

The Problematic Use of Infinitive in English

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Abstract

The study aims at verifying the source of difficulty in using the infinitive as a verb complement. To be used out of the context depending on the grammar-based rules, the infinitive, paying much more attention on the use of the full- infinitive, represents an error of verb complementation. Memorizing lists of verbs with their verb complementation as a before and after relation, even though possible, would be futile for the contextually competent use of the target language, English. As EFL learners, fourth year students at the department of English, College of Education, University of Al- Qadisiya face a problem in knowing when to use the infinitive with certain verbs that are possibly to be followed by infinitive, bare or full, gerund or either. To be more specific, they confuse the use of full-infinitive with that of the gerund as a verb complement in the sense that verbs in English have certain semantic implications or properties, that are contextually based ones, according to which the verb complements have to be selected. This does not mean that EFL learners do not confront a difficulty in the use of the infinitive as a verb complement with other verb forms, such as bare-infinitive or past participle but with the gerund is a remarkable error.

Accordingly, the study sheds light on the head verbs, main verbs, and their possible verb complementation for different grammarians to be the base of analyzing EFL learners' recognition of the use of the full-infinitive as a complement. It also shows how significant for EFL learners to know the communicative implication of using the full-infinitive in contrast with that of the gerund for being semantically driven use. Finally, the conclusion sums up the findings of the study.

1.1 Infinitive in English

Infinitive is a form of verb that is not limited by person, number or tense. In English it may stand alone or be preceded by the particle 'to' to which Hartmann and Stroke (1972:111) refer as 'first infinitive' and 'second infinitive' respectively. According to Yespers(1962:346), the 'to' is "often felt as belonging more closely to the preceding verb than to the infinitive", clarifying that through the possibility of using the 'to' by itself instead of "a clumsy repetition of the whole to-infinitive.", as in "Will they play? Yes, they will." The same could be said as in, "Yes, I asked them to.= asked them to play." The 'to' of the infinitive is used in short responses to questions and statements, and also in short clause endings: " Why did you take the longer route?" " I wanted to" or " He was surprised when he got an A on his composition." " Yes, he hadn't expected to." Furthermore, 'be' should be added if the question or statement is in the passive voice, as in:

1. She seemed to be troubled by someone .

Yes, she seemed to be.

1. . Does he expect to be promoted?

Yes, he expected to be.

Moreover, grammarians such as Quirk et al. (1985: 687) have also explicitly stated that the infinitive marker 'to' may be viewed as related to the spatial preposition 'to' through metaphorical connection. As its origin as a preposition, 'to' is seen to signal a goal of motion. To clarify, it has basically the same meaning as in its prepositional use (i.e., that of a

movement leading up to a terminus) (cf. Duffley 1992, 16-17). Just as the noun bank defines the end point of the movement in "She is going to the bank", so the bare infinitive wake denotes what lies at the end of the movement in the infinitival construction "She is going to wake up". However, there is one difference between the two uses, which is due to the nature of the infinitive. Since the latter denotes the actualization of all that is involved in the verb's lexeme, this construes 'to' as a movement leading to the actualization of an event. This implies that the starting point of the movement signified by 'to' is conceived as corresponding to a prior position in time with respect to the infinitive's event. It is possible to say that the 'to' projects a modal phrase whose value of futurity and, therefore, of potentiality, is a remnant of that origin in the sense that the future being understood as the goal, the end point of the temporal reference. This in turn, may explain some of the differences between to-infinitives and other non-finite clauses such as -ing clauses, since the former will be systematically associated with non-factual readings. Moreover, this view of 'to' as a modal preposition establishes a semantic relationship between the 'to' and the modal verbs, a relationship that may be reflected in the syntactic similarities between them which have been sometimes noted in the literature, and this is what Yesperson (1962:346) states saying that like modals, 'to' can appear separated from the verb that heads the predication or may act as the carrier of the negation.

In addition, having no subject and tense agreement, as other types of non-finite constructions, the infinitival construction, to Huddleston(1988:51), is non-kernel that requires a double reference to the subject in the sense that the subordinate clause lacks a subject and the missing subject is recoverable from the superordinate clause subject, as in :

3. Ed remembered to take his key.

He adds (ibid:63-4) saying that some non-finite clauses, like finites, be assigned the same functions as NPs. This applies to the 'copulative construction' with 'be' in its identifying sense, e.g., 'The solution is to resign.'. And also to the complex-transitive construction. As far as thematic variation is concerned, he (ibid:181-82) explains it saying that extraposition puts subordinate clause in final position for the heavy and complex material is to come late. 'Extraposition' is a term that applies to a syntactic process which characteristically moves a subordinate clause subject to the right, to a position beyond the main predicate; depending on the language concerned, it may or may not involve the addition of a dummy pronoun to take over the vacated subject function, as in ' (For you) to change your mind now is a mistake.' Or 'it would be

a mistake (for you) to change your mind now'. Or 'This made it a waste of time to accompany them' rather than 'this made to accompany of them a waste of time.'

