

ADVERBS OF MOBILITY: USAGE CHALLENGES AMONG KRI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract: An adverb is used to indicate roughly how frequently a typical or usual action or event occurs. It is one of the fundamental English grammar structures that present challenges for students at KRI University. The aim of this paper was to investigate the challenges of the mobility of adverbs among KRI University students. The instrument used for data collection was the open-ended questionnaire created via a Google Form with a five-item structure shared with participants. SPSS version 21 software was used to analyze the data, which was deployed at five universities in KRI at the upper secondary level to evaluate how effectively the respondents used adverbs. The results were examined using simple percentages. Many of the respondents were found to often place adverbs in ways that led to illegible and unclear sentences. Additionally, some students were found to misuse classes of words, using one when they should use the other. Since adverbs cannot just be used in every sentence positions, the study concluded that adverbs and adverbials genuinely display restricted mobility occurring in just three positions: initial, middle, and final. Accordingly, the result of the study of adverb movement depends largely on the adverb's subtype and nature which have a significant role in determining its mobility.

Keywords: *Adverbs of mobility; challenges; frequency; KRI*

INTRODUCTION

In English, adverbs are typically referred to as a highly mobile word class. The adverb category is a word class that may be expanded into more complex grammatical constructions like clauses and phrases. In general, they serve as modifiers that make a sentence's meaning clear, particularly in writing that is descriptive. According to Leech (1974), meaning refers to the entire "signification" process, which involves the fusion of linguistic (diction, tone, stress, idioms, etc.), paralinguistic (gestures and the forms of surrogating), and literary (symbolism, imagery, and figurative expressions) characteristics of a language in order to achieve the single goal of meaningful expression. Ejele (2003, p. 2) made a distinction between linguistic and non-linguistic meanings and came to the conclusion that linguistic meaning includes word, phrase, and sentence meanings that are

abstracted from contexts, ideas, and personal experiences. Though the idea of meaning is controversial in many ways (Ndimele, 2007b, pp 6–9), it is the main driver of expression.

One of the topics covered in courses on the adverb word class is adverbial mobility (Ahaotu, 2017). The major purpose of the adverbial category, which it shares with other categories like adjectives and quantifiers, is modification. Adverbial categories, however, differ greatly from those modified by adjectives and quantifiers. In general, word level categories in the English language display differing levels of inter-category mobility; they may serve as distinct word classes in various situations. However, the word "mobility" of adverbs as employed in this study refers to an adverb's ability to operate from several places inside a single phrase. The meaning of the statement need not significantly change as a result of these changes.

Adverbs are one-word modifiers of verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. The majority of them change or describe activities, situations, or traits, and they provide answers to the how, when, where, and why inquiries. Adverbial refers to any phrase or clause that is employed as an adverb. Adverbs according to Parrot (2000) are several word types with distinctly diverse purposes that may be used in a variety of places across a phrase. He thinks that the learner frequently has a significant challenge when deciding where to place them. According to Hernández (2006: 272), learning a new language typically entails making errors in a variety of areas, particularly in grammar. When creating grammatical structures, learners frequently utilize adverbs incorrectly, notably by placing them at the wrong place in the phrase. This should not come as a surprise because adjectives, nouns, and verbs are easier to define than adverbs. The grammar of adverbs is highly intricate and they have a wide variety of meanings. Adverbs communicate concepts like manner, time, and place in terms of meaning (location or destination). The majority of manner adverbs have a recognized form; they always finish in -ly. Other adverbs lack a distinctive suffix, making it difficult to identify them by their form. Additionally, they have the ability to change practically any English composition, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, other adverbs, and even complete phrases.

Stageberg (1971: 216) on the other hand, noted that there are multiple subclasses of one-word adverbials, and each subclass has a specific location in the various sentence patterns. Adverbs are also widely acknowledged by authors to be relatively complicated constructions due to their many categories, meanings, and placements in sentences. The adverb's syntactical and semantic activity, which is influenced by its location in the phrase, is the cause of this intricacy.

The placement of the adverb can alter the meaning of the statement as well as its grammaticality (Bing, 1989; Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Parrot, 2000;

Raimes, 2001). Because adverbs are regarded as the most mobile components in English, Iraqi EFL University students have trouble employing the order of frequency adverbs.

