

**THE EFFECT OF TEACHERS' USE OF PRAISE AND CRITISM IN
STUDENTS' LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF MOIBEN DIVISION OF UASIN
GISHU DISTRICT**

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AM13/1217/04**

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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL


DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

KIRUI CAROLINE CHEPKORIR. SIGN..........DATE..16/04/07.

APPROVAL

This MA Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

DR. CATHERINE KITETU. SIGN..........DATE..20.4.07

DEDICATION

To my dear parents
Joseph Kirui
And
Mary Kirui,
Who made great sacrifices
To bring me up and educate me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study would not have accomplished its objectives were it not for the assistance accorded the researcher by the following people.

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ABSTRACT

Language is the most powerful instrument of learning in all the areas of the school curriculum. Teachers, especially language teachers, make a difference and have enough impact on the lives of students. The effect of teachers' use of praise and criticism on students is not adequately documented in Kenya. This study therefore aimed to examine the praise and criticism phrases (locutionary act) used by the teacher, the intention of the teacher for praising or criticizing (illocutionary act) and the effect of these phrases (perlocutionary force) on the students. The findings would encourage teachers to use more praise and less criticism hence creating a conducive environment for learning and foster achievement. Better achievement in our secondary schools would be of great benefit to higher levels learning institutions and the nation as a whole, as a result of qualified personnel. The study is also useful to linguists, as it gives a description of how a speaker's choice of words affects the listener's reactions. In order to achieve the objectives, the researcher used observational schedules, audio recording, note taking, a questionnaire for students and interview schedules for eight teachers and sixteen students, from the two schools, who were selected through purposeful sampling. The study was guided by Austin's and Searle's Speech Act Theory, in examining the locutionary act (teacher talk) and the perlocutionary force (students' reactions). The data obtained was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings of the study show that though teachers use both praise and criticism in the classroom, criticisms are more prevalent. This affects negatively the students' participation in class and achievement. In view of these findings, the researcher recommends that teachers should use more of praise than criticism in the classroom as praise encourages the students and hence enhance learning whereas criticism discourages the students and hinders learning. Further research needs to be conducted on a larger sample and at higher levels of learning (tertiary levels) to examine the effects of praise and criticism on students. A study should also be conducted to look into the effects of teachers' written comments on students.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Praise: The study adopted Edwards and Westgate's (1994) definition of the term praise. They define praise as focusing on the positive aspects of the student's contribution. Praise shows approval and express admiration about achievements or characteristics of a person. Praise plays a part in instrumental reinforcement for correct responses, accurate homework, improved scores and likeable traits.

Criticisms: The Cambridge International Dictionary of English defines criticism as disapproval or giving disapproving judgement. To criticize is to give negative judgements about someone or something. Criticism may express dislike of or disagreement with something or someone. Constructive criticism, on the other hand, is positive and is meant to improve what already exists. In this study, the term criticism is used to mean disapproving or negative judgement. Criticism may be considered as blame and focuses on the negative aspects of the student's contribution, which shows that the teacher does not value the student's contribution.

Reaction: This refers to a response, which is the act or feeling produced in answer to a situation, an utterance or act. The study focused on the student's reaction to the teacher's talk.

Phrase: This is one word or a group of words performing a grammatical function. E.g. lazy/ the stupid lazy boy/the clever girl.

Locutionary Act: This is an act of simply uttering a sentence from a language, a description of what the speaker says.

Illocutionary Act: This is what the speaker intends to do by uttering a sentence. They include stating, promising, apologizing, threatening, predicting, ordering, embarrassing, intimidating, discouraging and requesting.

Perlocutionary Act: This is the effect on the hearer of what a speaker says. They include such effects as persuading, embarrassing, intimidating, boring, irritating or inspiring the hearer, encouraging and discouraging.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the problem

According to Edwards and Westgate (1994) language is the most powerful instrument of learning in all the areas of the school curriculum. Moskowitz (1978), explains that teachers, especially language teachers, make a difference and that they have enough impact on the lives of students. She argues that the trouble is that teachers are not aware of what students actually learn from them. She adds that if students find their thoughts, feelings and experiences are regarded as important in school, school becomes important to them and they develop positively and if not students tend to have low self esteem and dislike school.

An article entitled Teacher Talk: "Winning ways & building rapport with students", from the Centre for Social Development & Education (University of Massachusetts Boston), explains that where students explode in the classroom teachers tend to take it too literally and fall into the trap of saying "Don't you dare say that to me". The students here are blowing off steam or are having a bad day. The teacher's confrontation and reaction lead to problems, as confrontational situations make both lose. The teacher should work with the student to solve the problems

The idea that learning can be stimulated and enhanced through the use of rewards goes back at least as far as the educational practices of the ancient Greeks. Learning has always held a high place in Jewish culture, too, and edible rewards were provided to students of the Torah as far as the twelfth century (1190BC). Numerous other accounts make clear that instrumental reinforcement practices have been in use throughout history (Ingersoll, 1996).

