A Case Study of Question Formations of the Saudi EFL Learners at Bisha University

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Abstract

This paper has studied the question formation techniques used by the Saudi students at Bisha University. It addresses the problems faced by the students in forming questions in English. The study has identified that a large number of the students suffer from the lack of proper grammar rules in forming various types of interrogative sentences and also from the intense mother tongue interferences. The research has attempted to discover the degree of the students' difficultness/difficulties in forming questions and analyses the various types of their problems. The paper has also correlated the problems in the area, and the syllabus, the materials, tasks, and methodology prescribed. To achieve this objective, a questionnaire based survey has been used as a research tool to obtain data from both the girls' and boys' colleges of the University of Bisha. The survey comprised students' questionnaire and the tests based on Wh- questions and yes-no question formations in English. The survey has identified that most of the students had problems in forming interrogative sentences due to the mother tongue interferences. The study has also highlighted a few major problems, for instances, the syllabus is indifferent to the needs of the students, and not enough emphasis is done specifically on the English question formation aspect of the grammar. The author concluded the study with the hope that the educationalists and other stakeholders realize that no course is fruitful unless: 1). It is interesting, 2). It effects a progressive change in the ability level of the learners, and 3). It helps the students to use their potentiality to the optimum level.

Keywords: grammar, ELT, EFL, mother tongue interference, Saudi learners, question formations

1. Introduction

This study has focused on undergraduate students of Bachelor Program, English Department in two colleges (Girls' College & College of science and Arts) at University of Bisha. This study was carried out to examine how the learners of English in the two colleges use and write effective questions in English syntactic structures, namely wh-questions and yes-no questions which the students studied in their colleges in the Grammar course 1.

This study has tried to find out the reasons why students make mistakes when forming the different types of English questions. This study was also undertaken with the intention of investigating the current syllabus, materials, tasks and methodology of teaching / learning of English question formations in the Grammar Course1.

The number of respondents of this study 80 is eighty (boys& girls) and they were selected randomly for the study. Actually, question formations in general and English Question formations in Particular are the corner stone around which all communication, interaction and activities between the teachers and their students take place at each and every stage of teaching / learning processes.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study were to:

1)   investigate problems and difficulties college students face in writing effective English questions .

2)   examine the adequacy of the syllabus in the Grammar Course 1 for the teaching / learning English questions formation.

3)   investigate the appropriateness of the current teaching materials and to find out the effectiveness of the writing tasks in teaching English questions in the Grammar Course 1.

4)   to find out the reasons why college students make mistakes in English question formations.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Definition of Question Formation

According to a dictionary definition, a question is a sentence which by word-order use of interrogative words (who, what, why, etc) or intonation, requests, information, an answer, etc… it is something about which there is discussion, something which needs to be decided (Hornby, 1987). According to Richards et al. (1985), a question is a sentence which is addressed to a listener / reader and asks for an expression of fact, opinion, belief, etc. in English, questions may be formed.

1). by the use of a question word, such as 'what', 'how', 'when', 'where', 'why'

2). by the use of an operator in the first position in a sentence, as in: can she come?

3). through the use of intonation, as in: she isn't married?

4). by the use of a question tag, such as; Mary is a student, isn't she?

In the classroom, questions have a number of purposes. For instance, they can be used to:

• acquire and clarify information, answer concerns, and develop skills,

• provide motivation by encouraging active participation in learning,

• lead students to consider new ideas and make use of ideas already learned,

• help students to clarify ideas, structure their study and learn about things that interest them,

• provoke students and teachers to share ideas they have, and help teachers assess the effectiveness of their own teaching. (Kissock & Iyortsuun, 1984)

In this case, questioning is one of the most important teaching devices. The acquisition of a good style of questioning may be laid down definitely as one of good questioning teacher. The way teachers cultivate students in the classroom highly influences both the learners, and the society at large. Questioning techniques, i.e. a procedure or way of phrasing or posing or forwarding questions / problems, to students should be presented in a way students can understand. English question formation constitutes a serious learning difficulty that Arab learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) face (Mukattash, 1981; Al-Mekhlafi, 1999; Umale, 2011). Questions according to Farrant (1994) also serve two purposes:

• to test what has been learnt.For this purpose the four interrogatives – 'who','what','where', and' when' are generally used.

• to stimulate thought and lead to a deeper understanding . In this case, the interrogatives 'how', and 'why' are more often used.

