

Advice giving

**An investigation of teacher-student interaction
when giving advice**

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Abstract

Giving advice is an essential part of working as a teacher. However, advice-giving can be a sensitive topic depending on how the advice is delivered by the teacher. It remains to be seen what kind of approach teachers need to use to reach out and give advice to their students as successfully as possible. The present study aims to examine some different linguistic approaches teachers use to give advice to students. This was done by carrying out a Conversation Analysis on text extracts involving teacher and student interaction in an advising setting. The texts extracts were taken from The Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English. The results show that there were two main types of advice-giving strategies found in the data: direct and indirect advice giving. Both strategies seemed to be successful in that the students accepted the advice provided and did not argue with the teacher about its validity.

Keywords: Advice giving, linguistics, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, teacher-student interaction.

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1. Introduction

Giving advice of various kinds is a part of being a teacher. The advice given in the classrooms can be in the form of written or verbal advice, and it can concern advice related to students' educational work (e.g. help with how to progress with an essay or project), or problems students need advice about involving their physical or mental health may occur in students' lives. For instance, a visit to the academic advising office is “the place to go to for assistance in understanding and making connections between your personal goals and your educational career according to the home page of the University of North Texas (UNT). They further write that what you can expect from an advisor at their school. Advice should be able to provide you with advice about with information about different resources and services of the school. Furthermore, as earlier stated, an advisor should also be able to help the students with understanding the purpose and motivations of why it is important to further their educations, this is done by providing realistic goal-setting, help with decision making and providing help to help the students to understand what is expected of them to finish their studies. (UNT 2021).

It is in the nature of the concept ‘advice’ that the advice given is meant as a helpful tool to help students with a problem they have. However, the advice given is not always received gratefully and positively. According to UNT “Academic advising is a collaborative educational process in which you are an active participant (2021). You and your advisor are partners in pursuing your academic success”, in other words: the process of academic advising has an important factor of that the advisor and student need to work together to find understanding and acceptance for the advice to both be helpful and successful. Occasionally, the person on the receiving end of the advice may resist the advice given. Examples of students resisting advice will be provided in this study. (For instance, see section 2.1.1)

The topic of the current study is explored using Conversation Analysis. Conversation Analysis (CA) is a sub-branch of Discourse Analysis (DA). CA is a tool used in linguistics to analyze transcribed discourse to explore, for instance, how coherence and meaning are intertwined (Cook 2010, p. 435-436). In the present study, CA will be used on extracts of student-teacher interactions in order to analyze and compare different linguistic approaches teachers use and explore what effect the given advice has on students. Most previous studies on advice giving focus on the teacher-

parent context (See, for instance, Cheatham & Ostrovsky 2011). Only very limited attention has been paid to advice given in a highschool and university setting. The present study seeks to bridge this gap in the literature by analyzing conversations between teacher and students to find useful approaches involving advice-giving.

1.1 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of the present study is to analyze the linguistic approaches teachers use to give advice to students at high school and at the university, and to investigate the students' responses to the advice given. The research questions are the following:

- (1) Do the teachers giving advice use a **Direct** or **Indirect approach**?
- (2) Are the students' responses to the advice considered positive or negative?

If the students' responses are interpreted as positive, then the advice giving is considered '**successful**', and if the student's response is interpreted as negative, the advice giving is considered '**unsuccessful**'. (More information about successful and unsuccessful responses can be found in section 2.1.1 .)

2. Background

In section 2.1, a definition of what constitutes advice will be provided. Section 2.2 subsequently covers a literature review of prior research done on the topic of advice.

2.1 Advice

Giving advice is the act of providing information and direction. The act of giving advice is not the same as a directive on implying or forcing one to act. The act of giving advice differs from giving orders by stating possible options that the recipient may or may not have. Advice giving constitutes conveying a message that should lead to reflection and action in the future with future tasks or considerations for the receiver (Pilnick & Zaytz 2016, p. 348). In a study of advice in a university setting using Conversation Analysis, advice is defined as "any activity that involves one party conveying to another what the former believes to be beneficial to the latter regarding some performance or behaviour" (Waring 2007, p. 367). In a classroom setting, advice is given by a teacher and serves as a means of creating an understanding in the receiver. Advice is a means to

understand current situations and future scenarios that the advice may apply or lead to (Davidson & Edwards-Groves 2018, p. 3).

2.1.1 Unsuccessful vs. Successful advice

A potential problem with advice giving is that the advice must be delivered the right way to have a positive effect. Therefore, it is up to trained professionals, such as teachers, to educate themselves in the subject matter of advice giving to be able to give advice in an appropriate way. When the advice has been given, it is up to the student to understand and apply it to their issue (Pilnick & Zaytz 2016, p. 348). Due to the fact that the act of giving advice involves two or more individuals interacting, the advice may be accepted or rejected.

