

A Socio-Pragmatic Study of Criticism in Iraqi Vocational Schools

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دراسة اجتماعية تداولية للنقد في المدارس المهنية العراقية

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الملخص:

تركز هذه الدراسة على دراسة فعل النقد الكلامي الذي يمارسه مدرسو المدارس المهنية في العراق. فمن منظور اجتماعي تداولي، لم يُولَّ اهتمام يُذكر للنقد في المدارس المهنية، وخاصةً اللهجة العامية العراقية باعتبارها الأكثر استخداماً داخل الصف. لذلك، يهدف هذا العمل إلى إجراء تحليل اجتماعي تداولي لاستراتيجيات النقد التي يتبعها المدرسون باستخدام نموذج نجوين (٢٠٠٥). ومن ثم، يهدف إلى تحديد أكثر استراتيجيات النقد شيوعاً والاستراتيجيات الفرعية التي يستخدمها مدرسو المدارس المهنية (النساء والرجال)، ومعرفة أنواع أدوات التخفيف الأكثر استخداماً. ووفقاً للأهداف المذكورة سابقاً، يُفترض أن الاستراتيجيات المباشرة وغير المباشرة تُمثل التطبيق العملي للنقد، حيث تلجأ النساء إلى النقد غير المباشر أكثر من الرجال، وأن توجيه النقد إلى جميع الطلاب هو أداة التخفيف الأكثر استخداماً. ثبتت الدراسة نتائج التحليل الفرضيتين الأولى والثانية. البيانات عبارة عن اختبار مصمم للمدرسين والمدرسات ينتقدون طلابهم في الفصل الدراسي في مواقف مختلفة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التداولية الاجتماعية، النقد، الجنس، المدرسون، الطلاب، المدارس المهنية.

Abstract

The present study focuses on the investigation of the speech act of criticism as performed by teachers in vocational schools of Iraq. From a socio-pragmatic perspective, little emphasis has been given to vocational schools' criticism especially Iraqi colloquial speech act as it is the one used inside classroom. That's why, this work intends to make a socio-pragmatic analysis to teachers' strategies of criticism using Nguyen (2005a) model of criticism. The aim is to identify the most common criticism strategies and sub-strategies used by teachers of vocational schools (women and men), and to find out the types of mitigation devices that are most commonly used. In accordance with the aims mentioned earlier, it is hypothesized that: the direct and indirect strategies are the pragmatic realization of criticism where women resort to indirect criticism more than men, and directing criticism to the whole students is the most usable mitigation device. The results of the analysis proved its hypothesis. The data is a test designed to men and women teachers criticizing their students in the classroom in different situations.

Keywords: Socio-pragmatics, criticism, gender, teachers, students, vocational schools.

1. Introduction

Socio-pragmatics is an applied linguistic framework that investigate language where the societal factors that play a crucial role in its appropriateness. That is, it is a combination of sociolinguistics and pragmatics. Precisely, it can be defined as the sociological interface of pragmatics (Leech 1983: 10). Holmes (1992:1) elucidates the connection between the two branches as the sociocultural norms, underlying the interpretation and the language community's social rules and appropriateness norms, discourse practices, and accepted behaviors performance of communicative acts as (in)appropriate. Thomas (1995: 5) adds that sociopragmatics can be perceived as the social factors like gender, class, age, education and power are closely connected to the pragmatic meaning being enacted. This means the non-linguistic environment affects language use.

Criticism is a speech act which means showing disapproval to person's own works or behaviour in relation to a specific situation. This means it is a face threatening act that judge the addressee with critical analysis and evaluation of comparative worth. Principally, Cambridge Dictionary defines criticism as a form of judgement about the negative or positive qualities of someone or about someone or something which ranges from unprepared comments to a written detailed response.

Min (2008: 74) points out that criticism is a significant and indispensable speech act in daily communication, which has a special importance as the compliment, apology, and request in school's environment. Despite its importance, the pragmatic strategies instituting the structure of this act have not been investigated in vocational schools, which means that the pragmatic aspects of criticism have not been given their due attention in this realm.

Gender as social factor with its relation with language use such as criticism is highlighted here. Focusing on such perspective is the essence of this sociopragmatic study taking Arabic criticism as language practice done by Iraqi vocational school teachers whether specialized in English or not. Such social practice will be the subject of our investigation. Emphasis is given to teacher- students interaction.

To bridge the gap, the present study makes its appeal to tackle criticism from a pragmatic angle focusing on gender as a social factor. Thus, the present study specifies itself to criticism and finding answers to the following questions: (1) how criticism is pragmatically realized by women and men teachers in vocational schools? (2) what are the most frequently used types of mitigating devices by women and men teachers?

In accordance with the preceding questions, the study aims at: (1) pinpointing the pragmatic realization of criticism as used by women and men teachers in vocational schools, and (2) finding out the most frequent types of mitigating devices used by women and men teachers in vocational schools.

In relation to the aims above and answering their questions, it is hypothesized that (1) The direct and indirect strategies are the pragmatic realization of criticism where

women resort to indirect criticism more than men where suggestion or advice for change is the most frequent in former and showing disapproval in the later, and (2) Directing criticism to the whole students is the most usable mitigation device.

To achieve the aims of this study and test the hypotheses, the following procedures are followed: providing some theoretical framework for the concept of criticism and some related topics that are crucial to the aims of the study, collecting data, and applying an adopted model for a pragmatic analysis.