According to Jacobson, et. al. (1989:134) by asking students questions which begin with phrases such as 'whydo you suppose…. ?' and 'How does the … ?', the teacher pushes the students beyond a rote memory exercise and promotes critical thinking skill of the learners. Such thinking skills have eminent importance to them.

1.2.2 Problems in Learning English Question Formations

The wh-words, yes-no questions and tag-questions in Arabic displays flexibility and not rigid in terms of its placement and its construction, where as in English question words and its construction are rigid in terms of their syntactic positions. Besides, English and Arabic employ different processes in forming the different types of questions and that's why most of the college students make mistakes in forming the different types of English questions. Some of the factors which also influence the teaching / learning English language in general and English questions formation in particular include, large class, lack of exposure, inadequate syllabus, improper teaching materials, tasks and methodology.

1.2.3 Large Class Size

The English language classroom is a place where the foreign language learners are encouraged to involve in different communicative activities. However, there are many problems in the observed English language classes of the College of Science and Arts, University of Bisha. According to scholars in ELT like: Doff (2002), Cook (2001) and Tickoo (2003) large class size leaves hardly any room for free communicative activities such as information gap or problem solving tasks, especially those which require moving around or passing message to one another. Therefore, large class size seems to affect communicative language teaching; because it challenges the use of different classroom modes in which students carry out the communicative activities in language classroom. Thus, large class size problems are factors that contribute for the poor performance in learning the different types of English questions formation in particular and English language itself in general at the

undergraduate level. Many educational authorities agree on simple concepts that language classrooms should not exceed 25 students.

1.2.4 Lack of Motivation in Learning the Target Language

Motivation is the factor that determines a person's desire to do something. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972) two types of motivation are distinguished : 1) instrumental motivation : This is wanting to learn a language because it will be useful for certain instrumental goals, such as getting a job, reading a foreign newspaper, or passing an examination. 2) integrative motivation : This involves wanting to learn a language in order to communicate with people of another culture who speak it.

In this connection, the college students have not been motivated in either of the two types of motivation in learning the target language. The students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia learn the English language for nearly more than six years, in primary schools, intermediate schools, and secondary schools.However, the result of this many years of teaching / learning English is rather fruitless. Most of the students are not even able to express themselves in the target language properly. They even find it difficult to write correct different types of questions in English. This implies that college students at the University of Bisha are not motivated enough in learning English language in general and questions formation in particular.

It is believed that in any given classroom situation, just as much attention should be given to grammar as may be necessary in order to promote efficient language learning.The teaching of grammar is seen not as an end in itself, but as a useful aid in helping students to achieve the practical mastery of the language.

1.2.5 Lack of Exposure

A major problem with the Saudi English as a foreign language learner who struggles inside the typical Saudi EFL classroom to learn English is that she/he doesn't start by listening to a lot of English being used in natural communication situations all-around him/her as a native English speaking child does. In foreign language learning situations students do not have ample opportunity for practicing English language. The only chance they have is during the English in the classroom. Even this is mostly covered by the teacher talk.

1.2.6 English Question Formations

In this section, the researcher dealt with only two types of question formations in English, namely Wh-questions and Yes-no questions in which the students were tested.These two types are briefly discussed below.

1.2.6.1 Wh-Questions

Wh-questions in English seeking for a specific piece of information and are formed with the help of an interrogative pronouns such as who, where, what, when, why etc. These interrogative pronouns are the most commonly used in Arabic (Syed, 1998). In wh-questions, the speaker wants to know the identity of some elements, for instance, the subject, the object, the location, the time, etc. Let us look at the following wh-questions:

1)   Who has gone to Saudi Arabia?

2)   Where has your friend gone?

In the questions, the wh-words that refer to the person who has gone to Saudi Arabia and the place where the person has gone occur in sentence initial position.

1.2.6.2 Yes-no Questions

Yes-no questions are called 'polar' because the answer is given in the form of one of the two poles – positive or negative. They are also called closed questions because the possibilities of an expected answer are only two – yes or no. If we want to transfer a statement into a yes- no question, we apply the inversion rule and displace the auxiliary verb from its original position and place it before the subject, then we add, a question mark at the end of the sentence, as shown below:

- Ali is going to University of Bisha tomorrow.   It becomes   - Is Ali going to university of Bisha tomorrow? Yes-no questions can be formed with 'do' support. If statements do not have a modal or an auxiliary verb, we have to apply the 'do' support rule during transformation the statements into yes-no questions. For example:

-Ali went to Bisha University yesterday.   It becomes   - Did Ali go to Bisha University yesterday?

