

Grammatical tense assignment



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

He is not currently studying English anywhere else at the moment, apart from the CELT classes he attends on Monday evenings. Because of all these factors X does not get to practice his English much out of class, but he does make an effort to meet up with friends who speak English and practices with them on a social basis when he can. He also likes to watch movies in his own time to help his English, this is his favorite way of studying he says. Level of English Being an asylum seeker he is not sure if he is allowed to study here.

But in any event at this moment in time he has not undertaken any exams or attained any armor qualifications here yet. Educational background X is a high school graduate and was actually studying law at a university in Iraq before he left to come here. He hopes to study for the LILTS exam at some point in the future, with a view to one day becoming a pilot! Language background and previous language learning experiences X also studied English in high school for many years in Iraq, for about 6 years, at the end of which he was required to take an exam in which he tells me he did quite well.

He says the lessons in Iraq would mostly focus on vocabulary and grammar, but that they would also do quite a lot of reading which he enjoyed. The lessons were based on a more traditional approach, with the teacher doing most of the talking and the students just listening and making notes, with not as much emphasis on the students speaking themselves. Reasons for learning English and level of motivation His reasons for learning English are mainly to study for the LILTS exam and achieve all the qualifications he needs to then go on and study at university. He says his main aims are to improve his listening and speaking skills in English.

He makes an effort to meet friends who are native speakers outside of class to practice speaking English, especially as he speaks mostly Arabic at home. Learning style Ax's PARK survey showed that he is primarily an oral learner but also has a predilection for reading/writing learning (taken from <http://www.Park-learn.Com/English/page.Asp?P=questionnaire>). He also completed a learning questionnaire which shows a preference to the teacher asking the whole class questions and seeing things in class (pictures, words written down, etc) (taken from Scrivener, 2005, p. 405). Study skills

X finds it difficult to answer “ What did you enjoy most about the lessons in Iraq? “. He says he liked the stories in his lessons in Iraq, reading them mostly, but he didn't enjoy the grammar side of things as much and finds it quite difficult. In the CELT class he says he likes it when the teachers ask them questions and enjoys practicing speaking English with the other learners in class. This tallies with observations: X can be quite a shy and mild mannered person but he is quite confident when joining in WAC FEB. and quite keen to answer any questions from the teachers during whole class work.

The only change he would like to make is the lessons longer! Ax's main focus for self study is watching movies with subtitles and reading books. He doesn't work on any practical tasks as such and there is no evidence of any kind of a notepad or written work which he keeps and uses. X is aware of the phonemic alphabet but doesn't know it. He will use a dictionary in class but not usually at home. Student's self-assessment X thinks that his language has improved quite a lot since he has been here in the J, although he thinks studying English in Iraq obviously helped him a lot.

He thinks that his pronunciation is good and that his listening and reading skills are probably his stronger points. He identifies grammar as being one of his weaker points and finds gapped sentence questions particularly difficult. Tutors assessment of the learner's needs X is obviously quite a capable student who comes into the intermediate to upper intermediate learning bracket. He is quite confident in speaking and his pronunciation is generally very good, although his listening skills are also quite good he does sometimes struggle with questions and understanding exactly what is being asked of him.

Similarly, although his general knowledge of the structures of English are good, he does admit himself that his grammar needs improving, particularly the use of the past tenses.

| Part 2: Assessment and analysis of the learner's English Language systems | Student said / wrote | Correct version | Type of error | Possible reason for error (refer to published materials where appropriate) | Examples of structural (grammatical) and lexical problems in speaking |
|---|---|-----------------|---|--|---|
| | E. G. Made a stage did a work placement | | Confusion between the use of 'make' and 'do'. | Wrong vocabulary item used. | |

There is only one verb for 'make' and 'do' in AI. 'Stage' is a false cognate. (Smith and Swan, 2001, p. 69)

1. No I like English, I not like math. No I like English, I don't like math. The learner does not form the negative correctly: subject + don't + verb. The auxiliary 'do' has no equivalent in AI. Where no specific question word is used, a question is marked only by its rising intonation – When you went London? Negatives are formed by putting a particle (ala or AMA) before the verb – He not play football. (Swan and Smith, 2001, IPPP) 2.