To Close(1981: 77) and Yesperson (1962:330), the use of 'extraposition' is possible with 'anticipatory it' or 'preparatory it', as a subject, but not with present participials, e.g., 'She considered attempting it a waste of time.'.The 'anticipatory it' refers to the infinitive and this is what modern English tends to prefer, compare the following:

4. It is not always possible to get eight hours' sleep each night.

5. It has taken a long time to finish the project.

Moreover, Yesperson (1962: 330) states that it is sometimes hard to consider the infinitive as a subject without 'to' in colloquial constructions like the following;

6. Better wait and not say a word about it at present.= We had better wait...

7. As well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb.= One may as well be hanged...

Huddleston(1988:182) states that it is usually, though not invariable, the relation between the object and the complement over which it is moved; it is comparable to that

between a subject and a predicate in a simpler construction, cf, "Being able to talk things over with her was a great help/ It was a great help being able to talk things over with her." So that this application of extraposition is clearly analogous to the prototype. Where the subordinate clause is finite or infinitival, however, extraposition is obligatory: He made it known that he was dissatisfied. And not He made that he was dissatisfied known. They hadn't intended it to be so easy to get away. And not They hadn't intended to get away to be so easy. This is a special case of a broader restriction when finite or infinitival clauses are functioning in the structure of a larger clause they are virtually excluded from medial position. For further information concerning the "extraposed to-clause," for further information, see Biber et al.(1999: 714).

Moreover, constructions involving a non-finite as complement of the predicator exhibit a great deal of diversity and complexity; they present formidable problems for the analyst and it is not surprising that widely varying accounts are to be found in the literature. One of the problems is the prototypical complement is an NP, which is why it is expected to have the non-finites in complement function as involving nominalization. There are different degrees of nominalization where there is a high degree of nominalization that may be assigned to the non-finite and it is possible to be filled by the NPs. The object or the extraposed object and the predicative in the identifying 'be' construction represent the two possible places for that to happen as illustrated below:

8. This made it important for her husband to accompany them.

9. She considered his/him attempting it a waste of time.

10. The best solution would be for you to resign. (Huddleston,1988:51)

To Young (1984:43), the verb of the sentence may have a noun phrase or an infinitive, 'to-clause' or verb phrase, as a complement, consider the following:

11. He wants a permit.

12. He wants to sleep.

Where 'a permit' and 'to sleep' serve to function as complements of the verbs 'wants'. The infinitive, 'to sleep', is a nonfinite verb phrase. These correspond to the case where the movement or path denoted by 'to' is not actually followed through but evoked as a goal aimed at by the subject of the main verb. However, the event expressed by the infinitive can also be realized, as in

13. She got to see him.

Here 'get' evokes the general idea of movement, (Gronemeyer, 1999: 35), and this movement is conceived as actually leading to the accomplishment of the infinitive's event, so that the latter is represented as the result of the realization of the

main verb's event. As further examples of the verb complemented by a 'to-infinitive', see the following:

14. The proper expects to find the key in the lock.

15. I am trying to close the door.

Both of the 'to-infinitives,' 'to find' and 'to close' are used as complements of the verb having noun phrases as complements, 'the key' and 'the door' respectively. Huddleston (1988: 63) refers to such verbs as 'catenatives', a term that is derived from 'catenation' meaning 'chaining together', "linking together of speech sounds, syllables, and words by such devices as assimilation, juncture and elision."(Hartmann and Stroke,1972: 33). The construction is recursive in the sense that a non-finite can occur as complement within another, so that the construction may be ended up with a chain of catenative verbs, as in:

16. She wants to try to persuade them to stop drinking so much.

Where the verbs 'want', 'try', 'persuade' and 'stop' are catenatives; 'drinking so much' is the complement of 'stop'; 'to stop drinking so much' is one of the complements of 'persuade', and so on. On the other hand, Tipping (1964: 137) classifies the infinitive, whether full or bare, that follows the main verb in the sentence as object of the sentence, that follows the main verb in the sentence as objects of the sentence as in (17 and 18) and, to Yespersen (1962: 333), some verbs that cannot take an object require a prepositional group combined with 'to' as in (19 and 20) or to have the infinitive as the object of the preposition and the only preposition that is regularly used before the 'to-infinitive' is 'about' to mean 'on the point of' or 'going to' that is replaceable with 'gerund+ preposition' as shown in (16):

17. Learn to do well.

18. I saw him die.

19. I long to see her again.= I long for the sight of her.

20. I don't care to be famous.= I don't care for fame.

21. He was about to retire.= about retiring.

In addition, it is possible to find an indirect object alongside of the infinitive that is the direct object, e.g.:

22. They promised us to refrain from hostilities.

23. Our parents taught us to speak the truth and to fear nothing.

(Yespersen,1962:332)

The infinitival construction may be used in 'open interrogative' as directives in the sense that interrogatives with 'why' are usually used as directives, e.g., 'Why don't you see a doctor?' would often have the force of a suggestion that 'you should'. The same may be done in the form of the infinitival clause of 'why not see a doctor?', or in the use of do in construction with 'be' in 'why don't you be more careful?' (Huddleston,1988:137). Speech act verbs controlling a post-predicate infinitive clause are used to give indirect reports of directives, e.g., commands and requests:

24. I asked the telephone operators to connect me with his friends.

25 . I should have told Walter to let him go. (Biber et. Al, 1999: 7)