2. Sociopragmatics: Gender as a Concept

Sociopragmatics is an applied linguistic discipline that deals with pragmatic strategies with reference to social parameters like gender that affect the use of such stratagems. It can be named as pragmatics of society. According to Marmaridou (2011: 79), sociopragmatics deals with pragmatic phenomena that characterize the use of language for communication purposes. It focuses on the study of the external pragmatic factors affecting linguistic signs (their perception and the production) in a particular situation, such as indirectness in the performance of speech acts. It emphasizes on the area of speech acts and, more precisely, on their linguistic realisation and their strategic use in particular social circumstances (ibid: 92). Social circumstances include power and dominance, social distance, age, and gender.

Gender, as a concept, refers to the social roles that men and women play as well as the authority relationships between them, which usually have a deep consequence on the use and management of natural resources (Aguilar, 2004: 1). As for its use, Yule (2010: 247) differentiates between three employments of the word gender. Biological (or “natural”) gender is the division of sex between the “male” and “female” of each species. Grammatical gender is the distinction between “masculine” and “feminine”. A third use is for social gender, which is the distinction between “man” and “woman” to categorize individuals in terms of their social roles.

Additionally, gender is not based on sex, or the biological diversities between men and women. However, gender is created by 'culture, social relations, and natural environments' (Aguilar, 2004: 1). In this case, gender roles depend on values, norms customs and laws men and women in different parts of the world. As for their language, the differences are alleged to the way they speak as far as grammatical features (morphology) and the linguistic code (variation in language use) for instance.

Both linguistic prejudice and the extent to which men and women use the code differently are being empirically studied. It indicates that the study of language and gender is a branch of sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and allied disciplines such as sociopragmatics that examines speech patterns associated with a specific gender or social norms for such gendered language use.

2.1 Speech Act Theory and Criticism

Communication takes place when participants interact with each other. Such contact is fulfilled for certain purpose. The means by which they communicate is

language. Through it, people convey messages to others to express their own desires. Corder (1973:32) argues that the function of language is: "by which man can communicate; a system of communication; for the purposes of communication".

The speech act theory is the main pragmatic component of studying language in use or language in context where one can do things using his/ her own words as Austin (1962) suggests. Within pragmatics, importance is given to context of use specially the social context of its use. That is, people speak differently in different social setting using the same speech act. To check the influence of the social factors like gender upon language use, criticism is chosen for this mission as it is a speech act that embraces negative evaluation and face threatening act.

According to speech act theory, any utterance involves particular 'act' which denotes the speaker's desire to provoke something. As far as criticism is concerned, it is a speech act labeled or classified by Austin (1962: 83) as a performative verb in which using 'I criticize' which is the explicit form of the utterance where it occurs. Such act expresses the feelings of the speaker toward a negative item in the addressee. The performative verb of 'criticize' designates the speech act of criticism.

Searle (1979) presents different classification depending on matching between the world and words. As such, Searle (1979) suggests that speech acts consist of five general classifications to classify the functions or illocutionary of speech acts; these are declarations, representatives, expressives, directives, and commissive. Locating criticism among Searle's classification, Vanderveken (1990: 178-9) locates criticism as a part the assertive verbs on that it has two assertive uses. Firstly, in criticism, series of assertions reflect judgmental features of a specific subject which is called literary criticism. The Second use of 'criticism' is to make an assertion about someone behavioural faults in which the state of affairs is presented by the hearer of a negative behaviour. However, Farnia (2015: 2) states that criticism in its nature involves declarations, representatives, as well as expressive but not include directive and commissives.

From the researcher's point of view, criticism is an expressive speech act where an evaluation is given on certain matter. It can also be used by a speaker to express what s/he has inside his/her mind. Simply, it can be said that expressive speech acts show strong interpersonal function in communication.

2.2.1 Criticism and its Felicity conditions

Tracy et.al. (1987: 56) state that criticism is the act of showing the fault of someone by giving "a negative evaluation of a person or an act for which he or she is deemed responsible". It refers to the illocutionary force of presenting a negative assessment of the hearer's specific actions, choice, words, and products for which s/he may be responsible (Nguyen, 2005: 7).

This type of act is carried out in the hope of influencing the hearer's upcoming actions for his/her betterment as observed by the speaker or to communicate speaker's

disapproval of or dislike regarding what the hearer has done but without the implicature of unwanted consequences to the speaker (Wierzbicka, 1987). Criticism is similarly defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction or negative comment” (Hyland, 2000: 44).

According to speech act theory, there are set of felicity conditions that should be satisfied so as the illocutionary act of criticism is proper or felicitous. Criticism as an act is performed with the hope of persuading hearer's future actions for hearer's improvement as viewed by the speaker or to transfer speaker's displeasure with or dislike regarding what hearer has done, but without the implicature that what hearer has made unwanted penalties to speaker (Nguyen 2005a, 2005b; adapted from Wierzbicka 1987).

As this study is conducted to see the production of teachers, speaker and hearer will be replaced by the teacher and student respectively. The following requirements have to be satisfied so as the speech act of criticizing be effective:

1. The teacher makes things that seem inappropriate to the student in relation to specific evaluative principles that teacher holds, or a number of standards and norms that s/he thinks they are shared between him/herself and student.
2. The teacher grasps that this unfortunate action or choice might bring disapproving consequences to student or to the general public rather than to teacher him/ herself.
3. The teacher seems displeased with addressee's unsuitable action or choice and feels an urge to let his/her opinion be known verbally.
4. The teacher considers that his/her criticism will possibly lead to a transformation in student's future action or behavior and believes that s/he would not change or suggest a cure for the situation without teacher criticism.