Successful advice is advice that is accepted by the student (Davidson & Edwards-Groves 2018, p. 4). It can be identified by analyzing the students' response which should consist of a show of agreement, interest and/or understanding of the given advice. Then it is up to the recipient to follow through to reflect and act on the advice that has been given (Sandlund 2014, p. 646). A successful instance of advice is exemplified below. Example (1) shows advice from a Primary school teacher (T) to given to a parent (F) who shows no form of resistance to the advice given and has started considering what to do next. Since the parent's response is positive, the advice given is thus interpreted as successful. In the following examples, (+) and (++) are symbols for shorter and longer pauses respectively in the transcription.

Example 1:

1. F: any suggestions for (++) uhm anything that she might be working on now for the home?
2. (++) //like//
3. T: //sure//
4. F: is there some specific thing you're working on maybe this week this month (+) that //uh//
5. T: //uh// right now we're working on looking at things signs of winter and things that like there's no leaves on the trees and uh there's lots of things I put in the newsletter (+) things that you can work on, uhm (++) point out things when you're uhm out and about (++) u::hm=
6. F: = okay so I could probably do uh I got an idea uh (+) I figured uh when it when it's nice if we could probably go out for a little treasure hunt=

7. T: = uh huh oh yeah

Unsuccessful advice is advice that is rejected (Davidson & Edwards-Groves 2018, p. 4) It can be identified by the receiver's show of complete disinterest. Advice can also be viewed as unsuccessful if the receiver shows resistance to the advice that has been given (Pilnick & Zaytz 2016, p. 348-349). This is exemplified in example (2) below between a student's mother and a teacher.

Example 2:

1. M: just constantly he's very (+) destructive=
2. T: =uh huh (++) well and (1) eh he we don't see that here
3. M: uh huh
4. T: >and we're not< he every once in a while (1) he has thrown things, but we haven't seen it in a few weeks
5. M: uh huh
6. T: uhm (+) but then h- he comes over and he picks it up (+) and he says sorry (1) and //uh//
7. M: //boy// I wish I could get that at home
8. T: well we tell well a::nd there's a consequence
9. M: uh huh
10. T: for that. (+) you know if you choose not to pick it up, then you're choosing to lose gym time //or you're choosing//
11. M: //I'm trying that at// home
12. T: I an- it//s://
13. M: //ha//rd
14. T: hard it is hard it's taken us a long time to build it
15. M: uh //huh// = A confirmation/agreement
16. T: //so// don't don't be discouraged, it's hard
17. M: //uh huh// = A confirmation/agreement
18. T: //it is//>and you've got three<

2.1.2 Direct Advice vs. Indirect Advice

Direct advice is an approach involving teachers giving direct instructions to the student. It consists of telling the student what to do next. Direct advice given by someone can be identified by the use of imperative sentences and modal verbs in the same sentence as the advice (Cheatham & Ostrosky

2011, p. 30-31). Example (3) below illustrates the use of direct advice given by a teacher to one of their students. T stand for teacher and S stand for student. The answers within the brackets is back-channeling from the student during the teacher's turn.

Example 3:

T: yeah this is solid right here. [S: is this materi- okay.] so, you have one resistance here which you can calculate from the Nusselt number. [S: okay] you have the Nusselt number you get the H you calculate the resistance here. then you have, probably like, you might you might wanna think about the thickness too but let's not worry about that. then from here from to here you have a shape factor which is given here. [S: okay] it's this case right? so you use this shape factor for the resistance from here to here. [S: okay] then from here to here you have an H, so it's one over H-A area being this, and then again from here to here another shape factor from here to here, another H. (MICASE)

Indirect advice, on the other hand, is an indirect approach involving, for instance, indirect answers to questions. The advice contains generalized information suggested may help the receiver with their problem, (instead of giving specific direct advice on how to handle an issue or a situation). Indirect advice can be identified in conversations by the lack of imperative sentences and/or use of modal verbs. In the context of student and teacher, an indirect approach could deal with how teachers handle certain sensitive problems that often occur in schools (Cheatham & Ostrosky 2011, p. 31-35). An example of Indirect advice is shown in example (4) below is from a teacher to a mother of one the teacher's students.

Example 4:

“for that. you know if you choose not to pick it up, then you're choosing to lose gym time or you're choosing” (Cheatham & Ostrosky 2011, p. 32).