Adverbs may take on distinct roles inside the phrase. They may come at the start of the phrase, in the middle between the verb and the subject, or at the conclusion. Adverbs in English do not usually stand between the verb and the object.

The study basically answers these questions: what are learners' views on using adverbs in universities? To what extent do students overcome the difficulties associated with using adverbs? Does adverbial mobility pose a challenge to learners in KRI universities? Do teachers and course books adequately address adverbial mobility for students in the classroom environment? What are the connections between students and teachers when it comes to adoption?

The objectives of this study are: presenting a brief and relevant background on adverbs of frequency, identifying and categorizing the difficulties that students face when using adverbs, locating the areas of difficulty KRI EFL learners encounter in learning adverbs of frequency, to establish the opinion of teachers on the teaching resources available to them on adverbs

This study therefore investigated the challenges in the usage adverbs of mobility among KRI University students.

Literature Review

Adverbs are words which describe verbs and modify adjectives and other adverbs. Unlike adjectives, adverbs do not modify nouns. Adverbs can also modify phrases, clauses, and sentences and they answer such questions: "When?" "Where?" "Why?" "How?" "Under what conditions?" and "To what extent?"

Types of Adverb

According to Okoh (1995, pp. 48–49); Ahaotu (2013), pp. 95–101; Sinha (2002); and Hammer (2005), p. 44, adverbs may be categorized into different groups, including:

a) Adverbs of degree: rather, fairly absolutely, quite, securely, surely.

- b) Adverbs of time/frequency: once, often, last, since, now, later, tonight, early, late, yesterday morning, and always.
- c) Adverbs of place: in the classroom, there, anywhere, here, at the church, and upstairs
- d) Adverbs of reason: because, since, consequently.
- e) Adverbs of condition: if, unless, notwithstanding, if only, in case.

Ahaotu (2022) study affirmed that adverbs of manner include "well," "frantically," "recklessly," "soon," and "ferociously." The goal of this study is to examine the pattern of adverb and adverbial group mobility within different sentence positions and to ascertain how this mobility affects the grammatical proficiency of students at Emarid College in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, who serve as a representative of second-language (L2) and foreign language (FL) English learners. The study mainly concentrated on the proficiency of L2 learners in the syntactic arrangement of adverbs, which, like adjectives, may result in dangling modifiers and ambiguity if the order is incorrect (Eko 1987, pp. 55-56). The goal of the study was to determine if adverbs are restrictively or endlessly movable.

The Adverb Class in English

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (2000, pp. 126–136), an adverbial is an adverb that serves as a constituent apart from the sentence's subject, verb, object, and complement. The adjuncts, disjuncts, and conjuncts are the three groups of adverbials that were mentioned.

The Adjuncts

The main adverb functions of the adjunct subcategory are carried out, and it can be fully or partially incorporated into the clause or sentence's structure. Following are some instances of this:

1. Have you still not gotten your test results?
2. They are chatting up above.
3. You may now head inside.

4. Despite how much she loves him, he completely rejects her approaches.

The Conjuncts

A conjunct's connective function enables the realization of its semantic significance. Both a conjunction and a conjunct serve to link grammatical constructs. A conjunction on the other hand, links categories like words, phrases, clauses, and paragraphs, whereas a conjunct denotes the relationship between two semantic units that co-occur in the same or nearby sentences. Conjuncts, in other words, create a connection between assertions and what was spoken before them, like in the instances below:

1. I did not investigate his credentials.
But he looks to be highly clever.
2. If they open every window, I'm going out (Quirk & Greenbaum, 2000, p. 126).
3. Despite lasting three hours, the talk was not monotonous.
4. He should be held liable for our losses, yet he is still a kid.
5. Her parents publicly discouraged her from pursuing her dream of being a boxer.

The Disjuncts

The disjuncts offer an assessment of a statement in terms of the communication's format or content. Although they are only tangentially related to a sentence, they make remarks on its style or content. Examples include

6. Fortunately, we completed our homework before to the strike.
7. Sincerely, I have no options.
8. Thankfully, nobody was hurt.
9. To be honest, I detest math.

