

**A Concept-based Approach to Teaching Speech Acts of Refusal,
Warning and Order to Iraqi EFL learners**

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المخلص

تبحث الدراسة فاعلية طريقة التدريس المستندة إلى المفاهيم في تدريس عدد من أفعال الخطاب للطلبة العراقيين من دارسي اللغة الانكليزية بوصفها لغة اجنبية. تتكون عينة الدراسة من طلبة المرحلة الثالثة من قسم اللغة الانكليزية/ كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية/جامعة الموصل للعام الدراسي ٢٠١٧-٢٠١٨. تطبق الدراسة نموذج كالبيرن في تدريس ثلاثة من أفعال الخطاب التي قد تؤدي خصائصها إلى إراقة ماء وجه المتحدث أو المستمع ألا وهي الرفض والتحذير والأمر وذلك من خلال منهج مادة المحادثة. استخدمت الدراسة نوعين من الإختبارات وهما اختبار تكميل الخطاب واختبار لعب الادوار للحصول على بيانات لغرض الحساب الإحصائي. ومن أجل استخلاص البيانات، إعتمدت الدراسة أنموذج هدسن (١٩٩٥) لتقييم

أداء الطلاب في الاختبارين كليهما على أن الأنموذج قد عدل ليلائم أهداف الدراسة. تم استخدام التصميم التجريبي ذي المجموعتين احدهما ضابطة والآخرى تجريبية. وقد تم استخدام الاختبار التائي لعينتين مستقلتين في اختبار النتائج إحصائيا وتقويم أداء الطلبة في كلا الاختبارين. أظهرت الاختبارات الإحصائية فرقا ذو دلالة معنوية بين مجموع معدل المجموعتين التجريبية والضابطة ولصالح التجريبية. وهكذا تم قبول الفرضية.

Abstract

The current study investigates the effectiveness of concept-based instruction on teaching the speech acts فح Iraqi EFL learners. The sample of the study has been selected from third year students, Department of English, College of Education for Humanities / University of Mosul for the academic year 2017-2018. The study applies Galperin's (1978) model of concept-based instruction to teach speech acts of face-threatening nature, namely; refusal, warning and order through a course in conversation.

The research deploys discourse completion tests and role-play tests to elucidate data for statistical treatment. The research adopts Hudson et.al's (1995) model to evaluate students' performance for the discourse completion and role-play tests. The model has been slightly modified in order to suit the aims of the research. The two-groups experimental design is employed and T test for two independent s is applied in statistical treatments. The statistical treatment shows statistically significant differences in the mean scores of the DCT and the role-play test between the CBI oriented group and the Audio-lingual oriented group in proper use of speech acts of refusal, warning and order in favor of the CBI oriented group. Hence, the posed hypothesis is approved.

Introduction:

Pragmatics, the fundamental and key constituent of EFL learners' communicative competence and the most vital element of their aptitude to act and interact appropriately and culturally accepted to the native speaker, is dramatically undervalued. Advanced EFL learners might find it extremely demanding and problematic to use English in a fashion that is pragmatically – contextually and socially-appropriate to both, the situation and the interlocutor which, needless to say, can instigate a serious communication failure, and might carry serious social implications or even stereotyping.

Statement of the problem:

The problem of the study can be perceived in different dimensions of the teaching and learning process. First, *input*; McConachy & Hata (2013) state that “Despite being an important aspect of communication, pragmatics has been relatively underserved in many English language textbooks” (p, 294). Second, *awareness*, in order to acquire pragmatic competence, attention must be allocated to linguistic, paralinguistic and nonverbal forms by which the action is being accomplished and its immediate interactional or textual context (Kasper & Rover,2005:318). Third, *instruction*, the final dimension of the problem is imbedded in the ways teachers approach pragmatic instruction and the methods they implement in actual teaching of pragmatics and speech acts. According to Negueruela (2008), an issue affecting all areas of language instruction, including those of pragmatics and speech acts, has been a reliance on the use of *rules of thumb*⁽¹⁾(p,210).

(1) General or approximate principle, procedure, or rule based on experience or practice, as opposed to a specific, scientific calculation or estimate. *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Retrieved April 6, 2018 from

Aims of the study:

The study at hand aims at the following:

1. Investigating the efficiency of the Concept-based Instruction (henceforth CBI) in teaching speech acts of refusal, warning and order to Iraqi EFL learners
2. Helping students identify, interpret and co-construct⁽¹⁾ the different realizations of the above mentioned speech acts through instruction.