2.2 Literature review

Researching the topic of advice, Cheatham and Ostrosky studied how teachers gave advice to parents about their young children in a parent-teacher conferences setting. Cheatham and Ostrosky also used the Conversation Analysis for their study (2011, p.24). Material from conversations were six parent-teacher conferences. The study also used interviews to gather additional data for the study (2011, p.27). The results from the study show that teachers used two different approaches when conveying advice: direct advice and indirect advice. Direct advice was rarely given but served to give direct answers to concerns that parents had. Indirect advice entailed advice concerning the problem that parents had. Furthermore, the results from the study also indicated that parents and teachers worked together to solve problems concerning the children of the parents (2011, pp.29-39).

In another study on the topic of advice, Waring (2007) studied the use of advice giving in a university setting (2007). This was done using Conversation Analysis of transcribed data. The data was collected through audio recordings during a period of four years and consisted of 15 graduate peer tutoring sessions and 143 advising sequences in total (2007, p. 367). Results from the study show that advice given was seen having a positive effect on solving a problem or a way of highlighting benefits that the advice may provide. Additionally, the results show that the advice process was divided into a four-stages: (1) pre-advice, (2) immediately post-advice, (3) post-problematic uptake and (4) post-acceptance. The aim of the process of giving advice was manage the resistance of the recipient and be as pedagogical as possible when giving the advice (2007, p.387).

In another study using Conversation Analysis, Davidson, and Edwards-Groves (2018) wanted to examine how advice was given between a teacher and students. The aim of the study was to see how participants used reported or hypothetical speech when giving advice (2018, pp.2-4) **Reported speech** entails “replaying” prior events to give advice on what could have been done instead. Hypothetical speech involved how one should act if case x or y occurred (2018, pp.5-7). Findings show that both **reported** and **hypothetical speech** were deemed appropriate when giving advice (2018, p.14).

In the study of advice in the classroom, Betsy Rymes (1996) studied how the function of advice was applied to students. When teachers are using the function of giving advice to their students,

there is a need for trustworthiness and credulity in the dialogue between the teacher and his or her students. Furthermore, the study also mentioned factors that needed to be achieved between the teacher and the student. The factors that needed to be met were situational factors and social history. The situational factor was met when advice was given in a certain setting, provided that in certain situations giving advice would result in less resistance than others. The factor of social history was met when teachers and students had built up a certain relationship with each other and the students would feel that their teacher was competent and would want the best for their students (1996, pp.409-415)

3. Method and Material

In section 3.1, a description of the material will be provided. Section 3.2 subsequently presents the methodology that is used in the current study.

3.1 Material

The material analyzed in this study comes from two transcribed text extracts which contained 41692 words from 3 different supervision sessions from the **Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English** (MICASE). The Corpus was compiled in the year 2000 by the English Language Institute of the University of Michigan in the US. The MICASE corpus is a collection of almost 2 million words that have been audio-recorded and transcribed. All of the recorded material is from the University of Michigan. Each text extract consists of dialogue with one teacher and approximately 3-4 students. The text extracts consist of transcribed interactions between teacher and students in a setting where students receive advice about their school projects. The corpus contains data from several different speech situations in the academic setting such as lectures, discussions, and supervision sessions. The MICASE corpus was established to collect transcribed conversation with the goal of answering questions such as how academic and casual conversation differ from each other, and to analyze if there are gender differences in speech, and to show how students academic speech develops throughout their studies (Swales 2001, pp. 36-38).

In prior research, Labov explains that if someone is aware that they are being recorded, they act differently and the task of gathering data on naturally occurring speech is undermined by the researcher's presence since the recorded people unwittingly try to provide data that they view to be

viable to the study. This is called the **observer's paradox** (Labov 1970). This is a problem when using audio recordings. Attempts at trying to avoid the negative effects of the Observer's paradox have been made by increasing the time span of recording. It is argued that the participants forget about the recording equipment after a while. Whether this is indeed the case is not the subject of this study.

3.1.1 Ethical Considerations

This research follows the ethical procedures created by the Swedish Research Council ('*Vetenskapsrådet*'). All of the collected material used in the study comes from The Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English Database. The MICASE corpus is a well-known database and the compilers have made sure that all the data from teachers and students have been anonymized and cannot be traced back to anyone.

3.2 Method

This study used a **qualitative approach** to the analysis of the data. The reasoning behind the choice of method is that it allows for an in-depth analysis of how the participants speak and react to advice. The study will be done on data from a low number of participants, to enable the completion of this study within the limited time frame. The method chosen to analyze the collected material is **Conversation Analysis** (CA) which is a branch of Discourse Analysis. (See, for instance, Cook 2010, p. 431) Conversation Analysis (CA) originated in the 1960's. The work of an American sociologist named Harvey Sacks was essential in the start of the development of Conversation Analysis. CA was based upon studies of naturalistic observations. The method of CA provides the researcher with a method of analysis that serves to uncover how language is structured in conversations (Chatwin 2004, p. 131). Fundamental to Conversation analysis is the analysis of detailed transcriptions of naturally occurring language, and the researcher aims to identify recurring patterns of language and interaction. CA is developed to make sense of how meaning is achieved in conversations (Cook 2010, pp. 435-436).