As the examples above, the adverbials of these categories function as semantic connectors and modifiers, in contrast to conjunctions, which are primarily structural linkages (between words, phrases, clauses and paragraphs). The examples in sentences 9 through 11 show how adverbials vary from

conjunctions and act as conjuncts, as well as how both might coexist in a sentence.

When he said: "The adverb class is the hardest component of speech to define," Ndimele (2007a, p. 148) warned against a hurried delimitation of this group. Since they differ considerably in both their forms and positions within a sentence all words that are referred to as adverbs lack homogeneity in their form or placement. Huddleston and Pullum (2002, p. 652) provided what they referred to as the "beginning point for the definition of adverbs" in their contribution to the definition of adverbs. The adverb was characterized as follows: a group of words that belong to a separate grammatical category and are typically employed to modify verbs rather than nouns. In general, though, words that may modify verbs can also modify adjectives and other adverbs, and many of them can modify expressions of other categories besides nouns (or nominal).

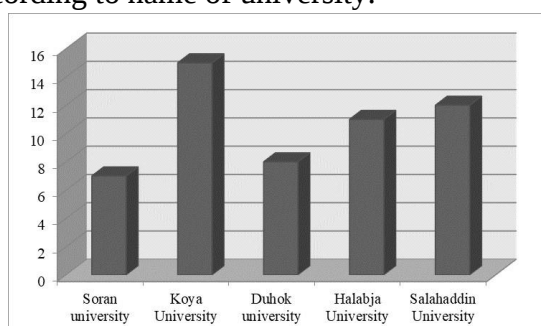
METHOD

Among the 53 students who participated in this research, 13.2% were from Soran University, 28.3% were from Koya University, 15.1% were from Duhok University, 20.8% were from Halabja University, and 15.1% were from Salahaddin University, the results of which are displayed in table 1.

Table 1. *Frequency of Students According to Name of University*

	Frequency	Percent
Soran university	7	13.2
Koya University	15	28.3
Duhok university	8	15.1
Halabja University	11	20.8
Salahaddin University	12	22.6
Total	53	100

Figure (1) shows the frequency of students according to name of university.

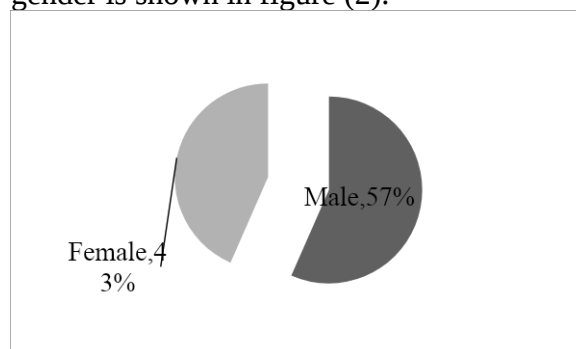


The obtained results show that 56.6% of the participants were male and 43.4% were female. The corresponding results are shown in Table (2).

Table 2. *Frequency of Participant's Gender*

	Frequency	Percent
Male	30	56.6
Female	23	43.4
Total	43	100.0

The frequency diagram of participant's gender is shown in figure (2).

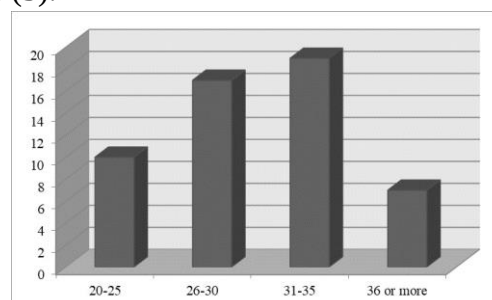


Also, 18.9 percent of the participants are in the age group of 20-25 years old, 32.1 percent in the age group between 26-30 years old, 35.8 percent in the age group of 31-35 years old, and 13.2 percent in the age group of 36 years old and older, the corresponding results are showed in the table (3).

Table 3. *Frequency of Participant's Age Group*

	Frequency	Percent
20-25	10	18.9
26-30	17	32.1
31-35	19	35.8
36 or more	7	13.2
Total	53	100.0

The related diagram to this table is shown in Figure (3).

