

**Investigating the Pragmatic
Functions of Commissives and
Expressives in Arabic
Supervisor – Student Interaction**

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Abstract

Relatively, little is known about Commissives and Expressives that the supervisors employ to communicate with their research students. In addition, it is unknown whether these speech acts can help determine the supervisors' mode of interaction across the stages of the supervisory process and the dominant mode throughout the entire process. The present research seeks to investigate the supervisors' use of direct and indirect Commissives and Expressives, while presenting their oral feedback. The study traces the supervisors' use of these speech acts throughout the stages of writing the theses. Also, it aims at finding if these speech acts can be used to identify the mode of interaction at each stage and the dominant one employed by the supervisors throughout the entire process. The study adopts an eclectic model that combines two parts. The first part is based mainly on Searle's (1979) Commissives and Expressives. The second part comprises Heron's (1976) six-category intervention analysis. The data has been approached qualitatively; in addition, some instruments from the quantitative method are used, such as percentages, figures, and some mathematical statistics, to explore the correlation between the speech acts under-study and the supervisory mode of interaction. The data analysis concludes that Commissive and Expressive speech acts can be used to determine the supervisors' mode of interaction throughout the various stages of the supervisory process and identify the dominant mode of interaction across the entire supervisory process. Besides, the findings show that the facilitative mode is the dominant mode of interaction employed by the supervisors throughout the various stages of the supervisory process.

Key words: Speech acts, Supervision, Modes of interactions

تحري الوظائف البراغماتية لأفعال الكلام الإلزامية والتعبيرية في حوارات المشرف
والطالب في اللغة العربية

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المستخلص

نسبيًا، لا يُعرف الكثير عن أفعال الكلام الإلزامية والتعبيرية التي يستخدمها المشرفون للتواصل مع طلابهم الباحثين. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، من غير المعروف ما إذا كان بإمكان أفعال الكلام الإلزامية والتعبيرية المساعدة في تحديد نمط تفاعل المشرفين مع طلابهم عبر مراحل العملية الإشرافية بالإضافة لتحديد النمط السائد خلال العملية الإشرافية بأكملها. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى دراسة استخدام المشرفين لأفعال الكلام الإلزامية والتعبيرية المباشرة وغير المباشرة أثناء تقديم ملاحظاتهم الشفوية أثناء الجلسات الإشرافية. كذلك تسعى الدراسة إلى تعقب استخدام المشرفين لهذه الأفعال الكلامية خلال مراحل كتابة الرسالة ومعرفة إمكانية استخدامها لمعرفة النمط التفاعلي الذي يستخدمه المشرفون في الحوار مع الطلبة خلال مراحل العملية الإشرافية والنمط السائد خلال العملية الإشرافية ككل. تستخدم الدراسة الحالية نموذج تجميعي مكون من جزأين. يعتمد الجزء الأول بشكل أساسي على أفعال الكلام الإخبارية لسيرل (1979) ويشمل الجزء الثاني على النموذج التفاعلي لهيرون (1976) ذو الست فئات. تم تناول البيانات بشكل وصفي؛ بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يتم استخدام بعض الأدوات من الطريقة الكمية، مثل النسب المئوية والأرقام وبعض الإحصائيات الرياضية، لاستكشاف الارتباط بين أفعال الكلام الإخبارية وطريقة التفاعل الإشرافية. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن أفعال الكلام الإلزامية والتعبيرية ممكن أن تستخدم لتحديد النمط الإشرافي للمشرفين عبر المراحل المختلفة للعملية الإشرافية بالإضافة لتحديد نوع النمط الإشرافي الغالب خلال العملية الإشرافية ككل. كما بينت الدراسة أن النمط التيسيري هو النمط السائد الذي يعتمد عليه المشرفون أثناء الجلسات الإشرافية بمراحلها المختلفة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أفعال الكلام، الإشراف، أنماط الحوار

1. Introduction

Education entails learning to gain a broader understanding and knowledge in several fields that may be utilised in the daily life. Postgraduate studies, in particular, are helpful in developing both the individual and the society in social, economic, cultural, etc., areas. Gaining a postgraduate degree is the result of an academic process where the supervisor and the research student interact throughout many sessions

over the stages of writing-up the thesis. During these interactions, the supervisor employs commissives and expressives (henceforth COMSs and EXPs) in postgraduate supervisory interactions to convey his/her intentions to his/her research student. The use of these speech acts can affect the mode of interaction adopted by the supervisor during the supervisory meetings.