In the present study, CA will be used on extracts of student-teacher interactions in order to analyze and compare a number of linguistic features used by the recorded teachers and students.

The linguistic features analyzed are the following:

- Turn-taking
- Pauses and filled pauses
- Hedges
- Backchanneling
- Use of modal verbs
- Use of imperative sentences

These linguistic features will be explained in section 3.2.1 below.

Finally, when writing the examples for this study, the tags of the speakers have been changed to differentiate the teacher from the students. The teacher from text extract 1 will have the tag 'T1' and the teacher from text extract 2 will have the tag 'T2'. The students in the text extracts will have the tags 'S1', 'S2', 'S3', etc. In addition, all turns have been numbered in the left margin to enable swift reference to specific turns.

3.2.1 Terminology

The following linguistic terms will be discussed in this study, and therefore require explanations.

Turn-Taking

In the act of conversation, there are different styles of involvement. Turn-Taking involves a speech act of two or more participants. In the conversation, the participants each take turn when speaking to convey their message rather than speak at the same time. The turn to speak is passed on to the next participants when a completion point has appeared. Completion points involve the end of a sentence or an apparent pause in the conversation (Yule 2017, p. 161).

Pauses and Filled pauses

Pauses in conversations occur when the speaker needs to recollect what it was that they were talking about. In conversation, a pause can be interpreted as someone passing on their turn to speak. Therefore, if speakers do not want to lose his turn of speech they will regularly use so-called filled

pauses. A filled pause is an utterance made to indicate that the speaker is thinking of what to say and simultaneously wish to keep their turn to speak. Examples of filled pauses are ‘um’, ‘em’, ‘er’ and ‘you know’ (Yule 2017, p. 162).

Hedges

So-called Hedges are used in conversation when the speaker is uncertain of what they are saying is accurate or complete. Hedges may also be used to signal politeness as they are careful, cautious expressions. Common examples of hedges are ‘sort of’, ‘kind of’, ‘think’, ‘feel’, ‘may’ and ‘correct me if I am wrong’ (Yule 2017, p. 165).

Back-channeling

Usually only one person, referred to as the speaker, speaks at a time, i.e has the turn to speak. The person on the receiving end of the conversation is called the receiver. When the speaker is conveying their message, the receiver may use certain words, for example, ‘yeah’, ‘oh’, ‘wow’ and ‘really’ to show that they are listening and showing attention to what the speaker is talking about. The act of uttering these sounds is called back-channeling. (Yule 2017, p. 309).

3.2.2 The process of Conversation analysis

The first step in the process of Conversation analysis was to download transcribed extracts from the MICASE Corpus. The second step consisted of making use of the search functions of the corpus. The search function involved searching for advice-sessions between teachers and students. The third step involved the actual analysis of the collected data to collect segments of text which involved the giving of advice. Focus was put on identifying different approaches used by the teachers in the text extracts which involved categorizing the approaches into the following two categories (cf. Section 2.1.1):

- (1) **Direct advice**
- (2) **Indirect advice**

This was done by analyzing how turn-taking, pauses (and filled pauses), hedges, back-channeling, and modal verbs and imperative sentences were used in the conversations between teacher and students.

Then the attention was moved to categorizing the students' responses to the given advice. The students' responses were categorized into the following two categories:

(3) **Successful approach**

(4) **Unsuccessful approach**

The categorization of the students' responses was based on whether the advice was received positively and a show of gratitude and interest was displayed (i.e. a successful approach) or was negatively received with a display of disinterest and resistance to the advice given (i.e. an unsuccessful approach).

In chapter 4 below , the results of the study will be presented, and then the results will be discussed in chapter 5.

4. Results -

An initial analysis of the 2 text extracts made it clear that there were two main types of advice-giving present in the data: direct and indirect advice (cf. section 2.1.2). The results from the Conversation Analysis indicate that the teachers from both text extracts use direct advice as their primary approach of conveying advice to their students.

4.1 Direct advice

The first example of direct advice can be seen in example (5). In this example, the first teacher is giving their student advice on how they should further their studies. In turn 2 student-3 states that they need to see an academic advisor, showing the subject matter of the conversation. In turn 4 , teacher-1 uses direct advice to convey that the student 'should go and see Linda Donohue'. The direct advice can be identified by the repetitive usage of the modal verb 'should' (Cheatham & Ostrosky 2011, p. 30-31).