Apart from the verbal usage, Hartmann and Stroke(1972:111) state that the infinitive may also be used as a noun or an adverbial or a form of command consider

the following respectively:

26. To see is to believe.

27. He studied hard to pass.

28. The tenant to pay the rates.

In constructions like that, 'be+infinitive', the infinitive is, according to Close(1981:77), a subject complement, as in:

29. Your mistake was to write him that letter.

30. Your mistake was not to write a letter.= You failed to write.

31. Your mistake was not to write that letter but to write so rudely.= you did write: your mistake was to write rudely.

To avoid such confusion, they could be reworded:

32. Your mistake was not so much to write a letter as to write so rudely.

To him (Aronson,1985: 66-7), some verbs can be followed by an object, a noun or a pronoun, plus an infinitive, and some other verbs cannot be followed by a direct object before the infinitive. In this case, the subject performs the infinitive action, as shown respectively:

33. Myron taught his daughter to drive.

34. Jeff refused to sign the contract.

Still other verbs may be used in either of the above ways:

35. The company wants Jody to prepare a financial report.

36. The company wants to send a financial report to its stockholders.

To clarify, see the following three classified types of verbs:

Verbs + infinitive

Afford, agree, arrange, care, consent, decide, demand, deserve, expect, fail, forget, hesitate, hope, know, how, learn, manage, mean, need, offer, plan, pretend, refuse, remember, say, threaten, volunteer, and wish.

Verbs + Object + Infinitive

Advise, allow, cause, challenge, command, convince, encourage, forbid, force, hire, instruct, invite, order, permit, persuade, remind, request, require, teach, tell, urge, warn.

Verb + Infinitive or Verb + Object + Infinitive

Ask, beg, dare, expect, help, like, promise, want, wish, would like.

The verbs taking an object before the infinitive may be changed to passive voice, in which no object is used before the infinitive:

37. The manager required the store clerks to attend a sales meeting.

38. The store clerks were required to attend a sales meeting.

Some of the verbs like hope, decide, agree, pretend, and promise are often followed by a that clause in stead of an infinitive, approximately the same meaning is retained, compare:

39. Miss Ross hopes to find a solution soon.

40. Miss Ross hopes that she can find a solution soon.

Such an option does not work with some verbs, as in:

(wrong) The earthquake caused that the building collapsed.

(right) The earthquake caused the building to collapse.

To Biber et al. (1999: 693), the use of the infinitive depends on the main verb of the sentence in the sense that the verbs taking the 'to-infinitive' in post predicate position can be usefully grouped into ten major semantic classes: speech act verbs, e.g. ask, tell, warn; other communicative verbs, e.g. show, prove; cognition verbs, e.g. assume, consider, expect, find; perception verbs, e.g. feel, see, hear; verbs of desire, e.g. hope, wish, like; verbs of intention or decision, e.g. decide, choose, plan, verbs of effort, e.g. try, manage, fail; verbs of modality or causation, e.g. help, let, persuade, get; aspectual verbs, e.g. start, continue, cease, verbs of existence/occurrence, some with a probability meaning, e.g. seem, happen, turn out. To clarify how the main verb determines the use of the infinitive, Biber et al.(ibid: 694), present five patterns of the infinitive clause in post predicate position as shown below:

Pattern 1: Verb + To-Clause

(try, hope)

1. . I'm just trying to get away early.

Pattern 2: Verb + NP + To- Clause

(tell, believe, enable, expect)

42. It enables the farmer to maintain uniform and near constant conditions in the house.

Pattern 3: Verb + for NP + To- Clause

(ask, love, arrange, wait)

43. Hire a Daily Mirror van and wait for Mrs. Jones to arrive.

Pattern 4: Verb + Bare-Infinitive Clause

(dare, help, let)

44. Thirteen thousands Ovambos on strike, that time, and the police didn't dare touch them because of United Nations.

Pattern 5: Verb + NP + Bare Infinitive Clause
(have, feel, help)

45. I'll have just do it.

Moreover, other grammarians analyze the use of the infinitive in comparison with the use of the gerund depending on the idea that there are certain verbs that accept either or both as in:

1. . Gerund or Infinitive

Come + Gerund

This construction is like other verbs of movement followed by the gerund that refers to the idea that the subject is the doer of the action while moving:

46. She came running across the field.

Come + To-infinitive

This construction is used to mean that something happens or develops, perhaps outside the subject's control:

47. At first I thought he was crazy, but I've come to appreciate his humour.

Go on + Gerund:

This construction is resorted to referring to the continuity of an action:

48. He went on speaking for two hours.

Go on + To- infinitive:

This is to express the idea that there is an action to do next:

49. After introducing her proposal, she went on to explain the benefits for the company.

Mean + Gerund:

It expresses the result of an action:

50. If you take that job in London, it will mean traveling for tow hours every day.

Mean + To-infinitive:

It means an intention or a plan:

1. . I mean to finish this job by the end of the week.

