

Recognition and Production of the Present Tense Versus Present Passive Constructions: Error Analysis of Iraqi EFL Learners' Performance

Shurooq Abboodi Ali (M.A.)

Department of English

College of Arts/ University of Baghdad

Abstract

The present tense and present passive constructions play a significant role in English sentence structure. They express actions which take place in the present. The two structures are common in English as well as being used extensively in everyday life of English. Besides, they are required by EFL learners in constructing their role or written communicative situations.

Therefore, the present study investigates the errors committed by Iraqi EFL learners in these two structures at the recognition and production levels since most of them may not recognize the present tense and the construction of present passive sentence particularly in time of change from active to passive. Thus, a test has been given to thirty two Iraqi EFL learners and their responses have been analyzed. Their responses have shown that they commit different errors in the present passive constructions at the recognition and production levels; contrarily, they do not commit errors in the present tense at the recognition and production levels. However, the researcher has explained the reasons behind their weaknesses in present passive constructions and has suggested some different suggestions which are hoped to be useful for both teachers and students as well.

1.The Problem

It is believed that most of Iraqi EFL learners have difficulties in learning present passive constructions at the recognition and production levels whereas they have no difficulties in learning the present tense at these levels.

2.The Aim

The aim of this study is to identify the areas of difficulty faced by Iraqi EFL learners when learning the present tense and present passive constructions at the recognition and production levels.

3.The Hypothesis

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It is hypothesized that most of Iraqi EFL Learners commit different errors in learning present passive constructions at the recognition and production levels whereas they do not commit errors in learning present tense at these levels.

4. Definition of Basic Terms

1. Performance: It is the way the language system is used in communication. It is a speaker's actual use of language in real situations; what the speaker actually says, including grammatical errors and other non-linguistic features such as hesitations and other nonfluencies. It is in contrast to the concept of competence which is the system of linguistic knowledge possessed by the speakers of a language (Tehrani & Shahbazi-Yeganeh, 1999:166-7 & Crystal, 1992:294).

5. Introduction

The present tense and present passive constructions are two grammatical structures available in English. They play a significant role in constructing English sentences.

The present tense is the popular grammatical tense expressing actions which take place in the present. It describes the things you do every day and locates a situation or event in present time. Chief among the benefits of using present tense is that it involves the reader almost immediately when done properly. It also allows verbs to exist in their most active state which pumps up the level of writing, even for the beginners (Richards & et al, 1992: 287,402).

Concerning passive constructions, Crystal (2003:339) states that the term voice is used in grammar to indicate if the structure of a sentence is active or passive. In active sentence, the doer of the action appears as the subject of the sentence while in passive voice constructions the patient appears as the subject of the sentence.

In addition, Alexander (1988:243-4), Bloomberg (2005:31), & Owl (2009:20) state that passive constructions are used when the emphasis is on the person or the thing which is reflected by an action. They are used in sentences where the object of the action is more important than the people who perform the action. Besides, Bloomberg and Owl (ibid) reveal that passive constructions make sense when the agent performing the action is obvious, unimportant, or unknown or when a writer wishes to postpone mentioning the agent until the last part of the sentence or to avoid mentioning the agent at all. The passive voice is effective in such circumstances because it highlights the action and what is acted upon rather than the agent performing the action.

Moreover, passive constructions are used to conceal the identity of a person responsible for a mistake. Sometimes a statement in passive is more polite than in active one, e.g.

1. A mistake is made

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In this example, the focus is on the fact that a mistake is made, but do not blame anyone(The American Heritage Book of English Usage, 1996:127 & English Grammar Online, 2009:35).