2.2.2 Criticism Realization

To criticize someone, one cannot use 'I criticize' as it is mentioned above. Verschueren (1980) cited in Álvarez (2005: 691) argues that "there is a *performativity continuum* which extends from one end where the performative verbs are, to the other end where, because of pragmatic constraints, these verbs cannot be used performatively". Criticism is performed without the use of the performative verb. Two realizations or strategies are seen: direct or indirect means.

Direct criticism is achieved through a direct association between sentence and its illocutionary force connected with (when form of sentence type corresponds with its usual function (Yule, 1988: 101). Thus, the negative evaluation is obvious, like your story is terrible. Namely, the speaker straightforwardly or frankly shows the hearer his or her own fault s/he encounters alluding to face threatening acts like insult without going round the bush.

The indirect criticism can be shown, as Searle (1975: 59) suggests, when one illocutionary force used to perform another or additional one that is not associated with. In this respect, sentence type does not correspond with the usual function alluding to

other speech acts to express it. Thus, the intention of the speaker is not straightforwardly mention in the speech or utterance.

To realize such manifestations, Nguyen's (2005) presents set of sub-strategies under both direct and indirect criticism types. In direct criticism, he states that the speaker or the criticizer explicitly highlights the hearer's own problem concerning his/her action, work, presentation, etc. Under this category, the speaker may resort to the following, cited from Indrawati 2019, 353):

- **Negative evaluation** (usually expressed via evaluative adjectives with negative meaning or evaluative adjective with positive meaning plus negation)
- **Disapproval** (the speaker's attitude towards the hearer's problem)
- **Expression of disagreement** (usually realized by means of the expressions of "No" or "I don't agree" or via arguments against hearer.
- **Statement of the problem** (stating errors or problems)
- **Statement of difficulty** (usually expressed by means of such structures as "I find it hard to understand...", "It's difficult to understand").
- **Consequences** (giving warning about negative consequences of the conduct).
- **Threats** (use psychological hurt or punishment)

As for the indirect attainment of criticism, the criticizer also utilizes specific formulas. Nguyen (2005) states that within indirect criticism, the person will conceal his own judgment and the problem under discussion will be implied as for the hearer's choice, action, product, etc. Thus, under this type, sub-strategies are used and they are as follows, cited from Indrawati, 2019, 353):

- **Correction** (fixing errors by asserting specific alternatives).
- **Indicating standard** (a rule which the speaker thinks is commonly agreed upon and applied to all).
- **Demand for change** (usually expressed via such structures as "you have to", "you must", "it is obligatory that", or "you are required" or "you need", "it is necessary").
- **Request for change** (expressed via such structures as "will you...?", "can you...?", "would you...?" or imperatives, or want-statement)
- **Advice about change** (expressed via the performative "I advise you...", or structures with "should")
- **Suggestion for change** (expressed via the performative "I suggest that ..." or such structures as "you can", "you could", "it would be better if" or why don't you" etc.)
- **Expression of uncertainty** (to raise the awareness about the inappropriateness like "I might be mistaken").
- **Asking/presupposing** (rhetorical questions to raise the awareness about the inappropriateness like "is there anything preventing you..?").

When certain circumstances, teachers utilize more than one strategy in one time either from the same super-strategy and this case is called inter-combination mechanism. However, teachers employ different super-strategies within the same speech and this case is called intra-combination mechanism.

2.2.3 Criticism Mitigation

Criticism involves face threatening act as it is presented against the self-esteem of the positive face of the hearer in accordance with Brown and Levinson's (1987: 72) concepts. Thus, to remove the imposition and the humiliation from the speaker's part, it should be presented in a way that idea of criticism will be transmitted without hurting the receiver's own positive face and achieve more degree of politeness accordingly.

Mills (2003: 161) argues that politeness ought not to be essentially measured as a 'good thing'. However, many speakers assert that they consider it as 'insincere' behaviour that is directed at the achievement of some long-term goal. Criticism in its nature carries the face threatening act, thus one may use specific mitigation strategies so as to lessen the impact of his/her own opinion. In addition to psychological side, parameters such as gender, social status, and power will be taken into consideration in the making such criticism.

Mitigation, as defined by Fraser (1980: 341), is lessening of certain undesirable effects which a speech act has on the hearer. To certain extent, mitigation is the semantic formula used by the speaker to eradicate or get rid of the bad impact. Two categories of mitigation strategies or semantic formulas are utilized by teachers to soften their criticism so as to reduce the force of their utterances. Following Nguyen's (2013: 107-108) coding scheme, they are two types of modifiers as follows:

1. Supportive moves occurring before or after the act, including
 - **Steers** are those utterances that teacher used to lead his/her students onto the issue he or she was going to raise.
 - **Sweeteners** are compliments paid to students either before or after a criticism so, it was sent to soften his speech.
 - **Grounders** are regularly the reasons given by teachers to explain his/her intent.
 - **Disarmers** are those utterances that teacher exploit to show his or her awareness of the potential offence that his or her speech might cause student. This could be utilized by forewarning, apologizing/ showing appreciation of students' efforts or self-abasing.
2. Internal modifiers occurring as an essential part of the act, including
 - **Subjectivizer** are terminologies that express person's own view point like "I feel and "I think it's a bit"
 - **Hedges** are words or phrases used within criticism to express ambiguity, probability, and/or caution like kind of, sort of ...etc.
 - **Downtoners** words or phrases which reduce the force of another word or phrase which is the opposite emphasis

- **Cajolers** are phrases that arises students' attention like "you know".

3. Data Description

3.1 Participants

Forty teachers are participated in this study from both genders. They are classified into two groups: twenty women teach boys only (henceforth W) and twenty men teach boys (henceforth M). Four industrial schools specialized for boys are chosen in Babylon. The channel will be one way direction from women and men teachers to vocational school boys from different sections (carpenter, construction, electricity, metals, computer, electron, etc.).