An article entitled "Strike fever in schools" in *School & Career Team* magazine, based on the Kenyan Secondary School Heads Association meeting held in June 2005, focuses on indiscipline in schools and shows that corporal punishment and other harsh measures meted out to students to stop or control unrest have proven to be faulty as they have usually exploded into fresh and more devastating strikes. Hence, other forms should be sought to resolve indiscipline in schools. In the same meeting, Education Permanent Secretary Karega Mutahi blamed parents and teachers for the indiscipline for inciting students, hence, language is a factor that should be considered.

According to Muigai (2004), in an article entitled "Conflict resolution in schools" in *Education & Training* magazine, the banning of caning in Kenyan schools has contributed a lot to

conflict in schools. This article quotes a classroom teacher lamenting "Teachers have been reduced into [sic] mere barkers and not biters following the withdrawal of corporal punishment, hence maintaining order in schools has become tricky as one has to resolve to other ways." Language, therefore, is a powerful tool which can be used by teachers to win students and foster learning or discourage the students and make them rebel, hence hindering learning.

The study concentrated on verbal reinforcement by focusing on the teachers' use of praise and criticism in the classroom.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Research has been conducted on the effects of reinforcing students' achievement and improvement in school in other parts of the world especially in America. However the role of language in students' learning has not been examined in Kenya yet words are powerful. The study therefore set out to examine the praise and criticism (locutions) teachers use when addressing students and the effect of these phrases on students' learning (perlocutionary force).

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To establish the nature of praise and criticism used by teachers.
2. To determine the effect of praise and criticism on the students' learning.

1.4 Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following assumptions:

1. Whereas teachers often use criticism when addressing students they rarely use praise words.
2. Students react positively to praise and negatively to criticism.

1.5 Significance of the Study

There is need for proper communication in the classroom between the teacher and the students to create a conducive environment for effective teaching and learning. The way teachers talk to students determine how much the students learn from them.

Teachers' use of praise and criticism in the classroom is not adequately documented in Kenya. This study brings to light the praise and criticism phrases used by teachers, how often teachers use these phrases and their effects on the students. The findings of this study will encourage teachers to use more praise and less criticism hence creating a conducive environment for learning and foster achievement. This study is significant to the field of Linguistics and particularly to Discourse Analysis studies since the major focus is on

Locutionary Acts (praise and criticism phrases) and their Perlocutionary force (effect) on students' learning.

Better achievement in our secondary school will be of great benefit to higher level learning institutions and the nation as a whole. Students with better grades will join these institutions and provide qualified personnel to the nation.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study involved teachers and students, as these are the groups directly involved and affected by the use of language in the classroom.

The study covered Moiben Division of Uasin Gishu District. The research was restricted to two schools in Moiben Division, which are Moiben Secondary and Sosiyo Secondary Schools, because of time and funds. These schools are mixed (boys and girls) and are therefore a representative of the schools in the Division.

The researcher used form one, two, three and four students, this is because all the students in the school get involved in learning when their teachers use praise and criticism in the classroom. The study focused on the use of these phrases naturally as they occur in the classrooms.

Time and funds available for the study were a limitation as the researcher had to collect data within the stipulated time. The financial resources also did not allow longer periods of data collection. So everything was done within the stipulated time since disruption would hinder the successful completion of the whole exercise.

The study focused on teacher talk, more specifically on teacher's use of praise and criticism in the classroom. The researcher was concerned in looking at how much teachers praised and criticized students and the effect of these phrases on the students. The locution act (the uttering of the praise or criticism by the teacher) and the perlocution force (the reaction of the student to the praise or criticism) were the key issues in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with literature review on the effect of teacher talk (praise and criticism) on the students, research findings on instructional reinforcement in America and the situation in Kenya. The chapter also presents the theoretical framework adopted in the study. The Speech Act Theory propounded by John Searle and John Austin guided the study in examining the locution act (teacher talk), the illocutionary act (the intention of the teacher for praising or criticizing) and the perlocution force (the consequent response from the student). The study was interested in looking at the teachers' use of praise and criticism in the classroom and the effect of these phrases on the students.

2.1 The Effect of Teacher Talk on Students ✓

Moskowitz (1978) explains that teachers, especially language teachers, make a difference and that they have enough impact on the lives of students. She argues that the trouble is that teachers are not aware of what students actually learn from them. "A teacher actually may affect the entire course of a person's life. In my own case, my fourth grade teacher and a professor in graduate school contact early and later in my life changed my future. We're never too young or too old to be influenced. Most of the time, though, such experiences are not communicated to us by students, so we don't realize our power to influence for better or for worse" (Moskowitz 1978:15).