- Ali goes to college early.   It becomes   - Does Ali go to college early?

- Saad and Ali love Indian films very much.   It becomes   - Do Saad and Ali love Indian films very much?

1.2.7 Definition of a Syllabus

Syllabuses are concerned with the specification and planning of what is to be learned, frequently it is set down in some written forms as prescriptions for action by teachers and learners (Candline, 1984).

1.2.8 Communicative Syllabus

Shaw (1982) groups communicative syllabuses into three categories:

1) A situational or contextual syllabus: This syllabus type could be confused with what Widdoson (1986) calls a "contextually aided structure approach", but it relates to what is called a "contextual method". Wilkins (1976) criticizes a situational approach on the ground that for more purposes it would be uneconomical, since the learner has no basis for transferring what he has learnt in one situation to other situations.

2) A topical or thematic syllabus: A number of writers have put forward the idea of using topics or themes as an organizing principle of course design and therefore of syllabus development. Hawkes (1983) and Cook (2001) speak of topics related to this area. Hawkes (1983) writes that "content is crucial" and that he and his associates plan to construct their course out of topics and aspects of topics.We may conclude with a great amount of certainty, that while topics are an important element in the syllabus, it is unlikely that the idea of utilizing them as the sole organizing device would be encouraged.

3) A "notional" (functional) syllabus: The Council of Europe Project has played a crucial role towards the development of 'the idea of notions'. Wilkins (1976) speakes in favour of the notional syllabus by stating that, "it takes the communicative facts of language into account from the beginning without losing sight of grammatical and situational factors. It is superior to the situational syllabus because it can ensure that the most important grammatical forms are included and because it can cover all kinds of language functions, not only those that typically occur in certain situations".

1.2.9 Inadequate Syllabus

A language syllabus is a part of the general curriculum and it is an educational document. It directs progress and indicates destination. Hence, to serve this purpose, it needs to be adequate (complete)in containing the requirements as a guide for the teaching /learning progress, relevant/suitable to the situation it intends to serve, and effectivein producing yielding expected learning outcomes. Experts in language teaching and learning such as Corder (1975), Wilkins (1976), Widdowson (1983), Stern (1983), Yalden (1983), White (1988) and Richards (1990) share the view that a curriculum indicates an overview of the educational cultural philosophy which appeals across subjects, provides a broad description of general goals and thereby deals with the totality of a content to be taught in schools or educational system. However, each of the objectives of the English language syllabus both in high schools and colleges is very broad and vague. The ultimate aim of language teaching is to develop students' communicative ability so that they can use the language at ease and with confidence. Therefore, the present day English syllabus should focus on communicative English to attain this aim.

1.2.10 Communicative Materials

Materials in a communicative instructional system have the primary function of promoting communicative language use. Hence, practitioners view the Communicative Language Teaching Materials as a mode to ensure the quality of classroom interaction and language. Richards and Rodgers (1986) discuss three kinds of materials used and they are as follows: 1) Text-based materials. 2) Task-based materials. 3) Realia.

1.2.11 Inadequate English Language Teaching Materials

Teaching materials or instructional materials are resources that, if used properly, can assist a teacher in bringing about an intended and desirable behavioral change in individual students (Burton et al., 1975; Rivers, 1981; Finch & Crunkiton, 1989, Heinich et al., 1989; Richards, 1990; Gerry, 1992; Pahuja, 2002; Aggarwal, 1996; Chaudhary, 2002). These materials are used by the teacher and students to enhance the teaching / learning situation. The primary, intermediate and secondary schools lack recent and relevant English language teaching materials, and reference materials which could help teachers and students to solve their problems. The other problem is lack of adequate exercises in the textbooks which is one of the deficiencies of the English language teaching materials. As a result, students have difficulties in learning the language skills and are unable to communicate inside and outside the class at their level.