Crystal(1987:380) clarifies that passive constructions are normally required in scientific texts since the sentences of scientific texts are mostly long and complicated, therefore, writers of such sentences prefer to use passive in their writing without mentioning the agent in their sentences. Moreover, passive constructions are preferred in such writing since they give a sense of impersonality that it helps to establish. In addition, Bloomberg(2005:32) & Owl(2009:21) agree with crystal and they add that while active constructions help to create clear and direct sentences, sometimes writers find that using passive expressions is rhetorically effective in scientific and discoursed English texts where the actor is not really important but the process or the principle being described is of ultimate importance. Passive voice constructions give a tone of detachment and they are employed by all skilled writers of English (see also Ansell,2009:76).

However, the present tense and present passive constructions are influential and sentimental in a given situation, most writers of English conventionally choose them in scientific fields or writing and other discourses. They are widely used and required by EFL learners in their field of study, thus the present study has tackled the salient types of these two structures and has excluded the case of present perfect continuous passive construction since it is cumbersome, rarely and hardly ever used.

6. The Present tense

6.1 Present Simple

According to Alexander(1988:163), the present simple is used in various ways:

A: It is used for stating general truth and facts, e.g.

2.Summer follows Spring.

3.Gases expand when heated.

B: It is used for habits and routines, e.g.

4.John smokes a lot.

5.I get up at 7.

C: It is used for things that are true and that normally happen in the present period of time, e.g.

6.My father works in a bank.

7.My sister wears glasses.

D: It is used for future plans and schedules, e.g.

8.The concert begins at 7:30 and ends at 9:30.

9.We leave tomorrow at 11:15 and arrive at 17:50.

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E: It is used for many verbs of thinking and sensing. These verbs are called stative verbs, e.g.

10. I love you.

11. I hate you.

6.2 Present Continuous

Murphy(1994:6,8) mentions that the present continuous is usually used to express continuing and ongoing actions which are taking place at the moment of writing and speaking. It is formed from the simple present of the auxiliary to be, followed by what is generally referred to as the present participle of the verb. The present participle of a verb is formed by adding ing to the base infinitives, e.g.

12. Let's go out. It is raining.

13. I'm going to bed now. Good night!

6.3 Present perfect

English present perfect is used to express actions which have been completed or perfected at the time of speaking or writing, e.g.

14. Professor Allen has tried different methods.

15. She has lived here for six months.

The present perfect of any English verb is formed from the simple present of the auxiliary to have, followed by what is generally referred to as the past participle of the verb(Praninskas,1975:284-5).

6.4 Present Perfect Continuous

It is used to express continuous, ongoing actions which have already been completed at the time of speaking or writing. Present perfect continuous expresses an action that has just stopped or recently stopped. It is formed from the present perfect of to be, followed by the present participle of the verb, e.g.

16. Oh look! It has just been raining.

17. He has been examining.

18. I'm tired because I've been working.

(Quirk & Greenbaum,1973:53 & Quirk & et al,1985:189)

7. Present Passive Constructions

Leech and Svartivk (1994:329) point out the construction of the passive sentence in the following sentences:

1. The object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive one.
2. The auxiliary verb should precede the main verb which is in its past participle form.
3. The subject of the active sentence becomes the object of the passive one(or is dropped).

Moreover, Murphy(1994:82-5), Bloomberg(2005:33-5), Ansell (2009:79-81), and Owl(2009:23-5) illustrate the construction of the salient types

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of present passive constructions as well as the change from the present active sentence to the present passive one in the following diagrams:

Present Simple

Active	Passive
1. Somebody cleans this room everyday.	-It is formed from is/ are/ I'm+ past participle.
2. They talk about the problems.	1. The room is cleaned everyday.
3. The movie fascinates me.	2. The problems are talked about.
	3. I'm fascinated by the movie.

Present Continuous

Active	Passive
1. Somebody is cleaning the room at the moment.	-It is formed from is/ are/ I'm+ being+past participle.
2. The dispatcher is notifying the police that three prisoners have escaped.	1. The room is being cleaned at the moment.
3. Shannon is helping me.	2. The police are being notified that three prisoners have escaped
	3. I'm being helped.

