The Role of Gender and Social Power in the Use of Advice-giving Strategies in Algerian Arabic

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Abstract: This study explores the influence of gender and social status on advice-giving strategies in Algerian Arabic. The study involved 50 native Algerian Arabic speakers (25 males and 25 females) who completed a Discourse Completion Task. This task, designed to measure the gender and social status variables, presented three types of advice-giving situations: high-to-low, low-to-high, and equal social power. Hinkel's (1997) taxonomy was used to categorize advice-giving strategies as direct, hedged, or indirect. The study's key finding was that male and female Algerians tend to give direct advice, particularly imperatives, regardless of the advisee's social status. This suggests that Algerians perceive advice-giving as a cooperative and supportive act that does not require mitigation or implication. Importantly, these findings have practical implications. They can help individuals and organizations avoid cross-cultural misunderstandings with Algerians. In cultures where advice-giving may be perceived as threatening one's freedom of action, logical thinking ability, and world knowledge, Algerians may be misunderstood as impolite and overly assertive despite their well-intentioned advice.

Keywords: advice-giving strategies, Algerian Arabic, cross-cultural communication, gender, social power, speech act theory

1. Introduction

Language is a means for humans to express their intentions, emotions, and necessities to one another. Yule (1996) argues that "people do not only produce utterances containing grammatical structures and words, they perform actions via those utterances" (Yule 1996: 47) and that such actions are called speech acts. Austin (1962) held that people exhibit behaviors and perform actions through the words they use—that is, they produce speech acts, hence the title of his book *How*

to Do Things with Words. Clark (1996) also notes that "[l]anguage is used for doing things" and that the use of language is "a form of *joint action* … that is carried out by an ensemble of people acting in coordination with each other" (Clark 1996: 3; emphasis in source). One speech act that this study is concerned with is advice-giving.

Advice-giving is a directive speech act that advocates an action for the benefit of the advisee and where the consequences of compliance are desirable (Tsui 1994). However, the perception of advice-giving varies across cultures. In American culture, it is considered a face-threatening act (FTA) (i.e., a speech act that threatens the advisee's freedom of action and desire not to be imposed upon by others) even if the advisor has no intention of interfering (Brown and Levinson 1987; Wilson and Kunkel 2000; Shaw and Hepburn 2013). Consequently, Americans often use indirect advice strategies (Blum-Kulka 1987; Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper 1989; Leech 1989; Chentsova-Dutton and Vaughn, 2011; Hosni 2020). In contrast, in some cultures like Iran, advice-giving may be avoided entirely when the person seeking advice is a religious figure due to religious theocracy (Al-Shboul and Zarei 2013; Aliakbari, Aghaee and AzimiAmoli 2015). Meanwhile, in the Egyptian culture, advice-giving is viewed as a sign of solidarity and cooperation, and direct advice is given freely, even to those of higher social status (Hosni 2020; El-Dakhs and Ahmed 2021). Thus, understanding how each culture perceives advice-giving is crucial for successful communication across cultures. For instance, an Egyptian offering direct advice to an American might be perceived as impolite, intrusive, and overly assertive, while the Egyptian's intentions were well-meaning.

In addition to general cultural norms, other sociocultural factors, such as age, gender, and social status, influence how speakers give advice. Research shows that when it comes to age and power dynamics, the advice given by older and socially powerful advisors tends to be more direct (El-Dakhs 2021; Shukur and Ali 2022). Social status refers to the advisor's higher occupation, wealth, or knowledge compared to the advisee. As for gender, findings are mixed. For example, Aliakbari et al. (2015) and El-Dakhs and Ahmed (2021) showed that gender did not play an essential role in choosing the advice-giving strategy; their male and female participants showed similar preferences. However, Al-Shboul and Zarei (2013) and Al-Shboul and Abumahfouz (2018) found that their male participants preferred indirect advice for advisees of higher social positions, while the female participants preferred hedged advice. Boatman (1987) found that gender played a crucial role in deciding whether or not to advise. In her study, female participants usually refrained from giving advice altogether to other male colleagues.

In this study, we investigate whether gender and social status play a role in determining the degree of indirectness in advice-giving in Algerian Arabic. The dependent variable is the degree of indirectness, which, according to Hinkel (1997), has three levels: direct advice, hedged advice, and indirect advice. The independent variables are gender and social status. The gender variable is tested by having 50 native speakers of Algerian Arabic, equally composed of men and women, participate in the Discourse Completion Task (DCT) we designed with six

situations that place the advisor and advisee in different social status positions. The research questions the study seeks to answer are:

1. To what extent does gender influence the degree of indirectness of advisors?
2. To what extent does social status influence the degree of indirectness of advisors?