Stop + Gerund

It means to finish an action in progress

52. I stopped working for them because the wages were so low.

Stop + To-Infinitive:

It refers to the idea of interrupting an activity in order to do something else, so the infinitive is used to express a purpose:

53. I stopped to have launch.= I was working, or traveling, and I interrupted what I was doing in order to eat.

Try + Gerund:

This is to mean experiment with an action that might be a solution to a problem:

54. If you have problems sleeping, you could try doing some yoga before you go bed,or you could try drinking some warm milk.

Try + To- infinitive:

It means to take an effort to do something:

55. I can't get in touch with Carl. Have you tried to mail him?

Forget, Regret and Remember + Gerund

The use of this construction is to mean an action happened earlier:

56. I remember locking the door.= I remember now, I locked the door earlier.

57. He regretted speaking so rudely.= He regretted at sometime in the past, he had spoken rudely at some earlier time in the past.

To refer to the simple future form, 'forget' is frequently used with never:

58. I'll never forget meeting the Queen.

When these verbs are followed by full-infinitive to refer to an action happening at the same time:

59. I remembered to lock the door. = I thought about it, then I did it.

60. Don't forget to buy some eggs.= Please think about it and then do it.

2. Gerund or Infinitive:

In some constructions the 'to' has more or less the meaning of direction towards an aim, either the infinitive or the gerund is used:

61. He is accustomed to use/ using his left hand.

62. With a view to facilitate/ facilitating research.

63. I have no object to mention/ mentioning names.

For Biber et. Al (1999: 707), the verb 'try', like other verbs of effort, e.g., attempt, manage, and fail, are notably common and grammatically constrained occurring only in the pattern: Verb + To- Clause:

64. I'm just trying to get away early.

To be more formal, the infinitive is used rather than the gerund in certain situations similarly after the adjective, as in

1. . Unworthy to take his place= unworthy taking his place. (Yesperson,1962:333)

Conversely, some grammatical patterns occur only with a restricted set of semantic categories.. In addition, individual verbs can follow different patterns. It is noted that the verb 'help' takes four of the five possible grammatical constructions or patterns. The verb 'ask' and 'mean' can occur in any of the four structural patterns with a To-Clause:

Verb + To- Clause

66. We can always ask to put them away for a week.

Verb + NP + To-Clause

67.He should ask the Prime Minister to open negotiation to enter the Exchange Rate Mechanism.

Be + Verb-ed + To-Clause

68. European transport ministers meeting in Paris will today be asked to approve radical plans for tax and financial incentives.

Verb + for + NP + To – Clause

1. . To continue the parallel, Mr. Crosby will probably ask for Liverpool to take their appointed place at Wembley next month.

The verbs choose, desire, expect, need, prefer, promise, want, and wish occur in two patterns:

Verb + To-Clause/ Verb + NP + To-Clause:

70. I don't want to have a broken nose!

71. I don't want that dog to come in.

Similarly, verbs such as arrange, long, agree, and consent occur in two patterns:

Verb + To-Clause/ Verb + for NP+ To-Clause:

72. Are you planning to eat that tray?

73. They must be able to plan for sufficient waste management capacity to serve their industrial base.

The verb 'dare' can control either a full or bare-Infinitive:

74. I don't think she would dare say anything to me about it.

75. He no longer dared to irrigate the entire acre, or the greenness of new grass would betray him.

Finally, many verbs take only one of the grammatical patterns. For example, verbs such as aim, decline, hope, refuse, regret, attempt, fail, and try occur only in the pattern verb + to – clause. Verbs such as tell, urge, warn, imagine, trust, allow, authorize, enable, permit, and persuade occur only in the pattern verb + NP + to-clause or the corresponding passive (Biber et al., 1999: 709-10).

The frequencies of specific verbs with infinitive clauses can be explained by a combination of factors, including the communicative importance of the semantic domain, whether the verb can only be complemented by an infinitive clause, bare-infinitive or gerund depending on the differences in meaning that can be conveyed with the different types of complementation. Many semantic classes allow only a restricted set of patterns. Perception verbs mainly take bare infinitive clauses, as in "I saw the train leave the station" that denotes the whole action, while in "I saw the train leaving the station" indicates that the activity is in progress. Such verbs are problematic in the sense that there many other verbs associated in meaning e.g., catch, spot, find, discover, and smell but none is followed by an infinitive. They may be followed by an object+gerund, e.g., "He caught the boys fighting.". Verbs of effort and aspectual verbs occur only in the verb + to – clause construction that are instances of subject to subject raising.

As the sphere of utility of the infinitive and the gerund are about the same, to Yespersen (1962:329-30), it is not to be wondered at that there is a good deal of overlapping, though in many cases idiomatic usage allows only one construction; only the gerund is permitted after avoid, resist, have done, give up, postpone, and only the infinitive after wish, hope, etc. But both constructions are found after, begin, continue, omit, prefer. Sometimes there is a difference:

76. I remember seeing him= past happening.

77. You must remember to call on him.

78. I hate lying(the vice in general).

79. I hate to lie. = myself, in this particular case.

The to-infinitive phrase is consequently similar to the gerundive –ing in that both evoke an event as a whole. What distinguishes them is the fact that the –ing evokes the totality of what is involved in an event (i.e., an inside view), whereas the to-infinitive phrase views an event from the outside, evoking the latter as the end point of a movement leading up to its actualization. In the case of the –ing, the actualization of the event is not at issue, but rather the event is seen in and for itself.