2. Statement of the problem

Postgraduate supervision has recently attracted many scholars' attention in different fields such as social and behavioral sciences, instructional science, discourse analysis, etc. However, studies that have explored postgraduate supervision approached it differently, and of course, they adopt a variety of theoretical frameworks such as conversational analysis approach, critical criticism and the role of supervision in increasing learning. The current study adopts an entirely new approach of analysis viz a pragmatic approach.

The choice of this topic was explicitly motivated by the following: first, relatively little is known about Searle's COMSs and EXPs the supervisors employ to communicate with research students, and the frequency of these speech act throughout the various stages of the supervisory process. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, no previous study has investigated the supervisors' use of COMSs and EXPs, as supervision is still a blurry area that takes place behind closed doors. In addition, it is unknown whether these speech acts can help determine the supervisors' mode of interaction across the stages of the supervisory process and the dominant mode throughout the whole process.

3. Aims of the Research

The present research aims at:

- a. Identifying and describing COMSs and EXPs related to the topic in the study sample.
- b. Tracing the changes in the supervisors' use of COMSs and EXPs throughout the three stages of the supervisory process, i.e. beginning, middle and final.
- c. Identifying the dominant mode of interaction throughout the various stages of the supervisory process.

4. Significance of the Research

The current research can hopefully provide a pragmatic model for analysing supervisors' utterances and detecting the supervisory mode of interaction employed by the supervisors throughout the various stages of supervision as such model is completely neglected in language study.

5. Data Collection and Analytical Procedure

The sample of the study includes twelve supervisory groups, i.e., each group consists of a supervisor and a research student. The groups are chosen from three departments at the College of Education for Humanities/University of Mosul for the academic year 2020-2021. The data were collected by audio recording three meetings for each supervisory group (at the beginning, middle and final stages). After transcribing all the recordings, Mayring's (2000) analytical procedures for deductive qualitative content analysis are followed to figure out the unit of analysis. The units of analysis are selected based on the existence of Searle's (1979) speech acts.

6. Searle's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts

Five types of illocutionary acts are identified by Searle (1979); these are assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declaratives. Searle's speech acts are divided into sub-categories regarding the illocutionary force of each speech act type. The sub-categories are then distinguished as direct and indirect based on the number of illocutionary forces each speech act express.

The illocutionary purpose of COMSs is expressed in the speaker's commitment to carry out some future action and its structure is typically represented in a declarative form. For example, *'If I succeed in the exam, I will invite you to dinner'* The illocutionary force of COMSs involves the acts of promising, offering, refusing, threatening, guaranteeing and volunteering (Azhari, Priono, & Nuriadi, 2018, p. 28).

The obligation created on the speaker in this class can be expressed directly or indirectly. The former is easier to understand by the hearer because it involves illocutionary verbs such as offer, promise, threat, refuse, vow, pledge, guarantee etc. The latter is more difficult to

interpret by the hearer due to the intended meaning embedded in such utterances. For example, the following utterance '*Do you like tea?*' expresses an indirect offer/invitation (Katz, 2016, p. 36).

Meanwhile, EXPs convey the speaker's feelings and its typical expression is usually expressed in a declarative form. For example, 'I am sorry I have missed John's wedding party'. The illocutionary purpose of this class is to express the psychological state of the speaker for a particular action or circumstance (Searle, 1976, p. 12). This class provides positive and negative evaluations. The former expresses praise, thanks and congratulations, while the latter expresses complaint, criticism and blame. Searle (1979) notes that EXPs have the illocutionary force of wishing, thanking, deploring, agreeing, congratulating, condoling, blaming, welcoming, praising, complimenting, apologizing, and lamenting. Moreover, Searle adds that this class is considered as the most challenging category communicating "the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content" (Searle, 1979, p. 15).