The study's focus on gender is due to the conflicting results found in previous research. Additionally, the interest in Algerian Arabic is motivated by several factors. Firstly, unlike other Arabic dialects studied for advice-giving strategies, such as Egyptian and Jordanian Arabic, Algerian Arabic has been influenced by two main languages - French and Amazigh - due to the country's history of French occupation and the pre-existing Amazigh language. Secondly, Algeria is the second most populous country in Africa after Egypt, making it crucial to understand how different speech acts are realized in Algerian Arabic to avoid cross-cultural misunderstandings, especially since many Algerians live in the diaspora. Finally, there is limited existing research on advice-giving in Algerian Arabic, unlike other aspects of the language that have been examined, such as pragmatic language use (e.g., Rabab'ah and AbuSeileek 2012; Rabab'ah, Idir and Alghazo 2020; Alghazo et al. 2021; Alkhalidi and Alghazo 2023), discourse markers (e.g., Jarrah, Alghazo and Al Salem 2019; Harb, Jarrah and Alghazo 2022; Hamdan, et al. 2023), and the realization of speech acts (Alghazo et al. 2021; Al-Maznaei 2021; Remache and Altakhaineh 2021; Benbouya and Rabab'ah 2022). Therefore, this study aims to bridge this gap in research by exploring the speech act of advice-giving in Algerian Arabic.

2. Literature Review

The speech act of advice-giving has been examined differently in various languages. Some studies explored advice-giving from a cross-cultural perspective. Other studies investigated the role of social factors (e.g., age, gender, and social status) in using advice-giving strategies. For example, Al-Khatib and Al-Khanji (2022) applied a qualitative-quantitative approach. They followed Hinkel's (1997) typology of direct, indirect, and hedged advice to identify the advice-giving strategies used in the first ten sections of the Holy Quran. Indirect advice ranked first in 58 verses of advice (48 out of 58 verses), followed by direct and hedged advice. Al-Khatib and Al-Khanji (2022) argued that the frequent use of indirect advice is due to a fundamental concept in Islam that people should not be forced to follow the rules of Islam but should choose to do so. The researchers also argued that hedged advice using words such as لعل (laʿalla; perhaps) and عسى (ʿasā; perhaps) was rare because hedged advice prevents direct communication, but religious discourse, including Quranic verses, is usually evident and understandable.

El-Dakhs and Ahmed (2021) used Martínez-Flor's (2003) typology of advice-giving strategies to classify the strategies used in advising new university teachers in Egypt by their peers and supervisors. The typology divides advice-giving strategies into indirect, conventionally indirect, and direct. Indirect advice is

realized through hints. Conventionally indirect advice is realized through conditional sentences, probability expressions such as "it could be better ..." and specific formulas such as "why don't you ...?". Direct advice is implemented through (negative) imperatives, modal verbs, and performatives such as "I advise you to ...". El-Dakhs and Ahmed (2021) recruited 50 university teachers from an Egyptian private university with 3-5 years of experience and 1-3 years of university affiliation. The teachers were equally divided between males and females. A role-play task with eight scenarios was used for data collection. The scenarios represented everyday situations at the university, such as handling student complaints or dealing with student plagiarism. The results showed that direct advice was predominant compared to the other two advice strategies, regardless of the interlocutors' gender or their years of experience. In addition, the results showed that the higher the academic rank of the advisor, the more likely he or she was to give direct advice. According to the researchers, collectivist Egyptians view advising as an act of cooperation, solidarity, and care; therefore, it is socially acceptable to give direct advice.

Using Martínez-Flor's (2003) typology of advice-giving strategies, El-Dakhs (2021) compared the advice strategies in 200 pandemic-related tweets posted by Saudi and Australian health departments during the first three months of the COVID-19 pandemic. El-Dakhs (2021) found that both ministries most frequently used direct advice. This finding contrasts with the findings of Chentsova-Dutton and Vaughn (2011), Feng (2015), and Morrow (2017), who highlight that Western communities, which are typically individualistic, prefer indirect advice so as not to compromise recipients' autonomy. However, the researcher attributed the directness of both ministries' advice to two factors: first, the genre of analysis, as health discourses are always direct and concise, and second, the seriousness of the situation considering the global pandemic.