80. I prefer to live in an apartment.

81. I prefer living in apartment.

82. Your proposals deserve being considered in detail.

83. These ideas deserve discussing.=to be discussed.

When the meaning is general, the verbs hate, love, like, prefer, are usually followed by a gerund and by a to-infinitive when they refer to a particular time or situation. It is obligatory to use to-infinitive with the expressions 'would love to', 'would hate to', etc. To refer to the future action or state, it is possible to use the to-infinitive, consider the following:

84. The best item on the programme is still to come.
85. If we are to win this match, we must all do our very best.
86. It was 1491. Columbus was to reach America a year later.

'Be to' can be used to serve the same communicative function or to express a command or prohibition regarding future action or to refer to a future in the hand of fate as shown respectively:

87. The Prime Minister is to speak on television this evening.
88. You are not to stand here.
89. I do not know what is to happen to us. (Close, 1981: 70)

There are certain verbs like expect, help, promise, want and hope refer to the future as seen from the present as in:

90. I hope to see you.

Where the subject of both, hope and see, is the same. If different, this construction, hope to see, cannot be used. Instead, the following is used:

91. I hope (that) you will see him this evening.

Or

92. I hope that I/ you saw the right man. (Close,1981:71)

Moreover, the future can be seen from the past in constructions like, "I hoped to see you" where 'see' refers to the future in the past as a shift in tense. To be compared with hope, expect, promise followed by the infinitive to refer to the future, the perfect infinitive stands for the future perfect as in:

93. I hope/ expect/ promise that I will have read or to have read this book by next Tuesday .

To refer to a habit or a course of action that is liked or disliked, the to-infinitive preceded by like, hate, prefer, consider:

94. I like to go for a walk on Sundays.
95. I hate to see you cry.
96. I prefer to go to bed early.

But such verbs can be followed by the -ing, when emphasis is on the activity rather than on the habit, e.g.

97. I like going for a walk.= I am content when I am walking.

Followed by 'would', then the following to-infinitive does refer to a future action or state, as in

98. Would you like go for a walk?
Yes, I would like to (go for a walk). (Close,1981:74)

To replace 'I hope', 'I'm longing' can be used, but it cannot replace 'I tell' in I tell you to go. But 'long', like some other verbs, can serve a different kind of meaning; once more referring to the future:

99. We're longing for you to come here again.

Where the infinitive is used to frequently express purpose, indicating that one action will follow another. To Tipping (1964: 137), the 'to' itself carries the sense of purpose, a preposition meaning 'for or for the purpose of' that is gradually lost its prepositional force to become simply a sign of the infinitive. To strengthen its force, the preposition 'to' is used with a preceding 'for' e.g., Simson went a fishing for to catch a whale. As a more elaborate expression of 'purpose + consequent action', the infinitive can be preceded by 'so as' or 'in order to' to avoid confusion with other uses of the infinitive, compare the following:

100. Some people refuse or hesitate to say what they think.
101. Some speakers hesitate so as or in order to talk to me after the lecture.
102. The lecturer stopped talking at last.
103. He stopped so as or in order to talk to me after the lecture

The idea of consequence can also be presented by the use of the infinitive after the adjective, as in

104. Walter was too weak to or not strong enough to climb the wall.

Such a sort of a construction can be reworded using 'so or such...as + full-infinitive' to give the same sense. This construction, to Tipping(1964: 138), serves to express the sense of result, e.g.:

105. The bombardment was so tremendous as to be heard in London.
106. He was so weak as / in such a state as to be able unable even to feed himself.
(Close, 1981: 75)

Conversely, the infinitive can be used to express unexpected consequence in

107. He went home to find his old friend George waiting for him.

The infinitive 'to find' could be replaced by 'and found', and what he found was pleasant. To express what is unexpectedly unpleasant is shown in the following:

108. He went home (only) to find his house in the ruins.

Related to the use of the infinitive of purpose is the infinitive is that of result or to obtain a result:

109. She worked suddenly to find someone standing in the doorway with a candle.
110. He needed only a few words to be convinced.
111. To be effective, a poem must be beautiful. (Yesperson, 1962:338)

To Biber et al. (1999:706), perception verbs are a special subset of mental verbs that represent sense perception rather than other mental states or attitudes. This category includes, feel, hear, see and watch that are used with either the bare infinitive or –ing with a difference in meaning according to the linguistic situation, as in

112. I saw that man break the window. = I saw the complete act.
113. I watched the fishermen hauling their boats up onto the shore. = I saw while the activity continued.
114. Did you hear a dog bark. = give one bark.
115. I heard that dog barking all night. = going on barking.
116. I didn't notice you raise your hand. = complete act.
117. But I noticed several people leaving the room. = I noticed them while they were on their way out.

