

**Ministry of higher Education
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College of Arts
Department of English**

**The Achievement Of College Students
In Using And Placing Single–Word Adverbs
In Their Appropriate Position**

By

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October, 2003

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1. The Problem and the Significance of the Research

Since adverbs have the function of modifying and that their position depends in many cases on the nature of modification. This function gives the adverbs a high mobility to occupy different positions in English sentences. This mobility causes problems to Iraqi students, namely:

- a- The differences between adverbs that have the mobility of occurrence in different positions (initial, medial, final) and others that are restricted to certain positions.
- b- The appropriate position of different kinds of adverbs.

Thus, the significance of this research lies in the fact that Iraqi students face the above- mentioned problems. Therefore, our task, as teachers of English, is to prepare a teaching programme, which may help the students to improve their performance in using adverbs, and placing them in their appropriate positions. This improving process requires on the part of the researcher to be well – acquainted with the level of the students' achievement.

2. Aims

The researcher aims at:

- 1- Identifying the problematic areas faced by college students in placing adverbs in their appropriate position;
- 2- Comparing the level of performance of both male and female students in using adverbs.

3. Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

- One- The students face problems in placing adverbs in their appropriate positions.
- Two- There is no statistically significant difference between the performance of male and female students at 5% level of significance.

4. Limits

This research is limited to:

One- The position of single – word adverbs of *manner, place, time, frequency* and *degree*, which are often misused by most Iraqi students.

Two- The students of the first year morning classes of the Department of English / College of Arts / AL- Mustansiriya University, during the six weeks of the first term of the academic year 2002-2003.

5. Procedures

The following steps will be followed:

One- Surveying the literature on adverbs, i.e theoretical background which comprises the definition, formation classification, position and order of adverbs.

Two- Constructing a two – part test to measure the students' performance in placing adverbs in their appropriate positions. (see Appendix 2).

Three- Conducting a pilot test.

Four- Ensuring validity and reliability of the test.

5.1. Theoretical Background

5.1.1. Definition

The term adverb is used to refer to "a heterogenous group of items, whose most frequent function is to specify the mode of action of the verb." (Crystal, 1980:16). An adverb may modify a verb "by giving circumstantial information about the time, place or manner in which an action, process takes place". (Finch, 2000:84).

In addition to the characteristic of modifying verbs, adverbs can modify other parts of speech. For most linguists an adverb can modify an adjective, a verb, or another adverb. Such adverbs can answer the questions where?, when?, how?, how often?, how much?, etc.

Most linguists have considered the adverb to be the fifth of the eight parts of speech. The term adverb also subsumes the following three categories:

One- Simple or one– word adverb, which has been defined either syntactically as "a word that modifies a verb, an adjective or another adverb".(Huang, 1974:211), as in:

- 1- He went away
- 2- She has a really beautiful

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- 3- He smokes very heavily.

Or, notionally as "a word which answers the questions where? When? How?"
(Roberts, 1954: 207), i.e where, when, how an action is/ was done, as in.

- 4- She walked away. (walked

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- 5- We are leaving soon.

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6- My brother plays the piano

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Some one – word adverbs, have the characteristic of modifying nouns, such as the there type with some kind of place meaning. In sentences such as:

7- The man there helped me.

8- He handed the newspapers

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there and above modify man and girls respectively.

Two- word – group adverb, such as a prepositional phrase or a noun phrase which functions adverbially, as in

9- He played in the yard.

10- I saw him last month.

Three- Adverbial clause, which modifies "a verb, a verbal, an adjective, an adverb or another clause". (ibid: 317). The sentence:

11- Don't come before we are

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shows that the function of an adverbial clause corresponds, more or less, to that of simple, one – word adverb.

5.1.2 Formation

There are different ways of forming adverbs. Eckersley and Eckersley (1960: 255) state that adverbs can be formed by:

One- adding the suffix (-*ly*) to the corresponding adjectives, as in.

12- He drives carefully.