Present Perfect

Active	Passive
1. The room looks nice, somebody has cleaned it.	-It is formed from has/have+ been+past participle.
2. Scientists have discovered traces of ice on the surface of Mars.	1. The room looks nice. It has been cleaned.
3. Penny hasn't taken me to the school.	2. Traces of ice have been discovered on the surface of Mars.
	3. I have been taken to the school.

8. Methodology

8.1 Description of the Test and Sample Selected

A test is prepared to examine the performance of Iraqi EFL learners in the present tense and present passive constructions at the recognition and production levels. The test is divided into two questions. Questions no. one is concerned with the present tense whereas question no. two is concerned with present passive constructions. Both questions are in turn divided into two parts A&B and the first part(A) concerns the recognition level whereas the second one (B) concerns the production level in each question. Each part includes ten items. In question no. one multiple choice item is used in (A) to show the recognition of

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the learners in the present tense. (B) is used to show the production of these learners in this structure by asking them to write sentence to each of the corrected one in (A). In question no. two the learners are asked to show their recognition in present passive constructions by asking them to choose the correct choice in each sentence in (A) and they are asked to change each sentence from active to passive one in (B) to show their production in these constructions (see appendix(1)).

The sample in this study is forty two Iraqi 2nd year college students in Department of English/ College of Arts/ University of Baghdad for the academic year 2011. Ten learners have been derived from this sample for the pilot study. Therefore, the residual number is thirty two and they are selected to represent the sample of this study.

8.2 Test Validity

The validity is the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure. It refers to the degree in which our test or other measuring device is truly measuring what we intend it to measure. It is vital for a test to be valid in order for the results to be accurately applied and interpreted. Whenever a test or other measuring device is used as part of the data collection process, the validity of that test is important (Harrison,1983:11). There are different types of validity, the most prominent of which is face validity which is a form of validity in which researchers determine if the test seems to measure what is intended to measure. It is the validity of a test at face value. In other words, a test can be said to have face validity if it looks like it is going to measure what it is supposed to measure (Brown, 1987:222). To ensure the validity of the test, the researcher has consulted ten jury members* in ELT, Applied Linguistics, and Linguistics. The test is judged valid by all the jurors with 90% of agreement. In the light of the jurors opinions the test has gained its face validity.

*The jury members are as follows:

1. Lonny Gold (Communication and Language Expert, Suggestopedic Master Trainer, Accelerative Learning Master Consultant/ Sweden).
2. Professor Dr. Nidham Sheet Hameed (Linguistics/ University of Baghdad/ College of Arts).
3. Assistant Professor Dr. Abdul Kareem Fadhl(Linguistics, University of Baghdad/ College of Education-Ibn Rushd).
4. Assistant Professor Dr. Biadaa' Faisal Noori (Applied Linguistics/ University of Baghdad/ College of Arts).
5. The Instructor Saleema Abdulzahra (Linguistics/ University of Alqadisiya/ College of Education)
6. The Instructor Zayneb Abboodi (Linguistics/ University of Tikrit/ College of Arts)
7. Assistant Instructor Aseel Gatti (Linguistics/ University of Baghdad/ College of Arts).

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8. Assistant Instructor Adhwaa' Mohammad Salman (Methods of Teaching English/ Ministry of Education).
9. Assistant Instructor Elaf Riyadh(Methods of Teaching English, University of Baghdad/ College of Education-Ibn Rushd).
10. Assistant Instructor Wassan Khalid (Linguistics/ University of Alanbar).

8.3 Pilot Study

Ten Iraqi 2nd year college students from Department of English/ College of Arts/ University of Baghdad are chosen for the pilot study as shown in table (1). The test is carried out in 2011. However, the pilot study aims at:

1. Determining the time needed by the testees to work out the test items.
2. Ensuring the clarity of the test instruction.
3. Finding out the test reliability.
4. Determining the effectiveness of the test items in their difficulty level and discrimination power in the light of the testees' responses.