Hosni (2020) combined a role-play task with a multiple-choice questionnaire to investigate the influence of culture on the advice-giving strategies used in Egyptian Arabic and mainstream American English. The role-play task consisted of 16 advice-seeking situations that tested the influence of social status (equal vs. unequal), social distance (near vs. far), and level of imposition (low vs. high). Five situations were adapted from Hinkel (1997), while Hosni originated the rest. The same situations for the role-play task were used for the multiple-choice questionnaire. However, instead of the unstructured, open-ended responses during the role-play task, which Hosni described as time-consuming to code, the questionnaire offered three choices for each situation: direct, indirect, and hedged advice. A total of 140 participants were recruited, composed of equal numbers of native Egyptian-Arabic and native American-English speakers. Hosni found that Egyptians are more likely to advise people of the same social status compared to Americans, even if that advice has a high level of imposition. She also found that Egyptians tend to be more direct than Americans, whether or not they are socially close to the recipient. She concluded that for collectivist Egyptians, advice is a sign of cooperation and solidarity and, therefore, need not be indirect or hedged. This is the same finding that El-Dakhs and Ahmed (2021) made about advice-giving

strategies in Egyptian Arabic. In contrast, individualistic Americans value their freedom of action and ability to make their decisions. Therefore, they tend to avoid unsolicited advice, and even when asked for advice, they give it indirectly or hedged.

Aljabali (2014) compared the advice-giving strategies of Arab and American teachers in situations with different social distances between the advisor and the advisee. To this end, Aljabali designed a DCT with 15 situations: six situations for interlocutors with the same status (e.g., colleagues), six situations in which the advisor has a higher social status than the advisee (e.g., a teacher and a student), and three situations in which the advisor has a lower social status than the advisee (e.g., a teacher and a principal). The 15 situations were first written in Arabic and then translated into English to make them more accessible for the participating American teachers. Aljabali recruited 30 teachers, equally divided between Arabs and Americans, to participate in his DCT. No information was provided about the background of the participants or how the task was set. Aljabali proposed a new classification of advice strategies: direct criticism, appeal to religion, question, proverb, threats, and enlightenment. According to his results, direct advice and enlightenment were the most frequent strategies used by Arabs and Americans. Aljabali defined enlightenment as "edification or the act of giving someone beneficial hints to do something for his/her own sake" (Aljabali 2014: 21), just as "this violates all legal and ethical principles and reflects badly on you as a professional" (Aljabali 2014: 26). Another insight of Aljabali is that threats and appeals to religion are used only by Arab teachers. A threat is a "statement which indicates that the advisee will be harmed if he/she does not follow the instructions or stop doing something" (Aljabali 2014: 21), such as "never do this again; otherwise, you will be punished" (Aljabali 2014: 26). Appeal to religion means "reciting any religious text from the Holy Books" (Aljabali 2014: 21). Aljabali argued that social status played a role in the choice of strategy for giving advice, especially among Arab teachers. For example, threats were not used when the advisee was more socially powerful than the advisor. However, he did not consider threats an aggressive strategy but rather a sign of "caring for others, especially sons and daughters, or students whom loyal teachers consider their students as their own children" (Aljabali 2014: 27).

As for the effect of social variables on advice-giving strategies, some studies examined factors such as gender and social status. Al-Shboul and Zarei (2013) investigated whether Iranian students of English as a foreign language (EFL) use different strategies when giving advice in English. Following Hinkel (1997), they classified advice-giving strategies into direct, indirect, and hedged. They used Hinkel's multiple-choice questionnaire, which consisted of 8 situations in which participants were asked to advise people with the same social status (e.g., acquaintances) and with a higher social status (e.g., instructors). After each situation, there were four choices: the first was direct advice with the modal verb 'should,' the second was indirect advice in the form of a comment, the third was hedged advice with 'maybe,' 'I think,' or a question and the last was the option not to give advice. The results show that male learners preferred indirect advice over

the other three options in both situations (peer acquaintances and instructors). In contrast, female learners chose hedged advice in both situations (among peers and instructors).