Yet, this rule cannot be applied to adjectives ending in (-*ly*), instead we use "similar adverbs or adverb phrases". (Thomson and Martinet, 1980: 55). For example, to form the adverb of the adjective friendly in a sentence such as

13- He seems friendly.

We use an adverbial phrase such as 'in a friendly way', as in

14- He talked in a friendly way.

Two- using the same form as the adjectives, such as high, low, deep, near,

fast, hard, late, much, straight, etc, as in

15- He climbed a high mountain. (adj)

16- The bird flew high. (adv)

Thomson and Martinet (1980) state that we may add the suffix (-*ly*) to some the above – mentioned adjectives to form adverbs. But these adverbs may have a narrower meaning than their corresponding adjectives, as in

17-He was highly placed. (= He had an important office).

Or, they may differ in meaning from their corresponding adjectives, as in

18- He welcomed me warmly. (= in a friendly way)

Three- adding the suffixes (-*ly*), (-*ways*), (-*wards*), (-*wise*) to nouns, as in

19- He visits me daily / weekly/ monthly.. etc.

20- Carry the box sideways through this opening.

21- He usually travels forwards and backwards

between Baghdad and Mosul.

22- Turn the knob of this door clockwise.

Or, adding the prefix (*a-*), as in

23- They traveled abroad.

5.1.3. Classification

Grammarians have proposed different ways in classifying adverbs. Tipping (1964) and many other linguists have classified adverbs according to their meanings; others such as Eckersley and Eckersley (1966) and Thomson and Martinet (1980) have classified adverbs according to their meaning as well as their position.

5.1.3.1 Classification of Adverbs According to Meaning.

According to their meaning, adverbs have been classified as follows:

1- Adverbs of *manner*, that express how an action is/ was done, such as quickly, badly, happily, hard, fast, well, etc, as in

24- He was running quickly.

2- Adverbs of *place*, that express where an action is/ was done, such as here, there, up, down, etc, as in

25- He stayed there.

3- Adverbs of ***time***, that express when an action is/ was done, such as now, soon, today, tomorrow, etc, as in

26- I will call on my sister tomorrow.

4- Adverbs of ***frequency***, that express how often an action is/ was done. These adverbs are of two types:

One- definite, such as weekly, once, again, every week, etc., as in

27- He visits his father weekly.

Two- indefinite, such as usually, always, generally, often, rarely, sometimes, never, etc., as in

28- She rarely brings her children to the park.

5- Adverbs of ***degree***, that express to what extent or to what degree an action is/was done, such as very, fairly, rather, quite, too, as in

29- Are you quite sure we are on the right road?

6- Adverbs of ***certainty***, that express affirmation, such as certainly, surely, definitely, yes, etc, as in

30- Will you help me? Certainly (=yes I will help you).

7- ***Interrogative*** adverbs, that are used in forming questions, such as where, when, why, which, how, etc., as in

31- Why did you say that?

8- ***Relative*** adverbs, that take the place of a relative pronoun + a preposition, such as where, when, as in

32- That is the room where (= in which) we lived.

33- I remember the day when (= on which) we met.

5.1.3.2. Classification of Adverbs According to Position

According to their position, adverbs have been classified as follows:

1- Initial position adverbs, where the adverb occurs as the first word in the sentence. This kind of adverbs give us, in advance, some information to set the scene for the action that follows, as in

34- Still, in spite of what he said, I think he is a liar.

2- Medial position adverbs, where the adverb occurs before the main verb or after the first auxiliary in a given sentence, as in

35- He always forgets to post the letters.

36- He is always pretending to be honest.

Since this type of adverbs represents close modification of the verb, medial position tends to be restricted to one – word adverbs and short prepositional phrases. Clauses and long prepositional phrases rarely occupy this position.

3- Final position adverbs, where the adverb occurs as the last word in the sentence, as in:

37- My son works hard.

Some other linguists, such as Thomas (1965: 162) have classified adverbs, according to position, into Five major categories:

One- Sentence adverbials, which modify the entire sentence rather than part of it, as in:

38- Certainly, the class was over.