Hypothesis:

In order to achieve the aims of the study, the following hypothesis has been posed:

- There will be statistically significant differences in the mean scores of the DCT and role-play tests between the CBI oriented group and the Audio-lingual oriented group in proper use of speech acts of refusal, warning and order in favor of the CBI oriented group.

Concept-based Instruction:

Rooted in the sociocultural theory, dated back to the early works of Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky and further developed by Piotr Galperin, CBI has recently received an increasing and substantial attention in the field of language teaching and learning. As a broad framework, CBI emphasizes the internalization of scientific or theoretical concepts as the ground base of learning. Yet, as Nicholas (2015) states, “it is still a relatively unknown methodology in language teaching contexts” (p,1). In this approach, the emphasis is on helping

Dictionary.com website <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/rule-of-thumb>

(1) The term ‘co-construction’ stipulates that verbal activities are inherently collaborative in nature and presuppose a common set of procedures to which social actors orient). Accordingly, giving a compliment, answering the phone, or rejecting an invitation must be viewed as accomplishments that result from a collaborative effort as participants contribute to the present verbal activity on a turn-by-turn basis

learners develop a deep conceptual understanding of a skill or knowledge area, so that this knowledge can then be applied in a variety of situations. Burch et al. (2015) define concept-based learning as the pedagogy that places emphasis on deep learning of specific concepts and de-emphasizes rote memorization of factual information (p,487).

Galperin's Model

The sociocultural theory of thought founded by Vygotsky and further developed by his followers has always taken interest in the process of teaching and learning. Piotr Galperin (1902–1988), a leading figure of the sociocultural theory and one of Vygotsky's major followers has integrated teaching and learning into Vygotsky's original theory.

Some researchers might view Galperin's work not only as a significant development of Vygotsky's ideas, but novel and necessary. Galperin's research strategy was to analyze how new mental processes emerge in the context of meaningful, goal-oriented activities of teaching and learning, through gradual internalization of actions by learners (Galperin,1992:67). Therefore, he has formulated an approach to instruction aiming at aiding the learners internalize scientific concepts. He argues that concepts should be the units of instruction which should be internalized through materialization and verbalization (Brooks et al., 2010:92).

Galperin pursues answers for precise questions such as under what conditions human mental actions are formed correctly? and what causes deviations, abnormalities and irregularities? and how they can be eliminated? Lee (2012) states that studies and researches conducted in the past years have identified several stages in the process. They are as follows:

1. Orienting stage: construction of the orienting basis of the action

2. Material(ized) stage: mastering the action using material or materialized objects
3. Stage of overt speech: mastering the action at the level of overt speech
4. Stage of covert speech: mastering the action at the level of speaking to oneself (covert speech)
5. Mental stage: transferring the action to the mental level) (p,25).

Speech Acts:

The notion of speech acts was first introduced by J. L. Austin (1962). He claims that there is some sort of an act or a function encoded in an utterance produced by the speaker and this act represents the purpose behind that utterance. Those purposes are the functions of the language, and speech acts are the means by which speakers achieve them. Farnia & Abdul Sattar (2015) explain that “When someone utters something, it is normally done with an intention to do something by means of the utterance” (p,306). Some scholars might have some even extreme enthusiasm about the concept of speech acts trying to explain language learning in speech acts terms. For example, Flowerdew (1988) argues that people learn a new language in order to do things by it, and, he claims that it would be much more efficient (faster, more appropriate and easier) for learners to learn how to achieve these things “purposes” using the language instead of accumulating knowledge about syntax, semantics, phonology...etc.(p,31).

So what is a speech act? Answering this question requires analyzing and understanding the speech situation. A typical speech situation would involve a speaker, a hearer, and an utterance. This utterance is not empty, there are many kinds of acts associated with it. In other words, the utterance is intended to make an impact since the speaker is performing an action. Austin, in his speech act theory, or how to do things with words, argues that language is used to carry out

actions. Thus he came up with the notion of what he called performative verbs, which explicitly indicates the speaker's goal as it is uttered. Communicative action occurs not only when one gets involved in different types of discourse encountered in social situations (which vary in length and complexity depending on the degree of familiarity between interlocutors, differences in social status, and degree of imposition), but also when speech acts (such as requests, refusals, apologies, compliments, and suggestions) are used.