Moskowitz (1978) adds that if students find that their thoughts, feelings and experiences are regarded as important in school, school becomes important to them and they develop positively. It is essential to establish a warm, supportive, accepting and non-threatening climate. Moskowitz (ibid) suggests that high risk topics, that is topics which hurt others. For example, "My worst failure", "what I dislike about myself" should be avoided. She argues that these topics are not only high-risk but also deal with the negative side of things.

Bolinger (1980) argues that words and grammar are full of bias due to overtly marked words, and that the rare person who on the rare occasion wants to be wholly neutral has to walk on a tight rope. He adds that most of the words in English, and most likely every language, has some taint of liking or disliking. This leads to synonyms and antonyms in positive and negative shades, which seem to form in our brains.

Bolinger (ibid) further argues that words are loaded. He explains that, loaded words are euphemistic or dysphemistic, that is, they picture what they designate in a favorable or an unfavorable way. Euphemisms and dysphemisms especially the more flattering, offensive or otherwise colourful ones are easy to notice. He gives the following examples calling a woman ‘a hag’, or a man ‘a coward’ or a person of either sex ‘a lush’ is to lay on the bias.

Bolinger (ibid) explains that some words keep on depreciating. For example, a child associates someone sick with evil and hence the word has become as insulting as ‘rotten’. The phrase ‘mentally retarded’ was not commonly used initially but you can now hear even a child ask ‘Are you retarded /MR, (mentally retarded)? Or say ‘what a retardo! Which are terminologies for ‘low intelligence’? According to Bolinger (1980), the widest spread of hidden bias is in the English Adjectives.

The typical adjective is scaled, that is, it comes in a more and a less or a better and worse forms.

For Example:

Praise		criticism
Truthful	versus	unreliable
Strong	versus	inexperienced
Clever	versus	big fool/so dumb

The following sentences are example of biased expressions.

- John is a big fool
- John is an awful fool
- Did you see that idiot try to cross the street ahead of me?

Bolinger(ibid) further gives:–“Likeable, admirable, perfect, caring, clever and teachable”, as examples of good adjectives. These good adjectives can be used to praise students so as to encourage the learners to participate in class. Criticisms, on other hand, should be avoided as seen in words like “dishonourable, detestable, abominable, stupid, intolerable” which are examples of bad adjectives and may discourage students a lot hence hindering learning.

Bolinger explains that language permits us to conceal on one side and reveal on the other. The revealing side is what concerns linguists because it is visible and requires no probing and secondly because there is too much to talk which cannot be taken for granted. The study focused on the praise and criticism words used by the teacher in the classroom while addressing the students.

According to Bolinger (ibid) T.V advertising has a high frequency of good/better/best in contrast to the low frequency of its antonym bad/worse/worst. ‘Bad’ is avoided hence adjectives like

ghastly, dreadful may not appear at all as opposed to wonderful and delicious. The good adjectives used in the advertisements persuade and attract the viewers to move closer and try the advertised products, even when they may not be favourable as such. These views concur with the findings of the study, as it was evident that the use of praise words encouraged the students to learn whereas criticism pushed the students away from the teacher and the subject

Bolinger concludes his text by saying that language affects our lives and is a vital agent in which we build our world. The same was evident in the study as findings showed that praise fostered learning whereas criticism hindered learning.

According to Zabel and Zabel (1996) teachers use praise and rewards to influence student behaviour, however, exaggerated opinions should be avoided. Praise can make students who are not always motivated to achieve, participate or even to cooperate. Praise has more long-lasting influence on behaviour than criticism or negative feedback.

Ndirangu (2004) asserts that, parents and teachers often overuse criticism to modify the behaviour of children and adolescents, however, the outcomes are predictably poor. A teacher's criticism may temporarily halt or interrupt undesired behaviour, but it offers no instruction about alternative, more desirable ways to behave. When students repeatedly hear critical comments from authority figures, like teachers, they come to believe that the criticisms are valid. Criticisms make students embarrassed angry at the critic and sometimes feel like retaliating. To save face criticized students defend themselves by arguing, sulking and deliberately not complying with the teacher. Negative reinforcement, for example, threatening and punishment has undesirable side effects such as creating student antagonism toward the teacher and providing a wrong model for students to imitate. The study observed instances of sulking and rebellion when students were criticized.

Zabel and Zabel (1996) explain a student's negative behaviour could be as a result of negative experience which generates negative feelings. The reactions may result in a vicious cycle, where a negative experience reinforces a student's anger to generate negative feelings that generate more negative behaviours and reactions. He advises that teachers should avoid getting caught up in a self-perpetuating conflict cycle but instead recognize the relationship between a student's feelings and behaviour.

Ndirangu (2004) explains that parents sometimes condemn and denounce their children as 'good-for-nothing' or 'hopeless' and even tell their children 'You will never amount to anything good! You are like your mother/father! These cold put-downs may be very damaging. They instill fear, shyness, self-hate and inadequacy in the youth and make them feel useless. He adds that some

parents are perfectionists and are never satisfied by their children's performance. If a child improves on their grade instead of the parent recognizing the effort and congratulating the child with a "Good-keep-it-up" comment they give a comment like "Puh! Puh! Puh! Why do you always get low grades with all that I am paying?" According to the current study it was observed that teachers' use of criticism results to fearing and hating the teacher as well as hating that particular subject.

