A Linguistic Study of Positive and Negative Transfer among English Majors of Jeddah Women's College with Reference to Clause Linkage

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Abstract

This study aims to identify areas of difficulty in English Appositive and Elliptical Clauses. Specially, it aims at pinpointing and analyzing errors made by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) senior students regarding the use of Appositive and Elliptical Clauses in their writing. Pilot approach was used to obtain the results of the study. The data is obtained from students' written work, an MCQ test, a translation test and a cloze one. The identification of errors is followed by their classification and then an explanation of their possible causes is presented in order to provide the main findings of the study. The study population consists of female students in the fourth year in the English department at Jeddah Women's College of Education. The samples of this research are collected from 130 female students. The key Findings of the Study are; Absence of some types of Appositive Clauses from the students' writing. In addition, errors found in Elliptical Clauses are ascribed to other learning problems, such as ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules and overgeneralization. In Elliptical Clauses, some errors are attributed to mother tongue interference and other learning problems at the same time . Moreover ,in Elliptical Clauses, students' mother tongue is behind the absence of Ellipsis in the students' writing. That is due to the fact that in English, the overuse of words is avoided by ellipsis but in Arabic, repetition is avoided by substitution. The study recommends syllabus designers, teachers and students acknowledge the importance of using these clauses in writing also, teachers should draw attention to the differences between English and Arabic Appositive and Elliptical Clauses. The points where interference may take place should be made clear to help students avoid such interference. In addition, students should be given more practice and intensive drilling techniques to use such clauses in their writing.

Keywords: language, Jaddah, English language .

دراسة لغوية للتداخل اللغوي الإيجابي والسلبي في كتابات طالبات الفرقة الرابعة بكلية التربية للبنات بجدة بالإشارة إلى العبارة الرابطة

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الملخص

هدفت الدراسة إلى تحليل أخطاء طالبات الفرقة الرابعة بكلية البنات بجدة عند استخدامهن للعبارة البدلية والعبارة الحذفية في الكتابة. استخدم المنهج التجريبي، حيث تم الحصول على البيانات من أعمال الطلاب المكتوبة ، واختبار MCQ ، واختبار الترجمة ، واختبار cloze. يتبع تحديد الأخطاء من خلال تصنيفها ثم يتم تقديم شرح لأسبابها المحتملة من أجل توفير النتائج الرئيسية للدراسة. يتكون مجتمع الدراسة من طالبات السنة الرابعة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية للبنات بجدة. تم جمع عينات هذا البحث من 130 طالبة. تشير نتائج الدراسة في موضع العبارة البدلية إلى تفوّق عدد الأخطاء في العبارات البدلية التي يسببها تدخل اللغة الأم عن عدد الأخطاء التي ترجع إلى أسباب تعود إلى اللغة الإنجليزية ومنها التعميم وعدم الإلمام بقواعد اللغة والتطبيق الغير كامل للقواعد، كما بينت عدم وجود بعض من أنواع العبارة البدلية في كتابات الطالبات بسبب اعتماد الطالبات على استعمال العبارات البسيطة الغير المركبة تفاديا للخطأ وأن بعض الأخطاء تسببها اللغة الأم واللغة الإنجليزية في وقت واحد حيث وجدت الباحثة أن مثل هذه الأخطاء قد تنسب إلى تدخل اللغة الأم وقد تسببها اللغة الإنجليزية نفسها. وفيما يتعلق بالعبارات الحذفية أشارت الدراسة إلى تفوّق عدد الأخطاء في العبارات الحذفية والتي تنسب إلى اللغة الإنجليزية عن عدد الأخطاء التي تعود إلى تدخل اللغة الأم. كم بينت أن تدخل اللغة العربية بدا واضحاً في كتابات الطالبات, حيث وجدت الباحثة كثرة التكرار والتبديل وتجاهل استخدام العبارات الحذفية وأن بعض الأخطاء تنسب إلى تدخل اللغة العربية والى اللغة الإنجليزية في آن واحد. توصي الدراسة بضرورة تنبيه الطالبات وواضعي المناهج والمعلمين إلى أهمية العبارة البدلية والحذفية وضرورة وقوف الطالبات على مواطن الصعوبة ومواضع الشبه والاختلاف بين اللغتين العربية والإنجليزية مما يساهم في تقليل الوقوع في الأخطاء وتفاديها كما أوصت بأهمية تنبيه الطالبات إلى أن الشرح و الاستعمال الزائد للكلمات يمكن تفاديه بواسطة توظيف الحذف والبدل إلى جانب الكتابة والتمرين المكثف.

الكلمات المفتاحية :اللغة ، جدة ، اللغة الإنجليزية .

Introduction

The process of second language acquisition (SLA) is one of the most interesting topics of linguists. Several research indicated the impact of language transfer on SLA. The topic of language transfer was first mentioned into the contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH), which assumes that certain elements in the first language hinder second language acquisition through negative transfer. Therefore, linguists assume that by contrasting first language with second language, they could foresee those areas in which the learners might have difficulties. Language transfer is defined as "the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired" (Oldin 28).