The distinction is comparable to that between progressive aspect, with – ing and non-progressive aspect that is indicated by the use of the infinitive. Moreover, sometimes the verb of the sentence is complemented by the 'to-infinitive' or any other non-finite forms like ing- or a noun phrase, consider the following respectively:

118. She wants to leave the country. (Huddleston, 1988:63)
119. He continued singing. (Young, 1984:43)
120. She has left the country. (Huddleston, 1988:63)

To Aronson(1985:63), the infinitive in (121) is used to complete the meaning of the verb. On the other hand, both Close(1981:77) and Tipping(1964:137) consider the infinitive as an object to the verb of the sentence, as in

121. The child started to cry. (Aronson,1985:63)
122. Learn to do well.

123. I hope to see you.

(Close,1981:77)

As far as the use of bare-infinitive is concerned, to Close(1981:69), bare-infinitives occur with some verbs of modality or causation; subject to subject raising only with verbs of probability or simple fact. It follows the modals like will, shall, can, may, etc., and also need and dare when they are used as modals. It also follows had better, had best, would, or had rather, would sooner, and might(just) as well: e.g.

124. We'd better try again.= I think we should.

125. You'd best try again. = this is now rather old-fashioned.

126. I'd rather or sooner stop now. = I'd prefer to stop now.

127. We might (just) write as well walk.

What is more is that 'had better' etc. can be followed by the progressive infinitive, as in 'We 'd better be going', but cannot be negated, though we can negate the infinitive, e.g. 'We 'd better not stop', 'I 'd rather not wait.' ' We might just as well not have a car at all'. To suggest or to make some sort of facilitation or causation, four verbs taking bare infinitive are used to do that: 'let's' or formally 'let us' , consider:" Let us go.= I suggest we go, have, help, and make." Close(1981:70) adds saying that it is also possible to use the bare infinitive after the verb hear (tell), as in:

128. Will you help carry this trunk.

129. We must make do= manage

130. Men have heard tell= have heard stories of strange land far away to the west.

If understood, the infinitive can be omitted after 'let' and 'make' e.g., "Please let us. Do not make me." With 'why' and 'why not' it is also possible to use the bare infinitive, e.g. "Why worry? Why not relax?" and after 'rather than' which can also be followed by the -ing:

131. Let's finish the job now rather than leave / leaving it till tomorrow.

(Close, 1981:70)

1.2 Infinitive in English Language Learning

Teaching grammar does not imply the idea of mastering the grammatical rules of the language being taught. This implies the idea that the word grammar is not simply a function of the class that a word belongs to in the sense that a word can have its own unique grammatical profile. Therefore, using a language depends not only upon a knowledge of structure but also upon the context in which the language is used. Speaking and writing imply the idea that both semantics and syntax work together to transmit meaning. This is often the case for the infinitive that is used differently according to the preceding or controlling verb and the context of situation which the speaker is in. The source of problem or difficulty in using the infinitive as a verb complement lies in the fact that EFL learners fail to recognize that some of the verbs should sometimes be followed by the gerund not the infinitive according to the semantic content the speaker is after. The English verb 'suggest' can be followed by an '-ing' form, e.g. 'I suggest leaving now' but not an infinitive; the converse is true of 'expect'. Words, then, may contain a lot of grammar. Being difficult for learners to master all the verbs and their complementation patterns, the focus on the form regardless of all other aspects of language use is of a limited and specific objective. This implies the idea that teaching English has to be built on the form, that is represented by the verb and its complementation, and the context of use. In other words, it is a matter of language awareness; it is axiomatic that the problem be first encountered in a meaningful context. It is form and function that should be focused on, as in:

132. She objected to working overtime.

133. He succeeded in passing the test.

Here, one would want students to infer the fact of the presence of the propositions triggers gerund complementation. They should then be in position to detect and correct errors such as: *We look forward to see the show. However, when it comes to accounting for verbal complementation it is not entirely satisfactory. It is suggested that the one should go beyond the form-focused instruction to meaning-focused instruction depending on the semantic properties of verbs. Learners should be aware of factivity that is one of these semantic properties to enable learners to predict the type of complement that can be selected. Factivity refers to the idea that the information contained in the complement is true. To Kirby(1987:24), it is in contrast with the mere assertion or assumption. Factive verbs are complemented by gerund or that clause, while the non-factive ones are complemented by the infinitive, e.g.,

134. He resented paying the bill.

135. He hoped to visit China.

To avoid the problem that learners may face in distinguishing which of the verbs is factive and which is not, one can say that the reference of the complement with the factive verbs is to an event that happened prior to the action of the matrix verb, as in:

136. She admitted hitting the child.

Here, it is possible to say that, according to factivity, the 'hitting' action clearly took place before 'admitting'. Kirby (1987:38) adds saying "the likelihood of having a gerundive complement is closely bound up with the degree of factivity inherent in the matrix verb.". The same is in the verbs that take both the infinitive and the gerund constructions indicating some sort of difference in meaning, see the following:

137. He stopped smoking.

138. He stopped to smoke.

Where the first refers to the idea that the man has kicked the habit of smoking while the second conveys the message that the man stopped what he was doing in order to have a cigarette.

The second semantic property that teachers should depend on in clarifying the appropriate use of the infinitive as a verb complement. To do that, the use of the infinitive should be compared with that of the gerund. The gerund implies actuality and 'fulfillment'. It is associated with verbs expressing the idea of activity, action, or event. Action verbs refer to verbs like avoid, enjoy, detest, etc.