You must send them virus You must send them a virus. The learner omits the indefinite article here. There is no indefinite article in Arabic, causing the most obvious problems as it is commonly omitted with singular and plural countable. (Swan and Smith, 2001, IPPP). I think this causes X some problems although this mistake wasn't something that occurred constantly. Examples of pronunciation problems E. G. Boat // Bought // The wrong phoneme / vowel sound is used. Both //and //move to the French sound 10/ which leads to confusion between pairs such as boat and bought. Smith and Swan, 2001, p. 53) 1. Iron (pronounced eye-Ron) Iron /Alan/ The phoneme ' r/ is unduly emphasized. There is no equivalent or near equivalent for /r/ in Arabic. [r/ is a voiced flap, very unlike the RPR /r/. Arabic commonly overpronounce the post-vocalic r. (Swan and Smith, 2001, IPPP) Arabic speakers tend to gloss over and confuse English short vowel sounds, while unduly emphasizing consonants. Among the features of Arabic which give rise to an ' Arabic accent' in English is a general reluctance to omit consonants, once the written form is known also. 2.

Ferry Very /veer/ The wrong phoneme / consonant sound is used. 1 interference, in Arabic ' v/ and lf/ are allophonic, and are usually both renounced as /f/. (Swan and Smith, 2001, PI 97) Examples of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in writing E. G. I live here for two months have lived here.... The present simple is used instead of the present perfect. AI interference. French uses the present tense with ' for' to talk about actions or states which began in the past and continue in the present (Smith and Swan, 2001, p. 58) 1. " But Antonio was sent all his money.... " But Antonio had sent all his money... " A mixture of past continuous and past

simple is used instead of the past perfect. AI interference. Arabic has a past or perfect tense, which signifies an action completed at the time of speaking. There is also a past perfect tense, however it is only used approximately as in English – formed by the past tense of the verb ‘to be’, followed by the past tense verb, for e. G. “He was he ate = he had eaten” (Swan and Smith, 2001, IPPP). X has simply applied this concept when writing in English instead of using the past perfect tense. 3.

Almost the whole piece of the written work X provided is made up from just one sentence, using a lot of commas and ands. Also there are various instances of capital letters being used when they are not necessary within the text, for e. G. – “close Best friend, But he...”, ‘Avgas sent All his money” and “money for Marriage”, etc. Think in general full stops need to be inserted where there are commas in order to shorten sentences. Lower case letters need to be inserted where capital letters are unnecessarily used – “close best friend”, “was sent all his money” and “money for marriage”.

See first box to the left. AI interference. Arabic punctuation is now similar to western style, though the use of full stops and commas is much freer than in English and so connected writing in English tends therefore to contain long, loose sentences, linked by commas and ands. Also, Arabic orthography is a cursive system, running from right to left. Only consonants and long vowels are written. There is no upper and lower case distinction and so Arabic speakers must learn an entirely new alphabet for English, including a capital letter system which can lead to the malformation of individual letters. Swan and Smith, 2001, p. 199-200) Language skills Effectiveness of oral communication (speaking and listening) Ax’s use of English is generally very

<https://assignbuster.com/grammatical-tense-assignment/>

good, the conversation flowed, he didn't seem to struggle allowing it and I didn't really need to adjust my language to any degree. However, his use of English does seem to flit from being quite quiet and almost inaudible at times, to very clear and quite loud. There are also times when he will miss certain words out and seemed to get confused with a few questions during the conversation.

I think part of that problem though is X has a tendency to answer a question even if he is unsure exactly what is being asked of him, instead of maybe just double checking – for e. G. I asked him were there some things he liked and some things he didn't like about his English lessons in Iraq? ND he replied " no I like English, I not like math". But after repeating the question and rephrasing it slightly he then understood and was able to answer more accurately. His range of vocabulary seems to be very good both while speaking and when listening.