Studies differ in determining the effect of language transfer on SLA. Lado suggests that Second Language (L2) learners depend entirely on their L1 in the process of their SLA and that this dependence results in transfer. However, Dulay and Burt argue that transfer has nothing to do with errors made by L2 students. Gass and Selinker observe that "there is now overwhelming evidence that language transfer is indeed a real and central phenomenon that must be considered in any full account of the second language process"(7). In this study, the researcher argues that language transfer is a phenomenon that influences SLA. Presently, language transfer is one of the many responsible factors for errors made by L2 learners. It is a fact that transfer occurs in one of two forms: positive transfer (known as "facilitation") and negative transfer (known as "interference"). Positive transfer occurs where there is a similarity between First Language (L1) and L2 which minimizes errors. Negative transfer occurs where there is a difference between L1 and L2 which maximizes errors .

When reviewing the modern literature related to language transfer, we find that there is an urgent need for more research in the field of contrastive linguistics to study the linguistic structures that are transferred from Arabic into English. Diab argues that for the best way to discover such transfer is through error analysis, i.e. analyzing the systematic errors that students make in their English writing in order to find out which mistakes result from the interference of Arabic (73). Therefore, this research comes with an aim to analyze the clause linkage errors, particularly errors in Appositive Clauses and Elliptical ones and the degree of CAH's contribution to the prediction of such errors. Accordingly, this study attempts to provide a better understanding of the process of second language learning, which in turn helps teachers to know how far towards the goal learners have progressed and provides them with some new insights that help in developing their teaching methods.

Statement of the Problem

During the researcher's work in the Department EFL , she noticed that students have difficulties in the writing techniques in general and in clause linkage in particular. The problem of the study was represented in explaining these difficulties, analyzing the errors, and suggest remedies for the causes of errors, by collecting and analyzing a sample of their written assignments.

Questions of the Study

The research seek to answer the following questions:

1. What are the types of errors made by EFL senior students in their use of Appositive and Elliptical Clauses in their writing?
2. What are the causes of those errors?
3. How can those errors be avoided?

Objectives of the study

The objective of this study is to identify errors made by EFL senior students in their use of Appositive and Elliptical Clauses in their writing .This can be done by analyzing students' errors, classifying them into various types , find out the causes of their errors and consequently avoid them.

Hypothesis of the Study

This study is developed to test the validity of the following hypothesis: Errors that are made by the students in Appositive and Elliptical Clauses due to mother tongue interference (MTI) are more than errors that are made due to other learning problems (OLP).

Significance of the study

This study is among the first to test EFL senior students' academic performance. The ability to write well in English is a basic requirement in the education of Saudi students in the English department. Hence, there is an important need to conduct a study to identify the causes of errors to improve students' academic writing.

EFL students are required to write a lot of assignments, research papers and answer many essay questions. So, much of the evaluation is based on the students' written work. writing techniques classes are considered responsible for equipping the students with the strategies and techniques that help them produce a good piece of writing. Therefore, this study is expected to help EFL teachers to adjust their teaching strategies to cope with writing difficulties. Furthermore, this study is provided a useful guide for language planners, syllabus designers and teachers in identifying and solving writing problems. the findings of this research probably , will provide some theoretical clues that can be used in the planning of future instructional materials and activities for writing courses in colleges of Education in Saudi Arabia.

Operational definition of Terms Used

Some linguistic terms that are used in this study are defined as follows:

- **A Clause**: a unit of grammatical organization smaller than the sentence, but bigger than phrase, words or morphemes.
- **Contrastive Analysis** (CA): A way of comparing two languages to determine similarities and dissimilarities
- **Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH)**: The prediction that similarities between two languages do not require learning and that differences are what need to be learned.
- **Error Analysis (EA)**: A procedure for analyzing second language data that begins with the errors learners make and then attempts to explain them.
- **Facilitation**: The use of the first language in a second language context resulting in a target-like second language form.
- **Interference**: The use of the first language in a second language context when the resulting second language form is incorrect.
- **Interlingual Errors**: Those attributed to the native language (NL) when the learner's L1 habits (patterns, systems and rules) interfere or prevent him/her, to some extent, from acquiring the patterns and rules of the second language.
- **Intralingual Errors**: Those related to the language being learned (TL), independent of the native language.
- **Language Acquisition**: A language faculty that constrains and guides the acquisition process.
- **Language Transfer**: The use of the first language in a second language context.
- **Negative Transfer**: The use of the first language in a second language context resulting in a non-target-like second language form.
- **Positive Transfer**: The use of the first language in a second language context when the resulting second language form is correct.

Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to 130 female Saudi students in the fourth year in the department of English.
- The study focuses only on the written data ,i.e., written performance of the students
- The study is confined to document errors in two types of clause linkage ; Appositive and Elliptical Clauses in particular, because the researcher found that the students do have a problem in handling and using these two types of clauses. For more concentration, other errors are excluded.

Literature review

- **The Clause in English and Arabic**

A clause is defined by Encyclopedia American as a single construction which consists of a subject and a predicate (28). Crystal refers that the term of clause is a unit of grammatical organization smaller than the sentence, but bigger than phrases, words or morphemes (61). It is clear from the previous definition that clause comes below the sentence. Clauses are classified into independent and dependent clauses. This means that some clauses can stand by themselves, as separate sentences, and some cannot. Another term for dependent clause is subordinate clause which means that the clause is subordinate to another element (the independent clause) and depends on other element for its meaning.

