

Advisories in EFL Classroom: Iraqi University Students' Use of the Speech Act of Urging

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Abstract

Iraqi EFL university learners are often observed to fail in producing pragmatic utterances, among which are utterances related to the speech act of urging. Their responses to situations implying urging are expected to be awkward and clumsy. A production test consisting of 8 items is administered to a sample of 50 EFL fourth year students of the Department of English, College of Education, Al-Farahidi University to detect their pragmatic use of the illocutionary speech act of urging. The data is gathered out of the students' responses to the test items. The paper infers that EFL students have tendency towards employing LI pragmatic features in producing utterances of urging in L2. The main reasons of their failure are attributed to their lack of the proper and accurate pragmatic, sociocultural, linguistic (syntactic and semantic) knowledge utilized in producing the illocutionary act of urging.

Key words: advisories, EFL students, speech acts, urging

أفعال "النصح" في الصف الدراسي للغة الإنجليزية : استخدام طلبة الجامعة العراقيين دراسي اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية لفعل الكلام "الحث"

المستخلص

من الملاحظ غالباً أن طلبة الجامعة العراقيين دراسي اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية يفشلون في إنتاج عبارات عملية، من بينها الأقوال المتعلقة بفعل الكلام "الحث". يستخدمه أولئك الطلبة في المواقف التي تتطلب على إلحاح مرجح. تم إجراء اختبار إنتاجية يتكون من (8) فقرات على عينة مكونة من (50) طالباً و طالبة من طلاب السنة الرابعة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية- كلية التربية- جامعة الفراهيدي من أجل التعرف على استخدام العينة العملي لفعل الكلام الإنشائي للحث. تم جمع البيانات من استجابات الطلبة لعناصر الاختبار. هذا وقد أشارت نتائج الدراسة بأن لدى طلبة الجامعة العراقيين دراسي اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية ميول نحو توظيف الميزات التداولية العملية للغة الأم (اللغة العربية) في إنتاج عبارات "الحث" في اللغة الثانية أو اللغة الإنجليزية. يمكن أن تُعزى الأسباب الرئيسية لفشلهم هذا إلى الافتقار للمعرفة العملية والدقيقة والاجتماعية والثقافية واللغوية (النحوية والدلالية) المستخدمة في إنتاج الفعل الإنشائي للحث.

الكلمات المفتاحية : أفعال النصح , أفعال الكلام , الحث .

Introduction

It is realized that recognizing and employing a certain language encompasses not merely an awareness of linguistic (grammatical, semantic and phonological) rules but also an awareness of a variety of socio-cultural qualities and features related to an organization of morals, views, principles and standards that L2 speakers opt to (Dascal, 1985, p.96). Absence of such awareness or knowledge may result in sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic failure which takes place when EFL students fail to understand and attain the intended speech act made by a certain social setting. In this respect, those students appear to be in dearth of sociocultural norms and principles attached to the enunciation of utterances involving the use of illocutionary acts. In other words,

they are expected to fail to produce native-like utterances. This is due to the interference of L1 sociocultural norms and principles which are utilized in L2 utterances and students lack of practice in L2 in real daily situations and activities. .

One of the situations in which Iraqi EFL university students are expected to fail is related to the production of the illocutionary act of urging. A plethora of studies conducted in the field of the use of pragmatics in teaching classes have revealed that the pragmatic failure is mainly ascribed to two factors: sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic. They further have concluded the pragmatic weak performance can be attributed to the pragmatic transfer (interference between L1 and L2). However, no study has so far been tackled to account for the pragmatic failure of Iraqi students in producing the illocutionary act of urging. This gap is intended to be filled by this paper.

Hence, it seems here necessary to give an overview of the leading terms in the present paper. The following pages are devoted to the introduction of theoretical background including an overview of the term speech acts, advisory speech acts, urging as advisory speech act, pragmatic considerations and syntactic realization of urging, pragmatics in English classes, speech acts in EFL classes, pragmatic failure consisting of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic failure.

Speech Acts

Pragmatics is concerned with the investigation of language users' capability of using language in terms of the contexts in utterances are made appropriate. The chief interest of pragmatics lies in "the use of language in everyday situation, rather than the grammatical aspects of that language" (Levinson, 1983, p.24). It is the study of "contextual meaning and necessarily involves the interpretation of what people mean in the particular context and how the context influences what is said" (Yule, 1996, p. 3). Therefore, it investigates how linguistic means are employed in everyday communication in terms of the speaker's intents and reader's (hearer's) understanding. Furthermore, language in social contexts is perceived as "a complex form of social action", so the main inquiry tackled in pragmatics is "how language functions in the lives of human beings" (Strazny, 2005: 869-872).

The term speech acts is a pragmatic concept which is concerned with language use in context linked to a theory known as speech acts theory. This has been initiated to account for the actions performed by words; language, in this respect, is seen not only as a way of representing statements or stating facts whether true or false rather it is viewed as doing actions. It was the philosopher Austin (1962) who first developed the concept of speech act and described it as an utterance uttered by a speaker in a certain situation (Rashid and Al-Noori, 2019, Abdulateef and Ali, 2023) . On his part, Yule (2006, p.118) affirms that this concept is seen as "a type of action performed by a speaker with the utterance". For instance, when one says "*I like you*", he assumes that his/her listener will be affected by his or her utterance.