1.2.12 Significance of the Study

The problem of forming English questions formation by college students (boys & girls), Department of English at University of Bisha was observed. Some of the students were from regional medium schools who had their own Arabic as medium of instruction in all levels of their schooling (primary, intermediate and secondary

schools) with English being only as one course language / subject. As a result, they have less proficiency in English and when they join higher institution of education, they have difficulty in coping with their academic studies.Thus the study was a kind of action research. Cohen and Manion (1980) point out that action research is interested in obtaining knowledge for a particular situation of purpose. It is situational or context based, collaborative, participation and self-evaluative. Therefore, if we are to make valid statements about a particular type of course or a new textbook, we need to examine what it is that actually happens during the new course or during the use of the new textbook (Breen,1989). It is possible that we can evaluate materials as they stand without their use in the classroom.But this kind of evaluation (Breen, 1989) does not help very much since it gives us no information about how the materials work in the classroom. This idea of Breen paves the ground to evaluation of materials in process to provide information about the ways in which learners and teachers react to them, which indicates whether the materials are successful or not. Communicative language teaching (CLT) has placed the classroom in the centre of attention. In the classroom, interaction occurs between teacher, learners and materials. This is the essential element of the classroom. A focus "what is done?" in the classroom helps for program evaluation, progam improvement and curriculum development (Vanlier, 1988). It is therefore, hoped that the study will attempt to find out the level of the college students in forming English questions. It will also try to investigate to what extent the syllabus, the materials, tasks and methodology incorporate the different types of English questions formation. As a result, the study will contribute to the process of identifying the underlying problems encountered by college students so that they could set relevant strategies to cope with their students. This study, therefore, will help syllabus designers, teaching materials writers, students, teachers, and other concerned to understand the difficulties in the teaching / learning of English questions formation in the "Grammar Course 1". The study also tries to obtain accurate data on the problems of the college students in learning English questions formation.

It was the strong belief of the author that this study would contribute to:

- the development of the teaching skills of teacher educators who will demonstrate effective use of questioning techniques on the training of college students and thereby help them to form or construct effective English questions of different types.

- If the result of the study is used and propagated to the teachers concerned in the country, it can help them to be aware of the use and way of teaching English language in general and English questions formation in particular and thereby to promote and develop students' reasoning power, critical thinking skills, problem solving, judging, generalizing etc .

2. Methodology

This study used quantitative method for data collection. The quantitative data instruments comprised students' questionnaire, and tests on English questions formation.

2.1 Population

The population of the study included college students (boys & girls) from the Department of English, University of Bisha Enrolled in the academic year, 2015.

2.2 Respondents

The study drew on the active participation of 80 respondents from five different levels of English Department, boys and girls, College of Science and Arts, University of Bisha.

2.3 The Research Design

The tools figuring in this study were designed by the researcher for collecting the required quantitative data. In preparing the instrument of the study (the tool), the researcher designed it and presented it to some experts of ELT in English Departments from different universities including university of Bisha to ensure the validity and standard of the instrument. The comments, suggestions, and modifications of the experts in the field of ELT, English Departments were incorporated in the draft before administering the instrument.

2.4 Methods of Data Collection

For this study, quantitative data collection instrument was used. Sarantkos (1998)writes, "As a result of similarities and differences in the nature and principles of various perspectives, two major methodologies, quantitative and qualitative methodology have emerged each of which contain certain theoretical and methodological principles". This implies that when we conduct research, in one way or the other, we employ quantitative or qualitative methodology; and for the purpose of our present study the required data was gathered by using quantitative method.

3. Results and Discussion

The data gathered through the students' questionnaire and the students' tests on English questions formation were tabulated, analyzed , and interpreted with statistical figures to reflect the results better.The sections of the questionnaire included background information, syllabus, teaching materials, tasks on English questions formation in the Grammar Course 1, and finally the students' tests on English questions formation, namely, wh-questions and yes-no questions. The following table shows sex of 80 students boys and girls participated in this study, of whom 30 respondents (37.5 %) were female and 50 respondents (62.5 %) were male. In fact more men than women took part in this study.

Table 1. Sex of the students

Sex	Responses	
	Frequency	precentage
Female	30	37.5
Male	50	62.5
Total	80	100

The following table shows the educational background of the learners at high schools. Learners were asked about their educational background at the high school level. This table below reported that the participants who were at college, 46 respondents (57.5%) had their schooling in schools of rural areas,while32 (40%)in urban areas. This shows that education is top priority in Saudi Arabia and rural areas are keeping pace with urban areas in providing education to students.