In Arabic a clause is referred to as (aljumla alqasira) which means a short sentence. Wright argues that in Arabic a sentence is divided into a subject and a predicate which means that in Arabic there are verb clause which begins with a verb and noun clause which begin with a noun. A clause may function in apposition to a noun, a phrase or a whole clause.

Apposition in English

Apposition in English is a type of lexical reiteration. It is the type of reiteration that involves identity of reference.. In traditional grammar, Apposition is "an element standing in apposition to another element" (Chalker and Weiner 31). Hoey argues that the second item must include or contain the same information as the earlier (70). Quick and Greenbaum point out that apposition resembles coordination in linking units having the same grammatical characteristics (The Comprehensive 620).

Semantically, the use of apposition gives unity and cohesiveness to the texts, adds a new outlook to the texts, spices up writing by varying sentence structure, supplies additional information, gives significance and emphasis to the units in apposition, helps in finding out the main ideas ,helps in avoiding misinterpretation, provides a more familiar or a more technical term and gives correction of what was said as an attempt at greater accuracy and precision in information.

Types of Apposition in English

According to Quirk and Greenbaum and Quirket al, apposition is classified into three major semantic types. These are: equivalence, attribution and inclusion(628).

- **Equivalence** :Appositives in an equivalence relationship depend on the shared knowledge between the speaker and his audience or between the writer and his reader. Equivalence has four subtypes of equivalence includes appellation, identification, designation and reformulation (Quirk et al 628).In appellation, both appositive noun phrases are commonly definite and the second is a proper noun and more specific than the first. Thus, "namely" is used as an indicator to introduce a more specific appositive. With identification, the first appositive is typically an indefinite noun phrase and the second appositive is more specific. Designation is the converse of appellation and identification. The second appositive is less specific than the first. Both appositives are commonly definite noun phrases. Reformulation is a rephrasing in the second appositive of the lexical content of the first. It indicates that the second appositive is a synonymous expression (Quirk and et al 1311).

- **Attribution**: involves "prediction rather than equivalence" (Quirk et al 1313)
- **Inclusion** : means that the first appositive is different from the second and the former includes the latter. There are two types of inclusion: exemplification and particularization. In exemplification, the second appositive exemplifies the reference of the more general term in the first appositive. On the other hand, Particularization is the marked form of inclusion and requires an explicit indicator, such as notably, particularly, especially, mainly, chiefly and most (Quirk et al 282)

Appositive Clause in English

An Appositive Clause is a subordinate clause that has the same kind of function with a noun as other types of appositives. It names or labels or specifies the preceding noun. In Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar (31-32), Weiner and Chalker have defined an Appositive Clause as "A finite clause often introduced by 'that', defining and post modifying a noun phrase (NP), and sharing identity of reference with it. Appositive Clauses are nominal clauses which have a relation to the head similar to that between two noun phrases in apposition (Quirk et al 270).

Types of Appositive Clauses

First: Finite Appositive Clauses: Quirk et al define a finite clause as "a clause whose verb element is finite" (992) . A finite verb is the one where there is tense, present or past, and subject concord. Finite clauses function as appositive clauses when they follow an abstract NP in the main clauses.

- **That- clause** : They are subordinate nominal clauses that have the conjunction 'that' as the first word of the clause. An Appositive 'that- clause' can be an indefinite or a definite noun phrase followed by a
- **Wh- interrogative Clause**: They are subordinate nominal clauses that are initiated by one of the wh- words
- **Yes/ no and Alternative Interrogative Clause**: They are subordinate nominal clauses which are introduced by 'whether' and 'if

- **Relative Clause**: They are subordinate clauses that are initiated by wh- elements. They resemble interrogative clauses in being introduced by one of the wh- elements. Yet, there is a difference in that an interrogative clause has missing information which is covered by information given in the subordinate clause while no missing information is found in the nominal relative clauses. (Rahim AL-Deen 88-9)

Second: Non-Finite Appositive Clauses

Non-finite Appositive Clauses are the subordinate clauses which have a non-finite verb where there is a verb with no tense, but only denotes action. For non- finite clauses to be in apposition, they must be preceded by an abstract noun phrase as their antecedents. They are of three types   (to- infinitive clauses, -ing participle clauses, and verbless clauses).

- **To- infinitive Clause**: They are subordinate clauses, introduced by the infinitive 'to' followed by the infinitive form of the verb.
- **Ing Clause**: They are subordinate clauses, initiated by the verb form of the verb + ing.
- **Verbless clause**: They are subordinate clauses that usually have a missing verb.

Apposition in Arabic (badal)

Arab grammarians, such as (Abdul HamIed: 345; Al-Haqiel: 186 ; Ibrahim: 203) recognize that apposition indicates "a word that follows another word without any intervening items and both have the same referent". In Arabic, it is referred to as 'badal'. It is worth mentioning that apposition may occur on the level of words, phrases, or clauses.