He only had to ask me what the meaning of a word was once and was able to give his opinions and express his views on a variety of subjects including film and games. His spoken language is not always accurate and there are some problems with sentence structure, but it didn't prevent communication in any way. There weren't many pronunciation errors in all honesty and if there were they were usually around the vowel sound rather than sentence stress and didn't affect comprehension in any way really.

Reading To asses Ax's reading we looked at an article from He skimmed the article with me and clearly understood the gist of the piece, answering the questions I had prepared very quickly and accurately while citing references

to the text at the same time. Devised some more detailed questions to which he didn't even need to read the text again, I advised him that he was supposed to have some more time to read the text again first, but he just began to write his answers to the questions straight away.

He got almost all of the questions correct the first time and with a small amount of guidance from myself he was then able to find the correct answer for the ones he had gotten wrong on his own. There was one question which he didn't understand fully but I think it was more down to the way it was phrased " sit down and chat about the day after work" rather than the actual question and what also didn't help him with this question was that he confused the word ' insist' with ' instead' in the text.

Although was quite impressed with Ax's reading skills, sometimes I feel that Ax's confidence can be a weakness of his as well as a strong point at the same time, because if he had just taken the time to read the text again and double check some of his answers he may have got all of the questions right the first time. Writing X makes a lot of the same errors in his writing as he does in his speaking: mainly regarding his use of tenses, sentence structure, the omission of articles occasionally, as well as using capital letters when they are not needed (usually after commas) and a few spelling mistakes.

Although these errors don't necessarily always effect the meaning of the sentence, it does seem to indicate a general misunderstanding for the use of the past tenses - for e. G. " but he was spend his fortune", " he was want to marry her", " he was love girl" and " he was sent all his money". Part 3: Helping the learner What will your learner need their English for in the

future? X wants to improve his English firstly to improve his communication skills with other people, but more importantly to take the LILTS exam at some point in the future with a hope to then go on and study at university.

Which ‘language systems’ error do you think needs most attention? Why? (Choose just one item of grammar, pronunciation or lexis or one functional area) I have chosen to focus on Ax’s errors relating to the use of the past tenses. Feel that although this is commonly a part of English learners find difficult, it is clear that this is something in particular that X struggles with in terms of both his speaking and writing skills; I’m confident that cracking this particular area of his English would help him significantly and improve the overall accuracy of his English language use.

Which task or piece of material have you chosen for him / her? Why is it suitable? (Add a referenced copy of the material) Rather than simply identifying one task, I have tried to put together a wider approach to give X a better view and understanding of all the past tenses, how they differ and also how they all compare to each other. I have selected a series of exercises from the British Council’s Learn English website for the past simple, past continuous and past perfect tenses.

I am aware that these will not cover every single aspect when talking about the past and it is by no means a full and comprehensive explanation but I do feel that there is sufficient information here to help X understand the different forms when talking about the past tense, their uses and how to practice them. Every exercise gives a solid background and explanation for each of the tenses first, regarding their – form (including regular/irregular

verbs), their uses and also how to form the negative and questions when using each particular tense as well (another area X showed signs of struggling with).

This is then followed up with a gap fill exercise (something else X felt was a nakedness of his) where the learner has to enter the correct form of the verb for each sentence, or do a sentence matching exercise. All of these together in combination, will I think go a long way to helping X to understand the past tenses much better and will also help to much improve his use of them, both in his writing and speaking skills. 1 . [Http://learning's. Bronchioles. Erg/en/English-grammar /verbs/pasterns/past-simple](http://learning's.Bronchioles.Erg/en/English-grammar/verbs/pasterns/past-simple) 2. [Http://learning's. Bronchioles . Org/en/English-grammar/verbs/past-tense/past-continuous](http://learning's.Bronchioles.Org/en/English-grammar/verbs/past-tense/past-continuous) 3. [Http://learning's. Bronchioles. Erg/en/English-grammar/verbs/past-tense/past-perfect](http://learning's.Bronchioles.Erg/en/English-grammar/verbs/past-tense/past-perfect) At this stage, X should have revised his knowledge about past

tenses and be aware of the rules about how they are used. So I would now like him to apply his revised knowledge and what he has learned to his own speaking and writing.