The notion of speech acts has been approached from different angles, viewpoints and perspectives in various contexts; from cross-cultural, developmental, social and socio-cultural, cognitive and educational perspectives. Concerning the latter, Soler & Pitarch (2010) claim that in educational contexts, learners' development of pragmatics has been addressed from different theoretical perspectives and the factors that potentially influence pragmatic learning have been highlighted. Among those factors, the role of instruction on learners' awareness and production of speech acts has generated a lot of interest. They further asserts that the "benefits of instruction on learners' production and awareness of speech acts are well documented" (p,65-66). Learners of all languages are shown to have difficulty understanding the intended meaning communicated by a speech act, or producing a speech act using appropriate language; hence teaching has become inevitable. But the question is, which speech acts to be taught?

Before addressing this question, Aksoylp & Topark (2014) bring up a very important question especially for EFL learning environments, which is the presence and presentation of speech acts in text-books, since in most cases, as established earlier, students rely on them for pragmatic input (p,125). Besides, just like vocabulary learning, teaching should be aiming at expanding learners' storage of

speech acts. Da Silva (2012) argues that “for learners, understanding pragmatics involves knowing which form to select from a repertoire of possible linguistic choices to express the appropriate illocutionary force as well as perform the desired speech act function” (p,12). Yet, he further explains that, first, it is virtually impossible to teach all speech acts found in every language context and purpose, and second, speech acts are the minimum communication units that can’t just be only analyzed at a sentence level (ibid).

Face-threatening Speech Acts:

The current study tries to approach speech acts selection from a different point of view in order to narrow down range and make the process easier and more *beneficial* for learners. A question is asked; which speech acts might have the potentials to be more difficult for our students to perform correctly and properly? Contemplating on the word “difficult” here calls for more contemplation. In other words, how can a specific speech act be more difficult than the rest? Answering this question requires going back to analyzing speech acts to their components to discover where exactly this difficulty lurks. As has been established, pragmatic ability, including the production and interpretation of speech acts, constitutes two major parts; pragma-linguistic and socio-linguistic competence. Pragma-linguistics competence refers to pragmatic strategies used for the purpose of making the communicative act more direct or indirect, softer or more intensified; such as the use of semantic formulae, routines, and linguistic forms. On the other hand, socio-pragmatic competence is related to social behavior and how speakers interpret and accomplish a communicative act in a certain speech community. So, difficulty may lie in the pragma-linguistic or socio-linguistic competence, or both. In other words, it might be linguistic, cultural or both. Diving deeper and deeper into more contemplation, the researcher came cross the

Politeness Theory and the notion of “face”. Yule (2014) defines face as “the emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize” (p,123). According to Politeness Theory, within interaction, maintaining “face” is both linguistically and culturally challenging even for native speakers. As Brown & Levinson (1987) state, face might be different in different cultures and strategies used to maintain it might be culture bound issue, yet, the mutual knowledge of members’ public self-image is universal (p,61). Therefore, one might argue that EFL learners, like the sample of the current study, still can relate to the concept of face due to its universality and it wouldn’t be *that* difficult for them to maintain it. Such an argument cannot be naiver and superficial. Hence, the researcher selected three speech acts that are face threatening in nature to be the object of this study. Aksoylp & Topark (2014) argue that “given the crucial function of course books in presenting pragmatic input, it is quite surprising that there remains a lot to investigate in this field as attempts to explore this issue are relatively scarce, especially, the difficulty of pragmatic realization and face-threatening nature” (p,126). The following is a brief account for each of the selected speech acts.

1. Refusal

The function of refusal is closely attached to people’s everyday life since there is a 50/50 chance it might be used in response to many other functions like, requests, invitations, offers, and suggestions. Nevertheless, one cannot but notice that researchers are not really interested in it. Allami & Naemi (2011) state that “whereas some speech acts such as requests, compliments, apologies and complaints etc. have been extensively perused in the field of cross-cultural pragmatics, the speech act of refusal, as a face-threatening has not been

as widely studied (p,368). Refusal is a high-risk face-threatening act and it is often realized through indirect strategies. Consequently, unlike acceptance, it requires a high level of pragmatics. A proper command over the function of refusal is considered an indication of pragmatic competence. “How one says no is more important in many societies than the answer itself” and “refusals, as sensitive and high-risk, can provide much insight into one’s pragmatics” (Al-Kahtani,2005:36). This implies that one, it should be the object of mores studies, and two, “there is a strong need for pragmatic instruction in order to help learners interpret and realize this speech act successfully” (Eslami,2015:217). Beebe et al. (1990) claim that refusals have been called a “major cross-cultural *sticking point* for many nonnative speakers” (p,56).