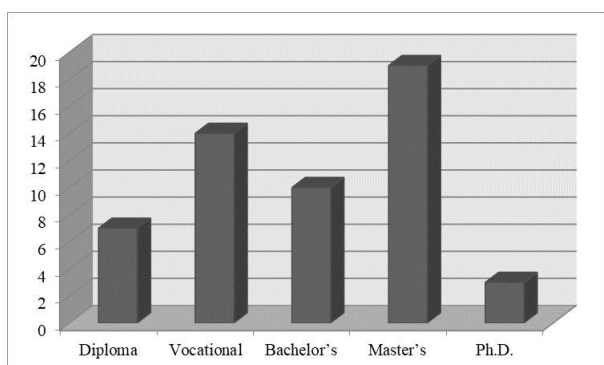


Among the 53 people who participated in this study, 13.2% have Diploma, 26.4% Vocational, 18.9% Bachelor's, 35.8% Master's and 5.7% Ph.D. detailed results are presented in Table (4).

Table 4. *Frequency of Participant's Study Level*

	Frequency	Percent
Diploma	7	13.2
Vocational	14	26.4
Bachelor's	10	18.9
Master's	19	35.8
Ph.D.	3	5.7
Total	53	100.0

The related diagram to this table is shown in Figure (4).



Among the participants, 20.8% studied in English Language and Literature, 24.5% in English Language Teaching, 32.1% in Linguistics and 22.6% in English Translation. The corresponding results are shown in table (5).

Table 5. *Frequency of Participant's Field of Study*

	Frequency	Percent
English Language and Literature	11	20.8
English Language Teaching	13	24.5
Linguistics	17	32.1
English Translation	12	22.6
Total	53	100.0

The corresponding diagram is shown in Figure (5).

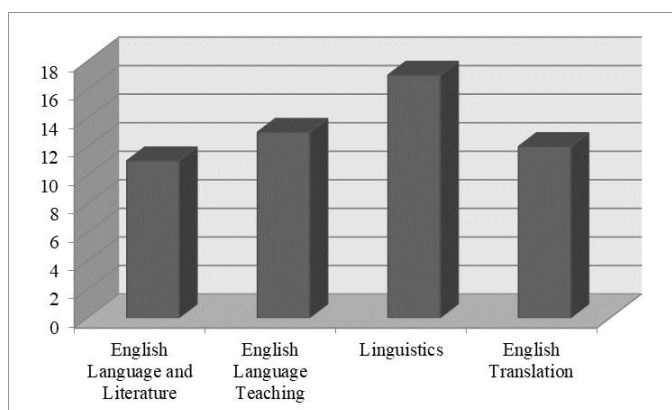


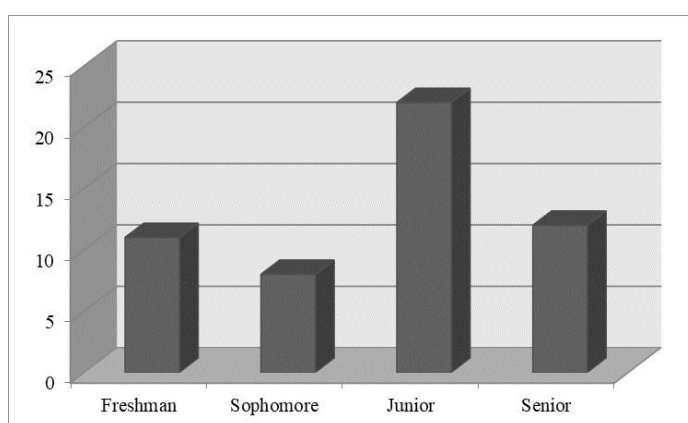
Figure 5. *Frequency of Participant's Field of Study*

Among the 53 people who participated in this study, 20.8% are freshman, 15.1% sophomore, 41.5% are junior and 22.6% are Senior that detailed results are presented in Table (6).

Table 6. *Frequency of Participant's Stage of Study*

	Frequency	Percent
Freshman	11	20.8
Sophomore	8	15.1
Junior	22	41.5
Senior	12	22.6
Total	53	100.0

The corresponding diagram is shown in Figure (6).