Two- Preverbs, which normally occur before the main verb or after the first auxiliary in the sentence, as in

39- They always complain.

40- They are always complaining.

Three- Adverbials of location and time.

Four- Adverbials of manner.

Five- Adverbials of degree.

Although the class of adverbs undergoes various ways of classification concerning position, yet it seems that different linguists have reached, more or less, the same results.

5.1.4 Characteristics of Adverb occurrence

According to the above – mentioned types of classification, some kinds of adverbs prove to have wide – ranging privileges of occurrence in different positions without disturbing or changing the meaning of the sentence. Others are restricted to certain positions; changing their position may either change the meaning or lead to ungrammatical sentences.

To differentiate between these two types of adverbs, the researcher illustrates the position of the adverbs under study in the following section.

5.1.4.1 Position of Adverbs of Manner

Adverbs of manner are normally placed in final positions when:

One- They occur after an intransitive verb, or after the object of a transitive verb, as in:

41- She danced beautifully.

42- They speak English well.

Two- They are obligatory for the verbs whose meaning is completed by these adverbs, as in

43- They lived happily.

Adverbs of manner can also be placed in medial position when the sentence:

One- is in the passive construction, as in

44- The plan was accurately made.

Two- contains a preposition in the sequence 'V + prep + obj', as in

45- He looked suspiciously at me.

Three- contains an object in the sequence 'V + obj', especially when the sentence contains a long object, as in

46- She carefully picked up all the bits of broken glass.

On some occasions some adverbs of manner are free to change their normal position, i.e final position. They may appear initially when they are used emphatically, as in

47- Silently, they entered the room.

Other adverbs of manner, notably those concerned with character and intelligence show difference in meaning when they are shifted from one position to another. In the following pair of sentences:

48- He answered the question foolishly.

49- He foolishly answered the question.

The adverb foolishly in (48) means: his answers were foolish; whereas in (49) foolishly expresses the idea that the action of answering the question was foolish.

5.1.4.2 Position of Adverbs of Place

Adverbs of place are normally placed in final positions when they occur after intransitive verbs, or after the direct objects of transitive verbs, as in:

50- She went downstairs.

51- I will see him downstairs.

Some adverbs of place can occur in initial position, especially those that indicate direction. When placed initially, such adverbs are followed by the sequence 'V + subject', as in

52- In came Tom.

But if the subject is a pronoun, no inversion is necessary, as in

53- In he came.

Adverbs of place rarely occur in medial positions. Some of them may do, especially those that refer to position such as here and there, as in

54- They there noticed a very curious statue.

Adverbs of place are more restricted in their movement than other types of adverbs.

5.1.4.3. Position of adverbs of time

Although adverbs of time are normally placed in final position, some of them are freely moveable. The adverb soon, for example, can occupy initial, medial or final position without disturbing the structure or meaning of the sentence, as in:

55- Soon she left home.

56- She Soon left home.

57- She left home Soon.

Other adverbs of time, such as yesterday, today, tomorrow, may occupy initial or final position, as in:

58- He is coming tomorrow.

59- Tomorrow he is coming.

However, there are certain adverbs of time that are common for certain positions. Adverbs such as nowadays, presently, etc are common for initial position, as in:

60- Nowadays we see unbelievable things.

61- Presently the students will visit the museum.

Other adverbs of time, such as momentarily, permanently, temporarily, etc. are common for medial position, as in:

62- They were momentarily shocked by the news.

Just, as an adverb of time is restricted to medial position. It either occurs before the main verb, as in:

63- She just phoned me.

Or, after the first auxiliary of the sentence, which is normally the auxiliary 'have' to form present perfect tenses, as in:

64- She has just told us the news.

Adverbs such as late, immediately are common for final position, as in:

65- He came late.

66- I'll go immediately.

5.1.4.4. Position of Adverbs of Frequency

Adverbs of frequency are considered an important group of medial position adverbs. But, in studying closely the position of these adverbs, it has been found that the position of definite frequency adverbs differs from that of indefinite ones. The former are normally placed in final position, as in:

67- The meeting takes place every week.