Refusals are considered to be face-threatening acts because they contradict the listener’s expectations. They belong to the category of commissives because they commit the refuser to (not) performing an action (Allami & Naemi,2011;386). In Cohen et al’s (1995) words, “They function as a response to an initiated act and are considered a speech act by which a speaker fails to engage in an action proposed by the interlocutor” (p,7). Miscommunication might take place if the non-native speaker does not know how to perform refusals in the target community. They are complicated and tricky speech acts to perform as a result of the inherent likelihood of offending the speaker for failure to perform refusal appropriately might jeopardize the social relations of the speakers.

2. Warning

Warnings can be seen as invitational patterns of behavior as they are basically conceived for the interest of the listener. Hornby (2010) defines warning as “a statement or an event telling somebody that something bad or unpleasant will take place in the future so that

they can avoid it” (p,1735). Taylor and Cameron (1987) elaborate that warning is only created in terms of interaction by claiming that “warnings in general don’t exist. What counts as warning depends on rules evolved and sustained in concrete interaction within social groups” (p,57). Warning as a face threatening act is very common in everyday language. Wierzbicka (1987) claims that “the verb *warn* stands for a speech act which is extremely common and versatile”. This versatility can be seen, including other things, in a wide range of syntactic structures which can be used to formulate a warning (p,177-178). Hence the importance and the challenge of appropriate performance of warning as a speech act.

3. Order

Despite the fact order is a daily used speech act and it is a delicate one since it is face threatening, little attention has been given to it. Very few studies have to investigate how it is co-constructed and used by EFL learners. According to Lavric (2007) An order threatens the positive and the negative face of the addressee by infringing on his/her social status and constraining his/her freedom of action; on the other hand, it enhances, if obeyed, the negative face or territory of the speaker because the speaker gets something done by somebody else” (p,29).

Speech act of ordering is often investigated under the term “imperatives”, including requests, suggestions, and commands. However, it is often the speech act of suggestion and request which attract researchers’ attention, while speech act of commands is ignored as a distinct case and left untouched in pragmatic aspect. Therefore, considering the importance of using speech act of ordering, it is crucial to provide more studies on order as a commonly used speech act and as a challenging one.

Thus, as far as the current study is concerned, the question of speech act selection is answered. Still, there is the issue of the realization of speech act beyond sentence level. As has been established, teaching just a list of functions is neither satisfactory nor useful for either the learners or the language teachers as it de-contextualizes speech acts from their social implications. Besides, speech acts can extend over *turn* level in a given interaction. Therefore, the researcher decided to implement the procedures and principles of concept-based instruction within the course “conversation” in order to approach the issue of the extended realization of a speech act over one turn. In other words, providing the students a chance to express and produce speech acts in extended realizations and preventing de-contextualization at the same time. Therefore, the current study implemented the principles and procedures of “Conversation Analysis” as a means of enhancing and measuring pragmatic proficiency.

Methodology:

Participants

The population of the study is 180 3rd year undergraduate students/ Department of English/ College of Education for Humanities / University of Mosul for the academic year 2017-2018. This choice is not random. The researchers are lecturers in the department and the choice is made so that the researcher would supervise and conduct the study by themselves. Moreover, the choice of 3rd year undergraduate students is basically based on the suggestion that they have developed adequate linguistic competence to get engaged with concepts of pragmatics. Besides, 3rd year students are supposed to be advanced learners and according to Hymes (1964) even fairly advanced language learners often lack communicative competence or the sufficient knowledge to correctly use the sociocultural norms of the target

language communities. In other words, pragmatic failure can be detected even in advanced levels of learners. One might argue that 4th year undergraduate students might be more advanced and more linguistically competent, but the reason they are not chosen is that 4th year's course of General Linguistics contains a chapter dealing with pragmatics. This might provide the students with prior or additional knowledge about concepts of pragmatics and, therefore, would jeopardize the integrity of the study.