7. Supervisors' Modes of Interaction

To communicate effectively, the interlocutors are expected to adhere to one or more modes of interaction. As in any communication, the supervisors in postgraduate studies need to employ a specific mode or modes of interaction throughout the supervisory process to guide the research students in completing the thesis. Meanwhile, the research student needs to engage adequately in any mode of interaction employed by the supervisor during the meeting. Supervisors' participation in supervisory meetings typically entails stating, explaining, instructing, clarifying, and expressing, among other things. To express any illocutionary acts listed above, the supervisor employs a particular mode of interaction that may differ from that used by other supervisors. The variation in modes of interaction among different supervisors or concerning the same supervisor throughout the various stages of the supervisory process could be attributed to the implicit perceptions that individual supervisors have of the supervisory process. Moreover, the level of postgraduate studies, whether diploma, Master or doctoral studies, also may influence the supervisory mode of interaction. To identify the supervisory mode of interaction, Heron's (1976) six

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categories of intervention model is adopted. These categories involve two major groups: authoritative and facilitative interventions.

Authoritative interventions include three sub-categories, the first is prescriptive interventions, in which the supervisor tries to control, guide the supervisee's actions, and provide advice and suggestions. For example, in a postgraduate supervision environment, the supervisor attempts to direct the behaviour of the research student to use a specific method of analysis. The second is the informative mode, where the supervisor intends to provide knowledge. It is authoritative in the sense that the supervisor serves as the source of information. For instance, the supervisor shares his or her beliefs or perspectives with the research student to explain the rationale behind employing a specific model of analysis to assist the research student in comprehending the model. The third sub-category is confronting, in which the supervisor draws the supervisee's attention to some limiting attitude or behaviour that he or she is unaware of by challenging them with comments without personal attack. It should be a fruitful and productive interaction rather than an aggressive one. For example, the supervisor confronts the research student: *'Have you noticed how frequently I have explained this technique?'* (Cassedy, 2010, p. 109).

Facilitative interventions also involve three sub-categories. The first is cathartic, in which the supervisor assists the supervisee in relieving stress. For instance, the supervisor tells the research student, *'Do not be worried. Many other students believe they do not have enough time to complete their thesis. This is perfectly normal'*. The second mode is catalytic, in which the supervisor assists the supervisee in comprehending, analysing, and resolving problems independently. For instance, the supervisor might ask the research student, *'How would you fix this issue?'* The final sub-category is supportive, in which the supervisor aims to build trust and demonstrate the supervisee's worth. For instance, the supervisor could tell the research student, *'well done, I'm so pleased of you.'* (Yaghchi, Ghafoori, & Nabifar, 2016, p. 182).

8. Data Analysis

This section presents an in-depth analysis of supervisors' use of COMSs and EXPs in their utterances during three stages of supervision.

The first step is to analyse supervisors' utterances extracted from the transcribed materials based on the presence of direct and indirect COMs and EXPs. The second step entails determining whether the identified speech acts can lead to identifying the supervisory mode of interaction throughout the three supervisory stages and recognising the dominant mode of interaction across the study sample.

8.1 Direct Commissives and Direct Expressives

The frequency of direct COMs and direct EXPs throughout each supervisory stage and department is illustrated in Table (1). In addition, this table shows the total frequency of direct COMs and direct EXPs across the three stages and departments in general.

Table 1: The Frequency of Direct Commissives and Direct Expressives

Dep.	Stages of supervision	No. of UT	Direct COMs	Direct Expressives
			No.(%)	No.(%)
English	Beginning	173	4(22%)	11(32%)
	Middle	199	4(22%)	8(23%)
	Final	191	10(56%)	15(45%)
History	Beginning	148	4(3%)	4(27%)
	Middle	133	2(2%)	7(46%)
	Final	131	3(2%)	4(27%)
Arabic	Beginning	95	0(0%)	2(17%)
	Middle	236	7(50%)	6(50%)
	Final	139	7(50%)	4(33%)
Total	Beginning	416	8(20%)	17(28%)
	Middle	568	13(31%)	21(34%)
	Final	461	20(49%)	23(38%)
	All stages	1445	41(41%)	61(59%)

Furthermore, the last row in this table presents the overall frequency of direct COMs and direct EXPs in the study sample regardless of stages and departments. However, Table (1) lists the frequency of direct COMs and direct EXPs during the three stages in each department to explain how the total frequencies are obtained. Finally, this table

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depicts the number of supervisors' utterances that involve Searle's direct speech acts in general across the study sample.