Ndirangu (ibid), sums up by saying that parents who set unrealistic goals, use cold put-downs and expect perfection, push their children too far leading to drug abuse. The youth may resort to drugs to escape from reality and sooth themselves. According to Jessor and Jessor (1977), the Adolescents physical development makes the youth highly emotional. Their agitation for independence from adults makes them not accommodate criticism and whenever denied an opportunity to articulate their opinions they resort to unruly behaviour such as strikes. The study looked at students' (who are adolescents) reactions to their teachers' praise and criticism.

Taneja (1990) in Graddol (1994) argues that discipline cannot be brought about through heavier hands by caning but through gentler tongues. Discipline can be fostered not by the whip but with words, actions and examples. Discipline comes through clear thinking and being attuned to the feelings of the students. The major assets are the ear that listens, the eye that witness, an open mind and an earnest wish to develop sympathy and accord discipline, which grows slowly, but never dies.

Lindgreen (1980) in Graddol (1994), emphasizes the role of teachers and school administration in the discipline of students. He says that teachers should direct the student to develop self discipline and hence grow up to be responsible, law abiding and considerate adults. Parker (1986) says that teachers should not attend to behaviour that they wish to weaken. He advises teachers to get involved with students showing the behaviour they wish to strengthen, Praise a student for improvement in behaviour, catch the students being good rather than bad. Tell them what it is you like that they are doing and award privileges to those showing good behaviour rather than focusing on the negative. The study however found out that teachers tend to focus on the negative more by criticizing and at times overlooked the positive by not praising.

Griffin (1996), argues that teachers should seize every chance to bestow praise. He says that students bloom under the sun of appreciation and that if one makes the students believe that they will succeed, then they are more than half-way to success. He adds that fear and frustration create stress and that if inmates of an institution, particularly adolescents, are under stress then any issues, even a trivial one, may trigger an outbreak of mass indiscipline. Griffin's view agrees with the findings of

the study, as it was observed that praise encouraged the students to participate in class whereas criticism discouraged the students.

2.2.1 Research Findings on Instructional Reinforcement in America

Various researches have been conducted in America on the use of rewards to manage student's behaviour and improve classroom discipline. Researches have also looked at the effects of reinforcing students' achievement at the school or district levels.

A research conducted in Indiana polis – USA based on 37 reports gave a guideline to the study and compared to it.

2.2.1.1 Changing Views of Reinforcement

The modern history of instructional reinforcement began with the proliferation of theories and experimental work in the area of behaviour modification in the 1950's and 1960's. This was a very active period for behavioural psychology. A great many studies were undertaken and many theories were advanced regarding the use of reinforcement to manage animal and human behaviour. While enthusiasm ran high regarding the proposed applications of behaviour modification techniques, most educators and psychologists now believe that the potential applications of behaviour modification were oversold. For one thing, behaviour modification theorists showed little restraint in generalizing findings from animal studies to human behaviour. In addition, the use of many behaviour modification techniques was determined to be unfeasible in educational settings.

The late 1960's and early 1970'S saw something of a backlash. Many educators began to express strong criticisms of the use of reinforcement techniques in educational settings. Some argued that providing social and particularly material reinforcement gives students the wrong message about learning; that these extrinsic payoffs communicate that the learning activities are not worthwhile in themselves. Others claim that providing reinforcement undermines intrinsic motivation and that whatever achievements gains result from using them are lost once reinforcement is withdrawn. The classroom management and effective schooling research of the 1970's and 1980's has helped to clarify the uses and effects of instrumental reinforcement and to resolve some of the issues raised by its critics.

2.2.1.2 The Effects of Reinforcement on Academic Achievement

Research on the effects of reinforcement in general on student's academic achievement in Indiana polis gives the following findings :(<http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i1/winning.html>)

- Contingent reinforcement is positively related to achievement

- Noncontingent reinforcement is unrelated to achievement in most cases; however, there is evidence that low-ability and younger (primary) children receive some academic benefit from noncontingent, socially motivated praise.
- Acknowledging correct responses as such is positively related to achievement.
- Reinforcements are most effective when clearly linked to students' progress toward goals.
- Achievement benefits accrue at the same rate whether students only receive rewards for correct answers, or both, receive rewards for correct answers and lose them for incorrect answers. ("response cost")
- Instrumental reinforcement alone produces achievement benefits equal to those produced by a combination of instrumental and behavioural reinforcement.

The study focused on praise and criticism only in the classroom situation.