Types of Apposition in Arabic

In Arabic, apposition has four types. shown below:

- **Apposition of the Whole for the Whole**: It means that the second noun "the permutative" / almubdal / is identical to the first" the antecedent" / almubdal minh
- **Apposition of the Part for the Whole**: This means that the permutative is a part of the antecedent
- **Comprehensive Apposition** :It means that the permutative refers to a quality included in its antecedent which shows that the permutative should be implicit in the antecedent
- **Apposition of the Mistake and Forgetness** :It means that what is said is said as a cause of a mistake or forgetness

Hasan in his book, Al-khulasah Al-Nahawyyah, mentions that "Apposition of the Part for the Whole" and "Comprehensive Apposition." should have a pronoun that refers anaphorically to the antecedent (181).

Appositive Clause in Arabic

In Arabic, Appositive Clause is a subordinate clause which specifies, explains or identifies a preceding nouns . Appositive Clauses can be finite or non-finite clauses. It is clear that ACs' in English and Arabic has the same syntactic and semantic function

Types of Appositive Clauses in Arabic

first: Finite Appositive Clauses in Arabic

Finite Appositive Clauses are the subordinate clauses in which verbs as in English are tensed and denote action such as, / kataba/ (wrote). They are also marked by taking a subject when intransitive or a subject and an object when transitive.(Rahim AL-Deen 55). The clauses that may function in apposition are as shown by (Rahim Al-Deen 135):

- **Appositive Verb Clauses**: They are subordinate clause that are initiated by a verb that needs a subject, either explicit or implied

- **Appositive Noun Clauses**: They are subordinate clauses that have a noun as the first word of the clause and require an inchoative and enunciative as their main constituents.

- **Appositive Interrogative Clauses**: They are subordinate clauses introduced by a question word such as when, how, why, where and which.

- **Appositive Yes/ No and Alternative Interrogative Clauses**: They are subordinate clauses that have the Arabic question particle, (whether) or (if).

- **Appositive Relative Clauses**: They are subordinate clauses that are initiated by the relative pronouns /?allaði/. For example:

Second: Non-finite Appositive Clauses

They are subordinate clauses that have a non-finite verb. A non-finite verb, as in English, is the verb with no tense, but only denotes action. The non-finite clauses that function as appositives are only the active participle and the passive participle

Ellipsis in English

Ellipsis is a linguistic phenomenon that, In ellipsis, a speaker leaves out a part of an utterance for the listener or the reader to retrieve from the linguistic context, i.e., the elements surrounding the ellipted part. Besides reducing length and complexity, ellipsis helps to connect one part of a sentence or text to another. Accordingly, this sort of reduction helps us to save energy and be economical. Ellipsis is defined by Chalker and Weiner as "the omission of a word or words from speech or writing that can be recovered by the hearer or reader from contextual cues" (131).

in the context of this study the term Ellipsis coincides with Halliday and Hasan's definition that "something left unsaid", where "unsaid" implies " but understood nevertheless". They further state that " an item is elliptical if its structure does not express all the features that have gone into its make-up – all the meaningful choices that are embodied in it...ellipsis occurs when something that is structurally necessary is left unsaid;

there is a sense of incompleteness associated with it…But it is useful to recognize … that the essential characteristic of ellipsis is that something which is present in the selection of underlying ('systemic') options is omitted in the structure – whether or not the resulting structure is in itself 'incomplete'. They simply deal with ellipsis as "substitution by zero" (142-43).

Types of Ellipsis in English

According to Quirk and Greenbaum , Quirk et al and Halliday and Hasan, ellipsis occurs in many different cases. Some of which are dependent on linguistic context and others are not dependent on linguistic context. To identify how and where ellipsis can take place, it is necessary to distinguish three major types of ellipsis:

1. The Recoverability type: The reduced text can be recovered from the context. It is one aspect of reduction which is considered a cohesive device in texts. There are three types of recoverability shown by (Quirk et al <u>A Comprehensive</u> 895-98) as following:

- **Textual ellipsis**: the reduced word or phrase can be recovered by anaphoric or cataphoric information given in the same text. Anaphoric ellipsis is the dominant type of textual ellipsis whereas final ellipsis is the dominant type of formal ellipsis. Cataphoric ellipsis occurs in a clause which is subordinate in relation to the clause in which the antecedent occurs.
- **Situational ellipsis**: the reduced word or phrase is not found in the text but in the situation the speaker and the receiver are in. It includes ellipsis in declarative sentences and interrogative ones.
- **Structural ellipsis**: the reduced word or phrase can only be recovered by knowing the grammatical structure of sentences. One of the most widespread ellipses is the missing especially in headlines, book titles, telegrams, etc. This type consists of the following: zero conjunction 'that' and the ellipted preposition.

2. **The Functional type**: in anaphoric and cataphoric ellipsis, it is important to consider the relation of the antecedent construction to the elliptical construction within the larger construction of which they are both a part. The functional type has two kinds of ellipsis shown by (Quirk et al <u>A Grammar</u> 574-85) as following:

- **General Ellipsis**: In the general ellipsis the functional relation between the elliptical and antecedent constructions is not important, while in special ellipsis the possibilities of omission are closely determined by the relation between these two constructions. This type includes ; elliptical noun phrases, adjectives and nouns as heads, ellipsis of modifiers , medial ellipsis and elliptical Clauses.
- **Special Types of Ellipsis**: marks a particular structural relation between the elliptical construction and the antecedent construction. It , unlike general ellipsis, allows initial ellipsis. It includes ;Ellipsis in nonfinite and verbless clauses , Ellipsis in coordination which allows both initial ellipsis and final ellipsis, Ellipsis in comparative clauses, as in coordination, both initial and final ellipsis is allowed and Ellipsis in appended clauses which can be regarded as elliptical clauses.