The primary aim of direct EXPs is to impart or bring to light the supervisor's viewpoint toward a particular state of affairs via conveying his approval or disapproval of the research students' work. The data in Table (1) shows that direct EXPs are used with a relatively low percentage compared to the huge number of the supervisors' utterances that involve other types Searle's speech acts, a matter which denotes that the supervisor here is not paying attention to the personal attitudes that are to be reflected while using EXPs. In relation to direct EXPs the present research identifies the following illocutionary forces employed by the supervisors in the sample of the study: praising, blaming, criticising and congratulating. These illocutionary forces endow utterances with a variety of uses or functions. Direct EXPs used by supervisors in this study include examples as follows:

1. احسنت انا جدا فخور بك.

Trasl. *Excellent; I am very proud of you.*

2. عندما قرأت الفصل الثاني بدأت أجد هناك فقرات تظهر لي جزء من هويتك كباحث.

Trasl. *When I read chapter two, I really started to notice paragraphs that express part of your identity as a researcher.*

3. ابدأ ولا حتى اقبل تناقشيني، تعبت راح اشتري قلم احمر حتى تبين التصحيحات.

Trasl. *No, I do not even accept your argument, I get fed up. I will buy a red pen hoping that you'll consider my directions.*

Example (1) demonstrates a direct EXP speech act with the illocutionary force of praising. The supervisor expresses his approval about the research student's work and informs him that he is proud of him. Examples (2) and (3) illustrate the use of direct EXPs with illocutionary forces of praising and blaming.

Meanwhile, the low frequency and percentage of direct COMs indicate that supervisors mostly do not prefer committing themselves to future acts they are not responsible for; the supervisors are already overloaded with supervisory responsibilities as they instruct and guide the research students. Moreover, throughout the supervisory process, there are many things that the supervisors prefer to be done by the research

students because they want to prepare the research students to be trustworthy researchers. However, the supervisors sometimes willingly commit to doing something to achieve organisational functions or help the research student continue the work. The COMs observed in the supervisors' utterances include: offer, commit, swear, and promise. The following are some examples of direct COMs used by supervisors in this study:

4. سوف اقرا العملي يوم الخميس القادم وان شاء الله ما يصير تغييرات كبيرة لان نحن تناقشنا بهذه المسألة كثيرا.

Trasl. *I will read the practical part next Thursday, and hopefully, there will be no significant changes because we have discussed this issue a lot.*

5. لا تقلقي سأقتصر رسالتك على كتاب الغنية للقاضي عياض وسأنظم اجتماعاً للجنة العلمية لمراجعة عنوان موضوعك وتقديم سيمينار حول التغييرات.

Tranl. *Do not worry. I will confine your thesis to Al-Ghuniya book by judge Ayyad and organise a meeting for the scientific committee to revise the title of your subject and present a seminar concerning the changes.*

6. اللقاء القادم اجلب لك كتاب فريد الزاهي، عندي نسخة منه راح تلقي بالكتاب أفضل تعريف.

Tranl. *I will bring you Farid Al Zahi's book in our next meeting. I have a copy of this book and you will find in it the most comprehensive definition.*

In example (4), there is a direct COM speech act with the illocutionary force of commitment, the supervisor commits to reading the practical section of the research next Thursday and believes that no crucial changes will be made due to the supervisor's previous extensive discussion with the research student. Example (5) illustrates the use of direct COM speech act with the illocutionary force of commitment to organise the work with the scientific committee in the department, whereas example (6) illustrates the illocutionary force of promising.

The second step in analysing the data in Table (1) sheds light on the reasons behind the variation in frequencies and percentages of supervisors' use of the same speech act across the three stages of the supervisory process. The data reveal the supervisors' infrequent use of direct COMs across the three stages. This speech act has been used 8 times (20%) at the beginning, 13 times (31%) at the middle, and 20 times

(49%) at the final stage. The low percentage of supervisors' use of direct COMs during the beginning and middle stages is due to supervisors' avoidance of committing themselves to future acts they are not responsible for. The supervisors' role is to guide research students through writing their theses. Assisting research students could be accomplished through Assertives, Directives and EXPs. Using direct COMs at the final stage is higher because the supervisors want to ensure that the research students complete their theses on time. The following are examples of direct COMs presented sequentially in accordance with the three stages of the supervisory process:

7. حسنا سأقرأ بعض المقالات الخاصة بموضوعك قبل لقائنا القادم.

Tranl. Ok, I will read some articles on your topic before our next meeting.

8. انا ماضار لي مجال أقرأ المستخلص لكن اوعدك أن أقرأه قريباً.