Purportedly, Grundy (2008, p. 71) avows that speech acts in a language must be seen as actions. They are the practices that "illustrate what people say to each other has force as well as content". The term speech acts has been further developed to refer to different activities performed via utterances. By saying "*You are fired!*", the speaker's (boss) utterance must specify the act of firing someone (employee). That is, the boss is realizing an act of firing via his/her utterance (Mey, 1993, p.112).

Ultimately, the classification of speech acts has been adopted by a group of scholars, among which are Austin (1962), Searle (1969, 1976, and 1979) and Bach and Harnish (1979). The focus is on the Bach and Harnish's classification as they coin the term "advisories" as a part of the directive speech acts. For them, advisories are "acts of communication" (1979, p. 19) by which a speaker makes use of to ask listeners to do a beneficial act to either them or the speaker him/herself. The following pages are devoted to the description of advisories.

"Reflexive-intentions" (R-intentions). To communicate according to them, is to express an attitude such as belief, an intention, a desire, etc., and "For S to express an attitude is for S to R-intend the hearer to think S has that attitude"

(p.15). The theory establishes two broad categories of illocutionary acts: communicative and non-communicative.

While the former requires the recognition of S's R-intention, the latter does not. In their theory, there are four main

categories of communicative illocutionary acts: Constatives, Directives, Commissives and Acknowledgements. These

four main categories correspond roughly to Austin's Expositives, Exercitives, Commissive, and Behabitives respectively and closely to Searle's Representatives (Assertives), Directives, Commissive and Expressives, differing mainly in their characterizations. There are two classes of non-communicative illocutionary acts: Effectives and Verdictives, corresponding roughly to Searle's Declarations. A detailed account of the categories established by Bach and Harnish are speech acts which express the speaker's belief and intention, or, at least the implication or desire, that the hearer form (or continue to hold) a like belief (p.42). Fifteen subcategories of this group are recognized as follows: Assertives, Informatives, Confirmatives, Concessives, Retractive, Assentives, Dissentives, Disputatives, Responsives, Suggestives and Suppositives (Ibid. pp42-46). Bach and Harnish's theory emphasize the need for the hearer to recognize a speaker's intention which they call "Reflexive-intentions" (R-intentions). To communicate according to them, is to express an attitude such as belief, an intention, a desire, etc., and "For S to express an attitude is for S to R-intend the hearer to think S has that attitude" (p.15). The theory establishes two broad categories of illocutionary acts: communicative and non-communicative. While the former requires the recognition of S's R-intention, the latter does not. In their theory, there are four main categories of communicative illocutionary acts: Constatives, Directives, Commissive and Acknowledgements. These four main categories correspond roughly to Austin's Expositives, Exercitives, Commissive, and Behabitives respectively and closely to Searle's Representatives (Assertives), Directives, Commissive and Expressives, differing mainly in their characterizations. There are two classes of non-communicative illocutionary acts: Effectives and Verdictives, corresponding roughly to Searle's Declarations. A detailed account of the categories established by Bach and Harnish are speech acts which express the speaker's belief and intention, or, at least the implication or desire, that the hearer form (or continue to hold) a like belief (p.42). Fifteen subcategories of this group are recognized as follows: Assertives, Informatives, Confirmatives, Concessives, Retractive, Assentives, Dissentives, Disputatives, Responsives, Suggestives and Suppositives (Ibid. pp42-46). Bach and Harnish's theory emphasize the need for the hearer to recognize a speaker's intention which they call "Reflexive-intentions" (R-intentions). To communicate according to them, is to express an attitude such as belief, an intention, a desire, etc., and "For S to express an attitude is for S to R-intend the hearer to think S has that attitude" (p.15). The theory establishes two broad categories of illocutionary acts: communicative and non-communicative. While the former requires the recognition of S's R-intention, the latter does not. In their theory, there are four main

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Advisory Speech Acts

Advisories are a sub-division of directive speech acts, they are employed as implements to convince and prompt people to do an act. In fact, directives are attempts made by the speaker to get the listener to execute an action (Searle, 1976, p.11). In directive speech acts, there must be an expression uttered by the speaker with respect to his/her intentions and contexts of situation towards a future act done by the hearer. This would be taken a reason for the hearer to do an action (Bach and Harnish, 1979, p.47).

Being a directive speech acts, advisories are those acts wherein the speaker articulates the idea that "there is (sufficient) reason for hearer to act," and "the intention that hearer takes speaker's belief as (sufficient) reason for him to act". In this respect, advisories realize the communicative aim of ensuing the hearer to perform a certain act since doing the act is beneficial to the hearer (ibid, p. 48). In ensure the successfulness of attaining the advisory act, such an act must be recognized by the listener/ hearer. He/she must believe in the happy result of performing an advisory. Advisories embrace speech act verbs such as "*admonish, advise, caution, counsel, propose, recommend, suggest, urge, warn and exhort*" (ibid). The emphasis is on urge as the paper intends to investigate the Iraqi EFL university students' use of the speech act of urging.