The original sample consisted of 60 (n=60) randomly selected students; 30 male and 30 female students who were randomly allocated to two groups for the sake of the experimentation. At outset of the experiment, one of the female subjects had to quit due to health issues. Consequently, the researchers had to cast out three more students, one female and two males, to keep an even number as role-play is to be adopted throughout the experiment. Only repeaters are excluded on the assumption that they *might* have developed more linguistic competence and, thus, all students are of the same age. Gender, as a "*potential*" intervening variable, is not the concern of the current study since the researchers have not taken it into consideration. The choice of an equal number of male and female students is for the sake of more equivalence.

The experimental design

The current study adopts the two groups pre-test, post-test design (see Cohen & Morrison, 2007:276 and Macky and Gass, 2005:148). The sample is randomly allocated to two groups; the CBI oriented group (n=28), as the experimental group, and the Audio-lingual (hence after AL) oriented group (n=28) as the control group. According to Cohen & Morrison (2000), there are many variables that might intervene in an experiment. This may *obstruct* the true effects of

independent variable/s, CBI in this case, upon dependent variables. An experimental design would impose control over these interventions (p,126).

Table (1)
The Experimental design

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
CBI oriented group		CBI	
AL oriented group		AL	

Equivalence

The pre-test in the current study serves two functions; first, investigating the equivalence in achievement tests between the CBI oriented group and the AL oriented group in both discourse completion test (DCT) and role play (RP) test; second, a diagnostic test for investigating the statistical differences between the pre-test and the post-test.

Table (2)
Equivalence in DCT between the CBI oriented group (CBI O.G.) and the AL oriented group (AL O.G.)

Speech Act	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t _ test		Sig.
					t Cal.	t Tab.	
Refusing	CBI O.G.	28	12.3571	2.52710	0.047		No.
	AL O.G	28	12.3929	3.15453			Sig.
Warning	CBI O.G.	28	13.4643	3.99520	1.203		No.
	AL O.G	28	12.3929	2.49947			Sig.
Order	CBI O.G.	28	11.3929	2.54354	0.106		No.
	AL O.G	28	12.3214	3.19784			Sig.

As shown in Table 3, there are no statistically significant differences as far as the DCT test is concerned. The same can be said for the RP test between the two groups as shown below in Table 4.

Table (3)

Equivalence in RP test between the CBI oriented group (CBI O.G.) and the AL oriented group (AL O.G.)

Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t _ test		Sig.
				t Cal.	t Tab.	
CBI O.G.	6	10.5000	3.20936	1.210	2.228	No.
AL O.G	6	8.6667	1.86190		(0.05)(10)	Sig.

Duration of the experiment

The execution of the experiment was supposed to be carried out in the second academic course 2017. After consulting the Department, the researchers decided to start prior to mid-year examination. The decision has been made so that enough time is provided. Therefore, the experiment started on Sunday, November the 20th 2017 and ended on Thursday May the 5th 2018. Excluding mid-year examination and spring holiday, the experiment lasted almost 24 weeks; that is almost a whole academic year. Every speech act is allotted 2 weeks; 2 hours a week. The rest of the experiment is devoted to the concepts of socio-cultural norms reflected in the organization of the English conversation as a means of promoting pragmatic proficiency.

Data collection methods

For data collection, two types of tests have been employed. The first one is a written-form-test (DCT) and the second is oral-form-test (RP). The following is a brief explanation of the tests adopted.

1. The discourse completion test (DCT)

Written DCTs are written production questionnaires which provide scenarios to which participants respond in writing (Kasper& Rose,1998:163). DCTs and/or or multiple-choice discourse completion tasks MCQs and role-play tasks have been widely used in data

elicitation for pragmatic studies. In cross-cultural studies of pragmatic development, and assessment instruments in pre-and posttests, discourse completion tasks or tests have been frequently deployed (Harlig,2013:71). They have mostly been used to elicit production of speech acts, usually as one-turn response to a situational prompt. According to Boxer (2010), “these methods are the only way of capturing a large amount of data in a short amount of time”.

The researchers have constructed two DCTs; one as a pre-test and the other as a post-test. Each test includes 12 items; 2 for each of the selected speech acts⁽¹⁾. The items are situational prompts with one-turn response. The situations are designed to elicit a response which includes students’ co-construction of the desired speech act.