3. **The Formal type**: Such a type distinguishes three main categories shown by (Quirk et al 893) as following:

- **Initial Ellipsis** (or ellipsis on the left) occurs when initial elements of a clause are left out. It applies to the subject (or a declarative clause) and the operator (the auxiliary verb or `be') of a clause.
- **Medial Ellipsis** occurs when medial elements of a clause are ellipted. It occurs when the operator (the finite auxiliary or the copula) is omitted.
- **Final Ellipsis** (or ellipsis on the right) in a clause usually takes the form of omission of words following the operator. Hence, it is often called post-operator ellipsis and applies usually to the predication. Characteristic of final ellipsis is that the main verb (and complement) is omitted.

Elliptical Clause in English

Elliptical clause in English is a clause in which some words have been left out. It is clear what the missing words are. Elliptical clause represents the functional type of ellipsis.

Types of Elliptical Clauses

- Ellipsis of predication in finite clauses which consists of Subject complement only, Subject complement + Adverbial, Adverbial only, Nonfinite part of verb only ,Nonfinite part of verb + Adverbial and Nonfinite part of verb + object + Adverbial.
- Ellipsis elicited with the adding of Do.
- Ellipsis of the predicate which means that the only part of the clause to remain is the subject
- Medial Ellipsis.
- Elllipsis in WH- clauses.
- Ellipsis in to- infinitive clauses
- Ellipsis of an entire clause which is limited to dependent clauses, and mainly to to- infinitive clauses. It is also limited to clauses functioning as complementation of other clauses. (Quirk et al 905).

Ellipsis in Arabic (alhadf)

Ellipsis is an important cohesive device in the Arabic language, and is used at the word, clause, and sentential levels. Most Arab grammarians agree that ellipsis is a means of reduction. Tabanh argues that ellipsis refers to the reduction of speech words without affecting meaning (155). Al-Jorjani believes that ellipsis is like magic, under the effect of which listeners or readers may think of many things beyond the limit of words (Badawi 152). Actually, there are many reasons for using ellipsis, one of which is simplification to avoid the overuse of words. In Arabic, ellipsis takes place under some conditions. The first condition is disambiguation. Another condition is that the ellipted item must be clear and understood from the context. A third condition is that ellipsis should not lead to vagueness (Afifi 276-77).

Types of Ellipsis in Arabic

Ellipsis of the Verb, Ellipsis of the subject and using the object instead, Ellipsis of the object, Ellipsis of the inchoative(almubtada) , Ellipsis of the enunciative , Ellipsis of the exceptive thing (almustathna), Ellipsis of the operator of the cognate accusative (camil almafaul almutlaq), Ellipsis of the operator of the adverb (camil alhal), Ellipsis of the vocative(almunada) , Ellipsis of a preposition (harf aljarr), Ellipsis of the annexed (almudaf), Ellipsis of the substantive(almawsuof) and using adjective instead, and Ellipsis of operator of interrogative sentences (harf alistifham).

Methodology

This study aims to investigate the most common errors made by EFL senior students in the use of Appositive and Elliptical Clauses in English. this a study will pinpoint the causes and the types of the errors. Due to the nature of the research, Pilot approach was used to obtain the results of the study.

population and sample of the study

The study population consists of female students in the fourth year in the English department at Jeddah Women's College of Education. The samples of this research are collected from 130 female students. The ages of the students ranged between 21 to 26. The majority of the students started learning English at the intermediate school. Arabic is the mother tongue of the students.

Tools of the Research

To collect data for the study, the researcher used different tools. Such data was collected at the end of the second term of the academic year (2006 – 2007). The researcher has designed four tests to determine and measure EFL senior students' ability in the use of AC and EC in their writing. One hundred and twenty items were prepared to cover all the tests. These were reviewed by different judges who revised them for face validity. Some items were changed, others were added and some were completely omitted. Tools used are presented in the following framework:

1. **The Multiple- choice Test (The MCQ) :** The diagnostic test used in this study is objective multiple choice items. Such a test provides insight into the learners' knowledge of the language elements themselves (Oller 37): The MCQ test prepared for this study contained 73 items. Forty items test Elliptical Clauses (eand 33 for Appositive ones. The test aims to evaluate the use of Elliptical Clause (EC) from functional general type of ellipsis, in particular elliptical clauses and assesse students' use of Appositive Clause (AC).

2. **The Translation Test :** Duff argues that translation helps to reveal the influence of the students' mother tongue on the target language (6). The objective of the translation test is to measure the EFL senior students' proficiency in the use of EC and AC in their writing. The translation test used in this study contained 27 sentences. 18 sentences for AC and 12 for EC. Students are asked to translate some sentences into English and others into Arabic.