Trnsl. I had no time to read the abstract, but I promise to do so soon.

9. انا سوف امشي معك سريع حتى تكملين عالوقت.

Tranl. I will make every effort to complete your work as soon as possible so you can submit the thesis on time.

In the above examples, the supervisors employ direct COMs with illocutionary forces of commitment and promise.

Finally, Table (1) sums up the supervisors' overall use of direct EXPs throughout the three stages of the supervisory process. These speech acts occur 17 times (28%) at the beginning, 21times (34%) at the middle stage, and 23 times (38%) at the final stage of the thesis. The following explanations show why supervisors' use of the direct EXPs slightly varies across supervision stages. The beginning and middle stages have almost the same frequency since the supervisors use direct EXPs to motivate research students at these stages. Research students need to be encouraged at these stages because the majority lack sufficient knowledge about their topics and how to conduct the practical part of the research. When supervisors observe progress in research students' achievements, they praise them for their further accomplishments.

However, the supervisors' use of direct EXPs signals a slight increase at the final stage. At this stage, supervisors use direct EXPs to evaluate research students' progress through the previous stages, i.e. beginning and middle. The evaluation could be expressed as blaming, praising, criticising etc. Supervisors at this stage aim to urge research students to edit their work to achieve well-presented final theses. The following are typical examples of direct EXPs presented sequentially according to the three stages of the supervisory process.

10. انت طالب جيد وعندك فكر لكن توجهاتك كلها علوم سياسية وليس تاريخية.

Trnsl. *You are a good and broad-minded student, yet your orientations are entirely political rather than historical.*

11. عندما قرأت الفصل الثاني بدأت أجد هناك فقرات تظهر لي جزء من هويتك كباحث.

Trnsl. *When I read chapter two, I really started to notice paragraphs that express part of your identity as a researcher.*

12. تناسق الفصول ممتاز، حتى لو رياضيات ما بهذا الشكل.

Trnsl. *The consistency among the chapters is excellent, as they defy mathematics itself.*

Example (10) Illustrates how EXPs are used in the first stage, (11) illustrates the middle stage, and (12) is drawn from the final stage. All three-exhibit direct EXPs with the illocutionary force of praising.

8.2 Indirect Commissives and indirect Expressives

The frequency of indirect COMs and indirect EXPs is depicted in Table (2) for each stage and department. Additionally, this table details the overall frequency of indirect COMs and indirect EXPs throughout the three stages and departments in general. Besides, this table reveals in its last row the total frequency for indirect COMs and indirect EXPs in the study sample regardless of stages and departments. Nevertheless, this table lists the frequency of these speech acts during the three stages in each department for organisational purposes and to demonstrate how the total frequencies are obtained. Finally, this table illustrates the number of supervisors' utterances that include Searle's indirect speech acts in general in the study sample in its third column.

Table 2: The Frequency of Indirectness of Illocutionary Acts

Dep.	Stages of supervision	No. of UT	Indirect COMs	Indirect EXPs
			No.(%)	No.(%)
English	Beginning	50	0(0%)	0(0%)
	Middle	45	0(0%)	0(0%)
	Final	27	0(0%)	0(0%)
History	Beginning	29	1(50%)	0(0%)
	Middle	76	1(50%)	0(0%)
	Final	50	0(0%)	0(0%)
Arabic	Beginning	28	0(0%)	0(0%)
	Middle	79	0(0%)	0(0%)
	Final	32	1(100%)	0(0%)
Total	Beginning	107	1(33%)	0(0%)
	Middle	200	1(33%)	0(0%)
	Final	109	1(33%)	0(0%)
	All Stages	416	3(100%)	0(0%)

The last row in Table (2) indicates that the indirect COMs are rarely used indirectly in the supervisors' utterances. The low frequency of this category of speech acts is justified as follows: the supervisors do not need to be indirect concerning an action or obligation for which they are not responsible. The COMs realised indirectly in the present study involve the illocutionary forces of offer. The following are examples of indirect COMs used by supervisors in the current research:

13. أنا أستطيع أن أجلب لك الكتاب.

Trnsl. *I can bring you the book.*

14. يمكنني مساعدتك في تقديم الاختبار التمهيدي.

Trnsl. *I can help you distribute the pre-test.*

Instead of expressing their direct obligation the supervisors in (13) and (14), indirectly use COMs with the illocutionary force of offer.