2.2.1.3 Praise and other Verbal Reinforcement

(<http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i1/winning.html>)

Praise is the type of reinforcement most commonly used by teachers. Until fairly recently, it was assumed that praise has reinforcing effects on students' academic performance. More recent research in Indiana Polis however, indicates that praise may be helpful, neutral, or detrimental, depending on the kind of praise it is and the context in which it is delivered. Findings include:

- Teacher praise does not necessarily reinforce learning, nor is it always intended to do so. Various other reasons, such as a desire to fill students' emotional needs or manage their behaviour, frequently motivate praise.
- Praise can enhance learning if it is contingent, specific, sincere, and credible
- Teachers whose students achieve most are sparing rather than effusive in praising correct answers.
- Greater achievement gains occur when the interactions in which praise is given are initiated by teachers rather than by students.
- When students are praised for their present progress relative to past performance, greater achievement gains result than when they are praised relative to the performance of their classmates.
- Noncontingent praise is negatively related to achievement for high-ability students.
- Praising students who answer correctly in class discussion is often intrusive and distracting, and may even embarrass the recipient.

- When correct responses are acknowledged as such (“Yes,” “correct,” “That’s right”) achievement benefits result.
- Basic feedback involves telling students if their response is correct and, if incorrect, supplying the correct answer. Elaborated corrective feedback involves providing students who have answered incorrectly with a series of rules or prompts that will enable them to arrive at the correct answer. Both kinds of feedbacks produce greater achievement gains than no feedback, and elaborated corrective feedback produces greater gains than basic feedback. The study concentrated on the use of praise and criticism however the students gave suggestions for corrective feedback instead of criticism.

2.2.1.4 Criticism, Response Cost and other Negative Incentives.

(<http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i1/winning.html>)

There are effects of ‘punishing’ learning failures. One such ‘punishment’ is criticism. Another is “ response cost” structures, in which students lose points, tokens, or other valuables for incorrect responses in class discussions or on tests. Findings include:

- The incidence of criticism in classroom, as noted by researchers in observational studies, is quite low.
- Criticism can be positively related to achievement for high-ability students if it is contingent, specific, and relatively infrequent.
- For students generally, criticism is unrelated to achievement
- Response cost structures alone are unrelated to achievement; a combination of reinforcement and response cost is positively related to achievement. In this study the frequency of criticism was high and affected class participation.

2.2.1.5 Effective Praise (<http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i1/winning.html>)

Brophy (1981) gives the following guidelines for effective praise:

- Is delivered contingently
- Specifies the particulars of the accomplishment
- Shows spontaneity, and other signs of credibility; suggests clear attention to the student’s accomplishment.
- Rewards attainment of specified performance criteria (which can include effort criteria, however)
- Provide information to students about their competence or the value of their accomplishments.

- Orients students towards better appreciation of their own task-related behaviour and thinking about problem solving.
- Use student's own prior accomplishments as the context for describing present accomplishments.
- Is given in recognition of noteworthy effort or success at difficult (for this student) tasks.
- Attributes success to effort and ability, implying their similar successes can be expected in the future.
- Fosters endogenous attributes (students believe that they expend effort on the task because they enjoy the task and/or want to develop task-relevant skills)
- Focuses students' attention on their own task relevant behaviour
- Fosters appreciation of and desirable attributions about task relevant behaviour after the process is completed.
- Fosters appreciation of and desirable attributions about task relevant behaviour after the process is completed.

2.2.1.6 **Ineffective Praise** (<http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v111/winning.html>)

- Is delivered randomly or unsystematically
- Is restricted to global positive reactions
- Shows a bland uniformity, which suggests a conditioned responses made with minimal attention.
- Rewards mere participation, without consideration of performance processes or outcomes.
- Provides no information at all or gives students' information about their status.
- Orients students toward comparing themselves with others and thinking about competing.
- Uses the accomplishments of peers as the context for describing students' present accomplishments.
- Is given without regard to the effort expended or the meaning of the accomplishment (to this student)
- Attributes success to ability alone or to external factors such as luck or easy task.
- Foster exogenous attributions (students believe that they expend effort on the task for external reasons – to please the teacher, win a competition or reward.)

- Focuses students' attention on the teacher as an external authority figure who is manipulating them.
- Intrudes into the ongoing process, distracting attention from task-relevant behaviour

The study borrowed a lot from these findings as it discovered that teachers do not employ reinforcement effectively in their daily teaching.

Research on Instructional Reinforcement has not been conducted in Kenya. The study focused on the teachers' use of praise and criticism in the classroom. It then suggested effective ways in which teachers can use praise and criticism to enhance learning.

2.2.2 The Situation in Kenya

Eshiwani (1998) states that school discipline must be maintained at all times because it's only when there is good discipline that proper learning can be expected to take place. The maintenance of discipline has been a function of the school ever since it came into existence, more specifically the teachers' role.

