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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT) AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (ELL) STUDENTS' LEVEL OF RECOGNITION OF EXTENDED COMPLEX SENTENCES

*Sibel ÇAĞATAY**

ABSTRACT

Complex sentences are formulated by combining an independent or a main clause with a dependent or a subordinate clause. This sentence type can be extended at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the sentence, which makes these sentences even harder to recognize on the part of the learners. For this reason, the present study particularly aims at finding out to what extent first year English Language Education (ELT) students and English Language and Literature (ELL) students, as prospective language professionals, can recognize extended complex sentences among other sentence structures such as simple, compound, and compound-complex sentences. The present paper attempts to reveal if there is any significant difference between first year ELT students and Literature students' level of recognition after the six-hour remedial teaching. 40-question multiple choice English test was administered to the participants. The alternatives of the test are composed of simple, compound, complex and extended complex sentences and the participants are expected to recognize and mark the extended complex ones among the others.

Findings which were analyzed using SPSS 21 reveal that all (100%) ELT students and 93% of the ELL students cannot recognize extended complex sentences before the instruction. However, both groups' scores increased significantly after the intervention. The current study also indicates that students at the ELT department performed significantly better than the ones at the Literature Department after the six-hour instruction.



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STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

English as a language is subsumed into three main categories of sentence structure; namely, simple, compound and complex. Complex sentences are the ones used the most frequently in formal contexts as Pavey (2010) notes. Considering this common use, it becomes much more significant for prospective language specialists such as linguists or language teachers. Lack of knowledge in the use of these structures might result in run-on sentences, fragmented or stringy structures, which cause confusion for other parties involved in communication. Complex sentences are mainly formed with noun clauses, relative clauses or adverbial clauses. These sentence types can also be extended in such different forms as “adjective clauses, adverbial phrases, prepositional phrases, appositive phrases, gerundive phrases, participle phrases, verbal phrases, infinitive phrases, or noun phrases”, which might confuse language learners even more (Demirezen, 2013, p.562). Misuse or any problems with the recognition of complex or extended complex sentences might exert an impact on the effective writing skills of a language learner/user (Demirezen, 2012b). Despite the common appearance in different genres or the importance of complex sentences, it has not attracted the attention of many scholars in the field, especially concerning young adult learners. Hence, the present study purports to shed light onto the difficulty level of the extended complex sentences for prospective language professionals and attempts to contribute to their recognition of these structures through a six-hour treatment program. In the light of this, the study aims to address the following research questions: *What is the overall awareness level of first year students both at English Language Teaching (ELT) Department and English Language and Literature (ELL) Department on extended complex sentences in pre-test and post-test; Is there any significant difference between the first year students at the Department of ELT and ELL in terms of the awareness of extended complex sentences?; Is there a significant difference between ELT and ELL students in terms of the recognition of extended complex sentences after the remedial teaching?*

The researcher recruited 30 freshmen from the English Language Teaching (ELT) and 30 freshmen students from the English Language and Literature (ELL) departments. In this study, a pre-test was by the researcher to analyze the difficulty level of extended complex sentences for the sample groups. The re-test consists of 40 multiple choice questions and it was checked and validated by three English instructors at Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Çankaya University, in Turkey. The sentences in the test were compiled from Demirezen’s book *From Sentence to Paragraph Structure* (1998), *Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)*, some dictionaries such as www.thefreedictionary.com, *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, Samancı’s (2012) study and some grammar books (*Oxford Advanced English Grammar* (Foley & Hall, 2010), *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, *The grammar book: An ESL/EFL teacher's course* (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999) and *Practical English Usage* (Swan, 2005). The test was administered in the same week of December, 2013 to both ELT and ELL students and they were both given 40 minutes to answer the questions. The participants

were asked to mark the correct extended complex sentence among the five options given. Following this pre-test, the participants were given a six-hour instruction on sentence types, mainly on complex and extended complex sentences. One week after the instruction, the post-test including the same sentences in the alternatives were given to the participants. In order to prevent any memorization on the part of the participants, the order of the alternatives in the test was changed. As for the data analyses, Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) 21.0 was used to identify the number of the participants' correct answers, mean scores, frequencies and percentages and the pre-test and post-test mean scores for both groups. Additionally, the changes from the pre-test and the post within each group were calculated via paired samples t test and an independent t-test was performed to see whether there were any significant differences between two groups. In order to answer the first research question, mean scores and percentages for the pre-test were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics. To be able to analyze the second research question, the pre- and post test scores were compared by performing a paired samples t-test, and it was revealed whether remedial teaching had made a difference in the difficulty level of extended complex sentences. Although the mean values for both groups were quite similar to each other in the pre-test (ELT *Mean*: 13.93; Literature *Mean*: 13.17), ELT students' scores were much higher than the post-test scores of ELL's. The number of the correct answers on pre-test ranged from 7 to 24 out of total 40 questions. The percentage for the correct answer is 32.5, which is below the passing grade 65 at Hacettepe University, which shows the difficulty students have in the recognition of extended complex sentences. Although both groups will probably be language professionals, this number is extremely low and the instruction was a great need. After the given instruction, participants in both groups did better (ELT=28.87; ELL=21.23). As for the third research question, the participants in the ELT department performed better at a statistically significant level ($p=.000$), which underscores the fact that given instruction contributed to the knowledge of the ELT students more. The finding of the study resonates with the entrenchment hypothesis which strongly highlights the significance of practicing a skill (Han, 2004). It was also Han (2004, p. 135), who proposed that explicit instruction for sentence structures would pave the way for more competence for the language learners. It is of great benefit, including the students studying in language departments, to diagnose and give the necessary instruction for the basic sentence structures of the language, specifically sentence types.