Using Bolinger's term (1968:119-127),to Quirk et al. (1985, 1191), the infinitive implies 'potentiality' or 'yet unrealized activities'as Dixon (1984: 590) refers to. Verbs expressing potentiality include wish, hope, want, etc., as in:

139. We enjoyed reading books.

140. We expect to arrive at 6pm. (Quirk et al., 1972: 825)

The third criterion that may enable learners to decide whether the infinitive or gerund to be the verb complement is implication. Verbs can have positive or negative implication. Where the implication is positive , it is possible to use infinitival construction, e.g., caused, persuaded, force, encourage, convince, etc.; where negative, gerundive complements are possible to use, e.g., prevented, prohibited, dissuaded, discouraged, etc. To clarify, see the following:

141. We forced them to try it.

142. We stopped them from doing it.

Where the former refers to the idea that the agent of the matrix verb successfully manipulates the subject of the lower verb into acting in the required way while the latter

means the agent of the matrix verb successfully prevents the action from taking place. But this does not mean all verbs are scaled in this way; i.e. there will be one or more that may be used in a deviant way. For instance, the verb 'forbid' does not keep pace with the pattern: negative impicator +object+ to-infinitive, e.g., "I forbade him to use my car." Thus, 'forbid' is to be an 'effect verb', those verbs that exert some manipulative force on the lower agent and they are known as 'suasive verbs' in functional grammar (Wilkins, 1976: 46-8), comparable to 'persuade', 'convince', etc.

Because of the overlap between the use of the gerund and the infinitive as verb complements in the verb + complement structures, it is a problem for EFL learners not to produce errors in recognizing which verb to be followed by which.

To support what is stated earlier regarding the use of the infinitive as a verb complement in English, the researcher has tested a number of EFL learners in recognizing the use of the infinitive according to the head verb where some of those verbs accept only the infinitive, full or bare, and some accept both of the infinitive and the gerund.

1.3 Methods

1.3.1 Sample

To verify what is hypothesized, the study is built on a test given to fifty fourth year EFL learners at the Department of English, College of Education, University of Al-Qadisiya. The sample is of homogeneous population for being taught the same EFL grammar textbooks and by the same professors and under the same conditions.

1.3.2 Design

The test is a form-based test to keep pace with what the EFL learners, the sample, are used to having; i.e. the form-based instruction of English. It is designed in a way, a multiple choice test, that verifies EFL learners' proficiency, that is concerned with the relationship between language control and a particular use of language. To Davies,2006: 7), in recognizing the use of the infinitive whether bare or full as a verb complement that is overlapped with the use of the gerund as a problematic area out of the context of use or without knowing the semantic properties of the controlling or head verb. The study aims at analyzing subjects' recognition of the use of the infinitive compared with that of the gerund out of the context.

1.3.3 Procedures

The data of the test are built on items of multiple choices, that were selected and given in a way to serve the aim of the study, providing learners with a good opportunity to recognize the use of the infinitive according to the preceding verb. The test is composed of two questions, each of which is of ten items. The first is composed of sentences with a missing verb complement that learners should fill in while the second includes a number of verbs out of the sentence to which they select the appropriate verb complement.

1.3.4 Error Analysis

Analyzing errors made by the language learner paves the way to determine areas that need reinforcement in teaching (Corder, 1974:52). According to Richards and Sampson (1974: 15), "... error analysis will continue to provide one means by which the teacher assesses learning and teaching and determines priorities for further effort." Having a multiple-choice test, the best way to discriminate learners, whether they have a difficulty in recognizing the use of the infinitive as a verb complement or not, is to apply "item discrimination". Item analysis shows how difficult each item is; i.e., learners face a problem to answer the item properly discriminating the high from the low learners in the test. The avoided items are considered as errors in performing what is required. Item analysis also

shows whether the distracters working as they should or not. To analyze errors made by the sample of the present study, the researcher has scored the test as a whole arranging them in order from the highest scores to the lowest ones. To get the level of difficulty in using the infinitive as a complement, the researcher has done the following:

$$\frac{\text{High Correct} + \text{Low Correct}}{\text{Total Number in Sample}} \text{ or } \frac{H_c + L_c}{N} \quad (\text{Madsen,1983:181})$$

As models for error analysis, in (6), Would you like ----- my stamps?, shows the problematic use of the infinitive after the head verb 'like' that should be complemented by infinitive, as in the choice 'B', to express the sense of futurity in this sentence; the hearer has not yet experienced seeing the stamps.

$$\frac{12 + 19}{50} = \frac{31}{50} = \% 62$$

(% 62) of the sample were unable to recognize the use of the infinitive choosing 'A' , seeing, as a gerundive complement to the verb 'like'. Following the same way of measure, an identical error has been identified, substitution, where (% 69) of the subjects substituted the gerund form in (7), I finally completed ----- my thesis., for the gerund in the sense that the head verb is 'completed' in the past implying the idea that choice 'C' is correct to use not 'B', 'to write'. Similarly, in item (10), We struggled ----- her point of view., where (% 76) failed to recognize the correct use of the infinitive as a verb complement, though the head verb, 'struggle' is in the past, the infinitive, to understand, choice 'A', is correct to use referring to the sense of futurity in the past. Item (8), How can anyone bear ----- clothes like that?, shows how difficult for learners to recognize the use of the gerund, choice 'A', 'wearing' that refers to the process, as a verb complement of the head verb 'bear' not the infinitive, choice 'D', 'to wear', where (% 71) wrongly chose 'D'.

