
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Politeness Strategies in Advice Giving Used by Bani Hassan: Grice's Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the politeness strategies in advice giving employed by speakers of the Bani Hassan dialect, based on Grice's politeness approach as a theoretical framework and to show the most frequent strategy employed by them. A Discourse Completion Test (DCT) comprising 50 different situations was used to investigate and elicit the responses of 100 participants. The results revealed that there are two primary categories of strategies were used by the participants: direct and indirect. The direct strategies are: using the imperative form, using the imperative form preceded by the negative particle laa "not", using the verb *ansah* "أنصح" (advise) and using mitigation. On the other hand, the indirect strategies are: using religious expressions, using proverbs, suggesting alternatives, giving negative consequences, giving positive consequences, using insulting, using sarcasm, using emphasizing, using interjection, and using jokes. The results also showed that using the verb 'ʔansʔah' (Advise) is the most frequent strategy used by Bani Hasan speakers to give advice with (17.7%) of the total strategies.

KEYWORDS

Politeness strategies, Advice-giving, Grice politeness approach, Bani Hassan dialect

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1. Introduction

Advice giving is a widely common activity that takes place between family members, friends, colleagues, neighbors and professionals. It can take different forms, to fit, written or spoken forms, in face-to-face situations or in mediated forms of communication (such as telephone conversations). In pragmatic terms, Searle (1969) classifies advice as a directive speech act, which is a category that he defines as an attempt by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. It is related to a request but with a difference that advice should be beneficial to its recipient. Brown and Levinson (1987) describe giving advice as an "intrinsically face threatening act" (p. 65), where the speaker indicates that s/he does not mean to avoid obstructing the hearer's freedom of action.

Questions of the Study

The present study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the politeness strategies used by Bani Hassan when giving advice?
2. What are the most frequent strategies used by Bani Hassan and what is the significance of each?

2. Methods and procedures

The data of this study consists of a DCT which includes 50 situations that happen frequently in everyday life in Mafrag. One hundred Bani Hassan tribe members who live in Al-Mafrag; fifty males and fifty females, were asked to respond to the situations in the DCT. The responses were analyzed within the framework of Grice's politeness approach.

The researchers prepared the DCT and gave it to the participants and requested to describe their responses to the mentioned situations. Then the researchers classified the data into groups. Besides studying the data quantitatively the collected data were investigated according to Grice's Approach of politeness to elicit the politeness strategies that were used by the participants. After distributing the DCT to the participants (100), the responses obtained (2000 examples) were counted and then classified into two main categories, namely, direct strategies and indirect strategies based on Searle's (1976) and Yule's (1996) classifications of speech acts. Yule (1996) argues that when there is a direct relationship between a structure and a function, then it is a direct speech act and when there is an indirect relationship between a structure and a function, then it is an indirect speech act.

3. Review of related literature

Mandalia (2011) investigated the politeness strategies in giving advice employed by the English Department of the State University of Pandang based on Brown and Levinson (1987) and Yule (1996). To elicit the necessary data; the researcher used the Discourse Completion Test. The study found that Bald on Record is the highest strategy used, while Negative Politeness is the lowest one. Positive Politeness is mostly used by Female students.

Huessin (2015) conducted a study to find out whether there are differences between Jordanian male and female students in the perception of the speech act of advice giving and to investigate the differences between them in the perception of the speech act in advice giving in terms of social status. The instrument used to collect data is an adopted version of Kinkel's (1997) MCQ. The study found that males preferred to use hedge advice with an instructor and tended to use indirect advice with a peer acquaintance. It also found that females preferred to use hedge advice with an instructor and tended to use direct advice with a peer acquaintance.

Agbaglo (2017) explored the use of politeness devices in the Analysis and Discussion sections of research articles produced by English Language Teachers at the University of Cape Coast. The corpus consisted of 20 Analysis and Discussion sections of the research articles. The researcher used Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and Myers' (1989) models for the analysis. It showed that these lecturers use politeness strategies in their research articles. It also became clear from the analysis that these lecturers favor the use of negative politeness strategies as compared to the positive politeness strategies.