Table 2. Educational background of the students at high school

Status	Responses	
	Frequency	precentage
Rural based	46	57.5
Urban based	32	40
No respose	2	2.5
Total	80	100

The other part of the students' questionnaire was about the syllabus of the "Grammar Course 1"; items are shown in the following table:

Table 3. Opinions on the syllabus for the grammar course 1

Item	Responses									
	Strongly agree		Agree		No opinion		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
a. The topics/subtopics in the syllabus are appropriate to the stated objectives.	4	5	12	15	3	3.75	55	68.75	6	7.5
b. The topics/subtopics in the syllabus are sufficient for the grammar course	3	3.75	10	12.5	2	2.5	58	72.5	7	8.75
c. The syllabus is relevant to the students.	2	2.5	8	10	4	5	60	75	6	7.5
d. The syllabus is appropriate to the academic level of the students.	1	1.25	3	3.75	6	7.5	61	76.25	9	11.25
e. The time allotted to each unit is adequate.	1	1.25	2	2.5	2	2.5	50	62.5	25	31.25

In item 4 of the students' questionnaire was about the syllabus of the grammar course 1. This consisted of 5 items as they appeared above from a to e. In item a of the above table, the students were asked if they found the topics/sub-topics in the syllabus appropriate to the stated objectives, 55 learners (68.75%)disagreed, while a mere 12 learners (15%) agreed. Only 4 learners (5%) strongly agreed about the appropriateness of the topics/sub-topics in the syllabus are appropriate to the stated objectives. This can only mean that the units chosen did not go down well with the learners.

In item b, the students were asked if the topics/sub-topics were sufficient for the grammar course,58 learners (72.5%) disagreed, while 10 learners (12.5%)agreed about the sufficiency of the topics for the grammar course 1. This figure is again supported with those 7 respondents (8.75%) who strongly disagreed; and only 3 respondents (3.75%) strongly agreed to the situation. Only 2 respondents (2.5%) had no opinion about the sufficiency or insufficiency of the syllabus for the course.

In item c, the students were asked if the syllabus was relevant to the students. 60 respondents (75%) disagreed that they found the syllabus relevant; 8 respondents 10%) agreed that they found it relevant. On the other hand, 6 respondents (7.5%) strongly disagreed that was not relevant, while 2 respondents (2.5%) strongly agreed.

In item d, when the students were asked about the appropriateness of the syllabus to their academic level. They felt that the syllabus was not in tune with the academic level of the students. In this connection, 61 respondents (75.25%) disagreed with the view that the syllabus matched the academic level of the students. On the other hand, 9 respondents (11.25%) strongly disagreed about the appropriateness of the syllabus to the academic standard of the learners. There were only 3 learners (3.75%) who felt there was a harmony between the syllabus and the academic level of the students. In item e, when they were asked about the adequacy of time allotted to each unit in the grammar course 1. 50 learners (62.5%) believed that the time allotted for completion of syllabus was inadequate. Only 2 respondents (2.5%) agreed that the time allotted to each unit was adequate. Strangely, 1 respondent (1.25%) strongly agreed that the time allotted was adequate. The opinions of the students seem in harmony with what was reported in other similar situations.

The fourth category of the students' questionnaire was about the teaching materials used in the classroom. See the table no. 4 and the details are given below it.

Table 4. The teaching materials in the grammar course 1

What is your opinion about the available teaching material in the grammar Course 1?		
Item of opinion	Frequency	precentage
a. Challenging	11	3.75
b. Interesting	8	10
c. Motivating	16	20
d. Difficult to understand	42	52.5
e. If any other	3	3.75
Total	80	100

In item no. 5 of the students' questionnaire the author wanted to know how challenging, interesting, motivating or difficult to understand the teaching material was to the learners. When they were asked about their opinions of the teaching material for teaching the Grammar Course 1, 42 respondents (52.5%) said that it was difficult to understand and 16 respondents (20%) found it motivating, while a mere 8 students (10%) found it interesting; on the other hand, 11 respondents (13.75%) said they found it challenging.There fore, the teaching materials should go to the level of the students and not to be difficult to understand.

The fifth category of the students' questionnaire confined itself to tasks on English questions formation. The analysis and discussion on tasks of questions formation are mentioned below.

Table 5. Rate of practice on English questions formation

Item	Wh-questions		Yes-no questions		Tag-questions		Multiple questions		Negative questions		Echo-questions	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
a. Always	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
b. Often	0	0	0	0	2	2.5	0	0	5	6.25	0	0
c. Sometimes	23	27.75	23	28.75	8	10	2	2.5	15	18.75	0	0
d. Rarely	50	62.5	47	58.75	60	75	2	2.5	45	56.25	0	0
e. Not at all	7	8.75	10	12.5	10	12.5	76	95	15	18.75	80	100
Total	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100

How often do you practice the following types of questions formation tasks in the class?