Keywords: complex sentences, extended complex sentences, teacher education, sentence structure, first year students, ELT students, literature students.

İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLİĞİ VE İNGİLİZ DİLİ EDEBİYATI ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN UZATILMIŞ BİRLEŞİK CÜMLELERİ ANLAMA DÜZEYLERİNİN KARŞILAŞTIRMALI OLARAK İNCELENMESİ

ÖZ

Akademik alanda en sık karşılaşılan birleşik cümle yapısı bir ana cümle bir de yan cümlenin birleşiminden oluşmaktadır. Birleşik cümleler cümlelerin başından, ortasından ya da sonundan uzatılarak daha da karmaşık hale gelmekte ve bu da öğrenenlerin bu yapıyı ayırt etmelerini zorlaştırmaktadır. Bu sebeple, bu çalışma gelecekte İngilizceyi profesyonel bir şekilde kullanacak olan İngilizce Öğretmenliği ve İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı öğrencilerinin bu yapıyı basit, sıralı ve bileşik cümle yapıları arasında hangi ölçüde ayırt ettiklerini araştırmıştır. Ayrıca çalışma öğrencilere sağlanan altı saatlik eğitimin sonunda her iki gruptaki katılımcıların cümle yapısını tanıma düzeylerinde istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir değişiklik olup olmadığını araştırma girişimindedir. Katılımcılara ön test ve son test de 40 soruluk çoktan seçmeli bir test uygulanmıştır. Seçenekler basit, sıralı, birleşik, ve uzatılmış birleşik cümlelerden oluşmaktadır ve katılımcıların bu seçenekler arasında uzatılmış cümle yapısını tanıyıp belirlemeleri beklenmiştir.

SPSS 21 kullanılarak analiz edilen veriden çıkan bulgular her iki grupta da tüm katılımcıların ön test skorlarına bakılırsa İngilizce Öğretmenliğindeki öğrencilerin hiçbirinin ilgili yapıyı tanımadığını, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatındaki öğrencilerin ise % 93 ünün bu yapıyı tanımadıklarını göstermektedir. Fakat verilen eğitim sonunda ise her iki grupta da doğru cevap sayılarında artış görülmüştür. Ayrıca bu çalışmanın bulguları İngilizce Öğretmenliği öğrencilerinin gelişiminin 6 saatlik eğitimden sonra istatistiksel olarak diğer gruptan büyük oranda farklı bir ilerleme olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: birleşik cümle, öğretmen eğitimi, uzatılmış birleşik cümle, cümle yapısı, İngilizce Öğretmenliği öğrencileri; İngiliz Edebiyatı öğrencileri

Introduction

Many second language acquisition (SLA) researchers have been interested in language (L2) learners' acquisition of English sentence structures. Learning of sentences has been challenging for Turkish language learners of English as complete sentences in English differs greatly in the word order and rules of structure in Turkish (Strömqvist & Verhoeven, 2004). Sentences, being an important part of grammar and writing instruction, have long been confused by the language learners who often fail to determine the sentence types (Demirezen, 2012b). Having four different types as simple, compound, complex -compound; complex sentences themselves are hard to recognize and identify on the part of the students whether they are one of the kinds above. This knowledge about language could contribute to the students' forming proper sentences, which may help them write good-quality essays with various sentence types (Demirezen, 1998).

Compared with some other structures in English, complex sentences are the most frequently used sentence types (Pavey, 2010) and these structures are challenging and problematic for most

English language learners (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Diessel, 2004). Researchers working on second language acquisition propose that the problems which English learners face related to sentence structure can be attributed to some factors ranging from the first language (L1) influence (Han & Odlin, 2005), avoidance (e.g. Chiang, 1980; Schachter, 1974; Han, 2004), to overgeneralization (Selinker, 1992).

The acquisition of complex sentence constructions has been extensively studied in first language acquisition including observational as well as experimental analyses (Diessel, 2004). However, not many studies have been done on young adult foreign language learners to compare the acquisition of complex sentence constructions in English (Al Musalli & Al Harthi, 2011). Before clarifying the details of a complex sentence structure, it is better to examine the definition of a sentence and all types of sentence structures.

Types of Sentences

In the field of grammar, a sentence can be described as “a structure that consists of one or more clauses capable of presenting a complete thought in a manner which is grammatically acceptable” (Turner, 1966, p. 87). As Harris (2006) suggests, a clause, on the other hand, is formed by a subject as well as a predicate. Sentences can be identified based on their function or clause structure. There are four types of sentences classified according to their structures, depending on the types of clauses they contain: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex (Steffani & Dachtyl, 2007).

Simple Sentences

A sentence including only a clause, in other words, one subject and one verb phrase, is considered as a simple sentence (Altenberg & Vago, 2010). “It can be as short as one word, or it may appear in some combinations with verb, direct object and indirect object. To this level, the structures of simple sentences are understandable by the students without structural confusions” (Demirezen, 2013, p. 561). In simple sentences, there is one main or independent sentence and here are some example sentences.