4. Findings

The researcher has found that there is a wide variety of advice strategies employed by Bani Hasan speakers. These strategies are classified into two major categories, direct and indirect. The direct strategies are: using the imperative form, using the imperative form preceded by the negative particle *laa* "not", using the verb *ansah* "أنصح" (advise) and using mitigation. On the other hand, the indirect strategies are: using religious expressions, using proverbs, suggesting alternatives, giving negative consequences, giving positive consequences, using insults, using sarcasm, using emphasizing, using interjection, and using jokes.

5. Results and Discussion

The speech acts provided by Bani Hasan speakers to give direct advice include using the imperative form, using the imperative form preceded by the negative particle *laa* "not", using the verb *ansah* "أنصح" (advise) and using mitigation. However, the indirect strategies include using religious expressions, using proverbs, suggesting alternatives, giving negative consequences, giving positive consequences, using insulting, using sarcasm, using emphasizing, using interjection, and using jokes. These different strategies used to give advice can be interpreted in terms of speakers' culture. Al-Khateeb (2009) argues that "cultural factors play a role in the development of diverse ways of talking and communicating" (p.20) and, thus, creating new ways or strategies of producing and perceiving an act of politeness.

Table 1: The frequencies and percentages of the strategies used by Bani Hasan to offer direct advice.

No.	Direct strategy	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Using the verb 'advise'	354	17.7%
2.	Using the imperative form	180	9%
3.	Using the imperative form preceded by the negative particle "not"	160	8%
4.	Using mitigation	120	6%
Total		814	40.7

The table shows that 40% (814 responses) of the strategies used by Bani Hasan speakers to give advice are direct. This result is in line with the ones reported in previous studies (Jaradat, 2006; Harb, 2016). The common usage of direct strategies among Arab speakers can be associated with different social factors as gender, age, and status. The results also show that using the verb '*ʔans'ah*' (Advise) is the most frequent strategy used by Bani Hasan speakers to give advice (17.7%). This can be an indication that speakers of this dialect prefer to give the advice directly by using the performative verb '*ʔans'ah*' to make the message short and clear that the speaker's intention is to give a piece of advice. By doing so, the speaker shows that he/she takes the addressee's face into consideration and thus does not threaten his/her face. For Goffman (1967, p.213) the notion of 'face' is defined as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact." Therefore, the use of the verb '*ʔans'ah*' decreases the chance of taking the utterance as an FTA. In other words, the speaker wants to convey a message to the addressee that the utterance is just a piece of advice and it is the latter's decision to take it or leave it. In addition, by using this verb of advice, the speaker respects the maxims of cooperation (quantity, quality, relevance and manner). One more point to add here is related to the appropriateness of using the verb '*ʔans'ah*'. Using this verb to give advice is considered an acceptable speech act whether the addressee is old or young, male or female, educated or uneducated, etc.

As shown in Table (1) above, the strategies of using the imperative form (in the case of affirmative) and the negation particle *laa* (Do not) followed by the imperative form (in the case of negation) are the second most frequent direct strategies used by Bani Hasan speakers to give advice, (9% & 8% respectively). These two strategies are similar in that they both use the imperative form to give advice. They should not be confused with the speech act of ordering. Although they are structurally similar, they have different illocutionary forces. In the case of orders, the speaker who is usually superior to the addressee (or at least equal to him/her) wants the latter to perform an action. Yet, in the case of giving advice, the speaker gives or offers a piece of advice, expecting the addressee to take it into consideration. The level of obligation is not the same as in the case of orders.

Within the same vein, when using the imperative form, the speaker respects the maxims of quantity, quality, relevance and manner by giving a piece of advice that is direct, clear, relevant and brief. Grice (1975, p.45) argues that one should make his/her "conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged". However, the advice giver threatens the face of the addressee by using the imperative. The level of face threatening depends on the relationship between the interlocutors (father/son, boss/worker, etc.). That is why using the imperative to give advice is considered acceptable/appropriate when it is used by someone who is superior to the addressee.