Example 5: **Direct advice from teacher-1 ('T1')
on how Student-3 (S3) should further their studies.**

1. S3: yeah cuz i have to, see an academic advisor. but, i wanted to wait till grades are in cuz hopefully that'll make me look better <LAUGH>
2. T1: you **should** um, you know who you should s-
do you have an academic advisor who
3. S3: no
4. T1: you know? you should go see um, uh Linda Donohue,
5. S3: Linda Donohue
6. T1: she, used to, she's, was in my cohort in the American Culture Program she's really great
7. S3: okay
8. T1: um, and uh, she, probably actually knows about a lot of cool classes because she's been a, student here so she knows professors
9. S3: oh okay
10. T1: and stuff. so i'd go see her
11. S3: alright
12. T1: okay?
13. S3: well thank you very much
14. T1: no problem
15. S3: and uh, you'll get my paper, and hopefully it'll be good.

Example (5) shows that Teacher-1 is advising Student-3 that s/he should go and see an academic advisor to get additional information about classes. Teacher-1 uses the common modal verb 'should' when giving out advice which is one of the identification elements of Direct advice. In turn 10 Teacher-1 repeats the advice in another form suggesting that if s/he was in the student's shoes then s/he 'would go and see her (the advisor)' This is another case of using a modal verb, this time 'would', when giving direct advice. In turns 13 and 15 Student-3 shows their appreciation of the given advice by thanking Teacher-1 and stating that s/he will submit his/her paper and that 'hopefully it'll be good'. So, Student-3 responds positively to the advice received and, due to the positive response and the apparent showing of no resistance, the advice can be viewed as successful advice (Sandlund 2014, p. 646). In turn 14, Teacher-1 responds to the gratitude of Student-3 with a 'no problem'.

Another instance of direct advice can be seen in example (6). In this example teacher-1 is having a session of advice with a Student-1 and their conversation concerns Student-1's essay. In turn 1 below, the student is introducing the topic i.e. the first outline s/he had given to Teacher-1 and Student-2 provides back-channeling in turn 2 showing that s/he is listening to Student-1. In turn 4

Teacher-1 acknowledges what Student-1 says by giving Student-3 positive feedback ‘‘that’s fine yeah. Then in turn 6 Teacher-1 starts giving Student-1 lengthy advice on how to progress with the essay writing and adds some constructive criticism about ‘interviewing your grandmother’.

Example 6: Direct advice from Teacher-1 to Student-1 about how to progress with an essay

1. S1: i kinda had to throw out like, th- the first outline i gave you
2. S2: mhm
3. S1: was kinda general idea and i had to throw some things outta that cuz like
4. T1: that's fine yeah
5. S1: just like rough ideas i had...
6. T1: great. now, um, you m- you might
though i don't know
i mean and this is not so important for the paper
but, i think this introduction sounds really good.
um, you- it's written really clearly and stuff.
um, now i worry, whether you are capturing by interviewing your grandmother,
um, that you're capturing what people do in Howell,
or whether you're capturing an older form of socializing, that still remains in
Howell especially among older people.
um, so you might i- it doesn't change your argument necessarily,
but you might wanna qualify it in that kinda way
7. S1: okay
8. T1: you see what i mean?
9. S1: okay i i made sure to ask
well let me write that down,
um, qualify i actually did,
um in a number of places,
um things that she said that i uh that interested me
i said you know, this is maybe why she says this or whatever.
10. T1: uhuh
11. S1: and also i made sure to ask her like, observations that i had made like.

Example 6 is another case of direct advice being the apparent result of the use of a modal verb. The modal verb used is ‘might’ when conveying the advice (Cheatham & Ostrosky 2011, p. 30-31). By using the modal verb ‘might’, the teacher suggests what to do next in the paper of the student, proposing that if the student uses their advice, it would be beneficial to the student. This advice is

met by positive response ‘well let me write that down’ from Student-1. The student repeats what the teacher says and writes it down. In prior research, findings have shown that if the receiver **repeats given advice**, then it can be analyzed as **successful** advice (Sandlund 2014, p. 646) .

Furthermore, the usage of the modal verb or **hedges**, can also be a sign of saving face and as a politeness marker (Tang, J, p. 157). The teacher may or may not be sure that the given advice is the correct answer to the student's issues, hence the usage of modal verbs. Using hedges or “hedging” can be **related to insecurity** or not wanting to be responsible for the results of the advice given to the recipient. However, it may also be analyzed Teacher-1 is showing politeness towards Student-1, i.e. rather than giving a direct advice that Student-1 is expected to follow, Teacher-1 opens the door to another possible interpretation by Student-1 in a polite way by using the tentative modal verb. Use of hedges is further discussed in chapter 5.