Aliakbari et al. (2015) examined the effect of gender, age, social status (equal vs. unequal), and social distance (familiar vs. distant) on Persians' choice of advice-giving strategies. Aliakbari et al. followed Hinkel's (1997) taxonomy for advice-giving strategies. They designed a discourse completion task with 13 situations in which advice against a religiously wrong action/behavior was to be given, divided as follows: two situations in which the advice was given to an interlocutor who was the participant's equal, three to a familiar interlocutor, three to an interlocutor who was older than the participant, two to an interlocutor who was younger than the participant, and three situations to an interlocutor who had a higher status. For each situation, participants had four choices: direct advice, indirect advice, hedged advice, or silence. The task was completed by 240 adult Persians, with an average age of 39 years for men and 32 years for women. The participants were 140 men and 100 women. The results revealed some interesting findings. First, gender was not an essential factor in the choice of the advice-giving strategy, but social status, social status, and age were. Second, only 7% of participants chose silence because, as Aliakbari et al. argued, Iranian collectivist and Islamic cultures consider advice-giving as solidarity and caring. Most silent cases were when the advisee was either older or of higher social status. Aliakbari et al. attributed this to the strict religious control in Iran, which does not allow ordinary people much leeway to advise people of higher social status. Finally, with trusted friends, participants gave more direct advice.

Al-Shboul and Abumahfouz (2018) investigated how gender and social status influence students' choice of advice-giving strategies at Al-Balqa' Applied University in Jordan. They applied the same methodology as Al-Shboul and Zarei (2013) but translated the situations and choices into Arabic to make it easier for the participants. Al-Shboul and Abumahfouz first did the translation and then reviewed it by professional translators. Al-Shboul and Abumahfouz recruited 100 students, equal numbers of men and women, who completed the multiple-choice questionnaire. Results showed that female students preferred hedged advice over direct advice in situations of equal or higher social status. Male students, on the other hand, chose indirect advice in situations of equal or higher social status. These results are identical to those of Al-Shboul and Zarei (2013). However, the implications of this similarity were not discussed. Furthermore, the implications of these gender differences for Jordanian culture were not addressed.

Shukur and Ali (2022) examined gender differences in advice strategies and content written by seniors (75+ years old) to the younger generation on the social media accounts of two U.S. facilities, St. Clair Nursing Center and Birch Creek Senior Living. A total of 30 pieces of advice, written equally by men and women, were analyzed using Hinkel's (1997) taxonomy of advice-giving strategies. In contrast to previous studies that have characterized American culture as individualistic and therefore giving indirect advice so as not to compromise the recipient's autonomy, this study shows that direct advice was the most common

strategy for both men and women. However, one difference between men and women is that the former preferred affirmative imperative verbs while the latter preferred negative imperative verbs. Shukur and Ali attributed the difference between their results and those of the previous study to two reasons. First, the age difference between the advisors and the virtual advisees gave the advisors a sense of power. Second, the virtual interaction ensured that the advisors cared less about the threat to the advisee's face. In terms of content, men's and women's advice differed. Female advisors focused on love, family, kindness, and fun, while male advisors focused on work, life, and making money. According to Shukur and Ali, the difference in topics reinforced stereotypes of women as emotional constructs and men as breadwinners.

Several studies have investigated how advice is given across different languages and cultures. These studies range from exploring advice-giving strategies in the Holy Quran to examining how university teachers in Egypt provide advice. Scholars have also examined how social factors such as age, gender, and social status influence advice-giving strategies and have discovered interesting patterns across various linguistic and cultural landscapes. However, there is a significant research gap regarding advice-giving in Algerian Arabic despite Algeria's political importance and sizable population. By filling this gap and expanding our understanding of advice-giving practices in Algerian Arabic, we can gain deeper insights into the dynamics of advice-giving across diverse cultural and linguistic contexts. Furthermore, this study will contribute to the broader discourse on language, gender, culture, and communication, comparing advice-giving practices between male and female speakers.

3. Method

3.1 Data collection instruments

We designed a DCT as an open-ended written questionnaire distributed online. The DCT consisted of 6 situations, as shown in Table 1 below, adapted from Hinkel's (1997). The situations were divided into two for each social status position: high (H) to low (L) (i.e., the advisor is of a higher social status than the advisee, situations 1 and 4), equal status (i.e., the advisor and advisees have the same social status, situations 2 and 5), and L to H (i.e., the advisor is of a lower social status compared to the advisee, situations 3 and 6). We translated the situations into Algerian Arabic. Participants were instructed to write their advice in Algerian Arabic using Arabic script and imagine that they were talking directly to the advisees.