Table 1: Example Simple Sentences

	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Predicate</i>
1. S + V	My heart	<i>aches</i>
2. S + V + (Object 1):	<i>John</i>	<i>lost his pants</i>
3. S + V + ((Object 1) + (Object 2)).	<i>I</i>	<i>sent him a message last night</i>

Note. Sentences are taken from Demirezen, 1998; Demirezen, 2013, p. 561; Steffani & Dachtyl, 2007.

However, it does not necessarily mean that simple sentences are always short and easy to identify or to comprehend (Demirezen, 2013). Simple sentences can be accompanied by extended phrasal elements. Demirezen (1998) states that extended phrasal elements may appear “as adjective clauses, adverbial phrases, prepositional phrases, appositive phrases, gerundive phrases, participle phrases, verbal phrases, infinitive phrases, noun phrases” (Demirezen, 2013, p.562) and they may precede, come in-mid sentence position, or follow the simple sentence structure. Below are some example sentences for different positions of extensions:

1. *To earn his living*, my brother works at the Opera House. (Extension is at the beginning)
2. Spielberg, *one of the most successful film directors, known especially films full of exciting events*, is a legend in the history of American Cinema. (Two extensions are in the middle)

3. She turned away, *hiding the fear in her eyes*. (Extension is at the end)
(Demirezen, 2013, p. 562-563)

Compound Sentences

Language users usually connect ideas to have a flow or to have coherence and cohesion especially in their writing. Therefore, compound sentences, in which two or more independent clauses are joint together, are used by the language learners to a great extent (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). To become autonomous in their writing by exploring these structures, they need to explore the conventions of compound sentences in detail (Demirezen, 1998; Demirezen, 2012b; Samancı, 2012). Here are different categories of compound sentences: compound sentences with coordinative conjunctions, compound sentences with a semi-colon, compound sentences with correlative conjunctions and compound sentences with conjunctive adverbs.

In the first category, both sentences are of equal importance and they can stand alone by themselves. The following coordinating conjunctions are generally used to make compound sentences: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so. Below is an example sentence:

Movies are good to entertain people, *and* they are instructive.

The second category, compound sentences with a semi-colon, can be exemplified by the following sentence:

I enjoy soccer; I hate basketball.

Compound sentences with correlative conjunctions can be formed by *both ...and, either ...or, not only....but also, neither...nor*. Here is an example sentence:

Either she comes with us or I will stay here.

Compound sentences could also be formed by conjunctive adverbs and below is a sentence illustrating it:

He looks like a scholar; *also*, he seems to be a fun person.

Complex Sentences

Apart from simple or compound sentences, learners also need to recognize the complex sentences and use them to elaborate their ideas in writing (Rooyen & Jordaan, 2009). The elements of a complex sentence do not have equality in their hierarchical importance (Steffani & Dachtyl, 2007). That is, “a complex sentence is a sentence that contains at least one full dependent clause with its own subject and predicate” (Verspoor & Sauter, 2000, p.37). With regard to meaning, complex sentences convey the meaning of a particular connection between two (or more) cases in subordinate clauses. The difference between a compound sentence and a complex sentence is that in a compound sentence, both parts are really just independent sentences. In a complex sentence; however, the dependent clause cannot function by itself. Instead, it holds a position of a constituent (subject, object, adverbial, or attribute) of the main clause, or sometimes it is only a part of another sentence constituent (Samancı, 2012). Below are some examples:

Table 2: An Example of A Complex Sentence Structure

Main Clause	Subordinate Clause
You will have to wait	until I am through.
All my father wanted me to do	was to help him.
If I were in your shoes,	I wouldn't go there.

Note. Sentences have been taken from Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999).

Dependent clauses of a complex sentence can be classified into three categories: adverbial clauses, noun clauses, relative clauses (Steffani & Dachtyl, 2007).

Adverbial Clauses. The first kind of dependent clause assumes role as adverbial clause which functions as an adverb of a sentence. An adverbial clause introduces a subordinate clause. The adverbial clause usually comes before the subject of the sentence, and it takes the role of a constituent (subject, object, adverbial, or attribute) of the main clause, or sometimes it could only take place of another sentence constituent (Samancı, 2012). Different types of adverbial clauses are adverbs of manner (e.g. as, as if.); adverbs of place (e.g. where, wherever); adverbs of time (e.g. when, since, until...); adverbial clauses of comparison (e.g. as than the more...the more); adverbs of reason (e.g. because, seeing that...); adverbs of concession (e.g. although, no matter ...); adverbs of purpose (e.g. so that, for fear that); adverbs of result (so, such that...), and adverbs of condition (e.g. if, provided that...).

Table 3: Examples of Adverbial Clauses

Since I have lost my job , I have been in depression.
Seeing that he was about to die , I couldn't leave his bedside
You can wash the dishes, then you can go to the movies

Note. Bolded parts are dependent clauses/adverbial clauses/subordinate clauses. Sentences have been taken from Demirezen (1998, p. 64-73).

Noun Clauses. The second type of dependent clause functions as noun phrases or noun clauses. Noun clauses start with a subordinating conjunction and have a subject and a predicate. Yet, if a sentence includes a noun clause, the other part of the sentence does not make sense, so it requires the noun clause to complement the sentence. In the example below, *is quite obvious* is not a complete sentence, so the noun clause constitutes a part of a sentence:

That you are wrong is quite obvious.