Whereas the latter are normally placed in medial position before the main verb or after the first auxiliary of the sentence, as in:

68- They sometimes stay up all night.

69- He can never understand.

But, on certain occasions, adverbs of frequency are placed before the auxiliary when:

One- the auxiliary is used alone, in addition to remarks, or in answers to questions, as in:

70- I know I should take exercises, but I never do.

Two- the auxiliary is stressed to give emphasis to a compound verb, as in:

71- I never can remember.

c- do is added for emphasis, as in:

72- But they always do arrive in time.

5.1.4.5. Position of Adverbs of Degree

Single-word adverbs of degree favour medial position, as in:

73- I entirely agree with you.

Adverbs of degree which modify adjectives or other adverbs are placed before the adjectives or adverbs they modify, as in:

74- It was too hot to work .

75- He played extremely badly.

Except for enough, it always follows the adjective or adverb it modifies, as in:

76- The box isn't big enough.

77- He didn't walk quickly enough.

Other adverbs of degree can modify verbs. They precede the main verb or follow the first auxiliary of the sentence, as in:

78- I quite understand.

79- He can nearly swim.

5.1.5. Order of Adverbs

Some sentences may contain more than one adverb, either of the same type, or of different types. Such situations require the adverbs to be placed in a particular order.

It is argued that when two or more adverbs of place occur in the same sentence, certain conventions should be noticed. These conventions are:

1- The direction adverb of place normally precedes the position adverb if they both occur in final position, as in:

80- I went to a school there.

2- If one of the two adverbs is a prepositional phrase it normally follows a single-word adverb, as in:

81- He played here near the fence.

3- An adverb which expresses a smaller place normally precedes the one that expresses a larger place, as in:

82- They met at the hotel in Basrah.

As for adverbs of time, the more specific time expression precedes the more general, as in:

83- She was born at nine o'clock on friday morning in the year 1968.

However, this order may be reversed if the more specific time expression is considerably longer, as in:

84- They carried the box today with a short time.

Only, the more general period can be placed initially, as in:

85- On Thursday the party starts at four o'clock.

When two or more frequency adverbs are placed in final position, adverbs denoting shorter period precede those denoting longer period, as in:

86- He jumped over the wall twice on two occasions.

In other situations, a sentence may contain different kinds of adverbs. The most normal order is manner, place, frequency and time, as in:

87- She danced beautifully here twice tonight.

5.2. Reserch Sample and Research Population

5.2.1. Research sample(pilot sample)

The research sample consists of (20) male and female students. This sample has been chosen randomly from the four morning sections of the first year at the college of Arts/ Department of English (A, B, C, D).

5.2.2. Research Population

The research population consists of (50) students distributed equally into (25) male and (25) female first year, morning classes/college of Arts/ Department of English.

5.3. Research Tools

5.3.1. Achievement Test

The goal of constructing an achievement test is to verify the hypotheses of this research (see 1.3). The achievement test consists of (50) items divided into two parts. Part one consists of (25) items 'Put the adverbs in their correct position'; whereas part two consists of (25) items 'Rearrange the following sentences in the correct word order'. (see Appendix 2).

The researcher has chosen these (50) items after consulting specialized grammar books.

5.3.1.1. Test Validity

The achievement test has been submitted to a number of juries in the field of the English language and linguistics (see Appendix 1) to determine the efficiency and the correct formulation of its items.

5.3.1.2. Pilot Test

A pilot achievement test has been prepared to be applied to a pilot sample of (20) male and female students in order to:

- 1- recognize the difficulty and recognition of the test items; and
- 2- determine item discrimination power.

Each part of the test has been scored out of (25) depending on the (1 or zero) principle, that is by giving (1) mark for the correct answer and (zero) for the incorrect, uncompleted or neglected one. Thus, the total score will be out of (50). This pilot sample will be excluded later from the experimental research.