The test is clarified to the learners and it is found out that all the instructions are clear and familiar to them and the average time required for working out all the test items is 45 minutes. The learners have put down their responses on the test papers which used as answer sheets. Accordingly, their responses have been corrected in order to determine the reliability of the test, difficulty level and discrimination power of its items. It is important to indicate that the correction of items and identifying of errors have been done by both Assistant professor Dr. Baidaa' Faisal Noori/ Department of English / College of Arts/ University of Baghdad and by the researcher, herself .

Table (1)

Sample Selected for The Pilot Study

Student	Q1		Q2		Total
	A: Recognition	B: Production	A: Recognition	B: Production	
1	9	9	8	9	35
2	9	8	7	8	32
3	9	8	6	7	30
4	6	7	6	9	28
5	6	6	8	5	25
6	5	7	6	6	24
7	4	5	4	7	20
8	3	3	6	6	18
9	4	5	4	3	16
10	5	4	4	2	15

8.4 Test Reliability

Reliability is one of the most important elements of test quality. It has to do with the consistency of an examinee's performance on the test. If a test yields

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inconsistent scores, it may be unethical to take any substantive actions on the basis of the test (Gronlund, 1985:9).

There are several methods for computing test reliability, one of which is Cronbach's Alpha. It is a measure of internal consistency and reliability. It indicates how well a group of items together measure the trait of interest by estimating the proportion of test variance due to common factors among the items. If all items in a test measure the same underlying dimension, then the items will be highly correlated with all other items. Alpha is an extension of Kuder-Richardson formula, but it differs in this, it can be described the variance whether or not items are dichotomously scored (Davies & et al, 1999:39 and Eble, 1972:418). Therefore, ten Iraqi 2nd year college students from Department of English/ College of Arts/ University of Baghdad are chosen randomly and tested in the items of the test (see table (1)). The learners' papers are corrected and the formula of Cronbach's Alpha is applied to the scores. It is found to be 0.75 which means an acceptable reliability.

The formula of Cronbach's Alpha is as follows:

$$\alpha = \frac{k}{k-1} \left[1 - \frac{\sum s_i^2}{s_t^2} \right]$$

K : is the number of items

s_t^2 : the variance of the observed total test scores

s_i^2 : the variance of component i for the current sample of persons.

(ibid)

8.5 Test Difficulty Level

The level of difficulty refers to the percentage of learners who get the items correct. It shows how easy or difficult the particular item proved in the test (Ebel, 1972:85). The total scores of the ten learners have been ranked from the highest to the lowest one, then they are divided into two groups. The total scores of the learners who answer the test items correctly at both the upper and the lower groups are divided by the total number of the learners of the both groups. The acceptable level of difficulty ranges from 20% - 80% (Brown, 1983:37). The level of difficulty of the test items ranges from 0.38-0.74 and it is considered acceptable as shown in table(2).

Table(2)
Test Difficulty

No. of Item	Difficulty Level	No. of Item	Difficulty Level	No. of Item	Difficulty Level	No. of Item	Difficulty Level
1	0.40	11	0.54	21	0.52	31	0.43
2	0.56	12	0.62	22	0.43	32	0.55
3	0.62	13	0.50	23	0.52	33	0.62

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4	0.57	14	0.43	24	0.38	34	0.45
5	0.38	15	0.72	25	0.74	35	0.35
6	0.71	16	0.45	26	0.54	36	0.51
7	0.54	17	0.62	27	0.52	37	0.60
8	0.39	18	0.54	28	0.34	38	0.42
9	0.46	19	0.55	29	0.35	39	0.52
10	0.62	20	0.63	30	0.52	40	0.65

The following formula is used to indicate the level of difficulty:

$$H + L$$

$$\text{Test Difficulty Level} = \frac{H + L}{N}$$

H = Number of correct answers in the high group.

L= Number of correct answers in the low group.

N= Total number of learners in both groups (Ferguson,1981:97).