3. **The Cloze Test:** Vallette believes that such a test will shed light on learners' ability to understand and use language contextually (12). It consists of sentences from which certain words are omitted. EFL senior students are asked to fill in the missing words. ECs is not included in this test because in handling such clauses students are asked to omit some words to avoid repetition. This type of testing is used to measure students' proficiency in handling ACs.

4. **The Essay Test :** this test helps in shedding light on different types of errors that are not expected to occur in the other types of tests used in this study. Although this type of test measures EFL senior students ability to use AC and EC in their writing, linguists, such as (Valette; 254 and Madsen; 117), argue that such type of test lacks objectivity in its grading which requires a lot of time. In addition to that, this test may not document or elicit the required items. In this test, EFL senior students are asked to write an essay about one of the following topics: an unforgettable Incident, a comparison between two characters and a free topic.

Two types of validity are used in this study. First is the face validity which means that test items are approved by other testers, teachers and testees. Such validity is achieved by giving the test to some testers of the English Department to revise them. The second is content validity which is done for the pilot version of the test. It is achieved by having the correlation coefficient to be calculated between the sum of marks for each items and the sum of marks for all items testing the same structure. Such validity helps researcher make sure that each item measured what it is supposed to measure (Heaton 135-55; Abu- Hatab & Othman 95- 113)

To be reliable, a test must be consistent in its measurements. It means that the test scores are stable when having the test to be applied on a same group and under the same circumstances. Two reliability are achieved: reliability of the test and reliability of scoring the test. The former means that the test in its pilot version was applied to the same sample who are fourth year students. Reliability of scoring the test means that the result of the test would be the same if it is scored by different scorers. In addition, correlation coefficient was calculated to measure the reliability of the pilot test (Heaton 156-57).

Result and Discussion

Table 1 shows all types of errors found in the study and their total numbers in Appositive Clauses to answer the first question of the study which is " What are the types of errors made by EFL senior students in their use of Appositive Clauses?"

Appositive clauses	Substitution	Word Order	Omission	Avoidance	Addition	Selection	Total
That- clause	42	-	15	3	21	-	81
Ing- participle clause	-	-	49	5	-	24	78
To- infinitive	26	-	-	3	36	-	65

Wh- interrogative	-	153	-	27	-	17	197
Yes/ no alternative	104	-	-	18	-	-	122
Relative clause	55	-	4	5	-	-	64
Total	227	153	68	61	57	41	607

Table 1 Types of Errors and their total numbers in Appositive Clauses

Substitution is the most frequent type of errors. It causes 227 errors. Although it is only found in wh- interrogative clauses, word order is the second in frequency and accounts for 153 errors. This type of error is a clear example of the students' mother tongue interference. Omission is the third and causes 68 errors. 61 errors and 57 errors are caused by avoidance and addition respectively. 41 errors are caused by selection. In some cases, these types of errors are attributed to either students' mother tongue interference or other learning problems, e.g. , overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, ignorance of rule restriction, etc. In other cases, the same errors are caused by interference and other causes at the same time.

The following table 2shows errors in ACs in a hierarchical order of difficulty:

1.	Appositive Wh- interrogative clause (197 errors)
2.	Appositive Yes\no and alternative Clause (122 errors)
3.	Appositive that- clause (81 errors)
4.	Appositive ing- participle clause (78 errors)
5.	Appositive to- infinitive clause (65 errors)
6.	Appositive relative clause (64 errors)

Table 2 Hierarchy of Difficulty of Appositive Clauses

The above table shows the hierarchy of difficulty of Appositive Clauses. It may influence the way of teaching such clauses. Teacher of EFL students can decide which type require more intensive practice and drills.

Appositive Wh- interrogative clause constitute the first difficulty, followed by Appositive Yes\no and alternative clause. Third in difficulty is Appositive that-clause. Appositive ing –participle clause is the fourth. Appositive to- infinitive clause and Appositive relative clause constitute the fifth and sixth order of difficulty respectively.

After classifying errors into types, a possible explanation is given to illustrate the causes of their occurrence. The causes of errors are classified into mother tongue interference and other learning problems, such as ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, overgeneralization, etc. Some errors are explained in terms of mother tongue interference and other learning problems at the same time. That gives an answer to the second question of the study, which is 'What are the causes of those errors?'

Table 3 shows the causes of errors found and their total numbers:

Appositive Clauses	Causes of Errors		Both	Total
	Mother tongue Interference	**Other learning Problems**		
That- clause	16 errors - Addition - Omission	45 errors -Substitution -Avoidance	20 errors -Addition	81
Ing- participle clause	49 errors - Omission -Positive interference	29 errors -Addition -Avoidance	-	78

To- infinitive Clause	36 errors - Addition - Positive interference	29 errors -Substitution - Avoidance	-	65
Wh- interrogative Clause	- 153 errors - Word order	27 errors -Selection -Avoidance	17 errors -Selection	197
Yes/no and Alternatives Clause	78 errors Substitution ('Does' or 'Do' for 'whether')	44 errors -Substitution ('if' for 'whether') -Avoidance	-	122
Relative Clause	4 errors - Omission	60 errors -Substitution -Avoidance	-	64
Total	336	234	37	607

Table 3 Causes of Errors and their total numbers in Appositive Clauses

Table 7 above shows that 336 errors are attributed to the interference of the students' mother tongue. 234 errors are ascribed to other learning problems. This proves the acceptance of the research hypothesis. More errors are due to mother tongue interference. Other learning problems cause (234) errors.