2. Role-play test (RP)

Role-play scenarios have always been used by teachers in teaching conversation as they are an excellent exercise in which students can carry out similar situations to daily communication. According to F´elix-Brasdefer (2004, 2007), role plays are performed by two or more speakers and are elicited through the presentation of a context called a scenario which typically includes information about speaker characteristics and setting. Amaya (2008) states that role-plays are very helpful exercise as they employ rehearsing the same role-play several times but changing the elements of the communicative situation, so that students can understand how this affects the linguistic codification of the message (p,21). Harlig (2013) confirms that the closest elicitation tasks to conversation are role plays, even though role plays often have a planning stage (p,74). Role-play scenarios can stretch over numerous turns, elicit a variety of speech acts and allow the observation of a large number of discourse features. “Because of

(1) See Appendix 2and 3.

the rich and varied discourse, role-plays have been deployed frequently in the interlanguage pragmatic research under controlled conditions (Kasper & Rover,2005:326). To achieve the aims of the current study, the researcher constructed two sets of scenarios for role-play tests; one as a pre-test and the other as a post-test. Each set consists of six scenarios, one for each of the selected speech acts under study

Implementation

The experiment started on Sunday, November the 20th, 2017. Both the CBI oriented group and the AL oriented group are submitted to a pre-test including DCT test and an RP test. The tests serve two functions; first, equivalence of both groups in achievement; second, the results would be used later on for statistical comparison with results of the post-test.

Pre-tests

The researcher supervised the administration of the tests by themselves. The DCT test is administrated first as it doesn't need much time. The test contains 12 situational prompts with one-turn response. The students are instructed to read the situations carefully and write an answer in the space provided under each situation. In addition, students are encouraged to ask questions if they find something vague or unclear. Finally, responses should be delivered quickly as possible and they should be what the student would normally use in real life situations. Students are given 20 minutes to finish the tests. The following are examples of the prompts used in the DCTs.

Ex. 1. Pre-test

- Your classmate is taking some pills without prescription. Warn him.
What would you say?.....

Ex. 2. Post-test

- You didn't have the chance to tell your classmate about the exam.
He is sore.

What would you say?

You_____

It is worth noticing that the prompts in the pre-test includes specific instruction as what is the student supposed to do. In other words, which speech act he is supposed to express. In Ex. 1., the students are clearly instructed express warning. On the other hand, the post-test is more indirect and the students have to infer which speech act is required. In Ex. 2., the speech act of apology is implied and not directly specified. The RP tests need much more time as the students are required to choose from the situations constructed by the researchers and perform a whole conversation. The situations consist of two roles; A and B as in the example below.

Person A

Where: College Library

Situation: The war has just ended. You and a bunch of classmates go to the university to see firsthand the amount of destruction. You meet the head of your department in the college library which is burnt badly. He asks you to move some of the books which are still intact from the college library to his office. He puts you in charge of your classmates and leaves. Your classmates seem to be displeased by the task. You have to start collecting, classifying, un-dusting and moving the books to the office. One of your classmates refuses to participate.

Order him to start doing his job. You know he is a slacker and might get to the rest of the group.

Person B

Where: College Library

Situation: The war has just ended. You and a bunch of classmates go to the university to see firsthand the amount of destruction. You meet

the head of your department in the college library which is burnt badly. He asks you to move some of the books which still intact from the college library to his office. He puts one of your classmates in charge and leaves. You refuse to participate.

Partners are assigned randomly by the researchers. They are not allowed to pre-choose a partner. The researcher took only one factor into consideration; the couple should consist of a female and male student. Then, the students are given the liberty to choose which role they want to play. After reading the scenario, they are instructed to ask questions if they find them unclear or vague. Conversations are recorded using an android voice-recording application for further analysis.

Instruction

Instruction followed a three-stage process of orientation, execution, and control.

1. Orientation stage

According to the principles suggested by Galperin, internalization is at the core of concept-based instruction. Internalization aims at gaining control of conceptual knowledge of the target linguistic community as well as of the linguistic code and it should be viewed as a kind of interactional and cyclic impact process. For learners to internalize targeted concepts, Galperin focuses on three important aspects; orientation, materialization and verbalization. The current study operationalizes these principles; orientation and materialization within the first stage of instruction; that is the orientation stage as well as the second stage (execution stage). At the beginning, elementary concepts related to the speech act at hand are