So, to encourage this I have adapted his piece of written work that he provided with me with, by editing out the parts of it that relate to the past tenses, so that when he now fills in the gaps himself with the correct past tense he is effectively correcting his own work. This final task will also encourage X to review any there writing that he has done before and to correct any misuse of the tenses. I appreciate that these tasks may be challenging, but I think it is what X needs to do in order to apply the rules that he knows to his day-to-day language use and to be able to self correct.

Which language skills area do you think he / she needs to focus on (Choose just one skill from speaking, listening, reading and writing)? In which situation will he / she use this skill? Which specific sub-skills will he / she need in this situation? In an LILTS exam X will be tested on his listening skills (gist and specific info) ND I wouldn't want this to be the area that lets him down and possibly effects his overall score because his level of English is generally very good.

So for this reason, and the fact that during his interview there were some points when errors in his understanding of my questions meant that his response wasn't appropriate, I have chosen listening. He also points out himself that while watching movies (his preferred method for learning English) he always needs the subtitles, again indicating that listening is maybe one of his least strong point of all his skills, so it makes sense to me to focus on this skill.

He seems able to listen for gist effectively but the problems arose when he didn't catch particular words, so I want to focus on more detailed listening skills. What material have you chosen for him / her? Why is it suitable? (Add a referenced copy of the material) I have chosen the series ' Words in the News' from the Bib's English learning website : [http://www. BBC. Co. UK/worldviewnearsightedly/language/worthiness's](http://www.BBC.Co.UK/worldviewnearsightedly/language/worthiness's) This material is useful for X for various reasons :- 1) The exercises consist of audio and video clips so the learner can practice his listening skills.

They also show the key vocabulary and subtitles are provided on the second time of viewing, so the learner really has to focus on what's being said the

first time and the second viewing then helps to either confirm what they heard or informs the learner of anything they may have missed. Options the learner has to display or hide certain texts, as well as additional support and guidance make these materials particularly useful for self-study.) To help develop the learner's micro skill of listening for detail, the exercises focus on certain key vocal items from the clip, so the learner needs to listen for those items and think about what they mean in the context. They then have to complete a task which requires the learner to use this vocal to complete sentences on topics not related to the theme of the clip. This will all help X to apply his knowledge, develop his vocabulary and to think about vocal in context and how to use it in different situations.) While the pace at which the news stories are delivered is slightly slower than a native speaker's normal speed, they are voiced by a range of presenters with a diverse variety of accents, helping the learner to experience natural and real life use of the English language.) These numerous videos and clips are easily accessible online and provide a good variety of different stories to keep the learner interested, whilst also giving them the option of choosing the material that is most suited to them.

This can be a key factor in sustaining a student's motivation which plays an important role in their learning success. Candidate Comments Aspects of the assignment I am pleased with: feel that this assignment has definitely helped me to appreciate the importance of learning about the learner – their background, differences between their AI and English and how this can affect their learning. Feel the material I have selected is appropriate and suitable to Ax's needs and trying to improve his weaknesses.

Aspects of the assignment I found difficult: found it difficult with X to identify many pronunciation errors (both phonemes and stress) because this was generally good as well as how to display the correct ways of pronouncing these certain words using the phonemic alphabet. Queries / aspects would like the tutor to comment on: wasn't sure about choosing the tenses to work on because I am aware of how big a topic this is in learning English and I am a firm believer of if you are going to do something then do it properly, so in an ideal world I would have the chance to work with the student on this area in much more depth.