In that- clause, 16 errors are caused by the interference and other learning problems accounts for 45 errors. It is also found that 20 errors are attributed to mother tongue interference and they can be explained in terms of other learning problems at the same time. In ing- participle clause 49 errors are ascribed to the interference and other learning problems causes 29 errors. In to- infinitive clause 36 errors result from the interference and other learning problems cause 29 errors. In Wh- interrogative clause 153 errors are the cause of the interference and other learning problems accounts for 27 errors. 17 errors occurred in Appositive Wh-interrogative clause are ascribed to mother tongue interference and other learning problems. In Yes/ no and alternative clause mother tongue causes 78 errors and 44 errors attributed to other learning problems. Finally, other learning problems cause 60 errors in the relative clause and mother tongue accounts for only four.

In analyzing the obtained data on Elliptical Clauses in the students' writing, errors were identified and classified into types as to give an answer to the first question of the study which is " what are the types of errors made by EFL senior students in their use of Elliptical Clauses?". Table 4 shows all types of errors found and their total numbers:

Elliptical Clauses	Addition	Selection	Avoidance	Omission	Substitution	Total
Subject Complement	-	8	9	71	-	88
Subject Complement + Adverbial	-	-	5	40	21	66
Adverbial	-	25	7	41	-	73
Nonfinite part of Verb	9	-	9	-	-	18
Nonfinite Part of Verb + Adverbial	11	-	13	7	-	31

Nonfinite Part of Verb Object + Adverbial	-	-	12	62	-	74
Do as a stranded Operator	-	-	4	-	13	17
Predicate	-	30	17	-	-	47
Medial Ellipsis	-	77	16	-	-	93
Ellipsis in Wh-clauses	27	-	4	21	-	52
Ellipsis in To-infinitive clause	11	-	7	-	-	18
Ellipsis of the entire clause	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ellipsis in nonfinite and verbless clause	-	37	7	21	-	65
Ellipsis in coordinated and comparative clauses	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ellipsis in Appended clause	83		5			88
Total	141	177	115	263	34	730

Table 4 Types of Errors and their total numbers in Elliptical Clauses

Omission and selection are the most frequent type of errors found. They cause 263 errors and 177 errors respectively. Addition is the third type in frequency with a total of 141 errors. Avoidance accounts for 115 errors. The least frequent errors are found in substitution type of error with 34 errors. These types of errors are found in the MCQ test and in the translation test.

The following table shows the Elliptical Clauses in a hierarchical order of difficulty:

1.	Medial Ellipsis (93)
2.	Ellipsis of Subject Complement (88)
3.	Ellipsis in Appended Clauses (88 errors)
4.	Ellipsis in nonfinite part of Verb+ object+ Adverbial (74errors)
5.	Ellipsis of Adverbial (73 errors)
6.	Ellipsis of Subject Complement+ Adverbial (66 errors)
7.	Ellipsis in nonfinite and verbless clauses (65 errors)
8.	Ellipsis in Wh- clauses (52 errors)
9.	Ellipsis of Predicate (47 errors)
10.	Ellipsis in nonfinite Part of verb+ Adverbial (31 errors)
11.	Ellipsis in nonfinite part of Verb (18 errors)
12.	Ellipsis in to- infinitive clauses (18 errors)
13.	Ellipsis elicited with the adding of 'Do' (17 errors)
14.	Ellipsis of the entire clause (no errors)
8.	Ellipsis in coordinate and comparative clauses (no errors)

Table 5 Hierarchy Order of Difficulty of Elliptical Clauses

The above table can provide some insights into Elliptical Clauses which constitute more errors. This hierarchy of errors can help in setting priority of teaching ECs. It is clear that medial ellipsis. ellipsis in subject complement, ellipsis in appended clauses constitute more errors than other types of elliptical clauses.

They are followed by errors in the ellipsis of nonfinite part of verb+ object+ adverbial, ellipsis of Adverbial, ellipsis of subject complement+ adverbial, ellipsis in nonfinite and verbless clauses, ellipsis of predicate. The least errors are found in the ellipsis of nonfinite part of verb + adverbial, ellipsis in nonfinite part of verb, ellipsis in to infinitive clause and finally ellipsis elicited with the adding of 'Do'. The hierarchy also shows positive transfer where no errors are occurred in the ellipsis of the entire clause and the ellipsis in the coordinate and comparative clauses.

After classifying errors into types, an explanation is given to illustrate the causes of their occurrence. The errors are either ascribed to the students' mother tongue interference or to other learning problems, such as ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, overgeneralization etc. In some instances, errors are ascribed to mother tongue and other learning problems at the same time. That gives an answer to the second question of the study, which is ' What are the causes of those errors?'