Table 1 Distribution of the situations according to social status

No.	Prompt	Power
1	Advise a little sibling to quit a bad habit	H > L
2	Advise a friend to fix his/her relationship with their significant other	Equal
3	Advise your father to quit smoking	L > H
4	Advise a student of yours to quit a bad behavior	H > L
5	Advise a neighbor to stop their wrongdoings with their mother	Equal
6	Advise your boss at work to solve a family problem	L > H

3.2 Participants

The study's participants are 25 Algerian women and 25 Algerian men. The females' ages range from 24 to 27, and the males' range from 18 to 43. All participants speak Algerian Arabic as their native language. The participants have different educational backgrounds. Some have a BA, and others have an MA degree. We targeted Algerians living in Algeria and no other countries to ensure their language and culture were as intact as possible.

3.3 Data coding

We took a descriptive and contrastive approach to coding the data. We began by labeling each response to the DCT situations as direct, hedged, or indirect, following Hinkel's (1997) typology, described in more detail in subsection 3.4. Two of the authors labeled each response. In disagreement, the other two authors had to vote for one or the other label. Second, we compared the data from the two groups of men and women and collected quantifiable data.

3.4 Model of analysis

This study categorizes and defines methods for giving advice based on Hinkel's (1997) system. Hinkel conducted a study comparing the directness levels of advice given by Chinese and American students using two different research tools: DCTs and Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ). The study involved 40 Taiwanese Chinese and 40 American English native speakers, with 20 females and 20 males in each group, all aged 18 to 25 (Hinkel 1997: 10). Hinkel found that Chinese participants tended to use indirect advice strategies in response to the DCT but used direct and hedged strategies for the MCQ. In contrast, American English speakers preferred direct and hedged advice strategies for the DCT but gave indirect responses for the MCQ (Hinkel 1997). This could be because the MCQ, which focuses on awareness, was more accessible for non-native Chinese speakers of English, while the DCT requires production (Martínez-Flor 2003). Hinkel relied on the theoretical framework of Brown and Levinson (1987) and other sources to develop her taxonomy of advice strategies, which is as follows:

- **Direct advice,** which includes imperatives and modals such as 'should' without hedging (Example: You shouldn't buy the book in this store.)
- **Hedged advice,** which involves the use of hedging devices, such as

- softeners (e.g., It seems to me...),
- questions (e.g., Why don't you…?),
- impersonal expressions (e.g., It's important (for you/ that you)…).

- **Indirect advice,** which refers to either response that could have more than one illocutionary force and in which no explicit or hedged advice was identified but had enough information to act on it, or it stands for the responses that did not fit the first two categories (Example: I had to study all the time when I took that course. That was hard.)

(Hinkel 1997: 10-12)

This study has employed Hinkel's (1997) model because it classifies strategies in more detail. The model classifies the different types of advice strategies under three groups: direct, hedged, and indirect. The uniqueness in categorization found in Hinkel's model has not appeared in any other models of giving advice. This has made it possible to code the data sets more precisely, using this model in particular, which has brought about the genesis of many valid results regarding the strategies.

4. Results

The tables below show variations in advice-giving strategies based on the variables used. To show if there is any statistically significant difference in the use of advice-giving strategies by male and female Algerian Arabic speakers, a Chi-square test for independence was used. This test was used to determine whether or not the strategies used are independent of gender. Table 2 below shows the results of the statistical analysis.

Table 2 Results of the inferential statistical test

Female					Male			
Strategy	**H>L**	**Equal**	L>H	Total	H>L	Equal	L>H	Total
Direct	38	36	21	95	35	29	37	101
Hedged	2	5	15	22	0	2	0	2
Indirect	10	9	14	33	15	19	13	47
Total	50	50	50	150	50	50	50	150
Ch2				19.36				6.22
p-value				0.00067				0.1832

Table 2 above shows that the p-value for the female speakers is lower than 0.05, which indicates a link between social status and the use of the type of strategies. Moreover, the results show that the p-value for the male speakers is more significant than 0.05, which indicates no link between the use of strategies and the

social status variable. These results reveal that the female participants are sensitive to the social status of the advisee, which reflects a conventional perception of women being more polite in their speech act use. As for the male speakers, the lack of link might indicate that men use a more direct style of advice-giving, regardless of social status.

Gender differences in using each type of strategy: The statistical results show a significant difference between the female and male speakers in using hedged strategies only. Table 3 below shows the results.

Table 3 Results of the differences between females and males

Strategy	Female Count	Male Count	Female Proportion	Male Proportion	Z-score	P-value
Direct	95	101	0.633	0.673	-0.73	0.467
Hedged	22	2	0.147	0.013	4.26	0.000021
Indirect	33	47	0.220	0.313	-1.83	0.068

Table 4 below shows that female participants used direct advice (63.33%) more often than other strategies in all situations. Within the direct advice strategies, they also used imperatives the most (77 times at a percentage of 51.33%). The second most frequently used strategy was indirect advice. It was used 33 times. Hedged advice comes next in order; it was used 22 times. The only type of hedged-advice strategies used was softeners (22 times), mainly used in the L>H situations.