Teachers resort to criticism in a specific situation where there are problems related to students such as bad behavior or law marks whether individual or collective. Teachers' specializations are different including English teachers who are two in each school. In most cases, even English teachers incorporate colloquial Arabic criticism in their classes. Regardless of gender, participants use Iraqi colloquial Arabic in their responses to the test as the researcher requests them to depict authentic classroom scenarios. Their teaching experience spans from five to twenty years. The mean experience of W is 14(SD= 3.3), the mean experience of M is 14.2(SD= 1.42). Results of a t test displays no significant difference between the two groups in terms of experience of teaching [$t = 0.46776$. The p -value=0.65243].

As for the addressee (the students) within vocational schools, their age varies between sixteen to twenty-two. This includes students who pass the three vocational years without failure, with failure in each year and even those who are hosting from the evening to the morning school as the study tackles the morning vocational schools for boys. The mean of their age is 19.5 (SD= 6.27). Results of a t test demonstrates no significant difference between them in terms of students' age [$t(6) = 2.5$ The P value =.01).

All the teachers are arbitrarily chosen. The researcher (English teachers in one of the schools under study) are working as interviewers who role-played with the participants. The interviewers and the participants are not made aware that the researcher intended to focus on the speech act of criticizing. They are only told that the aim of the study is to examine the teachers' use of some language functions. They are asked to write their gender as well as the period of experience before answering the test.

3.2 Instrument

Data are collected by ten actual-developed role-play situations happened in the classroom. The justification for using such mechanism is its aptitude to offer an affluent data source and to enable teachers produce real life situation where turn-taking mechanism are utilized (Kasper and Dahl 1991: 235). In designing role-play situations, the researcher is aware that despite the above merits, the teacher may face pressure if he cannot imagine being an actor or is unable to find him/her in the

described situations (Kasper and Dahl 1991: 241). Therefore, researcher is aware to minimize this possibility as they are teachers too.

The ten situations are extracted from two important topics of criticism in school context: performance of skills (from the 1st to 5th situation) and behavior (from the 6th to 10th situation). Those situations represent the most frequent topics in classroom as an educational setting. The researcher comes to such conclusion as they make an interview with more than 50 teachers asking them about the topics they comment on inside the class.

Prior to answering the test, teachers (hereafter referred to as Ts) are required to complete certain details such as their gender and years of experience, which have previously been shown to be insignificant through mean and standard deviation statistics. The following scenarios are briefly illustrated below:

1. The teacher (T) whether woman or man give his/her students' (S) their monthly exam sheets. T is unsatisfied with the law marks. They comment on the mistakes and errors being made which s/he remarks before the exam and ask them not to do it.
2. T is asking Ss to participate in solving some drills on the board. No one answer or even try to explain what is happening. The topic under study is explained before and this is a repetition for it.
3. T assigns homework to S(s) and most of them do not solve it although T reminds them more than one time tell them that marks will be assigned to the ones who solve or trying to solve even if the results are not correct.
4. Within daily explanation, T ask Ss to draw a diagram, solve a formula or drill that is already being explained before minutes. More than one Ss are mistaken in some parts.
5. T explains the lesson more than three times and solve the drills related to it with two or three Ss. S/he asks the rest to repeat what he has just mentioned to make sure that they have understood the lesson. They answer that they do not understand the lesson.
6. While of the S is answering or solving a question given by the T, other Ss in the class are laughing upon his/her mispronunciation of words (bullying). T thinks it is not suitable to react as such.
7. Within the exam, one of S is trying to cheat on his classmate for the second time after T warn him not to do it.
8. S(s) violate the school uniform rules or hair style. T is not satisfied with what s/he is wearing since unrelated colours are used.
9. Whereas T is explaining the subject on the board, Ss are talking between each other giving no attention to what T is doing. T knocks on the board to attract their attention but no attention is given.

10. While T is elucidating some important issues related to the monthly exam, a neighboring class Ss are shouting and singing do not pay attention to other classes or even respect those besides them.

The ten role-play situations were included in two distinct exhaustive instruction sheets for the participants (Ts). The situations and the instruction are written in simple Arabic to ensure Ts' complete understanding of the task requirements. Moreover, the instruction sheets also obviously encouraged Ts to ask questions before they start if they find any detail they cannot understand.

In the instruction sheets, all situations are preceded by a question that tells the researcher to which extent the situation is realistic and how near to life the participants perceive a given situation. This is applied according to Likert five-point scale (with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest). It specifies to what extent Ts agree with the statement: "استطيع ان اتخيل نفسي في هذا الموقف" I can put myself in this situation. If teachers do not find the situation realistic, they can leave that situation and move on to the next situation (score less than 3). However, if the opposite happens (score more than 3), they can continue answering the situation.

As a result, all situations are seen to be realistic as all women Ts and men Ts score more than 3 to all situations except for two women Ts in situation (8) where they cannot criticize students for their uniform or hairstyle.

3.3 Data Collection

Data are collected from secondary industrial schools in Babylon city in, Iraq. In an attempt to have a truthful and accurate answers, the researcher spends a fine time chatting with Ts as coworker. In testing, Ts are given as much time as they needed to read and ask questions about the task before they started. An audio recorder is played to record the conversations that happen within testing. It takes almost one hour including the interruption of questioning of what is not obvious. The researcher asked Ts to write the reason behind giving a situation not realistic. Testing itself happens separately for women Ts (henceforth W) and for men Ts (henceforth M). That is to say, they answer questionnaire separately as their rooms as such.