Finally, Table (2) demonstrates that no supervisor has uttered an indirect EXP. The supervisors' zero (0%) use of indirect EXPs indicates that supervisors, due to their authority and power, are not interested in

expressing their feelings or attitudes indirectly toward the research students' work, especially their negative feelings.

Conserving the supervisory stages Table (2) shows that indirect COMs have been used equally throughout the supervisory process i.e., one time (1%) at each stage. The following are examples of indirect COMs arranged sequentially according to the three stages of the supervisory process¹.

15. أنا أستطيع أن أجلب لك الكتاب.

Trnsl. *I can bring you the book.*

16. يمكنني مساعدتك في تقديم الاختبار التمهيدي.

Trnsl. *I can help you distribute the pre-test.*

17. إذا مستعجل أحاول اكمل قراءة بحثك الأسبوع القادم.

Trnsl. *If you are in a hurry, I will try to finish reading your research next week.*

As for indirect EXPs, Table (2) shows that the supervisors have not used these speech acts throughout the three stages. The zero (0%) use of these speech acts in the supervisors' utterances indicates that using these speech acts is not crucial in the context of this research. The supervisors prefer to use other speech acts due to the effect these speech acts have on the supervisory process.

9. Commissives, Expressives and Heron's (1976) Mode of Interaction

The present part of the analysis sheds light on the supervisory mode of interaction adopted by the supervisors throughout each stage of supervision within Searle's COMs and EXPs, regardless of being direct or indirect. The supervisory mode identification is achieved through the correlation between Searle's COMs and EXPs and Heron's model subcategories. The link between the two will be expressed in terms of formulas suggested by the researchers. The framework formula is to be read as follows:

If Speech act > (involves) intervention (then), the mode is authoritative/facilitative.

9.1 Supervisory Mode of Interaction in Commissives

¹ Examples number 15 and 16 are used here, though used earlier in the first step in analysing Table (2) since indirect COMs appear only three times in the sample of the study.

To determine the supervisory mode of interaction in COMs, the researchers examine whether the supervisors' utterances in COMs are linked to Heron's model subcategories. The suggested formula is used to investigate the association between the two.

The formulas connected with the authoritative mode subcategories will be inferred depending on the analysis of the supervisors' utterances related to COMs in the sample of the study. The analysis reveals that the authoritative mode is mirrored only in the following example:

❖ Confronting

18. سوف اقرأ لك هذا الفصل للمرة الاخيرة نبهتك اكثر من مرة وتكررين نفس الخطأ.

Trnsl. *I will read this chapter for the last time. I have warned you more than one time, yet you continue to commit the same mistake.*

In (18), the supervisor uses a COM speech act with the illocutionary force of commitment where the whole utterance represents a *confronting* intervention. He confronts the research student by raising his awareness not to commit such a mistake again. The formula used to deduce this intervention is *If COMs > Confronting → Authoritative*.

The data analysis reveals that the formula above is the only one relevant to the authoritative mode of interaction in COMs.

The formulas for the facilitative mode's subcategories are inferred by analysing the supervisors' utterances in COMs within the sample of study. The following are examples of the supervisors' utterances corresponding to the facilitative mode subcategories.

❖ Cathartic

19. لا تقلقي سأقتصر رسالتك على كتاب الغنية للقاضي عياض وسأنظم اجتماعاً للجنة العلمية لمراجعة عنوان موضوعك وتقديم سيمينار حول التغييرات.

Transl. *Do not worry. I will confine your thesis to Al-Ghuniya book by judge Ayyad and organise a meeting for the scientific committee to revise the title of your subject and present a seminar concerning the changes.*

In (19), the supervisor uses a COM speech act with the illocutionary force of commitment to organise the work with the scientific committee in the department. The supervisor's utterance represents a *cathartic* intervention. The formula used to deduce this intervention is *If COMs > Cathartic → Facilitative*.

❖ Supportive

20. المصادر حيل تفيد الموضوع، لأنه المصادر قديمة واصيلة، وبالمناقشة أقول الطالبة اعتمدت على مصادر أساسية ومواكبة للحدث.

Transl. *The references are beneficial to the subject because they are authentic and unique, and during the viva, I will say that the research student relied on original and updated sources.*

In (20), the supervisor employs a COM speech act with the illocutionary force of commitment to support the research student. The supervisor's utterance reflects a *supportive* intervention. The formula used to infer this intervention is *If COMs > Supportive → Facilitative*.