Table 4 Frequencies of advice-giving strategies used by the female participants

Strategy	Social Status / Situations	H>L 1 and 4	Equal 2 and 5	L>H 3 and 6	Percentages	Totals
Direct	Modals	3	10	5	12	63.33%
	Imperatives	35	26	16	51.33	
Hedged	Softeners	2	5	15	14.66	14.66%
	Questions	0	0	0	0	
	Impersonal expressions	0	0	0	0	
Indirect		10	9	14	22	22%

When the advisor and advisee had the same social status, female participants used the direct strategy (36 times) more often than the other two. The most frequently used type was imperatives (26 times, examples 1 and 2), while modals were used only ten times (examples 3 and 4). About 22% of the participants preferred the indirect strategy, which was used nine times (examples 5 and 6). The least used strategy was the hedged strategy, especially the first type, the softeners, which occurred only five times (examples 7 and 8). Participants showed no preference for the other types of hedged strategy (i.e., questions and impersonal expressions).

(1) Direct advice (imperatives)
يزيك من اللعب *وتلاهي* بقرايتك شوية
Stop playing and *focus* on your study.

(2) *روح/اهدر* معاها *حاول* تقنعها و تطلب منها سماح
Talk to her. *Try* to convince her to forgive you.

(3) Direct advice (modals)
راك تكبر *ولازم* تحبس هاذ العادات
You are growing up. You *should* stop this behavior.

(4) اواه يماك *لازم* تحترمها ماشي مليح تتعارك معها
Oh, you *must* respect your mother. It's not good to fight with her.

(5) Indirect advice
شوف انتايا كل مرة نحذر فيك هذه المرة راح يكون القرار صعب وتوصل للإدارة باباك
Look, I always warn you, but the decision will be tough this time, and I will tell the administration and your father.

(6) دنيا ساعة اليوم معاك غدوة عليك والي يظلم راح يظلم
Today, life is on your side, tomorrow is against you, and the oppressor will be oppressed.

(7) Hedged advice (softeners)
أنا نظن بلي القراية أولى، الميكرو ماراحش يهرب
I think that studying comes first. The computer won't run away.

(8) *تبانلي انك* تقدر تجيبلها كادو شباب وهدرمعاها بالعقيلة هي تبغيك
It seems to me that you may buy her a beautiful gift and talk to her tenderly, saying that she loves you.

In situations where the advisor has a lower social status, female participants also preferred the direct strategy (number of occurrences: 21), imperatives were used 16 times (example 9), and the modal 'should' was used five times (example 10). These results could indicate a special relationship between the speaker and the listener, even if the former has a low status and the latter has a high status. The hedged strategies were followed 15 times; the female participants used only softeners (example 11), and none used questions or impersonal expressions. In 14 cases, the female participants did not give the advice directly or hedged, but indirectly, in an implicit way. The listener takes the meaning from the context by reading between the lines (example 12).

(9) Direct advice (imperatives)
حاول تقعد معاهم و تسمعلهم و تتفاهمو بالعقل

Try to talk to them and rationally come to an agreement.

(10) Direct advice (modals)
بابا التدخين يضر بصحتك *لازمك* تحبسوا على خاطر كاين بزاف ناس مرضو بالسرطان و توفوا في سبتو.
Father, smoking is bad for you. You *should* stop it. It caused cancer in many people, and they died.

(11) Hedged advice (softener)
بابا وليت تشرب الدخان بزاف علاه؟ يخي علابالك مافيهش الفايدة ويضر، *انا متمنيا* نشوفك حبستو خاطرش مش حابة يجي نهار يمرضك بزاف
Father, you are becoming addicted to smoking; why? You know that it harms you. *I really wish that* you would stop it because I do not want to see you, one day, so sick.

(12) Indirect advice
علابالك عندي سمانة قريت موضوع يبين خطورة الدخان وانو يسبب سرطان بروستات
You know, I read an article a week ago about the dangers of smoking and how it causes prostate cancer.

Regarding the results related to the male participants, the following Table 5 shows how they reacted to the situations presented in the DCT and what strategies they used in the advice-giving process.