4. Data analysis

This section is assigned to the analysis of the data collected through a test given to W and M of ten everyday classroom situations dedicated to performance of skills and behaviour. The criticism realization strategies with mitigation strategies are analyzed according to Nguyen (2005a) model of criticism.

The analysis of the test will be divided into three parts. The first one is to show the frequency as well as the percentage of the types of pragmatic strategies used to criticize by both W and M. The second part is allocated to the analysis of the most frequent usable strategies through the ten situations with their topics. The third part is designed to analyze the mitigation strategies used across situations.

4.1. Criticism Realizations Strategies: Women and Men Variation

The analysis of the data displays that Ts embrace different types of criticizing strategies. Ts varies among the direct It discovers that Ts use direct strategies (370 tokens) more than indirect strategies (404 tokens) in performing strategies of criticism (see table 1). This proposes that Iraqi teachers are conscious of the detail that criticism is a face threatening act. Therefore, they adopted more indirect strategies. The following are abbreviation of the Table (1):

W= women

M= Men

Per.= Percentage

Freq.= Frequency

Table 1: The Overall Criticizing Strategies Used in Iraqi Industrial Schools for Boys.

Type	Strategies	M		W	
		Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
Direct Criticism	Negative evaluation	40	11%	30	7%
	Disapproval	30	8%	40	9.5%
	Identification of the problem	35	9%	24	6%
	Consequences	24	6%	20	5%
	Expression of disagreement	15	4%	18	5%
	Statement of difficulty	6	2%	10	2.5%
	Threats	30	8%	34	8.5%
	Total	190	51%	180	45%
Indirect Criticism	Correction	30	8%	34	8.5%
	Preaching and indicating standard	32	9%	36	9%
	Request for change	8	2%	12	3%
	Suggestion or Advice for change	74	19.7%	82	20.5%
	Expression of uncertainty	8	2%	14	3.5%
	Asking/presupposing	8	2%	12	3%
	Say nothing	4	1%	8	2%
	Other hints	20	5%	22	5.5%
	Total	184	49%	220	55%
	Total of all Strategies	374	100%	400	100%

According to table (1), the direct strategies are distributed to M and W: each is given frequency and percentage as used by Ts. Each of which is separately explained enhanced with example given by Ts as bellow:

1. Negative Evaluation

Ts resort to negative qualification of students' bad marks and behavior when expressing their dissatisfaction of what the students has done. In this strategy, they use negative adjectives with positive or negative meaning. However, the frequency of such strategy scores 20 times (12%) with M and 30 times (7%) with W. Example of this strategy taken from the Ts' response is as follows:

1- "انتم طلاب كسالى ومهملين بواجباتكم".

-You are lazy and carless students in doing your duties.

Such response is given in situation (3) where the Ts are asked to answer when they are exposed to Ss who do not make their homework. In the above response, teachers use directly the negative adjectives "كسالى، مهملين" which means carless and lazy to criticize their incapacity of doing their homework.

2. Disapproval

In this strategy, Ts show their criticism with no use of qualifying adjectives. Ss listened directly to negative problem they committed. Data shows that W use it more than men with (40) and (30) times respectively. This score (7.5% and 9.5%) as in the following example:

٢- "تره الموضوع ميحتاج تنمر وكلمات مؤذية انتو طلاب حالكم من حاله".

-The subject does not need such bullying and hurtful words. You are student like him/her. (Situation 6)

In the above response, Ts are asked to give their responses toward a S in the state of bullying to his classmate who could not read well in. T criticizes the S's attitude upon his classmate through his disapproval. This means that the student has done something immoral and forbidden inside the class. At the same time, T points out that all students can be wrong.

3. Identification of the problem

Identification of the problem occurs when T criticizes Ss directly by showing their mistakes whether words, actions or even appearance as in the following examples:

٣- "يا ابني.. انت مخالف للزي المدرسي بلبسك قميص ازرق به رسومات".

-Oh, my brother ...you have violated the school rules by wearing such painted shirt. (Situation 8).

٤- "انشاءك خاطى وما بي معلومه تخص الموضوع".

-Your composition is wrong and does have any idea related to its title. (Situation 4).

In this strategy, it is seen that M use this way of criticizing (45) times with (11%) while women use it (24) times with (6%). This means M practice this type double than that in W. In situation (8), T criticizes directly S who violates the school rules of uniform. He categorizes the trouble of wearing illegal colour 'blue' with 'paintings' not specified for school. It can be noted that "يا/ابني" which means 'oh son' is an inspiring comment for S to lessen the impact of the speech.

However, in situation (4), it can be noted that T alludes to direct explanatory criticism through identifying the problem of S's composition as being wrongly done. That is, the writing is not related to its topic.

4. Consequences

In this strategy, Ts notify their Ss with the bad effect of their behavior or marks. They do so through direct warning of destructive results that may happen if they continue their bad activities as in:

٥- "إذا تظلون على هذا المستوى الضحل مراح تتجحون هذي السنة".

-If you continue with this bad level, you will not pass this year. (Situation 2)

In the above response, T directly warn Ss collectively referring to all of them not specifying one. In Arabic, such way is considered as a belittling mechanism that lessens the impact of criticism being directed to all students in the class since their daily as well as monthly marks are too much bad.

5. Expression of disagreement

In this type of strategy, the criticizer (the teacher) expresses their disapproval through showing disagreement with the hearer in a direct way. The test shows that men allude to this strategy (15) times while women (18) times with 4% and 5% respectively. An example of this strategy as follows:

٦- هذا التمرين مينحل بهذه الطريقة. تطلع النتيجة خاطئة".