introduced. The concepts are listed down and showed⁽¹⁾ on board along with definitions. The main objective is to raise students' awareness and establish deep understanding and conceptualization of these concepts. After reflecting on concepts and definitions, questions are posed for the sake of discussion. Students are stimulated to elaborate on questions like, why do people use language? What is the function of language? Do languages have social functions? What can be done using *speech*? And how the speech act at hand is co-constructed? Ideas posed by students are elicited, formulated and listed down on the board. Then the researcher provides feedback and concise explanation. The next step moves towards substantiating the discussed concepts and ideas. As established earlier, for any new action, concept or idea to be learned, understood and eventually internalized, Galperin believes that it must have a material start or a manifestation. In other words, concepts should be materialized as much as possible. To this end, students watch and listen to several video and audio clips prepared by the researcher. The clips are authentic conversations chosen as directly related to the speech act under study. Students are asked to pin-point the semantic formula by which the targeted speech act is carried out rather than the whole conversation as the aim in this stage is to familiarize them with the speech act. As the students watch the clips, the teacher draws their attention to the dis-preference or anxiety showed by participants as the selected speech act is actually a face-threatening one.

Later, students are explicitly introduced to CA findings and how an English conversation is organized as related to the speech act. The objective is, first, to establish the fact that an execution of a speech act can extend over many turns and second, to show that a speech act is co-constructed rather than being performed by one participant only; and

(1) *Data show* is used throughout the whole experiment for several purposes as well as using the white board.

finally introduce the socio-cultural norm embedded within the organization of the English conversation. At this point, concepts like context and culture are explicitly introduced by the researchers. The researchers focus on the importance of context and cultural differences in relation to social interaction and pragmatics, and subsequently, to speech acts. Concepts of *Face-saving* and face-threatening speech acts are explicitly presented and discussed. Then, the students are encouraged to reflect upon how these factors may affect interaction when analyzing audio/video materials and when verbalizing. It is worth mentioning that verbalization is incorporated whenever there is a chance. Students are requested to perform verbalization tasks whenever a new concept is being introduced or even when materialized. They are required to attempt conveying their understanding of the taught concepts to either their peers, or to the teacher. At the end of the lesson, the researchers show an already made chart or a model showing how the targeted speech act is co-constructed as a means of applying *materialization*. Moreover, audio-visual clips are used to provide authentic examples of speech acts co-constructed in actual interactions. Implementation of audio and video clips guarantees involving more senses in the process of internalization as well as motivation towards learning. These video examples acted as a ‘bridge’ between the conceptual knowledge provided in the study program and actual performance, allowing them to apply their knowledge ‘offline’ without time pressure, before attempting to incorporate their developing conceptual understanding into their own ‘online’ performances” (Nicholas, 2015:8).

2. Execution stage

Students are regularly asked to perform interactional activities usually in shape of role-plays or extracted conversations. Role-plays

are always meaningful situations in which attention is drawn to the co-construction of the targeted speech act with reference to the socio-cultural norms and the organization of the conversation. In other words, the students should apply CA findings in carrying the plays out. Students always act as themselves instead of an arbitrary role. Moreover, scenarios represent those which may realistically occur in their everyday lives. That's to say, the designed scenarios are more dynamic and unpredictable and hence, they have more resemblance to the authentic interactions than traditional role-play. The tenet of verbalization suggested by Galperin is strongly implemented in students' performance.

3. Control stage

Once the performance is conducted, the researchers ask the students to discuss and reflect on their colleagues' execution of the scenario and how much they succeeded in applying CA findings and the co-construction of the speech act in the light of their understanding of the relevant concepts. Sometimes, students' executions of the chosen scenarios are recorded and then played for students to be analyzed. After finishing their analysis, students are encouraged to share their evaluation of the recorded performance with their colleagues and the teacher.

The above mechanism of instruction is constant in each lesson with minor variations depending on settings. The general aim is for students to internalize what is being presented. In other words, the aim is for students to develop their understanding of both the concepts taught, and the relationships between them.

Data Analysis

Two sets of DCTs and RPs have been constructed by the researcher to be used as a pre-test and a post-test. The current study adopts Hudson et.al's (1995) model to elicit data. The model contains

six criteria of pragmatic competence modified to be more suitable for the questions of the study. The criteria include the ability to use the correct speech act, typical expressions, amount of speech used and information given and levels of formality, politeness and directness. It is worth mentioning that the tests are designed so that students always act as themselves instead of an arbitrary role or situations and the scenarios represent those which may realistically occur in their everyday lives. All roles and scenarios are scripted between colleagues, in other words, the same social level, therefore, the researchers excluded the criterion of formality.