Table 5 Frequencies of advice-giving strategies used by the male participants

Strategy	Social Status / Situations	H>L 1 and 4	Equal 2 and 5	L>H 3 and 6	Percentages	Totals
Direct	Modals Imperatives	2 33	1 28	5 32	5.33 62	67.33%
Hedged	Softeners Questions Impersonal expressions	0 0 0	2 0 0	0 0 0	1.33 0 0	1.33%
Indirect		15	19	13	31.33	31.33%

As shown in Table 5, male participants showed a strong tendency to use direct strategies compared to other strategies in different situations. In 101 times (67.33%), eight pieces of advice were presented by the modal 'should' (5.33%, example 13) and 93 by imperatives (62%, example 14). The second most used strategy is indirect, which was used 47 times (31.33%, example 15). The least used strategy was the hedged strategy, which was used by 1.33%, and only softeners were used; none of the participants resorted to questions or impersonal expressions. Thus, imperatives are the most used form by male participants.

(13) Direct advice (modals)
لازم تنقص اللعب بالميكرو لانو عندو سلبيات ويلهيك على قرايتك
You *should* use the computer wisely because it has disadvantages, such as forgetting your studies.

(14) Direct advice (imperatives)
نقص اللعب، *وتوله* بقرايتك.
Reduce the play time and *focus* on your studies.

(15) Indirect advice
انتم اكل خاوا واك كبير و تعرف صلاحك.
You are all brothers and old enough to differentiate between right and wrong.

Male participants preferred direct advice when addressing a lower-status person. This strategy was used 35 times, including twice for using the modal 'should' and 33 times for imperatives. Indirect advice was used second most often (15 times). However, it is noticeable that none of the male respondents used the hedged strategies. These results were expected because, in Situations 1 and 4, the advisee had lower status and less authority than the advisor.

As shown in Table 5, male participants used the direct strategy more often than the other strategies when advising a person with the same status (a friend). The direct strategy was used 29 times. The most frequently used form was imperatives (example 16), which was used 28 times, while the modal 'should' was used only once (example 17). Other participants preferred the use of the indirect strategy. It was found 19 times (example 18). As for the hedged strategies, only softeners were used (twice, example 19); questions and impersonal expressions were not used. As mentioned in the analysis of this status in the results of the female Algerian participants, this result may be the result of the close distance (friendship) between the speaker and the listener.

(16) Direct advice (imperatives)
أمك ثم أمك ثم أمك. روح *بوس* رجليها *وراضيها* يرضى عليك ربي
Your mother is your most important one. *Go*, *kiss* her feet, and *reconcile* with her to please God.

(17) Direct advice (modals)
لازم عليك تكون متفتح ومتخليش الحوايج التافهة ديرلك عوائق في حياتك
You *should* be open-minded.

(18) Indirect advice
الجنة تحت اقدام الأمهات
Paradise lies under the feet of mothers.

(19) Hedged advice
أنا نحس بلي دوك تفوتوا المشكلة هادي.

I feel that you will overcome this problem.

Usually, a low-status person uses hedged or indirect strategies to advise someone with high status. However, just like the female participants, men preferred to use direct strategies to perform the speech act of giving advice (37 times). The imperative was the most common form, used 32 times (example 20), and the modal 'should' was used only five times (example 21). As for the indirect strategies, the male participants used them 13 times (example 22). The result, which was not expected, is that they did not rely on the hedged strategies to address a high-status person.

(20) Direct advice (imperatives)
حاول انك ما تتسرعش باه ماتغلطش *وانسى* لي فات
Try to think carefully to avoid making mistakes and *try* to forget the past.

(21) Direct advice (modals)
انت مسؤول الدار *لازم* تتحمل المسؤولي
You are responsible at home; you *should* take responsibility.

(22) Indirect advice
دخان مش مليح وخسارة صحة ودراهم
Smoking is not good, and it costs you your health and money.

This study contributes to intercultural pragmatics by investigating the realization of advice-giving in Algerian Arabic. The findings show that the typical convention of using direct strategies is challenged and reveals the role of the cultural context in shaping the advice-giving strategies used. More importantly, the study provides insight into the role of gender in the use of advice-giving strategies. In particular, the findings show that both male and female Algerian Arabic speakers use direct advice-giving strategies, regardless of the advisee's social status. This finding contrasts with the findings of studies on advice-giving in other cultures, such as Western cultures, where indirectness is the typical mode of giving advice. The preference for direct advice among Algerians indicates a cultural tendency for a more open and straightforward style of interaction, which not only contrasts with the norm in other cultures but also deviates from the prevalent conception within the study of speech acts, grounded in Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework that being direct creates a face-threatening act on the address's negative face. The direct strategies of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory may threaten the hearer's negative face, a desire not to be imposed upon. In the Algerian context, however, direct advice may not hold the potential for face-threatening implications. This may indicate the cultural reconfiguration of politeness to where directness is taken as an attribute of sincerity and solidarity.