-This drill cannot be solved in this way. The result will be wrong accordingly. (Situation 3)

The teacher expresses his/her disagreement toward the student's way of answering the drill assigned for homework by "not and wrong".

6. Statement of difficulty

In this strategy, T expresses his difficulty of understanding what is going on with Ss. That is, T directly says that he could not grasp the situation as in the following:

٧- "الدرس "٧-٧" مدا اقدر افهم ليش تهوسون وتسولفون بينكم بالرغم اني دا اشرح

- I cannot understand why you are so noisy and talkative although I am explaining the lesson for you. (Situation 9)

Here, Ts criticize Ss bad behavior of talking and making noise in the middle of the lecture. Thus, instead of listening to T, Ss waste their time talking with each other. The data shows that M utilize this strategy (6) times while it is (10) times with W.

7. Threats

In this strategy, Ts use psychological hurt or punishment as the physical one is forbidden. They allude to complain Ss' behavior or bad marks to their parents who will punish them accordingly. Another way is to minimize their daily marks as in the following example:

٨- "إذا ما توقفوا عن الكلام والهوسة الا انقصكم من درجات اليومى".

-If you do not stop talking, I will decrease your daily marks. (Situation 9)

M utilize such strategy more than W do with (30 times accounting 8%) and (34 times accounting 8.5%) respectively.

8. Severe criticism

Through the analysis of the results, it is found that M resorts to use this strategy (10 times accounting 3%) while W use it with (4 times accounting 1%). Ts choose vulgar language and insults to show their disapproval of specific situation as in the following example:

شبيكم طلاب انتوا اغبياء .. بكرة السؤال جدا واضح. " ٩ -

- What's up students? Are you Foolish? The question is so clear. (Situation 5)

In the above response, Ss ask T more than five times about a question in the exam which is quite clear. T, here, uses negative qualification words to express his/her disapproval like "foolish".

It is found that W resort to indirect strategies more than the direct ones with (220 times occurring 55%) with slight contrast with M who use the indirect strategies with (184 occurring 49%) as follows:

1. Correction

In an attempt to criticize their Ss, Iraqi Ts provide remedy instead of the bad behavior Ss do. Correction as an indirect strategy is used by men with (30 times accounting 9%) and 34 times accounting 8.5%) with W. This means that there is a slight equality between the two genders in the use of this strategy. This leads us to the conclusion that Ts' criticism is a type of improvement mechanism they use to accurate Ss' behavior:

١٠ - " عيف السوالف بالدرس وانتبه للصبره حتى تفقهم."

-Leave talking inside the lecture and look at the board instead so as you understand what is being said. (Situation9)

In the above response, T attempts to criticize Ss' bad behavior of speaking while s/he is explaining an important lesson. Thus, he indirectly shows his disapproval by directing the student to be with him/her.

2. Preaching and Indicating Standard

Preaching is the communication of truth to people presented by man or men. Indicating standard means the use of proverbs or famous saying that all people hear about to indirectly criticize the hearer. Those two strategies are resorted to at the same time by most Ts from both genders. They try to combine between the two without any split. That is, the teacher uses some speeches of wise men with preaching to tell Ss that what they do is incorrect. This means that criticism is presented by the means of preaching. The data scores (32) times with men while it sores (36) times with W accounting 9% for both as in the following example:

١١ - "ابنائي الغش حرام وميصير نعمل بي لان نتأجه سريعة الزوال وتعرفون الرسول شكال بهالخصوص من غشنا فليس منا."

-My sons! Cheating is taboo behavior that we should not do as its results are fast disappear. You know our prophet who says "The one who cheats us is none of us". (Situation 7)

As Muslims, T criticizes S's attempt to cheat in the exam through the indirect way of criticism by giving them a speech which is said by our prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him and his household). It is preceded by a speech of preach which gives Ss an idea about cheating effects that are forbidden in Islam and education.

3. Request for Change

To request means asking somebody to do something. In this strategy, the speaker or the criticizer use words like "ممكن" (if you do not mind) to show the incorrectness of the hearer's deeds as in the following:

١٢- "طلاب تكثرون تسكتون اذا امكن؟ احنا دنشرح وانتوتاثرون علينا".

-Students! Can you stop talking if you do not mind? We are explaining and you are affecting us (Situation 10)

Here, T resorts to question structure of ability "can you" and the phrase "if you do not mind" to criticize the students' noise inside the class. This strategy is used (8 times scores 2%) with men and (12 times scores 3%) with W.

4. Suggestion or Advice for Change

Suggestion means offering an idea or opinion to be considered by the hearer in an attempt to lessen the impact of criticism. It is sometimes be preceded by admiration as in the following:

١٣- "لوحتك جيدة بس لو تخططها قبل رسم الشكل يكون افضل".

-Your sheet is good but it would be better to delineate the sheet before drawing. (Situation 4)

T above chooses appreciation before criticizing student's imperfect drawing of a diagram suggesting that he makes delineation before drawing. However, an advice indicates an opinion that Ts offers about what Ss should do or how they should act in a particular situation as in the following:

١٤- "انتم خوش طلاب بس يجب ان تحترموا بعضكم البعض. التتمر على قراءة زميلكم تصرف ابد موخلو ومعييب".

- You are good students. However, you should respect one another. Bullying about your classmate's reading is not a good behavior. (Situation 6).

This strategy seems to be the most preferable one among all criticism strategy by both M. Ts and W.Ts. It occurs (74) times with (19.7%) in the former and (82) times with (20.5%) in the latter. This means that Ts do all their best to change student's bad performance or behavior and direct them for the right direction.