Learners were asked a question on tasks related to questions types and to their practice of particular English questions types. 50 respondents (62.5%) said that wh-questions were rarely done, while 23 learners (28.75%) claimed it was practiced only sometimes. However, 7 students (8.75%) answered it was not done at all. No one said it was done always or often.

The questions formations tasks on yes-no questions did not fare any better. 47 learners (58.75%) said they rarely practiced, while 10 learners (12.5%) replied they never practiced. 23 learners (28.75%) replied they practiced sometimes. However, no student said it was done always and often. Tag-questions were not given due emphasis by the instructors. 60 respondents (75%) said that they rarely practiced it, while 10 learners (12.5%) said they never practiced it. Only 8 learners (10%) claimed they did it sometimes. But no one indicated that it was done always. 76 learners (95%) said that they never practiced multiple questions, only 2 students replied they sometimes practiced them, no one had said always and often in practicing them. 15 learners (8.75%) claimed that they never practiced negative questions, while 45 respondents (56.25%) said they practiced them rarely. 15 learners (18.75%) reported that they practiced negative questions only sometimes. 80 learners (100%) reported that they have not had any practice in echo-questions. Statistics clearly revealed that learners have not had practice in some types of English questions formation.This indicates that students need more practice on English question formations.

In item no. 10 of the students'questionnaire, as shown below in table no.6 (a to f) on the difficulty level of forming different types of English questions. As indicated in table 20 below each type of questions has its own frequency and percentage, learners were asked to list the question type they had difficulty in constructing. 60 students (75%) said they had difficulty in constructing Wh- questions, 45 students (56.25%) had difficulty in forming Yes-no questions, 70 learners (87.5%) had difficulty in forming Tag-questions, 76 students (95%) in forming alternative questions and 62 students (77.5%) in forming negative questions. This can clearly indicate that most of the students face difficulties in writing effective English questions.

Table 6. Difficulties face students in forming questions in English

Item	Yes		No		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
a. Wh-questions	60	75	20	25	80	100
b. Yes-no questions	45	56.25	35	43.75	80	100
c. Tag-questions	70	87.5	10	12.5	80	100
d. Multiple questions	75	93.75	5	6.25	80	100
e. Alternative questions	76	95	4	5	80	100
f. Negative questions	62	77.5	18	22.5	80	100

Do students find difficulty in forming the following types of questions?

The last part of the students' questionnaire was tests on questions formation. The students were asked to fill the spaces to form the required questions. Question words and responses were given to them in the tests to help them

in forming the questions. The tests were taken by 80 students and dealt with two types of English questions formation, namely Wh-questions and Yes-no questions. The results of the tests are discussed below in two tables.

Table 7. Results of English W-h questions formation test

No.	Wh-questions	Frequency of correct	%	Frequency of incorrect	%	No response	%
1	Who is your favorite soccer player?	25	31.25	50	62.5	5	6.25
2	What is your name?	39	48.75	41	51.25	0	0
3	Where does Zafer live?	26	32.5	52	65	2	2.5
4	When did queen Elezabeth come to Aden?	27	33.75	45	56.25	8	10
5	How many Egyptian films did you see?	25	31.25	54	67.5	1	1.25
6	Where are you from?	28	35	49	61.25	3	3.75
7	How are they?	35	43.75	41	51.25	4	5

As it is clear from the above table, 25 learners (31.25%) got the first wh-question formation correct, while 50 learners (62.5%) got it wrong and 5 learners (6.25%) had not responded. 39 learners (48.75%) got the second wh-question formation correct, while 41 learners (51.25%)went wrong. To the third question, 26 learners (32.5%) came up with the correct formation response, while 52 learners (65%) with incorrect response and 2 learners (2.5%) had no responses. The fourth statement saw 27 learners (33.75%) emerge with the correct question formation, while 45 learners (56.25%) with incorrect question formation and 8 learners had not responded at all. The fith statement evoked 25 learners (31.25%) correct question formation, while 54 learners (67.5%) incorrect one and one learner (1.25%) had not responded. The sixth wh-question showed that 28 learners (35%) got correct question formation, while 49 learners (61.25%) got incorrect, and 3 learners (3.75%) had no response. The last wh-question 35 learners (43.75%) came up with the correct responses, 41 learners (51.25%) came with incorrect responses and 4 learners failed to respond.This indicates that most of the students face difficulties in the rules of forming English Wh-questions.