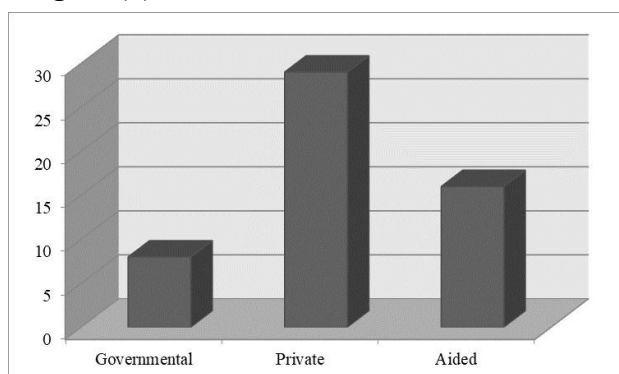
The obtained results showed that 15.1% of the participants are engaged in learning English as second language in governmental institutions, 54.7% in private

institutions and 30.2% in aided institutions. The relevant results are shown in table (7).

Table 7. *Frequency of Participant's Type of Institution*

	Frequency	Percent
Governmental	8	15.1
Private	29	54.7
Aided	16	30.2
Total	53	100.0

The corresponding diagram is shown in Figure (7).



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

What are the learners' views on using adverbs in universities?

Although the answer to this question was not homogenous, it included two spectrums, including for and against, which were well distinguishable. The first group had a positive opinion on the use of adverbs of mobility, and the variability of their position in sentences has been introduced as a factor to facilitate their use by this group, while the opposite group considered the same factor as the cause of their confusion, which in some cases questions the correctness of the sentence. Basically, adverbs are such important word class to the language learner. Pérez-Paredes & Sánchez Tornel (2014) argued that adverb use is a key aspect in the characterisation of learners' communicative competence, as evidenced by the inclusion of adverbs in the rating of standardized texts such as the Test of Written English. Adverbs have been found to be a problematic aspect of grammar

learning, given the difficulties that acquiring the adverb system poses for language learners together. Such difficulties are reflect differently, whether they are related to syntactic factors such as adverb placement (Osborne 2008, Rankin 2010) or to the overuse or underuse of a particular adverb (Hsue-Hueh Shih 2000) or of a type of adverb (Gilquin 2007, Pérez-Paredes et al. 2011).

To what extent do students overcome the difficulties associated with using adverbs?

The majority of the students considered practice and repetition to be the best ways to learn adverbs of mobility. Daily reading English texts, listening to podcasts, or watching native movies; choosing topics to write about in such a way that the desired adverbs are used in them; and reading articles related to the grammar of adverbs of mobility are among these exercises. In order to help learners improve, teachers can utilize other teaching methods such play method, demonstration and even project method to help students understand better. The gaming method could also be used as well as listening and imitation. They can also be exposed to the morphology of adverbs, as identified by Ndimele (2008) that most adverbs are morphologically marked by a – ly suffix. Another way to overcome this problem is to learn one of them. In this method, although changing the position of an adverb does not cause any grammatical problems in the sentence, the student prefers to learn only one position and only use it to avoid getting confused.

Does adverbial mobility pose a challenge to learners in KRI universities?

The answer of all the participants to this question was positive, and all of them complained about having to change the place of adverbs in different sentences and believed that this had no other result than confusing the students. The following are some comments:

When changing the position

of the adverb does not cause any special change in the meaning of the sentence and even grammatically there is no problem with the sentence, I don't know why this issue should be taken into consideration.

And

She sang beautifully. Beautifully she sang. She beautifully sang. When all three sentences have the same meaning and grammatically are same, why should the location of the adverb be important to us (laughing)?

Do teachers and course books adequately address adverbial mobility for students in the classroom environment?

The participants believed that teachers and course books prefer to express adverbial mobility (83% answered positively and 17% answered negatively), but the topic of the discussion itself is confusing and more practical examples are needed (61% did not consider the examples sufficient and 39% considered them sufficient). Also, 28% of students suggested that adverbial mobility should be taught using videos or podcasts, while 72% considered written examples to be sufficient. 73% of the students also evaluated the teacher's expression technique for teaching adverbial mobility as weak, although they believed that the teacher had sufficient knowledge. Learners in recent times have demonstrated that they spend considerable length of time on their phones and so the learning of adverb mobility and grammar could be made into a form of gaming system to increase learners' motivation towards the subject of study. Curriculum planners can also evaluate the challenges identified in this study so as to explore better ways of designing teaching materials to meet the needs of the learners.