5. Expression of Uncertainty

Ts here express their criticism through showing their uncertain thinking of what they are saying so as to lessen the impact of criticism. That is, they mention the

negative evaluation preceded by expressions like "ما متأكد، أتصور، اظن" as in the following:

١٤- "أتصور اني كلتكم ممنوع الكلام مع بعضكم اثناء الدرس."

- I think I told you should not talk within each other within the lecture. (Situation 9)

In this strategy, Ts use it (8) times scores 2% with men while it is (14) times scores 3.5% with W.

6. Asking/ Presupposing

To raise the consciousness of the inappropriate behavior, Ts resort to ask students questions that do not need an answer in their criticism. This means that they use rhetorical questions as in the following:

١٥- "شنو ناوي السنة تبقة بمكانك بنفس الصف؟ درجائك كلش مو زينة بكل الاسئلة مع الاسف."

- You want to stay at your place this year (in the same grade)? Your degrees are so sad in all the questions. Oh sorry. (Situation 1).

T criticizes S's carelessness upon his marks which are too low although he is in the same grade for the second year. In this strategy, men use it (8) times scores 2% and it is (12) times scores 3% with W. This means that the strategy of expression uncertainty and asking used approximately with equal manner in both genders.

1. Say Nothing

Within an attempt not to hurt the student's feeling, Ts allude to correct their Ss' mistakes and errors (the written ones) without saying anything. This strategy is the least usable strategy in comparison with others. Men use it (4) times scores 1% and W (8) times scores 2% as in the following:

١٦- "لا اكرث لما يرتديه الطلاب فهو ليس من مهمامي."

-I do not pay attention to school uniform as it not my task. (Situation 8)

2. Other Hints

This strategy means the strategy other than that mentioned before such as sarcasm, irony, or implication. The results indicate that men and W use this strategy with approximately equally with 5% with men and 5.5 with W as in the following example:

١٧- "الدرجة الي حصلتھه كلش زينه صحيح؟" (بتھكم)

- Your mark is very good right? (With irony) (Situation 1)

In the above response, T ironically criticizes S's mark as high. This is an implied response that the mark is too low in comparison with what T has expected.

4.2 Criticism Strategies across Situations

In order to look deeply upon the criticism strategies being used by Ts from both genders, a look should be put upon the most usable strategies in each situation given in the test. That is, a connection between the strategies and the topics raised to accurately analyze the matter. In other words, examining the variation among strategies being enacted across situations topics. Both genders are grouped to scrutinize their performance via each situation (see table 2).

Table (2): Frequencies and Percentages of Criticism Direct and Indirect Strategies Used across Situations

N.	Topic	Situations	Criticism Strategies	
			Freq.	Per.
1	Performance of Skills	Law Marks	Direct 26/3.4%	Indirect 54/7%
2		Daily participation	Direct 15/1.9%	Indirect 26/3.4%
3		Homework	Direct 48/6.2%	Indirect 28/3.6%
4		Committing Mistakes	Direct 21/2.7%	Indirect 52/6.7%
5		Repeated Questions	Direct 36/4.6%	Indirect 50/6.4%
Total			144/18.6%	212/27.3%
6	Behavior	Bullying	Direct 60/7.8%	Indirect 38/4.9%
7		Cheating	Direct 51/6.6%	Indirect 34/4.3%
8		School Uniform	Direct 26/3.4%	Indirect 20/2.6%
9		Talking without reason	Direct 35/4.5%	Indirect 66/8.5%
10		Neighboring Noisy Class	Direct 48/6.2%	Indirect 40/5.2%0
Total			220/28.6%	198/25.5%

As it is seen in table (2), The indirect strategies of criticism are used more than the direct ones in total occurring (404) times with 52.1% for the former and (370) times with 47.9% for the latter. However, Ts seem to differentiate between criticizing behavior and criticizing performance of skills in that the total number of strategies utilized by Ts are more for the latter than for the former occurring (356) times with 54% and 46% respectively. This means that Ts put all their efforts to correct behavior and they consider it more important than performance of skills. Additionally, they rely more on direct strategies with behaviors so as to attract Ss attention to wrong doing things to be changed later. However, they depend on indirect strategies with performances of skills. That is, they do not like to threaten Ss' face as it is a sensitive topic that may hinder Ss' courage. For example, law marks receive the highest the lowest number of occurrences with (15) times. Instead, Ts trust the indirect strategies which can be a motive to encourage Ss to get rid of such unsuccessful performances.

In performance of skills, law mark, repeated questions and committing mistakes receive the highest average of indirect criticism strategies with (54) times counting 7%, (50) times accounting 6.4% and (52) times accounting 6.7% respectively. That is, Ts try not to embarrass their Ss with such sensitive topics that may hinder their motivation for study. However, they are forced to direct criticism in unsolved homework with (48) average 6.2% to attract Ss' attention to such important task that they ignore deliberately. Concerning the lowest average of direct and indirect strategies goes to daily participation with (15) times accounting 1.9% and (26) times accounting 3.4% correspondingly. In other words, it is too impressible topic where criticism should not be used while agitation and encouragement are to be utilized instead.

Concerning behavior, Ts utilize direct criticisms with topics such as bullying, cheating, and annoying neighboring classes. Such topics scores the highest average of direct criticism as follows: (60) times scores 7.8%, (51) times scores 6.6%, 48 scores 6.2% respectively. It is worth mentioning that their indirect strategies are not insignificant. The average of them scores between 4.9% for bullying, 4.3% for cheating, and 5.2 % for annoying neighboring classes. This means that Ts talk extensively about such topics as the number of strategies seems extra in comparison with other topics. This is quite evident as through analysis it is found that direct and indirect criticism strategies are used side by side within one situation (inter-combination). Moreover, more than one direct or indirect criticism used alone within one situation (intra- combination). This is not only found with behavior topics but exceed to performance of skills.