To further examine how teachers, use direct advice, a last example from Teacher-1 of direct advice can be seen in example (7). In this example, Teacher-1 is speaking with Student-3. The conversation is about the student's paper concerning problems with the housing situation in New York. Note the direct advice identifiable by the use of a modal verb given in turn 5 ‘you **could**, talk about the parent involvement day’ and in turn 13 ‘you **might** wanna include the just the Degas ballerinas’.

Example 7: **Direct advice from Teacher-1
regarding the progression of an essay**

1. T1: okay great so you've got, another theme
2. S3: mhm
3. T1: slash paragraph
4. S3: mhm
5. T1: since, that's how you're gonna organize this,
uh, about family. and you might wanna,
um, i mean you **could**, talk about the parent involvement day,
6. S3: down there mhm
7. T1: with that paragraph instead of in a,
8. S3: mhm
9. T1: um, alright. uh, other, other things? oh yes.
10. S3: the religion?

11. T1: one other big thing.
12. S3: or
13. T1: well, the, yeah the religion um,
but you, you **might** wanna include the just the Degas ballerinas
14. S3: right, right
15. T1: too i mean cuz in a way they do kind of go together
i mean this is, taking images that are, i mean, okay.
i mean for the in the images one i mean it's- what is it doing?
16. S3: well it's, it's appropriating white images and making them black.
17. T1: mhm. so right
in your words appropriating... white images and making them black... why...?
18. S3: uh, why? <LAUGH>
i think that that's also a direct you know...
speaking to the, the popular opinion that blacks don't have culture.
19. T1: okay right.
so i mean especially in a way the,
i mean this is this is high culture
20. S3: right right
21. T1: Degas is high culture
22. S3: right
23. T1: right?
we're not talking folk culture
24. S3: mhm
25. T1: we're talking high culture.
right so it's kind of appropriating high culture.
oh but what about the religious ones?
i mean cuz the Last Supper,
and there were all these, African-American Jesuses and stuff there
26. S3: right lots of them <LAUGH>
27. T1: so?
28. S3: um, ap- takin- appropriating Christianity as a black, religion

The positive responses to each advice can be seen in turns 14, 20, and 26 respectively. The advice from the teacher is considered to be successful (Sandlund 2014, p. 646). The frequent usage of modal verbs and hedges in this example may be another case of the teacher saving face, this will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

A final example of direct advice is shown in example (8) below taken from text extract 2. In this conversation, Teacher-2 is advising their student on what honor courses they should consider, i.e.

how the student should further their studies. Teacher-2 suggests courses that may be viable to the student. The advice given can be seen in turn 1 'you **might wanna** take, this biological anthro course or a beginning geology course'. The advice is considered direct due to the use of the modal verb '**might**' + '**wann'a**' and '**could**' (Cheatham & Ostrosky 2011, p. 30-31). Then in turn 3 Teacher-2 continues by suggesting further action if Student-2 accepts the first advice.

Example 8: **Direct advice from Teacher-2
about courses that Student-2 might study**

1. T2: you know, you **might wanna** do that,
and then you **might wanna** take,
this biological anthro course or a beginning geology course or,
2. S2: mhm
3. T2: you know something like that, and then if you decide you wanna do geology or,
bio anthro, then you **could** use that, poli sci for social science distribution.
4. S2: right, okay
5. T2: and if you decide you want so- uh poli sci plus take some economics,
then you take these other courses for natural science distribution
6. S2: right, okay so nothing is wasted really
7. S2: so okay so these a- courses would all be, worth it no matter how i

8. T2: exactly,
9. S2: okay
10. T2: exactly, no matter how you really put it together.
11. S2: okay
12. T2: um, the one expectation that we have, is that you take two honors courses per term,

13. S2: mhm
13. T2: and, in that, orientation newsletter that you got in the mail
14. S2: mhm
15. T2: those blue sheets of paper, in the middle?
they've, they have the honors, uh courses for first-year students listed in there
16. S2: mkay there's, two booklets that we got i'm
1. S2: no

17. T2: no uh i'm referring to this
18. S2: i'm not sure if i remember that one
19. T2: oh, you **will**, you **will** remember,
i guarantee you

20. S2: oh, yeah, okay, right, i did see this,
yeah, oh mhm, right, yeah

In turn 7, Student-2 is showing positive response to all of the suggested courses ‘so okay so these a- courses would all be, worth it no matter how I’. Student-2 shows both a very positive response and interest in the advice given and, like Example 6, Student-2 does not show any form of resistance to the advice given. The advice is considered to be successful (Sandlund 2014, p. 646).

In conclusion, direct advice was identified by the prevalent use of modal verbs, hedges, and imperatives in the context of advice giving. In all the text extracts, the direct advice provided was analyzed as accepted by the student. It would thus seem as if this strategy, Direct advice, proved successful in the context of the present study. However, all of the direct advice was given in the context of advising sessions. The importance of context will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

4.2 Indirect advice

In this section, we will turn to a comparative analysis of the instances where indirect advice was provided by the teacher, and further investigate to what extent this indirect approach was successful or not.