Urge: Pragmatic Considerations

Like other speech acts verbs, having an unstable nature, urge has been described and classified differently by different linguists. For example, Austin (1962, p.151) categorizes 'urge' within the class of *exercitives* which imply the "exercising of powers". Based on the taxonomic values, Searle (1979, p.12) categorizes the speech act of urge as a directive act, as it exhibits "the illocutionary point of making the addressee do something; its direction of fit is world-to-words" and the transmitted "psychological state" is that of 'want'. Relationally, Bach and Harnish (1979, p.48) categorize 'urge' within the class of advisories as a sub-branch of directive speech acts.

Urge prompts a sequence of action and has a higher point of strength than 'request'. It has "neither the power nor the authority of 'command' and 'order'; nor does it have the humility of 'beg', pray', 'plead',...etc." Urge is different from other directives as it shows an extra "preparatory condition that the speaker has reasons for the course of action urged". For example, if someone urges another to do a thing, he/she would be obliged to provide reasons for the latter to do something. Another important point by which urge is different from directives is that there exists an issue of insistence and significance (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985, p. 200).

In this regard, Vanderveken (1990, p. 191) argues that 'urge' is differentiated from other directive speech act verbs such as "request", "command", "beg" ...etc. in that it exhibits a further preparatory condition associated with an urgent "motivation" by the speaker, and "lethargy" by the listener. In addition, Wierzbicka (1987, p. 61) holds that "to urge" means "to get the addressee to do something". In this sense, urge is parallel to speech act verbs such as "ask, request, order, command and many other verbs". However, it differs from these verbs in that the speaker does not show authority neither exhibits beneficiality for him/herself. In urging, as he/she has no authority over his/her addressee, the speaker can only place a sort of psychological pressure on him/her.

More elaborately, Searle's (1969, pp. 57-60) expounds that an act of urging is enunciated “when a speaker S utters a sentence St in the presence of the hearer H, then, in the literal utterance of St, S, non-defectively and sincerely, urges the H” if the subsequent conditions are satisfied. Consider table one which introduces these prerequisite conditions for urging.

Table 1: Felicity Conditions of Urge (Ameen, 2014, pp.179-180)

Propositional Content Conditions	a) The speaker conveys the proposition of the sentence(s), he/she utters. b) The speaker anticipates a future act by the hearer.
Preparatory Conditions	a) The speaker is motivated and is more aware of the urgency of the case than the hearer. b) The speaker has reason(s) for the act, he urges the hearer to do or comply. c) There is frequently lethargy noticed on the part of the hearer.
Sincerity Conditions	The speaker intends to make the hearer realize that the case is urgent and that the hearer must not act lethargically.
Essential Conditions	The speaker's utterance counts as a motivation to make the hearer execute the act urgently, and illustrates the speaker's understanding of the situation, and that the speaker has reasons for the act.

It is important to note that the speaker who urges has no power over his/her addressee, so he/she attempts to oblige his/her desire on the latter although the speaker recognizes no reply from the latter. The speaker intends to achieve his ambition by attempting to show his/her own feeling of earnestness to the addressee, and by inferring that he/she would not reveal a 'no' for an reply, and that he/she would not effortlessly surrender. In this sense, the speaker's standpoint is not "I say: I think you should do X", but a self-confident one "I say you should do X". Moreover, the speaker attempts his/her addressee to reply, and to reply at once. This reply is psychological as it is concerned with speaker's intention that the addressee should obey what the speaker obliges him/her to perform the act of urging (ibid).

Urge: Syntactic Realizations

Various syntactic constructions are utilized to vocalize the speech act of urge. Imperative, interrogative, declarative clauses as well as infinitival clauses and if-then constructions are employed to express urge.

a. Imperative Construction

- “Have mercy on us.” (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p.930).

b. Interrogative Construction

- “Does not have the time come to help us?” (König and Siemund, 2007, p.277-281).

c. Declarative Construction

- “I urge you that you save us.”

Here, the verb urge is used to give a direct speech act of urging, following the formula: S + urge+ Obj + that + S + indicative verb....

d. Infinitival Clauses

- "I *urge* you to *come* back early." (= S+ urge+ Obj + to infinitive) (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 959).

5. 'If-then' Construction

- "If you can do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 1088f).

All in all, the above constructions can be syntactically paraphrased into a canonical construction as proposed by Searle (1979, p. 21) for the class of directives as a whole. (I+ urge+ You+ to infinitive).