As far as distracters evaluation is concerned, it is obvious that distracters containing gerunds are more attractive than others to most of the subjects who participated in the test of the present study. This gives the indication that such distracters in this kind of study are good to use. The cause behind such a high choice, the gerund not other kinds of verb complements, lies in the fact that most of the head verbs in English accept both of the infinitive and the gerund as a verb complement with a sort of difference in the communicative value or content that is hard for EFL learners to notice or recognize.

Moreover, the second part of the test, implying the idea that EFL learners have to decide which verb complement is appropriate to use with certain verbs out of the sentence, shows that those verbs which accept both, the infinitive and the gerund, are easy to decide while those which should be followed by one of the two verb complements are difficult. To clarify, most of the subjects, (% 63), were able to decide correctly which verb complement to use after the verbs 'regret', item (6), and 'forget', item (7), in the sense that both of the complements are grammatically acceptable to use out of the context of use. On the contrary, (% 25) of the subjects succeeded in choosing the gerund after the verbs 'avoid', item (8), and 'admit', item (1) for being verbs that should be followed by the gerund only. This leads the one to say that these verbs are not amenable to be listed in the grammar textbooks for EFL learners to memorize. Listing of verbs provide learners with futile attempts to actively participate in the learning process and valuable communication.

As far as the source of errors is concerned, it is possible to say that the above mentioned errors are independent of the subjects' native language, in other words, they are due to the language being learned, target language. According to Richards (1974: 6), such errors are " items produced by the learner which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue,

but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language." The learner, in this case, derives the rules behind the data to which s/he has been exposed, and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language. Such errors are referred to as 'intralingual or developmental errors' that implying the erroneous or incomplete rule application.

At last, according to Harris (1969: 21), the test of the present study proves to be valid measuring what is aimed at. It is also reliable producing essentially the same results consistently for being repeated twice, keeping the conditions of the test relatively the same, for verifying EFL learners' proficiency in recognizing the use of the infinitive as a verb complement.

1.3.5 Results and Significance

In terms of the analysis of the errors committed in using the infinitive as a verb complement, the tendency of errors is due to the ambiguity of using this construction for being overlapped with the gerund as a verb complement in English and the lack of knowledge of the communicative function of each on behalf of the learners, or because of the lack of the input. To Krashen (1985:), the learner needs sufficient comprehensible input in order to acquire the language. To avoid confusion, that leads learners to face a difficulty, such overlapping constructions must not be presented or taught in a lumping way. They should be taught contextually. This implies the idea that drills and exercises providing no information necessary to the communicative message are of no value. Accordingly, learners' exposure to various contexts of using the infinitive construction, as with all other aspects of the language use, in the complement position is the best way to overcome the sense of confusing with other constructions and to know the basic meaning that is appropriate with the given verb in a given context. It is significant for learners to be aware of the fact that the use of language from which the use of the infinitive is a part does not only mean knowing the linguistic forms and their associative meaning, but also the context and the participants' world and intentions in communication. Consequently, it is important for the instructor to predict and understand learners' errors and to know how to go beyond the barrier of teaching isolated grammatical structures to create a linguistically competent learner.

Conclusion

According to the subjects' error analysis, the study confirms the idea that the use of the full-infinitive represents a difficult area for EFL learners to deal with for being remarkably overlapped with that of the gerund, as a verb complement particularly with those verbs that accept both as complements in certain contexts. This reflects the fact that context is of a significant role in the interpretation of utterances. Accordingly, teaching English must be built on exercises and drills that enable EFL learners to understand and recognize the semantic relations among the linguistic forms in utterances and to form messages that are coherent to the context of use.

To be pedagogically valuable and to avoid the sense of confusion with other forms as verb complements, instructors have to teach the infinitive deepening on what precedes, the catenative use of the linguistic forms, and the constrains of the given communicative situation.

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الخلاصة

الاستخدام المُشكّل للمصدر في اللغة الانكليزية

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقصي "الاستخدام المشكّل للمصدر" بوصفه ملحق للفعل في بنية فعل الجملة الانكليزية، بعيداً عن موقف الاستخدام اللغوي في التواصل، وقد ارتكزت الدراسة على تحليل نتائج الاختبار لاختبار من متعدد مبني على الاستخدام البنوي من دون الإشارة إلى نظيره الوظيفي لمتعلمي اللغة الانكليزية في كلية التربية / جامعة القادسية بعدهم عينة لمتعلمي هذه اللغة بوصفها لغة

أجنبية ، إن تصميم المناهج وطرائق التدريس المتبعة في تدريس اللغة الانكليزية مثلت المسوغ الحقيقي لاختيار الاختبار بهذا الشكل بغية إثبات عدم الجدوى والفشل في اعداد متعلمين ذوي قدرة على الخلق اللغوي الهادف طبقاً إلى الموقف اللغوي (التواصلي أو الوظيفي).