In example 9 below, Teacher-2 is the one who gives the indirect advice. The topic of the conversation is how to further the student’s studies. The indirect advice can be seen in turn 7 ‘now you see this here, this is a course in paleontology’ and turn 9 ‘but it tells you that you have to have an introductory’

Example 9: Indirect advice from Teacher-2 to Student-2 about an essay involving the Solar System

1. T2: evolution yeah uh okay Introductory Geography Water Climate and Mankind,
the Planets, Di- oh.
2. S2: oh yeah, and i... i might even wanna, take a, astronomy course or something i,
3. S1: yeah

4. S2: i like, i'm not a big fan of, and that's the thing with like the geology,
i'm not a fan of chemistry
5. T2: yeah
6. S2: and
7. T2: now you see this here, this is a course in paleontology
8. S2: oh it is,
i didn't
9. T2: but it tells you that you have to have an introductory
10. S2: biology
11. T2: biology course and, Geology one-seventeen before you can take it.
so... so you look and you say
okay, well what is this, one-seventeen is that introductory course in geology.
12. S2: mhm
13. T2: so, that's one way to look at it
14. S2: okay
15. T2: now another way... so we **can** also go and look at astronomy
16. S2: mkay
17. T2: and it tells you about the sol- you know,
you've got The Solar System, you've got The Stars Galaxies and the Universe,
and see some of these courses are intended for students who, are not gonna be
majors and others for students who are
18. S2: right
19. T2: so you've got to , **kind of** look at that
20. S2: mkay
21. T2: and some of them have labs and some of them don't.
uh, and the lab is, great fun, because you go up on the, roof of Angell Hall
where they have the telescopes
22. S2: oh, that would be fun
23. T2: and that's where and that's where you have your labs. so
24. S2: that would be exciting, yeah

The advice given about the Solar System in example (8) above is considered general information that may or may not be relevant to the student. If advice can be considered **general or public information**, then it is considered **indirect advice** (Cheatham & Ostrosky 2011, p. 30.) Student-2's response to the advice can be seen in turns 22 'oh, that would be fun' and in turn 24 'that would be exciting, yeah.' Both of the student's responses to the advice are very positive and Student-2 shows no resistance at all to the given advice.

Another example of indirect advice can be found in example (10) below taken from a session of advice giving with Teacher-2. In this example, Teacher-2 is trying to help Student-3 to further develop an essay. The topic of the essay is about the subject of religious imagery. In turn 4 the teacher starts giving the student advice and viable information on how to reflect on the topic and how to further develop the student's essay. Teacher-2 seems quite knowledgeable about the subject of religion, and during their conversation, the student seems quite enthusiastic about what the teacher has to say about the subject. Teacher-2 continues to further develop his or her reflection of how religion and politics has a deeper meaning between turns 24 and 37.

**Example 10: Indirect advice from Teacher-2 to Student-3
about how to develop an essay**

1. S3: um, ap- takin- appropriating Christianity as a black, religion.
2. T2: right... yeah. i mean, i mean obviously the the prevalence of, religious imagery
i mean the church is really, important. <LAUGH>
3. S3: right right.
4. T2: um, and lots of African-American churches have, white blue eyed Jesuses in them
i mean,
5. S3: right
6. T2: probably decreasingly.
7. S3: mhm
8. T2: um but in the old days they definitely did...
um, so what does it mean
i mean so the church is really important, in, African-American life
9. S3: mhm
10. T2: or, for many people, um, and, the um...
so what does it mean then within that sort of context,
to emphasize the sort of black Jesus.
11. S3: i think it's
12. T2: it's not just about impropriating religion right because i mean,
13. S3: right
14. T2: you got religion
15. S3: i think it's... kind of an empowerment thing.
16. T2: uhuh, okay
17. S3: that this religion was no- was in a way forced upon_
i mean
18. T2: okay