Question words that are used to introduce noun clauses are seen below:

Table 4: Examples of Noun Clauses

what	why	how long	whose+noun	whichever
who	how	how far	which +noun	whatever
where	how often	how hard	that	what time
when	whom			

Below are some example sentences for noun clauses:

This is **what I believe**.

How I will do is none of your business.

She only laughed at **what I said**.

What I want to know is **how you will solve the problem**.

(Demirezen, 1998, p. 29-32; Swan, 2005, p. 505-507).

Relative Clause Structures. A *relative clause* or an adjective clause is a dependent clause functioning as an adjective. In other words, a relative clause is “a subordinate clause which modifies nouns or pronouns to identify people or things or to give more information about them” (Swan, 2011, p. 494). Therefore, “a relative clause avoids the use of a repetitious subject, object, and appositives, which can make the writing of complex or compound-complex sentences awkward or stilted” (Demirezen, 1993, p. 40). In a relative clause, the noun modified is called *antecedent*, and the antecedent is followed by the relative clause, as seen in the following sentences:

This woman who lives in a boat is an expert on sea pollution

(antecedent) (adjective clause)

In other words, the noun qualified by the relative clause is termed as the antecedent. In some cases, “there may be double or triple antecedents”, as seen in the following sentence:

Mr. Brown is a **psychiatrist** **who worked with** **individuals**

(antecedent) (adjective clause) (antecedent)

who came with special needs to his office.

(adjective clause)

(Demirezen, 1998, p. 40-51; Foley & Hall, 2010, p. 304-305)

Extended Complex Sentences

Complex sentences can also be extended from the beginning, in the middle or at the end of a sentence. They can be seen “as adjective clauses, adverbial phrases, prepositional phrases, appositive phrases, gerundive phrases, participle phrases, verbal phrases, infinitive phrases, noun phrases” (Demirezen, 2013, p. 562). Here are some examples:

1. He'll be able to maintain a healthy weight, **like his brother**, if he keeps exercising.

extension

2. My friends, who were in London last week, visited the British Museum

to see the masterpieces.

extension

3. **Honestly speaking**, I do not want to tell you what I am going to do.

extension

Here are some more examples for the contrastive analysis of complex sentences and extended complex sentences in a chart:

Table 5: Example 1a

Main Clause	Subordinate Clause
She met my brother,	whom she later married.

Table 6: Example 1b

Extension	Main Clause	Subordinate Clause
On a very rainy day,	she met my brother,	whom she later married.

Table 7: Example 2a

Main Clause (Subject+Verb)	Subordinate Clause (Object)
I believe	that my proposal will be accepted by many scholars.

Table 8: Example 2b

Main Clause (Subject + Verb)	Subordinate Clause (Object)	Extension
I believe	that my proposal will be accepted by many scholars,	considering the content of it.

Compound-Complex Sentences

A compound-complex sentence is composed of two main clauses as well as one subordinate clause. It is also possible to see “more than two main clauses and subordinate clauses” (Demirezen, 1998, p. 97). Here is an example sentence:

Table 9: An Example of a Compound-Complex Sentence

Main Clause 1	Subordinating Clause 1	Conjunction	Main Clause 2	Subordinating Clause 2
I am not sure	if he is right in that	,but	I will look into the data on the computer	when I am available.

In addition to recognizing as well as using simple, compound, and complex sentences, one needs to be competent in compound-complex sentences to have a higher level of proficiency in the language. Here are some sample sentences of compound-complex sentences:

She confessed what she had done, but later she denied what she said.

Celine came in, but she spent some time dressing up and making up before she started to do the real stuff.

(Demirezen, 1998; Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1996; Swan, 2005).

Some Empirical Studies on Complex Sentences

In relation to complex sentence acquisition, there are many studies conducted on young learners or children or the production of sentence structures; however, few empirical studies can be found on the adult or adolescent recognition or the use of complex sentences. To illustrate, Rooyan and Jordan (2009) carried out research on secondary school international students in South Africa. 347 of them learnt English as their first language whereas 117 were learning it as their second language. Test of Adolescent Language (TOAL) was administered to the students and their listening scores were evaluated with respect to the comprehension of complex sentences. When the mean scores were compared for both groups (the ones who learnt English as their first language and second language), both groups’ scores were on the average scale. However, a statistically significant difference between the groups regarding the recognition of complex sentences was revealed. Based on the result, the

researchers suggested exposing the second or foreign learners to more complex sentence structures through listening, reading and writing tasks.

Marefat (2004) examined 30 essays produced by graduate students who are advanced level of English learners and the written production of undergraduate students with an intermediate level of proficiency. The aim was to identify the four types of sentence structures in students' essays. Both groups used the structures at similar numbers. The most commonly used structure was complex sentences; on the other hand, compound sentences received the lowest level of frequency. It is better to highlight the fact that the frequency was not parallel to the level of syntactic complexity of different sentence types. Participants in both groups preferred to use complex sentences more frequently compared to simple or compound ones in spite of the syntactic complexity. However, Marefat (2004) revealed that the more complex sentences are used, the more mistakes are made by the students.

