all at their final stage, i.e., fourth year, 25 males and 25 females. Their age range from 22-24. They all took the questionnaire online via MOODLE platform. It is hard for them to take the questionnaire on campus because of the pandemic, Covid19.

7.2 Materials

The materials of this research paper are thirty situations made by the authors. Each situation has an interrogative sentence issued by one addressor and directed to some addressee(s). These situations are diverse, i.e., the different environments they represent (e.g., academic, domestic, military situations, etc. (see Appendix A).

7.3 Instrument

The authors designed a "multiple-choice questionnaire" to measure the learners' recognition of interrogative IFs. The questionnaire comprises a short introduction as well as two parts. The introduction briefs the subjects about the questionnaire and what is required for them to do. It also contains some directions about how to answer. The experimented items that are thirty in number are put in the first part. The questionnaire is made into three columns. The first one contains brief situations, the second one includes the interrogative sentences that are issued in these situations. While the third column comprises multiple choices. In each item, a set of four options represents four possible IFs from which the subject must

choose one only that most suits the utterance as well as the situation in question. For the second part, the subjects are required to provide some information about their age, gender, and L2 proficiency for only statistical reasons. The questionnaire is sent to a jury of expert scholars who work for different Iraqi Universities to verify its validity.

7.4 Procedure

The questionnaire was uploaded to Kufa University MOODLE platform and distributed to the students who agreed to take part in the questionnaire. One session was held to answer the questionnaire at the College of Education, University of Kufa. First, the subjects were orally explained about the experiment via Google Meet App and how to answer the questionnaire items. Then, they were kindly told to submit their answers. The time to answer ranges from 25-35 minutes. They were requested to tick the appropriate choice. Additionally, they were also told to answer the questionnaire items in one session as well as to time themselves while conducting it. When finished, they saved the answers and submitted them. Finally, the questionnaire was piloted beforehand with ten EFL subjects to verify its feasibility and highlight and overcome any possible problems before doing the main experiment.

8. Discussion of the Results

This section sheds light on the central area of this study because it deals with the data and statistics that form the basis of the discussion. It includes a collection of statistical data that represent the subjects' responses to assist answer the research questions mentioned earlier. This outcome indicates the range to which the subjects could reply to recognizing the intended speech act conveyed by the English interrogatives from other related speech acts in a situation when options are given and whether the contextual factors governing using the speech acts have an important influence on the students' choice of the intended speech acts conveyed by the interrogatives as well as their comprehension of the subject matter under discussion. They are essential to disapprove or sustain the research questions of this study.

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The performance of the students has been assessed using an objective measure. The findings of the questionnaire were scored at the end to determine the number of correct and incorrect ones. Each outcome received a score out of 100 marks. Each correct response received three marks, while the incorrect response received a score of zero.

Based on this approach, it has been found that 30 out of the entire study sample of 50 students successfully achieved a passing grade. They succeed in passing with a low pass rate of 50 out of 100. Table (1) below shows that the correct answers range from (52.00% - 92.00%) The highest rate of correct responses indicates that the Iraqi students are competent in recognizing the intended speech act conveyed by the English interrogatives. On the other hand, the percentage of incorrect responses ranges from (8.00%) to (84.00%). The highest rate indicates that learners are incompetent in identifying the intended speech act conveyed by the English interrogatives.

Table 1: The Performance of the Students within the Test

No. of Items	No. of Correct Items	Percentage	No. of Incorrect Items	Percentage
1	21	42.00%	29	58.00%
2	15	30.00%	35	70.00%
3	40	80.00%	10	20.00%
4	46	92.00%	4	8.00%
5	12	24.00%	38	76.00%
6	9	18.00%	41	82.00%
7	16	32.00%	34	68.00%
8	39	78.00%	11	22.00%
9	19	38.00%	31	62.00%
10	18	36.00%	32	64.00%
11	30	60.00%	20	40.00%
12	26	52.00%	24	48.00%
13	41	82.00%	9	18.00%