An article entitled "Strike fever in schools" in *School & Career Team* magazine, based on the Kenyan Secondary School Heads Association meeting held in June 2005, focuses on indiscipline in schools and shows that corporal punishment and other harsh measures meted out to students to stop or control unrest have proven to be faulty as they have usually exploded into fresh and more devastating strikes. Hence, other forms should be sought to resolve indiscipline in schools. In the same meeting, Education Permanent Secretary, Karega Mutahi blamed parents and teachers for the indiscipline for inciting students, hence, language is a factor that should be considered. The National Vice Chairman of the Kenya Secondary School Heads Association, Mr. CK Tirop, observed that schools with positive climates such as positive teacher attitudes towards students, teacher praise and attitudes emphasizing the expectation of academic success have few discipline problems.

According to Muigai (2004), in an article entitled "Conflict resolution in schools" in *Education & Training* magazine, vol. 9, no. 3, the banning of caning in Kenyan schools has contributed a lot to conflict in schools. This article quotes a classroom teacher lamenting "Teachers have been reduced into [sic] mere barkers and not biters following the withdrawal of corporal punishment, hence maintaining order in schools has become tricky as one has to resolve to other ways." The article cites conflict resolution through negotiation between teachers and students as a channel to curb indiscipline and foster achievement in schools. Conflict may arise because of a person trying to force his or her opinions on others as have been seen in students having problems

with the prefects or teachers they consider draconian and harsh. Language, therefore, is a powerful tool which can be used by teachers to win students and foster learning or discourage the students and make them rebel, hence hindering learning.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the Speech Act Theory, as it examined the locution Act (the uttering of the praise and criticism words by the teacher), the illocutionary Act (the intention of the teacher for using praise and criticism) and the perlocution force (consequent response from the student). This theory is discussed below.

2.3.1 Speech Act Theory

Speech Act Theory, was developed by, two (2) philosophers, John Austin and John Searle, from the basic belief that language is used to perform actions. Its fundamental insights focus on how meaning and action are related to language.

John Austin, delivered the “William James Lectures” at Havard in 1955 which were published in 1962 as *How to do things with words*. His fundamental insight was that an utterance constitutes an act, that is, utterances are performatives for example, the act of promising, apologizing, naming, marrying, betting and giving. John Searle, one of Austin’s students, wrote a doctoral dissertation called ‘sense and reference’ in 1959 which was later published as **speech act**.

In (1969), Searle developed and extended Austin’s ideas by assuming that all utterances, not just those containing performative verbs, constitute act, that is, every speech event constitutes a speech act. Searle explains that every speech act consists three separate acts: an act of saying something (locutionary act), an act of doing something (illocutionary act) and an act of affecting someone / the listener (perlocutionary act.) This view guided the researcher in analyzing the teachers’ talk (the locutionary act), the intention of the teacher for praising or criticizing (illocutionary act) and the effect of praise or criticism on the student (the perlocutionary act). Searle adapted the following terminology from Austin.

- a) **Locutionary Act:** This is the act of simply uttering a sentence from a language, a description of what the speaker says. It is the act of using a referring expression (for example, a noun phrase) and a predicating expression.

For example	John /	is foolish
	Referring	Predicating
	Expression	Expression

b) **Illocutionary Act:** This is what the speaker intends to do by uttering a sentence. They include stating, promising, apologizing, threatening, predicting, ordering and requesting. For example: “John is foolish” the illocutionary act is one of stating.

c) **Perlocutionary act:** This is the effect on the hearer of what a speaker says. They include such effects as persuading, embarrassing, intimidating, boring, irritating or inspiring the hearer.

For example: “John is foolish”, the illocutionary act may be one of stating but the perlocutionary act is likely to be one of embarrassing or intimidating.

Searle suggests three kinds of appropriate (felicity) conditions that a speech act must meet:

1. Preparatory Conditions

Preparatory conditions expect the speaker and hearer to fulfil certain conditions, for example, for a promise the speaker would like the action done and the speaker knows this but that it is not obvious to either that the speaker will perform the action in the normal course of events. For a request, they are that the hearer can perform the action that the speaker knows this and again it is not obvious to either that the hearer will perform the action in the normal course of events. For an assertion, they are that the speaker has evidence for the truth of what he/she is saying and that it is not obvious to either that the hearer knows the facts.

2 Sincerity Conditions

Sincerity conditions must be fulfilled by the speaker and hearer and has expectations for the hearer and speaker, for example, for a promise that the speaker intends to act. For a request that he/she wants the hearer to act. For an assertion that he/she believes what he/she says. The speaker in this case is the teacher while the hearer is the student.

3 Essential Conditions

Essential conditions expect that the speaker intends that his utterance will count as a promise, request, order and that the hearer should be informed that intention. This is irrespective of whether he is sincere or not, but an utterance would not be a promise if it did not intend it to be so.