Similar to Marefat (2004), Al-Musalli and Al-Harhi (2009) shed light onto seven students' perceptions of the difficulty level of different sentence structures and to what extent they can produce these sentence types. To examine this, the researchers administered a questionnaire, including all types of sentence structures. The survey asked students to rank the sentences in order of difficulty. Then the participants were expected to write an essay. In those essays, the researchers tried to analyze what sentence structures they could use correctly. The results revealed that students viewed the difficulty of the sentences as:

Simple < Compound < Complex < Compound-complex

Students found complex and compound-complex sentences harder since these required the use of adverbs, more focus as well as investment; also, organizing ideas in these two groups was difficult. Students also reported that they were afraid of making mistakes when they spoke, so they avoided using these sentence types.

Complex sentences seem to be problematic for most second or foreign language learners as subordinate clauses especially in complex and compound-complex structures are syntactically more challenging to process in the brain compared to coordinate structures (simple and compound sentences) (King & Just, 1991). Resting upon these, the researcher did a study on the recognition of first year students at English Language Teaching Department and English Literature departments at two different universities in Turkey. To solve these fossilization problems, it was thought that remedial teaching could gear students to move towards higher level of proficiency in the language (Long, 1983).

The Purpose of the Study

In order to use complex sentences, language learners need to recognize and then process it. Cromer (1974) proposed that in foreign language learning "our cognitive abilities at different stages of development make certain meanings *available* for expression" and therefore, "it is cognition which determines language acquisition" (p. 246). Robinson (2003) posits that this idea is valid for adult language learning, too. In other words, adult learners can create complex concepts of the world, but sometimes the cognitive skills of adult language learners might not suffice to recognize and produce the complex sentences. In this sense, as Robinson (2003) suggests, having a command on complex structures can help adults to be able to express themselves with the help of their elaborated interlanguage.

Complex structures are also of great importance when it comes to written expressions of language users. As Güneş (2013), Demirezen (2019) and Koçak (2019) explain in their studies, effective writers can recognize and also use a wide range of sentence structures so that their readers might be interested and would not feel lost when reading. Considering the importance of gaining

deeper insight into syntactic components- specifically complex sentences as they are indicators of proficient users of a language-, language professionals are required to identify, parse or combine complex sentences in their academic life. In this sense, the purpose of this study is to investigate the recognition level of extended complex sentences by freshman students at two different undergraduate programs at language departments by comparing them.

Methodology

This paper presents research that investigates whether identifying extended complex sentences is a problem for freshman students. In addition, the study aims at revealing to what extent instruction aids students to acquire the knowledge of extended complex sentences. The participants are 30 first year students studying at METU in English Language Education (ELT) Department and 30 first year students at English Language and Literature Department (Literature) at Hacettepe University. The study also looks into whether there is any difference between the recognition levels of these two groups of students. In the light of these aims, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What is the overall awareness level of first year students both at English Language Teaching (ELT) and English Language and Literature (ELL) Departments on extended complex sentences in pre and post tests?

2-Is there any significant difference between the students of the ELT and ELL departments in terms of the awareness of extended complex sentences?

3- Is there a significant difference between ELT and ELL students with regard to the identification of extended complex sentences after the remedial teaching?

Setting and Participants. The participants are 30 first year students studying at Middle East Technical University (METU) in English Language Education (ELT) Department and 30 first year students at English Language and Literature Department (ELL) at Hacettepe University. Convenient purposive sampling or opportunity sampling was adopted (Dörnyei, 2007) in the present study. That is, as the researcher works at these two universities and it was easy to receive permission for the data collection, the participants at two universities were selected. Also, the researcher tried to aim at collecting data from 30 participants at minimum to apply parametric tests during the data analysis as suggested by Pallant (2011).

The overall aim of the first year of the ELT department is to enhance students' language skills and enable them to be proficient, and competent both in their own departmental studies and in their professional life. Similarly, the curriculum of the Literature department mainly aims to empower students' language proficiency, but it also tries to enable students to synthesize, criticize, internalize and produce ideas in literary texts. As extended complex sentences entail a good command of English, these two groups were selected. Also these two groups' achievement scores in English at the national university exam were similar; that is why, they were recruited as participants of the present study.

While the participants in the first group are 30 ELT Department freshman students (9 male and 21 female) at METU, the second group is composed of 30 freshman students (6 male and 24 female) at the ELL Department at Hacettepe University.

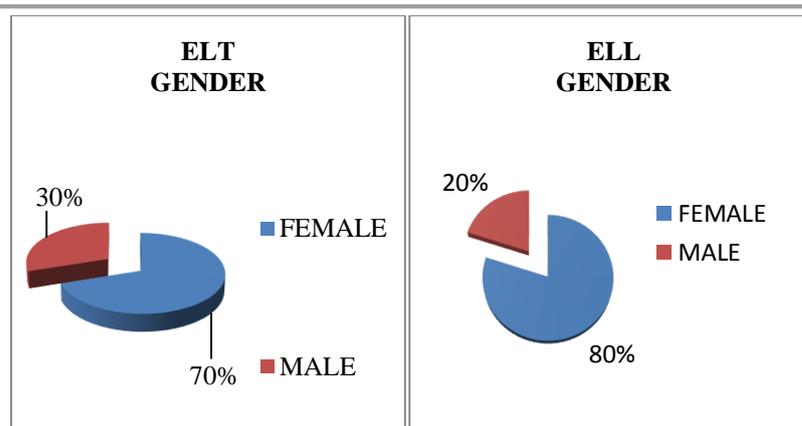


Figure 1. Gender Distribution of ELT and Literature Students

Instruments. The research has a pre and post-test design, the data of which was collected through a multiple choice test administered on the ELT and the ELL students. Both tests were prepared by the researcher. To get feedback about the questions in the tests and to ensure that the tests were reliable, they were checked by three English instructors. Also the reliability test was done and the reliability coefficient was found .805.