Table 6 below shows the causes of errors found and their total numbers as to give an answer to the second question of the study:

Elliptical Clauses	**Causes of Errors**			
	Mother tongue interference	**Other Learning Problems**	**Both**	**Total**
Ellipsis of subject complement	-71 errors -Omission	-17 errors -Selection -Avoidance	-	88 errors
Ellipsis of subject complement + adverbial	- 40 errors -Omission	- 5 errors -Avoidance	**-21 errors** **-** **Substitution**	66 errors

Ellipsis of Adverbial	-41errors -Omission	-7 errors -Avoidance	-25 errors -Selection	73 errors
Ellipsis of non-finite part of verb	Positive Transfer	18 errors -Addition -Avoidance	-	18 errors
Ellipsis of non-finite part of verb+ Adverbial	18 errors -Addition -Omission	- 13 errors - Avoidance	-	31 errors
Ellipsis of non-finite part of verb+ Object+ Adverbial	-	-12 errors - Avoidance	62 errors -Omission	74 errors
-Ellipsis elicited with the adding of 'Do'	Positive Transfer	-17 errors -substitution -Avoidance	-	-17 errors
-Ellipsis of the predicate	30 errors - Selection -Positive Transfer	-17 errors -Avoidance	-	-47 errors
Medial Ellipsis	-Positive Transfer	- 16 errors - Avoidance	- 77 errors -Selection	-93 errors

Wh- clause	-Positive Transfer	- 52 errors -Addition - Omission	-	-52 errors
To- infinitive clause	-	- 18 errors - Addition - Avoidance	-	18 errors
An entire clause	Positive Transfer (no errors found)			
Non-finite and herbless clause	-21 errors -Omission	-7 errors -Avoidance	-37 errors -Selection	-65 errors
-Comparative and coordinated clause	Positive Transfer (no errors found)			
Appended clause	-	- 88 errors - Addition	-	-88 errors
Total	221 errors	287 errors	222 errors	730 errors

Table 6 Causes of Errors and their total numbers in Elliptical Clauses

Table 29 above shows that EFL senior students made 221 errors due to their mother tongue interference while 287 errors are attributed to other learning problems. 222 errors are ascribed to mother tongue interference from one hand and to other learning problems from the other. The researcher tried her best to decide the causes of errors in some instances but the explanation put these instances in between.

This means that some errors can be explained in terms of the students' mother tongue interference and they can also be ascribed to the method of teaching and difficulty inherent in the English language itself, lack of training and the practice. They can be the result of interference and other learning problems at the same time. This indicates a rejection of the research hypothesis. Errors made due to other learning problems, such as ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, overgeneralization, etc. are more than errors made due to the students' mother tongue interference. It is also found that the structure of the students' language interferes positively to have them handled certain structures. But students' mother tongue is responsible for the absence of Elliptical Clauses in their written data. Their reliance on repetition and more on substitution are a clear proof of their mother tongue interference.

Conclusion

It is one of the aim of this study is to investigate the cause behind the occurrence of EFL senior students' errors in the use of the English Appositive and Elliptical Clauses. To achieve that end, it was necessary to identify the most common errors made in Appositive and Elliptical Clauses.

Concerning Appositive Clauses, it was found that the most frequent errors are in Appositive that- clause, to- infinitive clause and wh- interrogative clause. They are the types found in the students' essay writing.

Concerning Elliptical Clauses, the analysis of the written data shows complete absence of Elliptical Clauses. The researcher attributes that to the fact that ellipsis in English is used to avoid repetition while repetition and the overuse of words are avoided by substitution in Arabic. Students' intensive use of repetition and substitution was a clear case of the mother tongue interference. Moreover, difficulty inherent in the structure of English language in general and the structure of ellipsis in particular affected the occurrence of errors.

The errors made by EFL senior students were caused by two main factors: interference from Arabic and other learning problems. Significantly, errors made in Appositive Clauses were due to mother tongue interference than to other learning problems. Thus, the hypothesis of the study is verified. Concerning Elliptical Clauses, the hypothesis is rejected, since other learning problems cause more errors than mother tongue interference. Students' mother tongue is responsible for the absence of ellipsis in their writing on one hand and it is also responsible for the overuse of repetition and substitution. Other learning problems play a major role in error occurrence. The major learning problems identified in this study are ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete mastery of rule and overgeneralization, etc. After identifying the types of errors and their causes, possible ways of avoiding them are given.

Recommendations

To avoid error occurrence in Appositive and Elliptical Clauses and thus giving an answer to the third question of the study, which is 'How can these errors be avoided?', the researcher suggested some recommendations for teaching Appositive and Elliptical Clauses:

1. Appositive and Elliptical Clauses should be taught first as being important grammatical units at the level of subordinate clauses with reference to their types, functions and positions.

2. Teachers of English are recommended to give EFL students more practice and exercises showing the meaning conveyed by each type of Appositive and Elliptical clauses and emphasizing those which cause the interference of Arabic.

3. Teachers of English should make use of the studies on CA and EA. Such studies will help discover sources of difficulties inherent in the English language and know how to treat them properly.

4. It is also recommended for the teachers of writing and translation to make a CA between English Appositive and Elliptical Clauses and their Arabic equivalents to help EFL students avoid areas of interference.

5. Textbook designers of the English syllabus should bare in mind the problems identified in this study. They should concentrate on areas of difficulties and prepare remedial teaching programs to upgrade the level of using Appositive and Elliptical Clauses in context.

6. It is advised to decrease the number of students for essay writing classes since teachers' efficiency is strongly affected by the large number of the students.

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