In order to find out the difficulty factor of each item, the research has used a statistical tool called 'the difficulty factor equation' (see 5.4). It has been clarified that this difficulty factor ranges between 25%-70% with an average estimated to 48%.

Another statistical tool 'the strength of items recognition equation' (see 5.4), has been used to find out the strength of items recognition. This statistical tool illustrates that the strength of item range between 40% - 90% with an average estimated to 59%.

Bloom (1971:66) states that an achievement test is considered a good test when the items difficulty factor ranges between 20% - 80%; while Brown (1981:104) indicates that the strength of items recognition of each item is 30% or more.

As the entire test items, constructed by the researcher falls within the above-mentioned limits, the test is considered to have strength of items recognition.

5.3.1.3. Test Reliability

The 'split- half' method has been used for determining the test reliability. The researcher has also used 'Guttman equation' to estimate the connection factor between the two halves of the test. (see 5.4). It has been found that the percentage is 93%, which is considered to be reliable.

5.3.1.4. Scoring Reliability

According to the sample of the correct answers, the researcher and another scorer, each separately, marked the students' test papers. It has been found that the connection factor between both scorers is estimated to 86%, which is considered to be a great connection factor that shows a great scoring reliability.

5.3.2. Teaching Programme

As teachers of English, we are well acquainted with the fact that Iraqi students face great difficulty in using most adverbs, and placing them in their proper position. To avoid such difficulties, the researcher believes that teachers of English should prepare a teaching programme, which may help to improve the students' achievement concerning the above- mentioned difficulties.

It is believed that this teaching programme will be considered successful if teachers of English take into consideration the following points:

1- The Material

The material concerning adverbs, under study, includes, in addition to the text book taught in this stage, some other grammar books, as well as the teacher's own experience in teaching grammar.

2- Teaching Strategy

Using the demonstration and discussion method, taking into consideration the applying instruction events in demonstrating the material such as confines the teaching strategy:

One- Attracting the students' attention through interruption while demonstrating the material; the use of confirmed and warning statements and the variation of the pitch tone.

Two- Assisting the students to keep what they have learned by using confirmed expressions; recalling the students' previous abilities and experience; repeating the information and giving the students more examples and exercises.

3- Evaluation

Evaluation includes performance tests during the presentation of the material throughout the course of the students' study.

5.4. Statistical Tools

- 1- Coopers' equation to draw out the ratio of the experts' agreement upon the efficiency of the research tools.
- 2- Guttman equation of 'Split- Half Method' to calculate the test reliability. (AL-Bahy, 1978:24).
- 3- The equation of 'Item Difficulty Factor' and 'Item Recognition Equation' of the achievement test (Brown, 1981:104).
- 4- 'Pearson's Correlation Factor' to draw out the correlation factor between the scorers. (AL-Bahy, 1978:551).
- 5- T-test for separated groups to find out the difference of answers from the second hypothesis of the research (ibid: 558)
- 6- The use of the percentage ratio (100%) to find out the difference of answers from the first hypothesis of the research.

6-Results and Results Analysis

6.1. Investigating the first hypothesis

The researcher has investigated the first hypothesis by using the percentage ratio to find out the difference of students' (male and female) answers from both parts of the achievement test. The results show that about 37% of the students (male and female) have given correct answers for the first part of the test; whereas 63% of those students have given incorrect answers.

As for the second part of the test, the result is that about 32% of the students (male and female) have given correct answers; whereas about 68% of those students have given incorrect answers.

These results indicate that those students do face problems in using adverbs and placing them in their proper position, which prove the first hypothesis.

6.2. Investigating the second hypothesis

The researcher has investigated the second hypothesis by:

- 1- Classifying the sentences of part one of the two – part test and grouping them according to the adverbs these sentences contain. It has been found that:

One- Sentences 1,5,8,14,19 contain adverbs of manner.

Two- Sentences 4,9,15,20,23 contain adverbs of place.

Three- Sentences 2,11,13,16,18 contain adverbs of time.