Tests. The tests consist of 40 Likert-scale items (see Appendix 1). Each question has five options (ranging from a to e) which include different types of sentences (simple, compound, complex and compound-complex). The sentences used for options were gathered from “*From Sentence to Paragraph Structure*” (Demirezen, 1998), *Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)*, some dictionaries such as *www.thefreedictionary.com*, *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1996)*, *Samanci’s (2012) study* and some grammar books (*Oxford Advanced English Grammar, Understanding and Using English Grammar, The grammar book: An ESL/EFL teacher’s course and Practical English Usage*). In both pre-test and post-test, the items were selected at similar numbers depending on different categories of complex sentences. The details are shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Distribution of Complex Sentence Structures in the Test

Type of Complex Sentences	Number of Questions
Relative Clauses	11
Noun Clauses	11
Adverbial Clauses	11
Two complex sentences (e.g. Relative and Noun Clauses)	7
All types	(Total: 40)

To prevent the memorization of the correct answers on the part of the students, the places of the correct answers were changed in the post test.

Procedure. The study was conducted at Middle East Technical University and Hacettepe University in the first semester, in December, 2013. After the tests were prepared by the researcher and checked by three English instructors to assess the reliability of test items, necessary changes were made in the tests. Both pre-test and post-test sessions took 45 minutes of the lesson. After the pre-test session, the instructional process was initiated. All sentence types including simple, compound, complex and compound-complex were taught to both student groups (ELT and ELL) through six-hour

class instruction for each using power point presentation slides on the topic. Students were required to do various activities during the instructional process:

1st & 2nd Hours

Watching a short video on relative clauses (from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DvhC0eSib3g>)

Studying simple, extended simple and compound sentences through the power point slides: Slides 1-38

Doing exercise 1, 2 and 3, including identifying the simple & compound sentences, combining sentences, filling in the blanks

3rd & 4th Hours

Studying adverbial clauses in complex sentences through the power point slides: Slides 39- 60
Doing exercise 4, 5, and 6, including identifying the adverbial clauses in complex sentences, combining sentences, filling in the blanks

Studying noun clauses in complex sentences through the power point slides.

Doing exercise 7, 8, and 9, including identifying the noun clauses in complex sentences, combining sentences, filling in the blanks

5th & 6th Hours

Studying adjective/relative clauses in complex sentences through the power point slides: Slides 61- 89

Doing exercise 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15, including identifying the relative clauses in complex sentences, combining sentences, filling in the blanks and identifying the meaning difference between defining and non-defining relative clauses

Contingency Plan Game: Who wants to be a millionaire? <http://www.quia.com/rr/126726.html>

Students were given the power point slides to study outside the class and they were given some homework to practice the target structures.

14 days after the instruction, the post-test was administered to the participants in order to determine the effectiveness of instruction on students' identification level of extended complex sentences.

Data Analysis. The data gathered from the pre and the post tests were analyzed through Statistical Packages in Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21. The responses of multiple choice questions were scrutinized quantitatively using percentages and frequencies. In addition, to find out whether instruction has a reliable effect on students' knowledge of complex sentences, a paired-samples t-test was performed in each group. Independent samples t test was performed to contrast two groups' results.

Results

In the next section, the findings derived from the test will be presented in line with the research questions.

Research Question 1. What is the overall awareness level of first year students at English Language Education (ELT) Department and English Language and Literature (ELL) Department on extended complex sentences in the pre test and the post test?

In order to answer the first research question, all students' (both ELT and ELL freshmen) total pre-test and post-test scores were calculated and analyzed performing descriptive statistics (mean scores, frequency...) to be able to determine the recognition level of identifying extended complex sentences. In addition, students' responses to each item in the pre-test and the post-test were analyzed quantitatively using percentages and frequencies. The results in relation to the comparative analysis of pre-test and post-test results are shown in Table 11:

Table 11: Both Groups' Pre- and Post- Test Scores

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Percentage	SD
PRE-TEST	60	1	11	13.55	33.87	4.73
POST-TEST	60	24	48	25.05	62.62	7.08

Note. N: Number of the Students; Min: Minimum Score; Max. Maximum Score; Mean: Mean Score; SD: Standard Deviation

As illustrated in Table 11, while all the participants performed poorly with regard to the recognition of extended complex sentences in the pre-test, the mean score increased from 13.55 to 25.05 out of 40 in the post test, meaning that instruction helped most of the students to identify the target structure. However, students had difficulty with about 40 % of the questions in the post test. They may need more practice with respect to sentence structures in the future.

The pre-test results were examined in individual responses. It was found that complex structures were confused with all extended types and also compound-complex sentences. In addition, this table shows that specific students in both groups still had problems as they seemed to fail in the post test. Therefore, students can be given a tutorial if possible or should be provided with extra materials to reinforce the teaching learning process.

Research Question 2. Is there any significant difference between the students of the ELT and ELL departments in terms of the awareness of extended complex sentences?