See the results of the students' test on yes-no question on the following table and its interpretation below it.

Table 8. Results of English yes-no questions formation test

No.	Yes-no questions	Frequency of correct	%	Frequency of incorrect	%	No response	%
1	Are you going to Jedah?	32	40	43	53.75	5	6.25
2	Does your mother know English?	25	31.25	51	63.75	4	5
3	Are your neighbors nice?	30	37.5	45	56.25	5	6.25
4	Have you seen Yasser?	19	23.75	60	75	1	1.25
5	Is she coming over here?	20	25	57	71.25	3	3.75
6	Do you go to the garden every day?	25	31.25	53	66.25	2	2.5
7	Are they your best friends?	27	33.75	45	56.25	8	10

Learners were asked 7 items related to yes-no questions. In this connection learners had to form questions to responses were given to them in the test. 32 learners (40%) were able to arrive at the correct question formation for the first question, while 43 learners (53.75%) were unable to emerge with the correct question formation, 5 learners had no responses. To the second question 25 learners (31.25%) had the correct question formation, while 51 learners (63.75%) had the wrong question formation and 4 learners did not respond. To the third question 30 learners (37.5%) got the correct question formation, while 45 learners (56.25%) got it wrong and 5 learners

(6.25%) did not respond. To the fourth question, the number of correct responses was 19 (23.75%), while the number of incorrect responses was 60 (75%) and only one learner did not respond. To the fifth question; 20 learners were able to get the question correct, while 57 learners (71.25%) got it wrong and 3 learners (3.75%) did not respond. For the sixth question 25 learners (31.25%) replied correctly by coming up with the appropriate question formation, while 53 learners (66.25%) were in correct and 2 learners (2.5%) had not responded. In connection to the last question 27 learners (33.75%) answered with correct question formation, while 45 learners (56.25%) were not able to get the correct question formation and 8 learners (10%) did not respond at all.This can clearly mean that students did rather better in forming English Yes-no questions in comparision to Wh-questions.

4. Implications and Findings of the Study

The implications of the study are to overcome difficulties in English as a foreign language (EFL) in questions formation, one has to teach using communicative syllabus, teaching materials and tasks; upgrade learners' L2 proficiency and accuracy; strengthen learners in the areas of grammar and incorporate different language functions in teaching questions formation to the existing syllabus. There was no authentic material used in teaching questions formation. Besides, very few questions formation types and assignments were given to the learners. Time devoted to the actual teaching of questions formation in class is insufficient; the relation between English questions formation and other sub-skills of grammar is not balanced and needs to be revised.

From the results of the tests on English questions formation, it was evident that learners faced difficulties in forming wh-questions than that of yes-no questions and the analysis also revealed that learners havedone fairly well in tackling yes-no questions compared to wh-questions. From the data analysis, it was clear that the learners lacked the requisite skills and practice in English questions formation and had problems in that because of their mother tongue interference.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the recommendations and suggestions are made to improve the ability of the learners in questions formation in the teaching/learning process of the Grammar Course 1. Questions formation in English should be taught interactively. A communicative language teaching syllabus would not only reinforce the notion of language for communication but indeed go a long way in making learning useful, constructive and effective. Necessity of communicative teaching materials, materials should be designed that bring about the relevance of English questions formation and integrate the other language skills. Necessity for tasks that promote different types of English questions formation. Learners should be given a lot of practice and guidance in effective use of techniques in questioning. Moreover, feedback is useful for them, so that they not only realize their mistakes in forming English questions but also learn to produce improved and better English questions formation for their communicative purposes.

6. Conclusion

The present study has explored the difficulties that Saudi EFL learners face while forming English questions at University of Bisha. The analysis of the data revealed that most of the learners lacked practice and the basic knowledge in grammar rules for constructing different types of English questions formation. Besides, few activities were given to the learners; therefore instructors should play a great role in the teaching/learning process to help their learners to overcome the difficulties they actually face. They should also concentrate on such difficulties and use communicative language teaching technique in teaching/learning the grammar course 1 in general and English questions formation in particular. I also conclude this study with the hope that it will enable educationalists to realize that no course is fruitful unless it is interesting; it effects a progressive change in the ability level of the learners; and it helps students to use their potentiality to the optimum level.

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