What are the connections between students and teachers when it comes to adoption?

In total, students have stated that the most discussions and questions arise in the class during the teaching of adverbial mobility; 46% of them considered these discussions to be constructive, but the rest of them considered it to increase students' confusion. Students considered the presence of too many questions to be a sign of the subject's confusing nature, and 67% reported that they do not get answers to their questions in class, increasing their confusion. 83% of students considered the teacher's presentation technique insufficient to explain this topic.

Discussion

The results obtained in this research showed that the students at KRI universities had a major problem understanding the concept and function of adverbs of mobility and were often confused. In many cases, EFL learners experience challenges learning English adverbs and grammar in general. Al-Mekhlafi & Nagaratnam (2011: 71) assert that "since the 1970s, attention has shifted from ways of teaching grammar to ways of getting learners to communicate, but grammar has been seen to be a powerful undermining and demotivating force among L2 learners. In terms of motivation and learner success with languages, grammar has been seen to be a problem and to stand in the way of helping learners to communicate fluently. The hard fact that most teachers face is that learners often find it difficult to make flexible use of the rules of grammar taught in the classroom. They may know the rules perfectly, but are incapable of applying them in their own use of the language."

They considered the teachers' knowledge to be sufficient, but despite this, they are unable to fully understand the subject. The result of Ahaotu's (2022) showed the summary of the responses in contrast to the more general perception of adverbs and adverbial groups as a highly mobile category that may be put in any

sentence position without altering meaning. Based on the opinions of a majority of the respondents in the study, the research concluded that they perceived adverbs as restrictively mobile and agreed that mobility presents challenges to their students' use of adverbs. The study recommended among other things that teachers of English in TESOL contexts should incorporate the Lexical Approach in teaching adverbs and communication skills because the methodology enhances oral and written fluency as well as grammaticality. It seems that practice and repetition are the only methods that students found useful for understanding the subject, although they consider the use of multimedia tools to be an effective step in increasing their understanding of the subject. Findings by Quansah and Tetteh about perceptions of adverbial mobility in TESOL indicated that teachers and accessibility to language learning facilities play significant roles in second language acquisition. Adverbs often fall within the category of open word classes (Okoh, 2010; Quirk & Greenbaum, 2000), which means that they offer a broad range of lexical items that may be taught and acquired in TESOL settings. Future studies could consider conducting a more extensive empirical investigation to explore the practical implications of the recommended teaching methodologies, particularly in diverse TESOL settings. Additionally, a more nuanced examination of the specific factors contributing to students' challenges in comprehending adverbial mobility would provide valuable insights for educators and curriculum designers seeking to improve language learning outcomes in academic environments.

This study tried to show how crucial the Lexical Approach may be in the process, as well as the unavoidable connection between grammar and vocabulary. Adverbs provide crucial linguistic and communicative building blocks for ESL and EFL learners, according to the respondents' opinions.

Adverbial sub-categories like adverbs, adverbial collocation, phrases, and clauses offer a wealth of lexical resources for teaching, classroom exercises, and assessing English language and communication skills, particularly when the goal of the lesson is to increase fluency or develop descriptive abilities. Adverbial placement is violated, which results in uncomfortable phrases and ambiguity. Because of this, English students in this research believed that adverbial mobility is restricted and they concurred that their pupils had trouble accurately inserting adverbs.

CONCLUSION

Adverbs and adverbials offer an endless repertory of lexemes, which increase expressiveness in both written and spoken English, according to a major study report. When adverbs are used in sentences, their ability to convey meaning is obviously improved. The several examples shown above are more than enough for this submission. However, a student in an L2/FL classroom has a barrier because they must find a balance between the praised great mobility of adverbs and the reality that adverbs are truly selective and limited to just a few spots in a sentence. The student who wants to grasp the English language cannot skip any word class, much alone the crucial word class of adverbs. Due to its importance in fostering the growth of L2 vocabulary and helping with expressive specificity, the paper of this significant word class is required.

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