In an attempt to examine the differences-if any- between the two groups in terms of the recognition level of extended complex sentences, a paired-sample t test was performed for each group. The results are shown in a contrastive way below:

As indicated in Table 12, both ELT students and Literature students did not get a good score in the pre-test (ELT *Mean*: 13.93; Literature *Mean*: 13.17). Although students at English Language Education Department seemed to be performing slightly better than the other group, there was no statistically significant difference between them with respect to identifying the extended complex sentences.

Research Question 3. Is there a significant difference between ELT and ELL students with regard to the identification of extended complex sentences after the remedial teaching?

When comparing two groups, the researcher could observe that there was a difference between the success rates of these groups of students with respect to the identification of extended complex sentences through Independent Samples t test on SPSS.

Table 12: The comparison between ELT and Literature Student

	Department	N	Mean	<i>p</i> (2- tailed)	SD	SE
Presum	ELT	30	13.93	.535	4.5	.825
	ELL(Literature)	30	13.17		4.9	.910
Postsum	ELT	30	28.87	.000	6.5	1.1
	ELL(Literature)	30	21.23		5.3	.9

Note. Presum: The Total Score in the Pre-test; Postsum: the Total Score in the Post Test; N: Number of the Students; Mean: Mean Score; *p*: Significance Level; SD: Standard Deviation; SE: Standard of Error Mean

Looking into the table, we can state that there is a great difference between the two groups of students in terms of their scores after the teaching process. It can be concluded that ELT freshman students (Mean: 28.87/40) were quite more successful in recognizing extended complex sentences than the ELL students (Mean: 21.23/40) in the post test.

Table 13: Both Groups' Post Test Results

	N	Mean	SE	<i>p</i>
ELT Post-Test	30	28.87	1.1	.000
ELL(Literature)Post-Test	30	21.23	.9	.000

Note. N: Number of the Students; Mean: Mean Score; SE: Standard of Error Mean; *p*: Significance Level

After they were instructed about sentence types for 6 hours, students in both groups scored more in the post test at a statistically significant level ($p < .05$), which means that most of the students did not have difficulty in identifying extended complex sentences. Despite the explicit instruction and the outside class assignments on extended complex sentences, difficulties still continued for some of the participants.

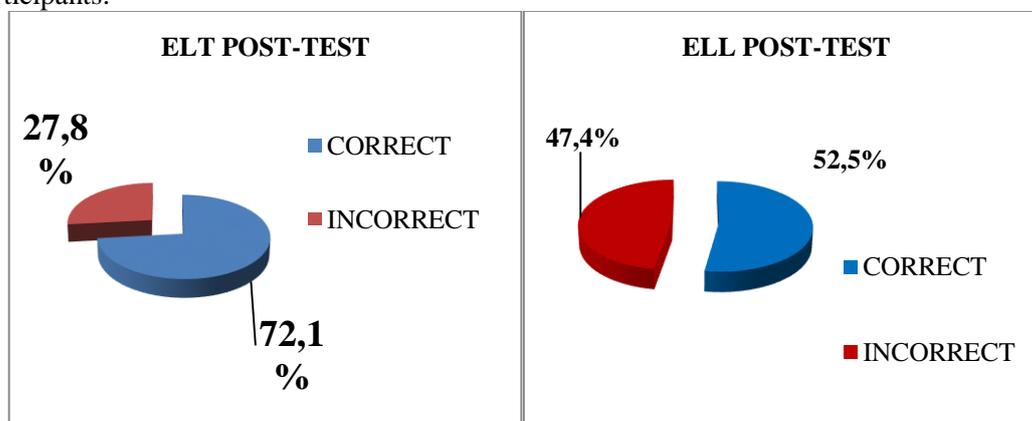


Figure 2. The Number of the Questions Answered Correctly by the ELT and Literature Students in the Post-Test

The students at the ELT department answered 72.1 % of the questions correctly in the post-test; whereas, the ELL students answered 52.5 % of the questions correctly. The ELT students increased their scores at 37.32 %; on the other hand, the Literature students' scores could rise at 20.15 %. Here is the figure showing the percentages of people who passed or failed:

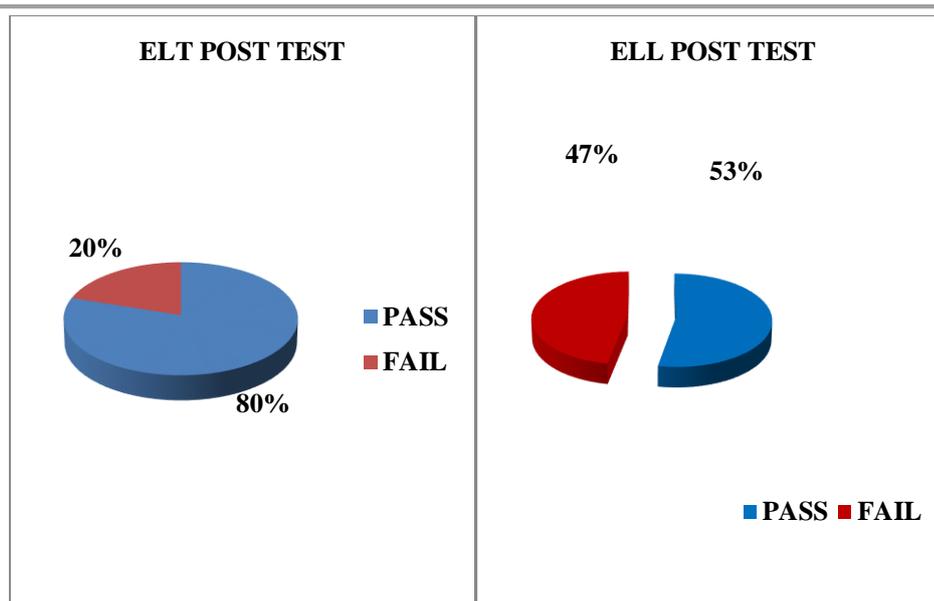


Figure 3. The Percentages of the Students Who Passed/Failed In the Post-Test

The passing grade at METU is 60 out of 100, so based on this information no students was able to pass in the pre-test. Surprisingly, most of the students (80%) did pretty well in the post test. The passing grade at Hacettepe University is 50, so about 6 % of the students could pass in the pre-test; whereas, 53 % of the students could pass in the post test.

As it is seen from the table and the figures above, both groups had great problems with the recognition of extended complex sentences before the classroom instruction. After both groups were instructed about sentence types for 6 hours, students scored more in the post test at a statistically significant level, which means that most of the students did not have difficulty in identifying extended complex sentences. Despite the explicit instruction and the outside class assignments on extended complex sentences, the target grammar point still posed challenges, especially in the Literature department.

Limitations to the Study

This research was conducted with 30 first year students from the ELT department studying at METU and 30 first year students from the English Language and Literature (ELL) Department at Hacettepe University. The main limitation of the study was the number of participants. As the study presents a limited number of students' recognition level of extended complex sentences, it would not be appropriate to generalize the results of this study to all ELT or Literature (ELL) students in Turkey or in the world. If the study had been conducted in various universities with more participants, it would have been possible to get more reliable data. The production level of complex sentence structures on the part of the students could not be examined because of time constraints. The pronunciation and stress patterns of different complex sentences could not be investigated in this study, either.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study purported to delve into Turkish undergraduate level students' (Freshman year students') identification level of English extended complex sentences. The study specifically explored ELT freshman students and English Language and Literature students' recognition of

extended complex sentences. In addition, the study provided information about whether instruction aids the acquisition of such sentences.

The results of the study show that all students in ELT and 93% of the Literature students had difficulty in identifying complex sentences before the instruction. However, it still poses a problem for some students (20% in ELT group and 47% of the Literature students) to identify complex sentences despite the explicit instruction and corrective feedback given on the various types of complex sentences. The reason for the failure at the beginning might derive from the fact that complex notions and structures cause adult language learners to develop their interlanguage as Robinson (2003) proposed. The difficulties of complex and extended complex sentences as well as the students' confusion of these two structures in this research are similar to what Al-Musalli and Al-Harhi (2009) found in their studies. They revealed that complex and compound-complex sentences are considered as problematic structures of all sentence types. However, as all participants are ELT and English Literature students in the present study, they are expected to be competent in English grammar for their subsequent four year education in their own departments. Also, they need to recognize the sentence structures, internalize and then use them in their academic writing skills to a great extent. Hence, the above-mentioned reasons should not be considered as an excuse for their failure.

In the present study, the reason for the success of the students at ELT department in the post test can be attributed to their motivation to learn and teach English, the grammar courses they take or the reading and writing courses they attend in their departmental studies. However, based on the informal interview with the Literature students, it can be said that they do not want to learn the structure of the sentences as they are not taught or tested this target grammar or any writing conventions.

As regards the effect of instruction on the acquisition of complex sentence structures, the results show that the instruction facilitates the recognition of extended complex sentences to a great extent. Previous research has also indicated that "explicit instruction (rule explication and/or corrective feedback) has, potentially, a useful contribution to make the learners' noticing of specific features in the input" (Han, 2004, p. 135). Long (1983) also pointed out that formal instruction could accelerate the learning process as well as the 'route' of acquisition. In the light of this proven result, it is clear that students need to be exposed to complex sentences more by means of class instruction.

The increase in both groups is also in line with Entrenchment Hypothesis. As Han and Odlin (2005) argue, although language learners have to recognize and use the complex sentences, their interlanguage might reflect some major problematic areas. Entrenchment hypothesis accounts for these fossilization problems as it proposes that the more we continue to practice the skill, the deeper the entrenchment and the harder it becomes to change or prevent the use of the skill (Han & Odlin, 2005). Therefore, the practice during the remedial teaching helped adult learners to recognize extended complex sentences among the others and contributed to their conversion of misunderstanding in syntactic structures.

Recommendations and Pedagogical Implications

The study reveals that instruction plays a crucial role in the recognition of complex sentences. With regard to English sentence structures acquisition, L2 learners' exposure to explicit instruction and practice speeds up the recognition and comprehension of these structures. Therefore, in order to improve students' knowledge of the target structure, teachers can integrate more explicit teaching and more exercises through all language skills (Rooyan & Jordan, 2009). Considering the fact that most of these students are going to become English language teachers, it is of great importance for students in both groups to practice the sentence structures, particularly extended complex sentences more in alignment with other language skills.

The present study aimed at investigating L2 learners' recognition level of extended complex sentences on the part of freshman ELT and Literature students. In order to analyze the order of difficulty for L2 complex sentence acquisition, another study which could shed light onto learners' production level of English complex sentences should be conducted. The same study could be done with more participants and their spoken or written productions could be investigated. Stress patterns and intonation of the complex sentences may also be studied in depth.

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