Pragmatics in English Classes

The practice of pragmatics in L2/FL classroom discovers the learners' capabilities of matching utterances with their appropriate situations. Stalnaker (1972, p. 383) maintains that pragmatics involves the investigation of "linguistic acts and the contexts in which they are performed". Then, teaching pragmatics intends to simplify L2 learners' common sense of capability of seeking "socially appropriate language for the situations that they encounter". In L2/EF teaching, pragmatics embraces "speech acts, conversational structure, conversational implicature, conversational management, discourse organization, and sociolinguistic aspects of language use such as choice of address forms". These branches of language use have not conventionally been taken into account when designing L2/FL teaching programs. Instead, they have developed curriculum and programs which are intended to teach L2/FL students "the secret rules of English."

Furthermore, a lot of studies have investigated the pragmatic use in L2/FL classroom and found that pragmatics has not received due consideration in teaching curricula. Researchers and scholars have observed that in attaining classroom activities, students have to "do things with words". In other words, they have pointed to the pragmatic practices in actual instructions given by teachers in their interaction with their students and events and activities associated to L2/FL learners (Stalnaker, 1972, p. 384). Additionally, contemporary studies have affirmed that teaching can make use of pragmatic improvement in "both comprehension and production". Obviously, the main aim behind "instruction in pragmatics" is to nurture L2/FL learners' pragmatic cognizance and to provide them with options concerned with their interactions in English. With pragmatic instruction, L2/FL learners can preserve their identifiable national identities and contribute to communication in English with more confidence over both anticipated power and consequence of their influences (ibid).

L2/FL teachers often seek to resort to the pragmatic considerations when teaching and giving instructions. They show countless accountability for their students who strive to use English for their study or work out abroad. In this respect, they are above all required to follow their personal capability of thinking critically "about language data and instances of use to prepare themselves". L2/FL learners can benefit from the unequivocal "teaching of pragmatics by their teachers" and if possible become independent learners, undertaking pragmatic aspects to "solve communication problems and pushing their competence level" (Locastro, 2012, p. 11).

Speech Acts in EFL Teaching Classes

In correlation with the above discussion, pragmatic studies (involving speech acts) should take into account supplying L2/FL learners with linguistic means and resources and assisting them to learn and comprehend the activities in a suitable manner. This means that teaching must be process rather product oriented (Rueda 2006 cited in Shokouhi and Rezaei, 2015: 102). Having possessed, collectively, "a good grammatical and lexical command and succeed in communicating functionally", teachers are required in their classroom teaching to center on increasing "both competences" to make their students be more efficacious in the acquisition and use of L2/FL.

In theorizing and teaching English L2/ FL, speech acts theory exhibits an important role as it enhances the awareness of how English language works when practiced by speakers in various situations contrary to the Chomsky's statement that that "grammatical competence" is adequate to generate an infinite number of sentences based on the "acquired linguistic categories and systems". Nevertheless, for a competent interaction, a course of "communicative competence" is required to be supplemented (Rathert, 2013, pp. 81-2).

However, the chief problem in teaching pragmatics is the unusual number and classification of speech acts. The huge "number of language functions and speech acts" renders teaching speech acts an unachievable end, therefore, it is often suggested the emphasis should be placed on the use of language in constant discourse. In effect, the actual accountability of L2/FL teachers is directing students towards more the prevailing "pragmatic functions in language", particularly in spoken discourse or written texts. Here, L2/FL teachers are obliged to gain more information about how speech acts are employed in real contexts and their fundamentals. They ought

to teach their students to utilize the normal input for L2/FL students in a specific subject, for a specific purpose, and as “part of a strategy” (Bardovi – Harlig, 1996, p. 23).

Numerous studies have revealed that L2/FL learners are slow to realize speech acts. They are slow to recognize in what way to reply to cultural alterations since only as “they transfer L1 language patterns into learning L2, they also transfer pragmatic understanding from L1 into L2”. It has been noticed that it is problematic to “acquire pragmatic competence” and that even high-level L2 learners are susceptible to “pragmatic failure” (Tanaka, 1997 cited in Milleret, 2009, p. 31).

The importance of utilizing speech acts in classroom teaching (particularly EFL Classes) emanates from the fact that they are often immersed in actual communication. Furthermore, speech acts allow students to accomplish an extensive variety of functions such as commanding, requesting, instructing, congratulating, apologizing, greeting...etc. Such phenomenon of speech acts happens everywhere, not to mention in the classroom setting. It is apparent that the process of EFL teaching and learning incorporates the use of speech acts in the interactions initiated between teacher and students. Celce-Murcia (2000) holds that the employment of speech acts in classroom establishes how the process of teaching and learning EFL occurs. Moreover, the employment of suitable speech acts surely makes possible the effective teaching and learning process.

In this respect, EFL students are required to employ speech acts in their communications. Here, EFL teachers are recommended to teach their students “not only how to produce the speech act but also how to interpreted and comprehend a speech act utterance”. Otherwise, they are not able to understand what others intend by their utterances. Consequently, in classroom settings, EFL learners are required to practice the various formulas and replies of speech acts so as to ensure smooth and proper communication with one another in classes. According to Zhao and Throssell (2011, p. 92), EFL teachers must employ and familiarize students with the speech acts in teaching. They further are required to offer the “relevant knowledge to help the students become in produce appropriate speech acts in intercultural communication”.