8.6 Test Discrimination Power

The test discrimination power of the test shows to which extent an item is efficient or inefficient. The test item is good if it has a discrimination power of 0.20 or more (Brown, 1981:104). However, the discrimination power of the test items ranges from 2.45-9.52. The tabled t. value is 2.262 at 0.05 level of significance and 9 degree of freedom (see table (3)).

Table (3)
Test Discrimination Power

No. of Item	Discrimination Power	No. of Item	Discrimination Power	No. of Item	Discrimination Power	No. of Item	Discrimination Power
1	3.45	11	4.52	21	8.52	31	6.54
2	5.41	12	6.52	22	7.52	32	8.52
3	2.98	13	2.88	23	3.55	33	7.12
4	2.45	14	2.54	24	4.21	34	9.52
5	6.71	15	7.52	25	3.55	35	4.52
6	3.58	16	8.63	26	4.12	36	6.41
7	6.52	17	5.42	27	8.22	37	3.51
8	4.63	18	3.52	28	7.52	38	7.52
9	5.32	19	4.12	29	4.52	39	4.14
10	8.54	20	5.22	30	4.12	40	3.33

The following formula is used to indicate test discrimination power:

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{S_1^2 (n_1 - 1) + (n_2 - 1) S_2^2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2} \times \frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}}}$$

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X1 : Mean of high group.

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X2 : Mean of low group.

S_1^2 : Variance of high group.

S_2^2 : Variance of low group.

N1: Number of high group scores.

N2: Number of low group scores. .(Glass & Stanly,1970:362)

8.7 Scoring Scheme

Scoring scheme is the way according to which the obtained results are interpreted properly. The whole mark given to the test is 40 which is distributed among the two questions as follows:

1. Question no. one represents the present tense and twenty marks are specified for it. It is divided into two parts (A&B) for the recognition and production levels; thus, ten marks are allotted for each part which means that one mark is given for each item.
2. Question no. two represents the present passive constructions and twenty marks are also specified for it. It is divided into two parts (A&B) for the recognition and production levels. Ten marks are allotted for each part which means that one mark is given for each item.

8.8 Final Administration of the Test

After confirming the validity, reliability, difficulty level, and discrimination power of the test, it is applied on thirty two Iraqi 2nd year college students in Department of English/ College of Arts/ University of Baghdad. The test is scored depending on the errors committed by the learners in the present tense and present passive constructions at the recognition and production levels. Percentage is used to show the frequency rates of correct and incorrect answers made by the learners in these two structures in each item in the test. The learners' responses are also scored by both assistant professor Dr. Baidaa' Faisal Noori and by the researcher as well.

9. Data Analysis

Table(4) below shows the percentage of the correct and incorrect answers in questions no. one and two in the present tense and present passive constructions at the recognition and production levels.

Table(4)

Percentage of Correct and Incorrect Answers of Questions no. One and Two

The Percentage of the Correct Answers	The Percentage of the Incorrect Answers
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Q1 Present Tense	A Recognition	90.6%	9.4%
	B Production	87.5%	12.5%
Q2 Present Passive Constructions	A Recognition	28.1%	71.9%
	B Production	21.8%	78.2%

It is obvious from table (4) that the correct answers of question no. one (A&B) which is concerned with the present tense at the recognition and production levels are 90.6% and 87.5% respectively whereas the incorrect ones of (A&B) are 9.4% and 12.5% respectively . This means that the learners have no difficulties in the present tense at the recognition and production levels. Table (5) presents the percentage of correct and incorrect answers in question no. one (A&B).