The study confined itself to the locution act (the uttering of the praise or criticism word by the teacher) and the per locution force (consequent response from the student), as per Searle’s and Austin’s Speech Act Theory. The theory guided the study in the data collection and analysis as it looked at the utterance of praise/criticism by the teacher, the intention of the teacher and the effect of these phrases on the student.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used in the research. The first section expounds on the sampling procedures where by the sampling procedures used in selecting the schools and the respondents to the interviews and questionnaires are described. The second section discusses the data collection procedures.

3.1 Sampling procedures

3.1.1 Sampling Schools

The study was a case study of Moiben Division in Uasin Gishu District and targeted the Secondary Schools in the division. There are seven secondary schools in the division. The researcher visited all the seven schools first before sampling the schools. Due to cost and time, two representative schools namely: Moiben High School and Sosiyo Secondary School were selected. The schools selected were easy to reach hence efficiency in data collection. The two schools also had the highest population of students, compared to the other schools in the division and would therefore give adequate data. Both schools are mixed and boarding.

3.1.1 Sampling Respondents

All the four classes in each of the two schools were used for data collection. Form one, two, three and four students from the two schools and the teachers whose lessons were observed were involved as the respondents.

Purposive sampling was used to select form one, two, three and four students and the teachers addressing the students, from the two schools, so that any of these respondents had an equal chance of being selected. Eight classroom lessons were observed for forty minutes, that is, one lesson for each class (form one – four) in the two schools. The eight classroom sessions (40 minutes each) also recorded teachers' use of praise and criticism and the students' reactions to these phrases.

All the students in the two schools were given questionnaires to fill. This sample unit was made up of two hundred and forty (240) students: one hundred and thirty (130) from

Sosiyo secondary school and one hundred and ten (110) from Moiben Secondary School. Out of the 240 respondents, 82 of them were girls and 158 were boys.

Sixteen students were followed up for an interview session, that is, two students from each of the four classes in the two schools. Purposive sampling was used to select the sixteen students, since the students selected were those who had been praised or criticized by the teachers. Ten of these respondents were boys and six were girls, this was because one of the two schools was changing into a boys' school and therefore form one and two comprised of boys only in that school.

Eight teachers, that is, four from each of the two schools were interviewed. The eight teachers interviewed were the teachers whose teaching sessions had been audio recorded in class, this is because the teachers are the ones who use praise and criticism when addressing the students.

3.2 Data Collection Procedures

The following were the data collection procedures employed:

- 1) Observation schedules in the classroom
- 2) Audio recording of the teaching sessions which lasted forty minutes each
- 3) A students' questionnaire with close and open ended questions
- 4) Unstructured interviews for teachers and students

3.2.1 Observation

Observation schedules were used in this study to record the frequency of teachers' use of praise and criticism and the reactions of the students. The schedules also recorded the number of times each student was praised or criticized.

The researcher sat at the back of the class during the lesson and observed the interaction between the teacher and the students. Every time the teacher praised or criticized a student it was recorded in the observation schedule (Refer to Appendix D pp 80-93). The responses of the students were also observed and noted down. The observation lasted forty minutes in each classroom. Eight classroom sessions were observed in total, that is, four from each of the two schools. The method was appropriate as it allowed the study of the phenomenon at a close range in its natural occurrence. The observer paradox was taken care of by the presence of the researcher in the school from early in the morning, (during the morning assembly up to late in the evening) and

the observations were conducted later in the day. The same routine continued for a week when the observations were being conducted.

Observation involves the presence of the researcher whereby one observes what is taking place and notes down. Observation can be done in two ways that is, by use of either field notes or observation schedules. Field notes allow the researcher to record observations in a relatively open-ended way and are detailed. Here details of class or group interactions are recorded. Observation schedules, on the other hand, record specified categories of behavior. Observation schedules help structure observation talk and are used to record systematically the number and type of contributions made by participants.

3.2.2 Audio Recording

There were three instances of audio recording, these were: audio recording the classroom sessions, the teachers' interview sessions and students' interviews.

Audio recording was used with permission from the participants in the classroom. The researcher, with permission from the teacher, asked the students if she could record the lesson which they all agreed to. A small tape recorder was used to avoid disrupting the learners. Once the students had given their consent, the researcher put the recorder on the teacher's table so that it could capture the teacher's talk clearly. Meanwhile the researcher sat at the back of the class for observation. Eight classroom sessions each lasting forty minutes were audio recorded.

The interview sessions between the researcher and eight teachers were audio recorded with the consent of the interviewee. The interview sessions lasted between twenty and thirty (20 – 30) minutes. The recording was conducted in the school library in one of the schools and in the Home science room in the other school.

Audio recording was also used to record the interview sessions between the researcher and sixteen students. Audio recording was done with the permission of the student. Eight of these sessions were conducted outside, under a tree and eight were conducted in the school library.

Audio recording was appropriate as the hand and the mind may not have been fast enough in recording everything. This also enabled the researcher to re-play the tapes for analysis.