The data analysis reveals the following formulas are relevant to the facilitative mode of interaction in COMs:

A. If COMs > Cathartic → Facilitative

B. If COMs > Supportive → Facilitative

The data in Table (3) summarises the frequency of authoritative and facilitative modes of interaction across the supervisory stages in COMs based on the elicited formulas.

Table 3: Supervisory Mode of Interaction in Commissives

Dept.	Mode of Interaction	Authoritative			Facilitative		
		Prescriptive	Informative	Confronting	Cathartic	Catalytic	Supportive
	Stages	No.(%)	No.(%)	No.(%)	No.(%)	No.(%)	No.(%)
English	Beginning	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
	Middle	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
	Final	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	9 (90%)

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History	Beginning	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
	Middle	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)
	Final	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (100%)
Arabic	Beginning	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
	Middle	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (100%)
	Final	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (100%)
Total Subcategories	Beginning	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (100%)
	Middle	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	13 (100%)
	Final	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	20 (95%)
Total Main Categories in Stages	Beginning	0 (0%)			9 (20%)		
	Middle	1 (100%)			13 (30%)		
	Final	0 (0%)			21 (50%)		
Total of Each Mode		1			43		
Total		44					

The authoritative mode in COMs has been used one time at the middle stage and does not occur at the beginning and final stages. Meanwhile, the facilitative mode in COMs has been used 9 times (20%) at the beginning stage, 13 times (30%) at the middle stage and 21 times (50%) at the final stage.

9. 2 Supervisory Mode of Interaction in Expressives

To specify the supervisory mode of interaction in EXPs, the supervisors' utterances in this speech act are analysed to determine whether they

correspond to Heron's model subcategories or not. The proposed formula is used to explore the link between the two. The formulas associated with the subcategories in authoritative mode will be elicited based on the analysis of the supervisors' utterances related to EXPs in the sample of the study. The following are examples of the supervisors' utterances that reflect the authoritative mode subcategories:

❖ Confronting

21. انا نبهتك اكثر من مرة أي شي تكتبه يجب ان يكون له علاقة بشغلك.

Trnsl. *I told you several times, anything you write must be relevant to your work.*

In (21), the supervisor employs an EXP speech act with the illocutionary force of criticism which in turn represents a confronting intervention. The supervisor uses this intervention to draw the research student's attention to some behaviour that the supervisor had frequently asked him not to do. He provides explicit input to the research student to accomplish this intervention without being aggressive. The formula used to deduce this intervention is *If EXPs > Confronting → Authoritative*.

❖ Informative

22. أنت ضيعت الكثير من الوقت تكتب عن أفعال الكلام وهي أصلا ليس لها علاقة بشغلك.

Trnsl. *You have wasted a lot of time writing about the speech acts which have nothing to do with your work.*

In (22), the supervisor applies an EXP speech act with the illocutionary force of criticism which in turn represents an *informative* intervention. The supervisor uses this intervention to draw the research student's attention that he has wasted a lot of time writing about speech acts, which have nothing to do with his work. The formula used to infer this intervention is *If EXPs > Informative → Authoritative*.

The investigation of supervisors' utterances shows that only the following formulas relate to the authoritative mode in EXPs:

A. *If EXPs > Confronting → Authoritative*

B. *If EXPs > Informative → Authoritative*

The formulas for the facilitative mode's subcategories are extracted by analysing the supervisors' utterances in EXPs in the sample of the

study. The following are instances of the supervisory utterances associated with the facilitative mode subcategories.

❖ Cathartic

23. انت لاتخافين انت طالبة متميزة.

Trnsl. *Do not be afraid; you are an excellent student.*

In (23), the supervisor uses an EXP speech act with the illocutionary force of parsing to assure the research student that there is no reason to be worried as she is clever. The supervisor's utterance represents a *cathartic* intervention. The formula used to deduce this intervention is *If EXPs > Cathartic → Facilitative*.

❖ Supportive

24. إنه لأمر جيد أنك توقفت عن استخدام أسئلة تتطلب أكثر من إجابة.