Table(5)
The Percentage of Correct and Incorrect
Answers of Question no. one (A&B)

		No. of Item	The Percentage of Correct Answers	The Percentage of Incorrect Answers
Q1	A Recognition	1	87.5%	12.5%
		2	96.8%	3.2%
		3	90.6%	9.4%
		4	90.6%	9.4%
		5	90.6%	9.4%
		6	93.7%	6.3%
		7	90.6%	9.4%
		8	87.5%	12.5%
		9	90.6%	9.4%
		10	96.8%	3.2%
	B Production	1	84.3%	15.7%
		2	93.7%	6.3%
		3	87.5%	12.5%
		4	90.6%	9.4%
		5	90.6%	9.4%
		6	93.7%	6.3%
		7	87.5%	12.5%
		8	81.2%	18.8%
		9	93.7%	6.3%
		10	84.3%	15.7%

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On the contrary, the performance of the learners in question no. two which is concerned with present passive constructions at the recognition and production levels is so low as well as it is lower than that of question no. one which is concerned with the present tense. The percentage of correct answers in question no. two (A&B) at the recognition and production levels is 28.1% and 21.8% respectively whereas that of the incorrect ones at the recognition and production levels is 71.9% and 78.2% respectively (see table(1)). Regarding the percentages of the correct and incorrect answers of question no. two, table (6) shows these percentages in details.

Table (6)
The percentage of the Correct and Incorrect
Answers of Question no. Two(A&B)

		No. of Item	The Percentage of Correct Answers	The Percentage of Incorrect Answers
Q2	A Recognition	1	31.2%	68.8%
		2	37.5%	62.5%
		3	28.1%	71.9%
		4	21.8%	78.2%
		5	15.6%	84.4%
		6	34.3%	65.7%
		7	37.5%	62.5%
		8	9.4%	90.6%
		9	18.7%	81.3%
		10	34.3%	65.7%
	B Production	1	43.7%	56.3%
		2	21.8%	78.2%
		3	21.8%	78.2%
		4	18.7%	81.3%
		5	31.2%	68.8%
		6	15.6%	84.4%
		7	40.6%	59.4%
		8	6.3%	93.7%
		9	43.7%	56.3%
		10	6.3%	93.7%

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learners' performance in question no. two (A&B) at the recognition and production levels can be discussed as follows:

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1. The percentages of the correct and incorrect answers of items no. 3,5,7,&10 which are concerned with present simple passive construction at the recognition level are 28.1%, 15.6%, 37.5%, &34.3% respectively whereas those of the incorrect ones are 71.9%, 84.4%, 62.5%, &65.7%. Similarly, the percentages of the correct and incorrect answers of items no. 1,4,8,&9 which are concerned with present simple passive construction at the production level are 43.7%, 18.7%, 6.3%, & 43.7% respectively whereas those of the incorrect ones are 56.3%, 81.3%, 93.7%, & 56.3%. Thus, it is noted that most of the learners commit errors when they try to recognize the present simple passive construction at the recognition level(A) and when they try to change the present simple active sentences to the present simple passive ones at the production level(B). Such errors belong to the fact that:

- a) They do not recognize the object given in present simple active sentences at the production level (B) whether it is a noun (singular or plural) or a personal pronoun. This object should be the subject of the present simple passive sentence. Besides, some other learners recognize it but they do not know how to change it when it is a personal pronoun from the object case in the present simple active sentence to the subject case in the present simple passive one as with the personal pronoun me in item no. 4.
- b) They do not recognize the auxiliary verb is which should be used in items no.3&10 at the recognition level (A). This auxiliary verb should be put according to the subject of the present simple passive sentence. In addition, at the production level they either neglect using the auxiliary verb (is, are) or misuse it in the present simple passive sentence particularly on the case of the interrogative one as in item no. 8 in which the performance of the learners is so low.
- c) They choose incorrect verbs in items no. 5,7,&10 at the recognition level (A) which means that they do not recognize the verbs which should be used with past participle in the present simple passive sentences. They also commit errors in the past participle of the given verbs whether they are regular or irregular ones at the production level(B).
- d) They either misuse the negative form not or neglect using it in the present simple passive sentence at the production level (B) as in item no.4.

It is important to indicate that the percentages of the correct and incorrect answers are the same in both items no. 1&9 at the production level which reflect that the learners have the same difficulties in these items.