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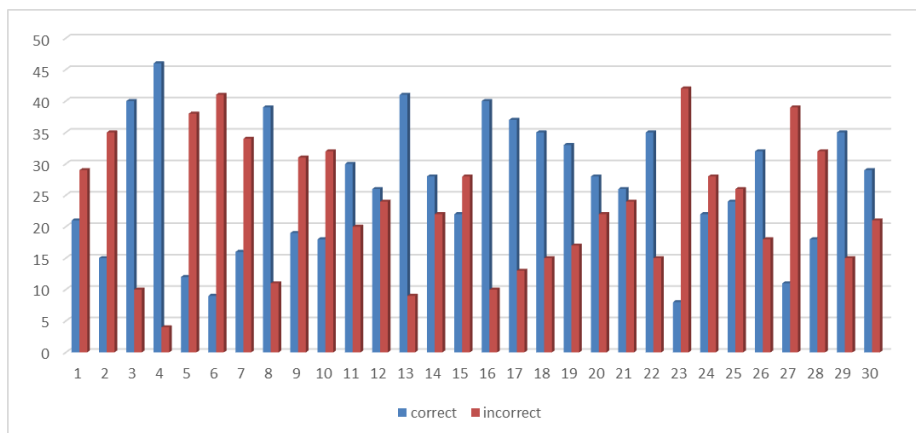| 14	28	56.00%	22	44.00%
15	22	44.00%	28	56.00%
16	40	80.00%	10	20.00%
17	37	74.00%	13	26.00%
18	35	70.00%	15	30.00%
19	33	66.00%	17	34.00%
20	28	56.00%	22	44.00%
21	26	52.00%	24	48.00%
22	35	70.00%	15	30.00%
23	8	16.00%	42	84.00%
24	22	44.00%	28	56.00%
25	24	48.00%	26	52.00%
26	32	64.00%	18	36.00%
27	11	22.00%	39	68.00%
28	18	36.00%	32	64.00%
29	35	70.00%	15	30.00%
30	29	58.00%	21	42.00%

Figure 1: The Performance of the Students within the Test

Table 2: The Overall Results of the Students' Performance

Items	Total	Percentage
Correct	795	53%
Incorrect	705	47%

Table (2) shows the total number of students' responses. The overall number of correct responses is (795) with a percentage of (53%), whereas that of the incorrect ones is (705) with a percentage of (47%).
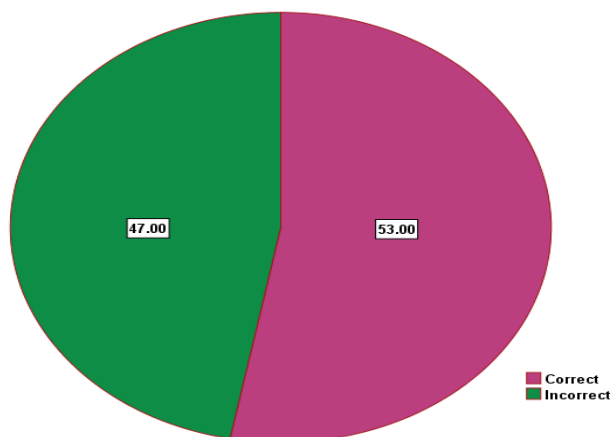
Figure 2: The Overall Results of the Students' Performance

9. The Overall Findings

The findings obtained from the analysis of the data provide strong evidence that the recognition of Iraqi EFL learners of IFs expressed by English Interrogatives is relatively different. The largest proportion of students was able to recognize the intended speech act conveyed by the English interrogatives. This can be attributed to some reasons. First, those students have good knowledge about the items they are exposed to. Next, they are familiar with the structure of such items. Furthermore, they are highly exposed to informal language. In addition, they have a wide knowledge of pragmatics, including speech acts. Another reason is that those students might have contact with native speakers. Thus, the questions of this paper have been verified.

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10. Conclusion

It is concluded that the rate of the correct responses to the whole questionnaire (795.53%) is higher than that of the incorrect ones (705.47%). This finding indicates the awareness of recognizing the appropriate speech acts and that provides the answer to the first study question "Iraqi EFL learners can recognize the intended speech act conveyed by the English interrogatives from other related ones in a situation when options are given". Further, this study confirms that the learners pay more attention to understanding the intended speech acts conveyed by the interrogatives depending on the contextual factors governing using these speech acts. This is the answer to the second research question.

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Appendix A
The Questionnaire

Introduction

What if you hear an interrogative sentence and realize that the intended meaning is something other than asking a question? You may get confused with what the speaker means by it. We have designed the following multiple-choice questionnaire as part of our study to investigate the range of illocutionary forces (possible intended meanings) of English interrogatives.

We kindly ask you to carefully read each of the following situations and the interrogative sentence said in it. Then, you need to choose **ONE OPTION ONLY** from the list of the given choices that you believe to be the intended meaning of the interrogative sentence. We do appreciate your participation in our study. Many thanks in advance.

	Situation	Utterance	Choices
11	A physics teacher addresses one of his students:	- Could you answer this question, please?	a- asking b- requesting c- ordering d- offering
22	Tim addresses his ten-year-old younger brother who is putting his feet on Tim's chair:	- Can't you lift your feet off my chair?	a- ordering b- requesting c- asking d- praising
23	James talks to Gary about their friend, Donald:	- Does he usually wear a suit for work?	a- requesting b- asking c- advising