Results and Discussion

1. DCT

The statistical treatment of the data collected from the DCT post-test shows that students' performance of the CBI oriented group has developed and promoted significantly as compared to those collected from the pre-test. The following table shows this development numerically.

Table (4)

The mean and standard Deviation of students' marks of both groups in the DCT post-test

Speech Act	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t _ test		Sig.		
					t Cal.	t Tab.			
Refusal	CBI OG	28	19.0357	3.46925	2.683	2.006 (0.05) (54)	Sig.		
	AL OG	28	16.3571	3.98343					
Warning	CBI OG	28	17.8571	4.99418	3.416		2.006 (0.05) (54)	Sig.	
	AL OG	28	13.8929	3.57294					
Order	CBI OG	28	18.4286	3.89138	3.589			2.006 (0.05) (54)	Sig.
	AL OG	28	14.6429	4.00198					

As the table above shows, the difference between the mean scores of both groups have significant value as far as the DCT is concerned. The value of the T calculated is higher than the value of the T tabultaed for each of the selected speech acts. As the mean scores of the CBI OG are higher than those of the ALOG, the significant value is in favor of the CBI OG. The statistical calculation approves the first hypothesis at 0.05, the level of significance, under 54, the degree of freedom. It is established earlier that assessing pragmatic competence in this study follows Hudson et al's model. The mean scores obtained in the above table are distributed for the six criteria suggested by the model except the criterion of formality. The statistical treatment shows that the students in the CBI OG have scored a higher total score for each criterion within the same speech act.

2. RPT

The statistical treatment again approves the second hypothesis of the current study at 0.05, the level of significance, under 54, the degree of freedom.

Table (5)

The mean and standard Deviation of students' marks of both groups in the RP post-test

roup	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t _ test		Sig.
				t Cal.	t Tab.	
CBI OG	6	16.6667	3.44480	4.088	2.228	Sig.
AL OG	6	8.8333	3.18852		(0.05)(10)	

Conclusions

The researchers account for several conclusions suggested by the results of the teaching experience and the statistical treatment of the data collected throughout the experiment as well as the researcher's own observations. These conclusions are related to specific area of inquiry as follows.

1. In spite of the fact that the question of “can pragmatics be taught?” has always been debatable, a great deal of research has verified that it can. The study at hand adds to this body of research. Yet, the issue still stands concerning Iraqi educational settings. The results acquired from this study clearly approves that Iraqi settings are no different from others.
2. The results provide substantial evidence that the procedures and principles of CBI are both feasible and effective especially in language teaching and the teaching of pragmatics in particular. Vygotskyian socio-cultural theory has remained inapplicable to teaching in spite of the early attempts to operationalize its principles within the process of teaching. It was until the further development conducted by Galperin (1978) that has forged Vygotsky's works into precise and applicable framework. Galperin has constructed a three stage-method based on the theoretical background provided by the socio-cultural theory which made it easier to be followed and implemented by teachers.
3. The DCTs, as mentioned earlier, has been widely used in elucidating data for pragmatic assessment especially in teaching speech acts. Nevertheless, the researcher has noticed that the use of RP as a testing means provides the researchers with more data concerning the construction of speech acts. Moreover, the use of RPs in teaching conversation promotes performance as far as pragmatics is concerned. Observing students' performance during the execution of the current

study reveals that co-construction of speech acts is achieved better in RPs. The notion that speech acts are *co-constructed* and that such co-construction might be achieved *beyond the level of one turn* is better performed and observed in playing roles. Finally, RPs provides an excellent opportunity to apply CA findings concerning the organization of the English conversation in addition to raising awareness of the socio-cultural norms embedded in it.

4. One of the core notions in CBI is raising the learners' awareness of the concepts to be taught. Throughout the study, explicit teaching strategies have been employed to this end. Explicitly pointing out the concept at hand has proven to be very helpful in making students aware of it leading to conceptualization and eventually internalization. Moreover, explicit discussion has always been used to raise the learners' awareness of the interrelated concepts and the relations amongst them.
5. As CBI generally aims at internalization of concepts, it is concluded that materialization and verbalization play a significant role in achieving this goal. Emphasizing the notion of the *concept* being the core unit of learning, CBI starts with abstract presentation and information about the concept at hand. Forging this information and presentation into concrete and tangible shape is the concern of both materialization and verbalization. Applying these processes, it has been noticed, enables students to develop deeper understanding leading to internalizing the concepts and extending this conceptual knowledge to the outside world.

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