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2. The percentages of the correct answers of items no. 1,8,&9 which are concerned with present continuous passive construction at the recognition level are 31.2%,9.4%,&18.7% respectively whereas those of the incorrect answers are 68.8%, 90.6%,&81.3%. Comparably, the percentages of the correct answers of items no. 2,6,&10 which are concerned with present continuous passive construction at the production level are 21.8%,15.6%,&6.3% respectively whereas those of the incorrect answers are 78.2%, 84.4%,&93.7% which show that most of the learners commit errors at these two levels when they try to recognize these sentences in (A) as well as when they try to change from the present continuous active sentences to the present continuous passive ones in (B) because:

a) they do not recognize the object in the present continuous active sentences whether it is a noun or a personal pronoun at the production level(B). This object should be the subject of the present continuous passive one and if it is a personal pronoun, it should be changed from the object case to the subject case in the present continuous passive sentence as in item no.10:

(active form):

Miss Liu is taking me to the theatre to see Romeo and Juliet's film.

(passive form):

I'm being taken to the theatre to see Romeo and Juliet's film.

The performance of the learners in this item is so low since they have misunderstood the object given in the first sentence and they have thought that it is Romeo and Juliet instead of me in the sentence. On the other hand , some other learners do not know how to change the personal pronoun from the object case in the first sentence to the subject case in the second passive one when they recognize the object given in the first sentence.

a) they do not recognize the auxiliary verb are in item no.8 at the recognition level (A) which should suit the subject of the present passive continuous sentence as well as they misuse the auxiliary verb (is, are) in item no.6 at the production level (B) when the personal pronoun we takes the position of the subject in the present continuous passive sentence since most of the learners use the same auxiliary verb is of the present continuous active one instead of are.

b) they do not recognize being in the present continuous passive sentence in item no.1 at the recognition level(A). They also neglect using being at the production level (B) which should be used after the auxiliary verb and which should be followed by a past participle in the present continuous passive sentence.

c) they also do not recognize the verb worn in the present passive continuous sentence in item no.9 at the recognition level (A) since they have chosen

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wore instead. This verb must be in past participle. They also commit errors in it in the verbs given in the present passive continuous sentences at the production level(B).

3. Nevertheless, the percentages of the correct answers of items no. 2,4,&6 which are concerned with present perfect passive construction at the recognition level are 37.5%,21.8%,&34.3% respectively whereas those of the incorrect answers are 62.5%, 78.2%,&65.7%. Likewise, the percentages of the correct answers of items no. 3,5,&7 which are concerned with present perfect passive construction at the production level are 21.8%, 31.2%, 40.6% respectively whereas those of the incorrect answers are 78.2%, 68.8%, 59.4%. Such rates indicate that most of the learners do not recognize the construction of the present passive perfect sentence at the recognition level (A) and they do not know how to change the present perfect active sentences to the present perfect passive ones at the production level(B) because of the following reasons:
1. They do not recognize the object given in item no.3 at the production level(B) in the present perfect active sentence whether it is a noun (singular or plural) or a personal pronoun. Some other learners recognize it but they do not know how to change it from the object case in the present perfect active sentence to the subject case in the present perfect passive one when it is a personal pronoun.
2. They do not recognize the auxiliary verb have in item no.2 at the recognition level (A) which should suit the subject of the present perfect passive sentence.
3. They either misuse the negative form not or neglect using it in the present perfect passive sentence as in item no.3 at the production level(B).
4. They do not recognize that been should be used in the present perfect passive sentence as in item no.6 at the recognition level(A) and they also neglect using it in the sentences that are at the production level(B) since most of them use the same construction of the present perfect active sentence when they try to change it from active to passive, i.e. they use has/have + past participle instead of using has/have + been + past participle.
5. They also do not recognize the past participle of the irregular verbs as in item no.4 at the recognition level(A) since they choose wrote instead of written.

It is worth noting that five learners have left the whole items of question no. two with no answers. They have no performance in present passive constructions at all although they have answered the whole items of question no. one. Besides, seven learners have tried to answer the whole items of question no. two but they have completely failed. However, only seven learners have passed question no. two successfully.