In terms of speech acts in classroom teaching, EFL students need to more take part in class activities, class discussion and to create an interactive teaching classes. Talking to teachers and peers is not sufficient for EFL students to learn EFL; they are required to carefully listen, think, speak and write while participating in class activities. Students cannot gain adequate practice only by talking to their teachers, simply because very little can be obtained by only listening to teachers. They are required to participate in all class activities and exercise and cooperate with other class students. Hence, they can develop a level of competency, becoming critical thinkers in classes that offers them chances for exhaustive, structured communication among EFL students (Bishop, 2000, Rasheed, 2020). Therefore, it is often argued that that EFL students’ success or letdown of learning is due to by the improper and ineffective employment of speech acts in teaching classes. This is mainly attributed to what is known as pragmatic failure.

Pragmatic Failure

Commonly, pragmatic failure in cross-cultural communication happens when the following four circumstances are selected (Ziran and Xinren, 2004, pp.52-7):

- i. The speaker picks an unfitting topic. Various cultures typically show dissimilar “beliefs, value views and living habits”. As a result, one is required to differentiate between free and constrained themes in intercultural interaction.
- ii. The speaker chooses vocabularies which reflect various insinuations in the EFL, or which diverge from his/her individual intent in constructing these utterances. This type of pragmatic failure usually occurs in greeting utterances. In addition, misuse of particular vocabulary in EFL also leads to misinterpretation.
- iii. The speaker’s utterance expressing particular ideas does not match the convention of EFL. This is simply because individuals with “different cultural backgrounds” have tendency to employ various vocabularies and strategies to transfer the same information. Then, they would “commit pragmatic failure” while expressing a certain language other than their native language.
- iv. An interlocutor may give an unfitting reply to a specific statement or question and thus breaks down the flow of a conversation.

Additionally, Thomas (1983, p. 91) describes pragmatic failure as the incapability of understanding “what is meant by what is said” (p. 91). This means that if a speaker is misinterpreted by the addressee, communication breaks down, leading to “pragmatic failure”. Relationally, Guan-lian (2002, p. 195) argues that pragmatic failure takes place when a speaker employs “grammatically correct sentences, but unconsciously violates the interpersonal relationship rules, social conventions, or takes little notice of time, space and addressee”.

Kasper (1997, p.207) attributes pragmatic failure to pragmatic transfer which is defined as 'the effect exercised by "learners' pragmatic knowledge of languages and cultures other than L2 on their comprehension, production and learning of L2 pragmatic information". For instance, in some societies, offering coffee after meals is usually realized as a polite manner to give indication to the guest that he/she should leave shortly if he/she does not want to overstay their hospitality. If interlocutors from various cultural experiences are unconscious of the variances in their "relatively mental sets", misinterpretations may happen.

Zegarac and Pennington (2008, pp.142-143) expound that individuals typically come up with a new circumstances with a present "mental set" i.e. "a structure of mind involving already an existing order to think of a problem or a situation in a specific way. Mental sets are largely determined by culture specific knowledge". Thus, interactions between people from various cultural experiences may be affected by their various "mental sets". Relationally, Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 394) maintain that "pragmatic transfer" indicates the transference of the strategies of native language and applying speech acts into the target. This transference is perhaps inappropriate "either at the level of form and words or at the level of politeness and indirectness in the second language".

However, based on Leech's (1983, p.127) pragmatic behavior, Thomas (1983) differentiates between "pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics" as two components of pragmatics. Pragmalinguistics studies "the relationship between the forms and the meanings they can express" whereas sociopragmatics studies "the distribution of form/meaning pairing in different contexts and their appropriateness in those contexts" (Haugh, et al., 2022, p.4). With reference with Leech's view, Kasper (1997, p. 209) contends that two types of pragmatic transfer are distinguished: "pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic". Pragmalinguistic transfer involves the exercise of "L1 strategies and systems in the interlanguage"; on the other hand, sociopragmatic transfer involves the transference of "L1 cultural awareness of internal and external context variables into L2".

Pragmalinguistic Failure

Pragmalinguistic failure takes place when a speaker is unsuccessful to transfer his/ her meaning due to the misunderstanding of the pragmatic force of the conveyed message. In some cases, "a speaker might translate something from an L1 into a target language without the knowledge that the communicative conventions of the target language are quite different" (Thomas, 1983, p. 91). For instance, the greeting expression, "How are you?", can be usually used in English to mean something like 'Hello'. Yet, this is not the case in other languages. Pragmalinguistic failure arises when "the pragmatic force mapped by the speaker onto a given utterance is systematically different from most frequently assigned to it by native speakers of the target language, or when conversational strategies are inappropriately transferred from the speaker's mother tongue to the target language".