The fourth most frequent direct strategy of advice giving is using mitigation. In this case, the speaker tries to lessen the effect of giving direct advice by using a mitigator that softens the level of the utterance on the addressee. This polite strategy is meant to decrease the use of the imperative or obligation forms that usually follow the mitigation form.

Table (2): The frequencies and the percentages of the strategies used by Bani Hasan to offer indirect advice

No.	Indirect strategy	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Using religious expressions	262	13.1%
2.	Giving negative consequences	230	11.5%
3.	Using proverbs	190	9.5%
4.	Suggesting alternatives	100	5%

5.	Using interjection	92	4.6%
6.	Giving positive consequences	90	4.5%
7.	Using insulting	80	4%
8.	Using emphasizing	60	3%
9.	Using sarcasm	56	2.8%
10.	Using jokes	26	1.3%
Total		1186	59.3

Table 2 shows that 60% (1186 out of 2000 examples) of the strategies used by Bani Hasan speakers to give advice are indirect. The results further show that the most frequent strategy used by Bani Hasan speakers when they give indirect advice is using "religious expressions" (13.1%), while the least common one is using "jokes" (1.3%). Between these two extremes, there are some indirect strategies used by speakers of this dialect to give advice in an implicit way. While some of these indirect strategies are relatively frequent (using negative consequences (11.5%) and using proverbs (9.5%)), other ones are not commonly used (suggesting alternatives (5%), suggesting interjections (4.6%), giving positive consequences (4.5%), using insulting (4%), using emphasizing (3%) and using sarcasm (2.8%).

Using jokes as the least preferred way of advice-giving can be interpreted in terms of the nature of advice itself. When advising someone, the advice giver tends to be serious in most cases in order to give the impression that the entire situation is serious and that the advice seeker should also be serious and take the advice into consideration. Yet, using jokes as a way to advise is still being used even marginally. It could be an acceptable way of advising among those who are socially close to each other such as friends, brothers, sisters, etc. It goes without saying that this strategy cannot be used (even if it is not acceptable) among those who are socially distant and have a low level of solidarity. Thus, using jokes can be used to give advice in soldier-officer interactions (i.e., in L to H interactions).

The same line of argument applies to using insults and sarcasm. They are only expected among speakers who are socially close to each other and have high solidarity which makes the advice seeker accept the harsh nature of advice even though it threatens his/her face. These strategies are also expected among speakers who have H(igh)-L(ow) relationship such as officers and soldiers. The power scale enables officers to use such strategies, while inferiority makes soldiers accept this tough way of giving advice, although it threatens his/her face.

Comparing the results in Tables (1) and (2) above shows that while both direct and indirect strategies of giving advice are frequent in the discourse of the Bani Hasan dialect, indirect strategies are used more than their direct counterparts (60% & 40% respectively). This result is not surprising as it is in line with those reported for speakers of Arabic in general in that they favor indirect ways of refusing, advising, promising, etc. when compared with speakers of Western languages. Many studies (Kaplan, 1966; Morkus, 2009, 2014; Khwaileh, 2005; Al-Shboul and Huwari, 2016) have reported that English speakers are more direct than Arabic speakers due to different cultural orientations. Furthermore, Khwaileh (2005) points out that cultural, religious and familial values for Jordanians can be taken as a justification for the higher frequency of indirect, compared with direct, strategies used by Jordanians to express their viewpoints and feelings.

To clarify the direct and indirect strategies, some responses were analyzed qualitatively.

Direct

The imperative form is equivalent to **أفعل الأمر ?alʔmr** (the imperative verb) in Arabic. It is used to implement a wide variety of pragmatic functions. One of these common functions is to provide advice to others. Consider the following situation:

Situation (1): شاب لا يحترم كبار السن

Transliteration: ja:b la: jaħtarim kiba:r assin

Translation: 'A youth who does not respect old people.'

Advice provided: احترم كبار السن

Transliteration: iħtarimkiba:r assin

Translation: 'Respect old people.'