Four- Sentences 3,12,17,21,25 contain adverbs of frequency.

Five- Sentences 6,7,10,22,24 contain adverbs of degree.

- 2- Drawing out the calculated T. to compare it with its scheduled value in order to know the difference between the performance of male and female students at 5% level of significance. The results of this procedure are illustrated as follows.

- 1- The values of calculated T. for the above mentioned groups (a, b, c, d, e) are (0.327), (0.1271), (1.9166), (0.336), and (0.5988) respectively.

- 2- The values of calculated T. for group a, b, d and e are lesser than their scheduled T. which is (1.860)

- 3- The value of calculated T. for group (c) is higher than its scheduled T. (1.860).

In this case we should accept the previous null hypothesis which indicates that there is no statistical difference at 5% level of significance between the male and female students' achievement in using manner, place, frequency and degree adverbs. But, there is a statistical difference at 5% level of significance between the male and female students' achievement on the females' behalf in using adverbs of time.

7- Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the result analysis, it has been found out that:

- 1- The students' achievement to use single – word adverbs (manner, place, time, frequency, and degree) is below the required level. This level can be

improved to be higher through changing the teaching strategy. These single – word adverbs should not be taught through lectures only, but through other means such as:

One- The demonstration and discussion method;.

Two- Confirmed and warning statements to gain the students' attention.

- 2- The material, organized by the researcher, was found difficult to be comprehended by the students. Teachers of English can facilitate the material in a way that may help the students to comprehend and recall it in accordance with the nature of learning.

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Appendix (1)

Names of Juries:

1. Professor Bushra Mustafa
2. Assistant Professor Irfan Saeed
3. Assistant Professor Layla Shaaban
4. Dr. Sawsan Fasil Al-Samir
5. Assistant Lecturer Rafida Mansoor
6. Assistant Lecturer Suhair Safwat

I- PUT THE ADVERBS IN THEIR CORRECT POSITIONS:

- 1- He denied that he had stolen the documents. (angrily)
- 2- He is playing chess. (today)
- 3- We shall submit to the enemy. (never)
- 4- She saw him. (downstairs)
- 5- They decided to leave the town. (secretly)
- 6- It's a nice day. (quite)
- 7- He can swim. (nearly)
- 8- She picked up all the bits of broken glass. (carefully)
- 9- The bird flew. (high)
- 10- The box isn't big. (enough)
- 11- The whole family is going out. (tomorrow)
- 12- They stay up all night. (sometimes)
- 13- I have posted the letter. (just)
- 14- He was running. (quickly)
- 15- She painted the picture. (here)
- 16- I'm absolutely determined to finish this exercise. (tonight)
- 17- He visits his father. (often)
- 18- She goes to movies. (on Saturday)
- 19- They speak English. (well)
- 20- She played well. (there)
- 21- Do you go to the pictures? (frequently)
- 22- He was anxious about the danger of fire. (extremely)
- 23- He left his dog. (behind)
- 24- I enjoyed it. (really)
- 25- I have trouble in December. (always)

**II- RE ARRANGE THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES IN THE CORRECT
WORD ORDER:**

- 1- My parents tell me often this.
- 2- He is tomorrow coming.
- 3- He needs badly a holiday.
- 4- He jumped the fence over.
- 5- You have enough said.
- 6- I saw somewhere your keys.
- 7- They entered silently the room.
- 8- We on Friday shall go away for the week-end.
- 9- I completely am exhausted.
- 10- They were shocked momentarily by the news.
- 11- She brings her children rarely with her.
- 12- He has had to borrow from friends occasionally.
- 13- He reads easily music.
- 14- He near stood the window.
- 15- The hours pass when slowly you can't sleep.
- 16- I understand quite.
- 17- He calls usually me at night.
- 18- She is in still her bed.
- 19- She phoned me just.
- 20- He arrives generally on time.
- 21- Joseph well speak Spanish.
- 22- The shop is just the corner round.
- 23- He went in the lift up.
- 24- It was hot too to work.
- 25- You absolutely are right.