19. S3: not in a way it was totally forced upon them,
20. T2: uhuh
21. S3: but yet they've taken it and made it their own.
22. T2: okay
23. S3: that this is not just, them bowing to the white man's religion.
24. T2: okay right. yeah. i think that's a very good point.
um, i mean it's also making a kind of <PAUSE:06>
i mean it's connecting in some sense religion and politics.
um,
25. S3: yeah
26. T2: and saying uh, you know, last time i checked like,
God wasn't black or white and
27. S3: right, right
28. T2: neither you know Jesus wasn't, um <PAUSE:07>
so it's, it serves as a sort of cri- in and of itself like
i mean since, so many representations of God and Jesus are white
28. S3: mhm
29. T2: um the, kind of shock value of a black Jesus,
30. S3: right
31. T2: serves as a critique of sort of mainstream,
32. S3: right, right
33. T2: religion right?
i mean it reminds people that Jesus is always represented as white,
34. S3: right
35. T2: and that that's weird <LAUGH>
36. S3: right right
37. T2: okay so um, so i think both those points are important.
the kind of empowerment and critique.
um, good now other uh <PAUSE:05> other issues.
other, top- other things we haven't,
38. S3: uh
39. T2: covered in
40. S3: hm hm hm
41. T2: terms of, um
42. S3: in terms of
43. T2: themes like of
43. S3: at the festival?
44. T2: yeah <PAUSE:05>
45. S3: i think we covered,
let me find the page that's got the, actual notes
<LOOKING THROUGH NOTES>

46. T2: i mean, i think that i think that's pretty good
47. S3: i think that that's just about it

The advice given by Teacher-2 in example (10) is indirect advice. The indirect advice is identified by Teacher-2's way of working around the subject, instead of directly giving Student-3 the answer to how to deal with their essay problem. Student-3 is analyzed as receiving the advice positively and showing no case of disagreement or resistance. This approach seems quite helpful when discussing ideas to further nudge students in the "right" direction. This will be further discussed in the next section, Chapter 5.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to map out and exemplify two different linguistic approaches teachers use to give advice to students during advising sessions: **Direct advice** and **Indirect Advice**. The study also attempted to interpret if these approaches by the teacher were considered **successful** or **unsuccessful** by the student. This was done by using the methodology of Conversation Analysis on text extracts taken from MICASE. In conclusion, the analysis showed that both linguistic approaches, i.e. both direct and indirect advice, were **successful** means of giving advice. In the instances of advice giving, the student showed little to no resistance to the advice that has been given.

Prior research from Primary school working with advice to parents has shown that direct advice is hardly ever used, and that Indirect advice leads to considerably less resistance from the parents (Cheatham & Ostrosky 2011, p.31-32). However, in the text extracts taken from the MICASE Corpus, **direct** advice was the only approach Teacher-1 used for giving advice and Teacher-2 most often used direct advice with only a few instances of Indirect advice. The fact that the two results differ may be due to differences in the context and setting in which the advice was given. The text extracts taken from MICASE were in the category of advising sessions and the participants were students in need of help to further their education. The advice given may be seen as **requested advice** (Waring 2007, p.373-374). When advice is requested, it is more likely that the teacher giving the advice uses **direct advice to confront the issue** instead of **discussing the problem**

which is **indirect** advice (Cheatham & Ostrosky 2011, p.30). This may explain the frequent use of direct advice of both the teachers in the text extracts.

Direct advice implies that the one who gives advice has information that may benefit the recipient. In the usage of direct advice, the teachers use modal verbs and imperatives to tell the recipient **how** to progress in their endeavors. The modal verbs may indicate that the teachers are trying to save face and they may be a marker of politeness. The modal verbs used in the context of direct advice can also be viewed as a form of hedging (cf. Section 2.3.1). The occurrence of these hedges could indicate that the teachers are not entirely sure of how to help the students. Therefore, they are giving direct advice by using modal verbs as hedges to show that they are not completely sure of their utterances and thereby they offer a polite possibility to the student to have different ideas. So, in this way the teacher may be analyzed as not being responsible for the results of the advice given (Robinson 2014, p.1–5).

In each conversation between the teachers and students, the teachers are in the process of providing beneficial advice concerning the students' studies. Compared to advice giving to parents of Primary school children, there were no apparent problems in the text extracts of the present study. Furthermore, since most of the advice was **requested**, it might also explain the low resistance shown from the students as shown by Waring (2007, p.73) who found that if the advice was requested of the teacher, the likelihood of the advice being resisted and viewed as unsuccessful was slim to none, a result supported by this study.

Due to the small scope of this study and time constraints, more research is needed to further investigate the topic of advice giving. For instance, ideas that come to mind when thinking of the topic of advice giving, is that a quantitative approach may prove enlightening. If a quantitative approach was applied to a similar methodology of the present study, then it may provide useful data when comparing the instances of advice giving. Researchers could, for example, calculate the number of instances of direct and indirect advice and compare which out of the two approaches was used the most. Such studies could also calculate the frequency of modal verbs and imperatives in direct advice to see which is more frequently used out of the two.

Additionally, age could be a factor that may prove interesting to study. All in all, the results show

that advice giving is a viable tool when it comes to assisting students with problem solving and benefiting them with helpful information. In short, this proposed additional future research may greatly assist teachers and teacher candidates in their efforts to approach the topic of advice giving at both highschools and universities.

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