The fact that there was no significant gender difference in preference for directness in giving advice undermines some literature suggesting that women usually prefer to be more indirect or polite in their communication strategies due to

societal expectations revolving around femininity. In other words, this might mean that traditional gender relations have no significant impact on the linguistic preference regarding advising Algerian society, or this advice is perceived as equally supportive and not confrontative for both genders. This adds a new insight into the human understanding of universal gendered communication.

The analysis of the results showed that Algerian participants, irrespective of gender and the advisee's social status, tend to prefer direct advice. This preference for directness can be interpreted within the framework of Hofstede, Jan Hofstede and Minkov's (2010) collectivism-individualism dichotomy. As per this dichotomy, various nations are typically characterized as individualistic or collectivistic. For example, North American and Western European communities are often characterized as individualistic (Markus and Kitayama 1991; Triandis 1995; Ting-Toomey 1999), whereas Middle Eastern communities are commonly labeled as collectivistic cultures (Hofstede et al. 2010; Ajami 2016; San Martin et al. 2018).

Individuals hailing from individualistic cultures view themselves as being more independent from others and prioritize individual goals, needs, and interests. On the other hand, individuals from collectivistic cultures perceive themselves as deeply embedded in situations and relationships (Schwartz 1990). Therefore, advice-giving in English is typically considered a face-threatening speech act that needs to be hedged or hinted at (Brown and Levinson 1987; Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Leech 1989; Wilson and Kunkel 2000; Chentsova-Dutton and Vaughn 2011; Shaw and Hepburn 2013). However, in Arabic, advice-giving is considered an act of cooperation and solidarity that can be direct, showing genuine concern for the advisees rather than threatening their autonomy, logical thinking abilities, or world knowledge (Hosni 2020; El-Dakhs and Ahmed 2021). Nonetheless, this pattern can be broken in urgent situations. As mentioned in Section 2, El-Dakhs (2021) found that the Australian Ministry of Health used mostly direct advice with imperative verbs while posting about COVID-19.

The findings of this research are consistent with previous literature on Egyptian Arabic (Hosni 2020; El-Dakhs and Ahmed 2021), as outlined in Section 2. It appears that Algerians, similar to Egyptians, tend to provide direct advice, whereas Jordanians do not (Al-Shboul and Zarei 2013; Al-Shboul and Abumahfouz 2018). This raises inquiries regarding whether directness is exclusive to North African Arabs and not to Asian Arabs and the underlying reasons behind this difference. Furthermore, it is critical to consider whether we would obtain different outcomes if the study were conducted using different methodologies, as discussed in the next section. It would be prudent to employ various methods to confirm the findings before drawing conclusions and identifying patterns.

5. Conclusion

The study examined the advice-giving strategies of Algerian men and women, finding that gender and social status did not impact the choice of direct advice-giving strategies regardless of the advisee's social status. Algerian advice-giving is viewed as a collaborative and supportive act that does not require any form of

mitigation or implication, which should be understood to avoid cross-cultural misunderstandings. This study addresses a gap in the literature by exploring advice-giving in Algerian Arabic compared to other Arabic dialects, which is essential for effective cross-cultural communication.

Further research using other methods, like semi-structured interviews and corpus analysis, is necessary to confirm that Algerians prefer direct advice regardless of the advisor's gender or the advisee's social status. Once the findings are established, we can confidently conclude that Algerians use advice to foster collaboration and solidarity, enhancing support and genuine concern for the advisee.

6. Limitations of the study

While Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) provide a convenient method for collecting pragmatic data, it is important to acknowledge their limitations. Due to their controlled nature, DCTs may not fully capture naturalistic speech acts, and contextual factors may not be adequately controlled. Additionally, the reliance on a small number of participants may limit the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, unlike their female counterparts, the broad age range among male participants raises concerns about potential age-related influences on the results. Despite these limitations, we recognize the value of DCTs as preliminary examination tools. Future research could explore additional methods, such as semi-structured interviews or corpus analysis, to supplement and validate the findings obtained from DCTs.

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