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			d- agreeing
44	A thirteen-year-old boy says to his mother:	- May I go for a swim this afternoon, mom?	a- advising b- asking c- asking for permission d- threatening
55	Cathy, an eight-year-old girl often licks her plate when she eats. Her mom addresses her:	- "How many times do I have to tell you not to lick your plate?"	a- complimenting b- criticizing c- asking d- obligating
56	Sarah is studying to do her math exam tomorrow. She cannot focus because her younger sister, Amy, is making so much noise. Sarah tells Amy:	- Must you make so much noise?	a- refusing b- prohibiting c- complaining d- asking
57	A wife says to her husband:	-Will you go to the mall this afternoon?	a- requesting b- suggesting c- asking d- offering
58	Samantha is talking to her maid who has broken an antique vase while cleaning:	- "Honestly, couldn't you have been more careful?"	a- blaming b- asking c- advising d- teasing
59	Bob has taken his wife to the cinema. After watching the movie, he tells her:	- Wasn't it a great movie?	a- asking b- criticizing c- praising d- disagreeing
1 110	Jim, who is an accountant in a private	-Why don't you take a	a- expressing sarcasm

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	company, feels exhausted and bored because he always works late. His workmate, James, tells him:	holiday?	b- offering c- asking d- advising
111	Davis addresses his bored fiancée:	-How about going to the movies?	a- advising b- suggesting c- asking d- rebuking
112	Michael says: Iraqi security forces have achieved outstanding victories against the terrorist groups in Iraqi cities. His friend, Robert, has replied:	- Who would ever deny it?	a- asking b- expressing surprise c- agreeing d- suggesting
113	A dad is talking to his elder son:	- Did you visit your uncle yesterday?	a- praising b- asking c- asking for permission d- refusing
114	Linda turns thirty next week but she is not interested to have a birthday party. She tells her close friend, Susan "I'm getting too old". Susan replies:	- "How old is too old?"	a- disagreeing b- asking c- suggesting d- apologizing
115	On a battlefield, corporal Bob tells his commanding officer to start a missile attack against the enemy. The	- Who do you think you are?	a- expressing opinion b- refusing c- asking d- blaming

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	officer angrily shouted at him:		
116	Lucy has already finished writing some letters to her friends. Her elder sister, Melinda, tells her:	- Would you like me to post these letters?	a- <mark>offering</mark> b- asking c- agreeing d- praising
117	Oliver's father passed away yesterday. His close friend, Leo, visited him at home today and told him:	- Is there anything I can do for you?	a- asking b- <mark>expressing condolence</mark> c- complaining d- disagreeing
118	Jacob, who is a new hire in a construction company, starts his first day at work today. His workmate, Jack, meets him and says:	- How do you do Mr. Smith?	a- asking b- rebuking c- <mark>greeting</mark> d- criticizing
119	Daniel talks to Thomas bout their friend, Steven:	- Was he an engineer in 2000?	a- offering b- suggesting c- praising d- <mark>asking</mark>
220	In an interrogation session, one of the Senate members asked the treasurer some questions in a loud voice The treasurer was responsible for the absence of a large amount of money:	- "Where's the report? Is it handled by the financial members? Who's responsible for this? Where did the money go?"	a- <mark>complaining</mark> b- asking c- refusing d- prohibiting

221	Paul, a senior accountant in an import company, has recently signed illegal contracts with an international company. His boss has found out what he has done. He angrily says to him:	- How dare you do such a thing?	a- asking b- threatening c- expressing sarcasm d- disagreeing
222	Donald, a college student, has talked to his professor in an impolite and disrespectful way. The professor angrily and in a loud voice says :	- How dare you talk to me that way?	a- asking b- teasing c- rebuking d- suggesting
223	A husband is complaining to his wife and tells her "You don't love me". In return, the wife replies in a soft tone:	- What is love then?	a- apologizing b- offering c- asking d- criticizing
224	Julia has bought a new handbag. Her friend, Jennifer, has met her downtown and says:	- Isn't your bag beautiful?	a- expressing surprise b- asking c- requesting d- complimenting
225	Bob noticed that one of the pedestrians has thrown a cigarette butt on the sidewalk. He addresses him:	- Excuse me, could you pick up what you have thrown on the sidewalk?	a- suggesting b- criticizing c- asking d- praising
226	Kevin talks to his close friend, Edward:	- Are going to the gym at the weekend?	a- requesting b- complaining c- asking

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			d- advising
227	It's Sunday morning. A mom is talking to her 16-year-old daughter:	- How about helping me with the washing-up?	a- expressing opinion b- asking c- offering d- blaming
228	Bob is going on holiday to Iceland. His friend, Gary says:	- Why would you go there? Don't you know it's dirty and the food is awful?	a- asking b- refusing c- expressing sarcasm d- rebuking
229	Simon has hired a new shop assistant girl in his supermarket. He tells his friend, Mark, about her: "And I think she's stealing stuff as well." Mark replies:	- She's what?	a- obligating b- expressing surprise c- praising d- asking
330	Joseph tells his elder brother, Paul that he is so bored. Paul tells him:	- "Why don't you go and check if you're in the other room?"	a- ordering b- suggesting c- asking d- teasing

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