10. Conclusions

After discussing the performance of the learners in the test, the researcher has come up with the following conclusions:

1. Iraqi EFL learners of English Department at the College of Arts/ University of Baghdad have difficulties in learning present passive constructions at the recognition and production levels whereas they have no such difficulties in learning the present tense at these levels.
2. The learners commit errors in their recognition of the present passive constructions as well as in their production of these constructions when they try to change from the present active sentences to the present passive ones.

Therefore, the present study suggests the following:

1. Present passive constructions should be taught in the first year of English department at the university level.
2. A list of regular and irregular verbs should be given to the learners.
3. The object (whether it is a noun or a personal pronoun in the present active sentence) is showed and explained to make the learners recognize the position of it in such a sentence and show them how it takes the position of the subject in the present passive one.
4. The personal pronoun is clarified regarding its position as an object and how it is changed into a subject in the present passive sentence.
5. The use of auxiliary verb and negative forms should be concentrated on in both active and passive constructions.
6. The forms of being in the present continuous passive sentence and been in the present perfect passive one should be concentrated on since most of the learners neglect using them in these sentences. Besides, the difference between present perfect active and present perfect passive constructions must be clarified since most of them use the former in the construction of the latter when they change from active to passive.
7. Extensive examples, exercises, and examinations are put forward in order to give the learners the ability of transforming the present active sentences to present passive ones and vice versa.
8. Furthermore, such constructions should be taught in the first year and they should be kept learning in the second year with additional detailed information. It is important to mention that reports play a significant role in teaching English passive and active constructions through making each learner write a report about an interesting English topic and asking him/her to use present passive constructions in it. This helps the learners to read more about such constructions and use them in their reports with more attention.

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Appendix(1) The Test

Q1: A: Write the number of the sentence and the letter of the correct choice:

1. The moon round the earth.
a. go b. goes c. going d. gone
2. the car is useless! It is always down.
a. breaking b. break c. breaks down d. broke
3. She here since September.
a. live b. living c. has lived d. have lived
4. It for two hours.
a. has been raining b. have been raining c. rain d. rains
5. Maria and Tom are in Britain at the moment. They are.....English.
a. learning b. learn c. learns d. learnt
6. It doesn'tvery much in Summer.
a. rains b. raining c. rained d. rain
7. Some studentsher with her lessons recently.
a. helping b. have been helping d. helps d. has been helping
8. It's nice to see you again. Weeach other for a long time.
a. see b. hasn't seen c. haven't seen d. seen
9. The children usually.....very soundly.

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- a. sleep b. sleeps c. sleeping d. slept
10. What do you usually.....at weekends?
a. does b. did c. do d. done

B: Write a complete sentence to each of the corrected one above.

Q2:

A: Read the following sentences carefully and choose the correct answer from each bracket:

1. A cup of tea is (be,being) drunk.
2. The tables (have,has) been cleaned.
3. The party (is,are) prepared.
4. A letter has been (wrote,written).
5. The meeting is (postponed,postpone).
6. Short stories have (been,be) bought.
7. Turkey and Lebanon are (visit,visited).
8. The letters (is,are) being received.
9. A tie is not being (worn,wore).
10. How (are,is) the old house (lived,living)?

B: Change the form of the following bold sentences into present passive constructions:

1. It is a big company. **It employs two hundred people.**
2. **Elizabeth is sending a letter at the moment.**
3. 'Are you going to the party?' 'No, **no one have invited me**'.
4. **John and George don't often see me in the markets.**
5. Have you heard the news? **Someone has shot the president.**
6. There is somebody walking behind us. **I think he is following us.**
7. Up to now, dots, **line and symbols on walls have long puzzled the historians.**
8. **How do people learn languages?**
9. **Water covers most of the earth's surface.**
10. **Miss Liu is taking me to the theatre to see Romeo and Juliet's film.**