As it is noticed in table (2), school uniform receives the lowest number of strategies used with (26) times accounting 3.4% for direct and (20) times accounting 2.6% for indirect criticism. It happens as such since some Ts abstain to criticize as it is none of their business. Simultaneously, they do not pay much effort to criticize Ss' uniform.

5.5.2 Mitigation Devices

Mitigation devices are set of arrangements or equipment used to lessen the bad effect of criticism. Through analysis, it is found that Ts utilize various tools to reduce the consequences of the criticism whether direct or even indirect. Table (3) illustrates the types of modifiers or mitigation devices that Ts allude to in their criticism.

Table (3): Mitigation Devices Used by Teachers in their Criticism

Mitigation Devices		Women		Men	
		Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
Supportive moves	Sweeteners	42	11.6%	30	10%
	Grounders	34	9.4%	64	21.1%
	Disarmers	52	14.3%	42	14.1%
Internal modifiers	Subjectivizer	12	3.3%	10	3.6%
	Cajolers	25	6.9%	10	3.6%
	(Calling) + Plural Pronouns refer to students	198	54.5%	142	47.7%
Total		363	100%	298	100%

As it is noticed in table (3), Ts made use of all devices and show different patterns of preference for particular types. They approximately depend on the same types of migration devices whether men or W. However, the number of their devices in total is different as W use more devices to lessen their effect of criticism with (363) times with the former and (298) times with the latter. At the same time, it is found that more than one mitigating device is used within the same response. As for the most usable soften tool is the plural pronoun that refers to students as a whole not directing the speech to specified one with or without calling "يا" so as the criticism will be transferred to a kind of advice like All of you (كلكم), most of you (اغلبكم), some of you (بعضكم), our students (طلابنا)، ابنائنا، طالبنا)، my students (طلابي)، my or our dear students (اعزائي اعزائنا، الطلاب)، or the use of plural pronoun which attach nouns that may offend S's face as in the following extract:

١٨ - طلابنا، يا اعزائنا مخالفتكم للزي تشويه لصوره الطالب. دتلبسون اللون كارثية

-Our dear students, uniform violation distorts student's picture. You are wearing disastrous colours.

Such device scores the highest usage with men and W in (142) times score 47.7% and (198) times scores 54.5% respectively where W seem to be superior in this device. As it seen, with the reset internal modifiers, W utilize more Subjectivizer and cajolars with 3.3% and 6.9% while men score 3.6% for the two. Ts relay on expressions like "اعتقد، اتصور، اظن، اشعر، اخمن" for subjectivizers and "كما تعلمون، مثل ما تشوفون" for cajolars in their criticism. This means that subjectivizers suspicions related to the speaker him/herself while cajolars connected with the hearer.

Within supportive moves, men tend to rely mostly on grounders multiple times with (21.1%) more than W with (9.4%) where justifications to criticism are being enacted. For instance:

١٩ - "اني اعرف الكلام الي راح اكوله ممكن يكون جارح..."

-I know that my words might be offensive...

In the same vein, W and men make use of structures like disarmers approximately with the same frequency (14.3%) and (14.1) respectively where Ts used to show his or her consciousness of the potential offence that his or her speech may cause to Ss. It can be done by forewarning, apologizing/ showing appreciation of Ss' efforts or self-abasing. For instance:

"اتصور... وفكرتك حلوة بس ٢٠ -"بالحقيقة اني أقدر الي سويتة"

-In fact, I appreciate what you have done and your new idea but what I think ...

Finally, as for sweetener, W scores percentage near that of men with 11.6% for the former and 10% for the latter. That is, a slight variation can be figured out in the use of such device. Expressions of this device designate a compliment that may precede or follow Ts' criticism so as the offence can be reduced. For instance:

٢١ - "اني ادري انتو طلاب رائعين ومؤدبين اذا تعيفون السوالف اثناء الدرس."

-I know you are fantastic and polite students if you stop talking inside the class.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis conducted in the present study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Teachers' criticism is a component of their responsibilities related to assessing or evaluating, alongside their role as educators. Teachers act as assessors when it comes to carrying out their roles and providing grades, delivering feedback aimed at improving students' skills following critiques. That is the reason they seldom employ the indirect strategy (hints)
2. Criticism is considered as a line of demarcation that clarifies errors and mistakes that students committed. They, especially men, do not consider the offensive part of criticism as a bad thing since education is their long-term goal behind such. That is why they use more direct criticism strategies than women.
3. Teachers act as educators as well as advisers where the situation is related to behaviors. Although they start with criticism, they complete it with clarifications and advices. This means that criticism is used to qualify student's performance or behaviour. It is a tool that seems more effective and fruitful used to attract their attention toward the problems they are in.
4. Teacher proves that they are really aware of the sensitive nature of students especially with topics like manners and behaviours. In such situations, they almost suggest indirect and mitigated criticism as well as they do not come cross sever criticism with both genders. However, they vary among the sub-strategies used. More specifically, they use collective criticism more than individual one with students so as not to be considered as personal.
5. In classroom, teachers allude to colloquial Iraqi in criticism even those specializing in Arabic. Interestingly, this means that criticism will not take its due effect with the use of standard Arabic and thus the information will be comprehended easily by students.

6. Teachers use the strategy of saying nothing as an indirect strategy when there is little importance to the wrong information mentioned by the students in comparison with the main idea needed so that it does not need much emphasis.

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