Trnsl. *It's good you stopped asking questions that require more than one answer.*

In (24), the supervisor employs an EXP speech act with the illocutionary force of praising to support the research student. The supervisor's utterance in turn reflects a supportive intervention. The formula used to infer this intervention is *If EXPs > Supportive → Facilitative*.

After analysing the data, the following formulas appear to represent the facilitative mode of interaction in EXPs:

A. *If EXPs > Cathartic → Facilitative*

B. *If EXPs > Supportive → Facilitative*

The supervisory modes of interaction throughout the three stages of the supervision in EXPs are summarised in Table (4). The frequencies for both modes are provided in percentages based on the inferred formulas. The above table shows that the authoritative mode has been used 3 times (20%) in EXPs at the beginning stage, 9 times (60%) throughout the middle stage, and 3 times (20%) at the final stage. As for the facilitative mode in EXPs, it has been applied 14 times (30%) at the beginning stage,

12 times (26%) throughout the middle stage and 20 times (44%) at the final stage.

In order to arrive at the dominant mode of supervision, the ultimate frequencies of Tables (3-4) are summarised in Table (5). Hence, this table reflects the dominant mode of interaction in each stage with respect to each speech act and the dominant mode of interaction across all the sample of the study.

Table 4: Supervisory Mode of Interaction in Expressives

Dept.	Mode of Interaction	Authoritative			Facilitative		
		Prescriptive	Informative	Confronting	Cathartic	Catalytic	Supportive
	Stages	No.(%)	No.(%)	No.(%)	No.(%)	No.(%)	No.(%)
English	Beginning	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (100%)
	Middle	0 (0%)	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	1 (20%)	0 (0%)	4 (80%)
	Final	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	11 (85%)
History	Beginning	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)
	Middle	0 (0%)	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	1 (17%)	0 (0%)	5 (83%)
	Final	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
Arabic	Beginning	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
	Middle	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)

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	Final	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)
Total Subcategories	Beginning	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	14 (100%)
	Middle	0 (0%)	5 (56%)	4 (44%)	2 (17%)	0 (0%)	10 (83%)
	Final	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)	2 (9%)	0 (0%)	18 (91%)
Total Main Categories in Stages	Beginning	3 (20%)			14 (30%)		
	Middle	9 (60%)			12 (26%)		
	Final	3 (20%)			20 (44%)		
Total of Each Mode		15 (25%)			46 (75%)		
Total		61					

**Table 5: Supervisory Mode of Interaction in Relation to the
Comissives and Expressives**

Speech Acts			Beginning	Middle	Final	
Authorita tive	COMs	No.(%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	Total
	EXPs	No.(%)	3 (20%)	9 (60%)	3 (20%)	
Total Stages		No.(%)	3 (19%)	10 (62%)	3 (19%)	16 (16%)
Facilitativ e	COMs	No.(%)	9 (20%)	13 (30%)	21 (50%)	Total
	EXPs	No.(%)	14 (30%)	12 (26%)	20 (44%)	
Total Stages		No.(%)	23 (26%)	25 (28%)	41 (46%)	89 (84%)
Total						105 (100%)

Table (5), shows that the authoritative mode has been employed 16 times (16%) in the study sample, whereas the facilitative mode has been used 89 times (84%) in the study sample. Thus, the facilitative mode is the dominant mode in relation to COMs and EXPs, however.

10. Conclusions

The study comes up with the following conclusions:

1. Direct COMs, and direct EXPs have been used in the sample of the study. Meanwhile, only indirect COMs are implemented.
2. Direct COMs are highly implemented in the final stage, while indirect COMs are used with the same range across the three supervisory stages.
3. The infrequent use of COMs indicates that they are not a favourite option in supervision since supervisors frequently avoid committing themselves to future acts, they are not responsible for, supervisors are already heavily burdened with instructing and guiding the research students to complete their work. Supervisors do not utilise indirect EXPs in the sample of the study due to their authority and power; they are not interested in indirectly communicating their feelings or attitudes about the research students' work, particularly their negative feelings.
4. The formulas suggested in the analysis adequately work to infer the mode of interaction.
5. It has been found that supervisors at the middle stage tend to be more authoritative than at the other stages because the research student requires as much intervention as possible from the supervisor at this stage. And, they are more facilitative at the final stage than in the other stages, as supervisors at this stage desire to see their students step forward towards becoming independent researchers. In general, the facilitative mode is the dominant mode throughout the three stages with regard to COMs and EXPs.

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