Ziran and Xinren (2004, pp. 52-7) explicate that the speaker performs pragmatic failure when he/she "takes for granted that the listener is able to understand his meaning and he, thus, makes an inappropriate utterance". On his/her part, the listener performs pragmatic failure by realizing the speaker's meaning inaccurately. In classroom teaching, pragmalinguistic failure happens when a learner on occasion is unable to obtain the correct meaning of an utterance owing to the view that "the communicative conventions behind such an utterance used are different". Such a problem is deemed as a pragmalinguistic one as "it has a little to do with speaker's perception of what constitute appropriate behavior". Furthermore, it has more to do with realizing how to express an utterance (e.g. a command) with the aim of interpreting it as a specific speech act (a command) but not a question.

Sociopragmatic Failure

The second kind is known as "socio-pragmatic failure" which is interested in "what to say" and "whom to say it to". A lot of misinterpretations can be due to what is recognized as variances in appraisal concerning "size of imposition, cross-culturally different assessments of relative power or social distance, and value judgements". Sociopragmatic failure occurs due to the various cultural customs and pragmatic values that determine linguistic performances in dissimilar cultures. Because speakers with various cultural experiences have dissimilar considerations of the suitability of linguistic performance, there appear certain obstructions to actual communication. Besides, various cultures show various manners of thinking, instructions of speaking, social principles and lay various relative loads on the pragmatic norms, and these cross-culturally various valuations of "social parameters have negatively affected language users' linguistic choices", which ultimately lead to sociopragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983, pp. 91-4).

Ziran and Xinren (2004, pp. 52-7) illustrate that sociopragmatic failure arises when the speaker does not pay consideration to the “identity and social status” of the addressee through conversation. The speaker may yield pragmatic failure when using “a polite form of expression towards a close person or someone of a lower social status, or by addressing a remote person or someone of a higher social status with an intimate form”. The speaker's nonexistence of familiarity with the politeness norms of social communication is a main reason of socio-pragmatic failure. Sociopragmatic failure is produced owing to the social situations contiguous with speech acts, such as” the social distance, politics, religion, morals, gender, power” and the intimacy of relations between the participants, i.e., information about the world. Hence, this kind of transfer happens “when the speaker does not know what to say, when, why and to whom”. For instance, not identifying “the pragmatic force of a ‘thank you’ might cause a pragma-linguistic failure, but cultural differences of when to say it, in which occasion and for what reason might cause socio-pragmatic failure” (Carter and Nunan, 2001, p. 102).

Methodology

Methodology is concerned with three parts: the research method utilized in the paper to detect the Iraqi EFL university students’ use of the illocutionary act of urging, the sample, the number of students selected and the leading tool (instrument).

i- Research Method

An amalgamation of qualitative and quantitative research method is made use of to explain and analyze the collected data. The collected data are comprised of students’ responses to the production test of the speech act of urging directed to them during the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024. The data analysis takes two direction; the first involves a descriptive, explanatory (qualitative) analysis of the responses with the aim of detecting the pragmatic utilization of the illocutionary act of urging. The second is based on the numerical and statistical analysis of the frequency of the students' responses to the test items.

ii- Sample

The sample of the paper comprises 50 4th year of students of the Department of English, College of Education, Al-Farahidi University. The purpose of picking 4th year students is that they are supposed to have ample knowledge of pragmatic issues, especially of speech acts, simple because they encounter pragmatic themes and topics in courses intended for Linguistics and Grammar via their fourth stages of their BA program. The main test is administered to the students on December 6, 2023). To prevent any side consequence on the test presentation and to ensure homogeneity of the participants, a number of variables (students' age= the students seems to be of the same age; educational background of the students’ parents and the students’ standard in English) should be taken into account so as to gain efficient consequences.

iii- Instrument: The leading tool employed in this paper is a production test comprising five items: In actual fact, the test involves five communicative situations by which students are required to produce appropriate utterances implying the use of the advisory speech act of urging. The researchers believe that five items are somehow sufficient to help them to detect the students’ pragmatic use of urging as they have selected a sample of 50 students.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Iraqi EFL Students' responses to the production test are gathered and examined distinguishing the number of students’ accurate and inaccurate responses to the test’s items. However, it is necessary to assign the causes and justifications behind the students’ poor production of the advisory speech act of urging. Then, main findings via appropriate percentages, table and diagram are detected in terms of the results obtained from the data analysis. The upcoming table discloses the number of the accurate responses of the items of using urging with their percentages:

Table 2: Students’ Production of Urging

Item No.	Correct Responses	Percentages
1	14	28%
2	13	26%

3	10	20%
4	12	24%
5	9	18%
6	12	24%
7	11	22%
8	13	26%
Total	94	23.5%

Figure 1: Students' Production of Urging

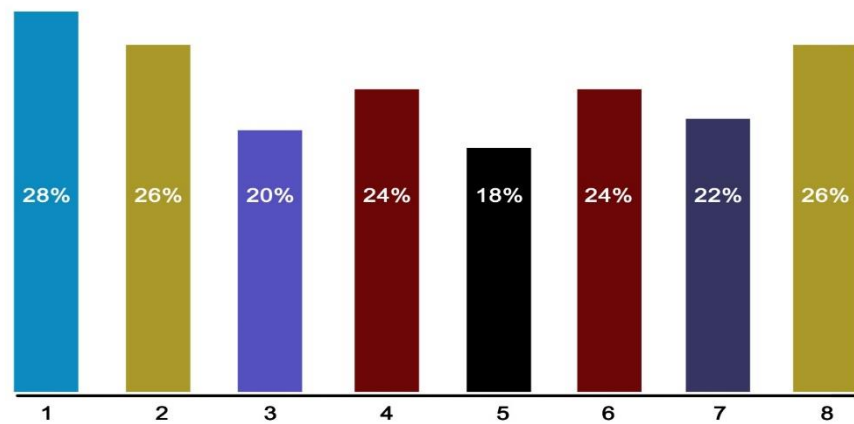


Table 1 and figure 1 reveal that the production of the speech act of urging is problematic to Iraqi EFL students as only 94 correct answers out of 400 (whole of the answers) constituting a ratio of 23.5%. This means that they are poor in producing the illocutionary act of urging. However, the most difficult item is 5 (A lot of sick people in the near hospital are in urgent need for blood donations. How would you urge your class mates to go to the hospital to donate blood for them?) as only 9 of the whole 50 students could provide the right answer. On the other hand, the first item (Sami smokes a lot and he hurts his health. You feel it is necessary to urge him to give up smoking.) appears to be less difficult as only 14 (with a ratio of 28%) students are able to give the correct answers.

Pragmatic Failure

With reference to the above table and figure, it has been observed that Iraqi university EFL students have exhibited a lot of deficiencies and inadequacies to the extent that their performance of the items concerning the spoken utterances of urging appears to be so weak. Overall, there seems to be two types of failure are concerned here (sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic). In other words, Iraqi EFL students would not cope with the social pragmatic norms and principles of English language (sociopragmatic failure) or are not able to match linguistic structures to pragmatic behavior (pragmalinguistic failure).

Sociopragmatic Failure

Most scholars concerned with EF/L2 learning and teaching agree that two chief sociopragmatic factors affecting Iraqi students' responses are "The influence of L1 culture and Lack of the social norms and principles of the

target culture". These two factors will be explicated via the explanatory examples drawn from students' responses to the test items.

In terms of the sociopragmatic influence, students endeavor to yield the essential spoken circumstances but they employ their L1 socio-pragmatic means to do so. This is simply because they attempt to yield the spoken utterances depending on their L1 sociopragmatic information. It is obvious that those students are perhaps unaccustomed with the L2 societal, traditional and pragmatic issues, which are completely different from that of L1. Furthermore, L1 social and cultural norms, standards and instructions cannot be suitable or germane to the L2 cultural and social norms and principle. An illustrative instance here seems to be fruitful:

In test item no (3) "It is so chilly. Your little brother wants to go out. Urge him to wear heavy clothes", being influenced by L1 social and cultural norms and principle, Iraqi students reveal their stances concerning this communicative situation; they have produced utterances implying the speech act of urging such as "I urged you to wear clothes", "Wear clothes it is cold" which do not reflect urging of any kind. In the first utterance, the student uses the verb urge in the past form believing that it is similar to Arabic utterances, while in the second, the student gives a command to urge a brother to take an action.

Due to the L1 cultural interference, students resort to a straightforward translation associated with daily activities and circumstances. Most of the students' responses seem to be mismatch English social and cultural features. Predominantly, the students' inadequate understanding arises due their lack of L2 sociopragmatic knowledge; they are unconscious of the values introduced for the enunciation of the illocutionary act of urging. Johnson and Johnson (1999, p. 354) explain that those students resort to what is known as "negative transfer" when "the L1 forms, norms or principles used in TL production are not part of the TL forms, norms or principles". Therefore, the consequential utterances are inaccurate and inappropriate. Sociopragmatic intrusion brings about when those students copy from L1 to L2 their cultural, social pragmatic knowledge. Mostly, they endeavor to map L1 pragmatic features, norms and standards onto L2 pragmatic features, norms and standards and attempt to solve problems facing them in producing pragmatic utterances.

All these erroneous and incomplete utterances produced by students entail the fact that students' inability to give proper and appropriate utterances can be due to their misunderstanding of the given situations. Those students, disregarding the pragmatic meaning of the situations and utterances, resort to the literal senses of the situation to give responses to the items of the test. In some cases, this leads them to translate from Arabic into English, ignoring the fact that they two dissimilar languages bounded by dissimilar linguistic, traditional and cultural standards, principles and conventions.

Pragmalinguistic Failure

The students' inappropriate utilization of pragmatic utterances can also attributed to specific inappropriate syntactic and semantic traits when producing utterances of urging. Such a kind of failure is realized, in Kasper's (2001, p. 51) words, as pragmalinguistic failure as it implicates "mappings of form, meaning, force and context". He expound that this failure is associated with in what manner specific linguistic selections can be employed to issue various kinds of meaning (in particular, pragmatic meaning). The unsuitable utilization of the syntactic construction causes students diverge from the fitting pragmatic expression correlating with the specified situations; and the illocutionary act of urging utilized in the target language.