In the situation above, there are two interlocutors, namely, the advice seeker and the advice giver. Here, the latter, who is the advice giver, says to the former who does not respect the old people: "iħtarimkiba:r assin" (Respect old people). It is obvious that the speaker is using the imperative form so as to advise the hearer directly to respect old people. In other words, the hidden meaning behind using the imperative form is to give a direct advice.

It is worth mentioning that the speaker here does not flout any of Grice's four maxims. That is, the speaker is giving sufficient information, being relevant as well as saying something true. Therefore, the speaker here is cooperative by being straightforward in giving the needed advice, having in mind all the above-mentioned maxims of cooperation. Although using the imperative could threaten the face of the advice seeker, the compensation for this comes in the form of taking into consideration the principle or maxims of cooperation.

Indirect

We, Muslims, use religious expressions a lot in our daily lives to perform many kinds of speech acts such as advising. Consider the following:

Situation (5): شاب مقدم على الزواج

Transliteration: ja:b la mugbel ũla azzawaz

Translation: 'A young man is going to get married.'

The advice provided: عليه أن يختار الزوجة الصالحة ذات الدين والخلق الحسن قال الرسول -صلى الله عليه وسلم- "تخيروا لنطفكم فان العرق دساس".

Transliteration: ũalih an jaxtar azzawzah assalihah ōat addin wa lıxulq alhasan qal arrasul salah allah ũalih wa sallam taxiıaru linutafikm wain alŕq dssas

Translation: 'He should choose the good wife. The messenger of Allah –Peace Be upon Him- said that "Choose the best for your sperm, and marry compatible women and propose marriage to them".

In the above situation, there are two interlocutors: the first one who is an advice seeker and the second one who is an advice giver. In this situation, the speaker is providing an indirect advice to the other interlocutor (the hearer) by saying the above mentioned long utterance (the religious expression). Here, the speaker advises the hearer indirectly to choose the ideal woman to marry.

Recall that using religious expressions is found to be the most frequent strategy used by Bani Hasan speakers to give advice. Using religious expressions makes the advice giver sure that his/her advice is going to be both respected and taken into consideration by the advice seeker. In addition, using religious expressions can be taken as a way to save face for both the speaker and the addressee. In other words, the advice-giver avoids threatening the face of his/her addressee as the former makes reference to a saying from hadith (sayings of Prophet Mohammad-Peace be upon Him). Although such usage can be considered as a way of flouting the principle of quantity, the latter principle is flouted but compensated for by saving the face of the addressee and avoiding FTA.

The aforementioned situation can be a case of multiple violation, which takes place when the speaker flouts more than one maxim at the same time. Here, the advice giver is not only flouting the maxim of quantity (mentioning more information than needed) but also flouting the maxim of manner (not being concise). Thus, the speaker implies that the hearer should choose the right woman to marry.

6. Conclusions

This study investigated the politeness strategies used by Bani Hasan speakers when they provide advice to each other based on the Cooperative Principle and Grice's maxims. The collected responses revealed that there are two main strategies used by Bani Hasan speakers when they give a piece of advice, direct and indirect. The study also showed that indirect strategies were used more than direct, with a percentage (60% & 40% respectively). This study tries to investigate the politeness strategies in advice giving used by Bani Hassan who live in Mafrıq in North Jordan based on Grice's model. Thus, it has a number of limitations. First, it restricts itself to identify the politeness strategies depending on Grice's model. Secondly, it limits itself to only Bani Hassan who live in Mafrıq city, excluding any Bani Hassan who reside in other cities in Jordan. Therefore, the results of this study will be limited to this region.

The study recommends that further research should tackle the politeness strategies used by Bani Hasan when they use other kinds of speech acts such as congratulations, warning, threatening, complimenting, criticizing and many others. It also highly recommends that further research should investigate the politeness strategies in giving advice used by other tribes in Southern and Eastern Badia in Jordan to provide contrastive analyses of the speech act of advising in these areas. It is also recommended to conduct more studies that could provide contrastive analyses of the speech act of advising between Arabic and its dialects as well as other world languages.

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