In some cases students' pragmatic failure is ascribed to students' pragmalinguistic information; Iraqi students are observed to lack pragmalinguistic knowledge and consequently are unsuccessful in catching the connotation of utterances owing their unsuitable awareness of the communicative standards and norms contiguous with an utterance. Two instances (items 4 and 5) drawn from the students' responses to the test items appear to be here of good indication.

4: Your friend gets fat. He wants to lose weight. How would you urge him to often go swimming?

5: A lot of sick people in the near hospital are in urgent need for blood donations. How would you urge your class mates to go to the hospital to donate blood for them?

The students' discomfited indeterminate utterances, in one sense, can be attributed to the fact that they are unable to assume what the given situations are intended to convey. It seems that are incapable of relating the linguistic forms to the pragmatic sense of the given utterance. In other words, they are likely ignorant of the idea that it is insufficient to rely on linguistic sense to get at the anticipated meaning of an utterance. An inspection of the students' answers produced by the Iraqi students discloses that they consider the specified situations literally, without giving any attention to their pragmatic and contextual respects.

For item 4, relying on the given words and expressions in the utterance, they have produced unfitting and awkward utterances which do not match those of the native speakers. One response is "lose weight is better", another is "you getting fat, go to swimming", yet another is "You want to go swimming to get fat". Obviously, those students find difficulty in understanding the given situations (i.e. they were unable to arrive at the semantic meaning of the given utterance), therefore, they fail to produce appropriate pragmatic utterances.

Likewise, in items (5), students also produce awkward and unhappy utterances; they are unsuccessful in getting at the proper meanings of the given situations (particularly, donate and donation). Therefore, they yield utterances that do not cope with the given instructions. They appear to be compelled by the words establishing the given situation ignoring the pragmatic influences the situations yield. Thus, they produce utterances like "it is urgent for blood donate", "Go to the hospital to sick people" and "people are sick in hospital classmates". It is apparent that some utterances given by the students are nonsensical. This failure is attributed to the idea that they are unable to match semantic and syntactic features to those of pragmatic ones. The students' understanding and production of the given utterance associated with urging are recognized as gawky and uncertain; sometimes they produce unconceivable responses.

Findings

The pragmatic analysis of the students' responses to the test items concerning the use of the illocutionary act of urging has yielded the following findings:

1. Iraqi EFL students encounter a lot of difficulties in producing the advisory speech act of urging; they have yielded awkward and unfitting utterances which do not match those of the target language. Their pragmatic failure is ascribed to two factors: sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic.
2. Their sociopragmatic failure is attributed to the interference of L1 cultural and social standards and norms which are employed when producing L2 utterances. Their utterances are straight translations of students' L1 culture into L2, leading to non-native construction of the illocutionary act of urging.
3. Their pragmalinguistic failure is ascribed to the view that Iraqi EFL students cannot match syntactic and semantic knowledge to that of pragmatic knowledge to get at the predicted meaning of urging.
4. Some students' utterances seem to have nonsensical explanations due the students' lack of the proper pragmatic knowledge; they are unable to understand the situations which require urging and the outcome is awkward and precarious utterances for urging. However, other responses have shown their inability to gain the senses of some word found in the specified situation. In return, their responses are linked with sense that do not match the specified situations.

Recommendations

In correlation with the above findings, some instructional recommendations can be proposed in teaching classrooms:

1. EFL students must be motivated and encouraged by their instructors to use English in the class, attempting to put up this practice regularly, in and out of teaching classes by which students are able to talk others making use of English. This exercise might improve the students' communicative competence of L2 and henceforward guiding towards suitable and articulate use of speech acts in general and urging in particular. In this way, they can get acquainted to L2 pragmatic awareness.
2. EFL teachers are recommended to help their students build their communicative and pragmatic knowledge (competence), not only the linguistic competence, as both competences are employed in producing pragmatic utterances. In this regard, growing students' awareness levels of suitability and pragmatics in the target language can be accomplished via stimulating the students' daily participation in classroom activities and tasks linked to the spoken interactions of L1 speakers, TV and internet programs.
3. EFL teacher and students must pay attention to various syntactic instructions and rules that are linked to the interpretations of speech acts. Teachers in particular must seek the grammatical rules that can be used to develop their communicative and pragmatic knowledge.

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Appendix

The Test

Q/ Give suitable utterances for the following situations

1. Sami smokes a lot and he hurts his health. You feel it is necessary to urge him to give up smoking.
2. You are at home. You feel so hungry. How would you urge you mother to prepare lunch for you?
3. It is so chilly. Your little brother wants to go out. Urge him to wear heavy clothes.
4. Your friend gets fat. He wants to lose weight. How would you urge him to often go swimming?
5. A lot of sick people in the near hospital are in urgent need for blood donations. How would you urge your class mates to go to the hospital to donate blood for them?
6. Your brother is in urgent need of money. How would you urge your father to lend him some money?
7. It is afternoon, your colleague seems to be so tired and in urgent need of having rest. Urge him to take a nap.
8. Your colleague often comes to college late. Urge him to come early.