3.2.3 Questionnaire

The researcher visited the schools in person and administered the questionnaires to the students. This was to ensure that all the questionnaires were filled and handed in. All the students,

from form one to four, in the two schools were given a questionnaire to fill. One hundred and ten (110) students from Moiben High School (25 form ones, 28 form twos, 25 form threes and 32 form fours) responded to the questionnaire. Twenty four (24) of these students were girls and eighty six (86) were boys. One hundred and thirty (130) students from Sosiyo secondary school (28 form ones, 25 from twos, 32 form threes and 45 form fours) responded to the questionnaire. Fifty-eight (58) of these respondents were girls and seventy-two (72) were boys.

The researcher went to all the eight classrooms in the company of the Head of Department – languages, who introduced the researcher to the students. After explaining to the students the aim of the research, the researcher then issued each student with a questionnaire and instructed them to read through before filling them. The researcher remained in class and clarified any questions asked. All the students were used so as to get the general feeling towards the teacher's use of praise and criticism and their effect on the students. The questionnaire comprised of both close ended and open-ended questions (refer to Appendix A pp 58- 61).

3.2.4 Unstructured Interviews

Two categories of interviews were conducted, one for teachers and the other for students (refer to Appendix B and C respectively pp 62- 80).

The interview schedules for teachers were used to get views from the teachers on the use of praise and criticism in the classroom. Eight teachers, whose teaching sessions had been recorded in class, were interviewed. The interviews were conducted in person by the researcher. A teacher was interviewed at a time to ensure that each one of them gave their own views. The interview sessions for Sosiyo Secondary School teachers were conducted in the Home science room and those for Moiben took place in the school library. The interviews lasted between twenty to thirty (20 – 30) minutes for each teacher. The method was appropriate as the researcher clarified the questions to the interviewee. It also created an opportunity for the respondent to clarify and elaborate on the issues at hand resulting into more information. The interview sessions were audio recorded with the permission of the interviewee.

Interview schedules were also used to find out the effect of teachers' praise and criticism on the students. These sessions aimed at finding out how the learners felt when they were praised or criticized. Sixteen students, that is, two from each class (form one – four) from the two schools were interviewed. The sixteen students were purposefully sampled, that is, the students who

had been praised or criticized by their teachers in class during the observation schedules were selected for the interviews. The interviews for Sosiyo Secondary School were conducted in the school library and those for Moiben were conducted under a tree within the school compound. The interview sessions were audio recorded with the permission of the interviewee.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The first section shows the data obtained and thereafter the data obtained is analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

4.1 Data Obtained

The amount of data obtained is as presented in table 1 below.

Table1: Amount of Data obtained

Procedure	School A	School B	Total
Observation	4 Classes	4 Classes	8 Classes
Audio recording	4 Classes	4 Classes	8 Classes
Interviews	8 Students	8 Students	16 Students
	4 Teachers	4 Teachers	8 Teachers
Questionnaire	110 Students	130 Students	240 Students

The table above shows that four classes were observed and audio recorded in each of the two schools giving a total of eight classes. Sixteen students, that is, eight from each school were interviewed and four teachers were also interviewed from each school totaling to eight teachers. The questionnaire was responded to by one hundred and ten (110) students from school A and one hundred and thirty from school B, giving a total of two hundred and forty (240) respondents.

Though the aspect of gender was not part of the objectives of the study it still featured during the study as shown below. The following table shows the number of respondents in terms of gender.

Table 2: Respondents to questionnaires and interviews

Tool	Female		Male		Total
	School A	School B	School A	School B	
Questionnaire	24	58	86	72	240
Interview for Students	2	4	6	4	16
Interview for Teachers	2	3	2	1	8
TOTAL	28	65	94	77	264

Table 2 shows that there were more male respondents (158) to the questionnaire than the female (82), which can be represented as 65.8% and 34.2% respectively. The students' interviews had more boys (10) than girls (6) whereas the teachers' interviews had more female teachers (5) than male teachers (3).

The data obtained is presented in two parts. Part I deals with data from observation schedules and student questionnaire while part II deals with data from interview schedules.

Part I

4.1.1 Data Obtained from Observation Schedules

The observational sessions recorded various praise words and criticisms used by the teachers in the classroom. Some of these words were used repeatedly while others were used only once. The tables below (table 3a & 3b) give a summary of the praise phrases recorded during the observation and those in the students' questionnaire. Thereafter table 4a & 4b give a summary of the criticism phrases recorded during the observation in the eight classrooms and those in the students' questionnaire. The observational schedules also recorded the number of students praised and those criticized in each class in the two schools and the number of times a student is praised or criticized during the lesson as shown in table 7.

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Table 3a: Praise phrases recorded during the fourty minutes observation in each class

School A		School B	
Form 1	Frequency	Form 1	Frequency
-Good trial	1	-Good	1
-You are right	1	-Very good	2
-Good	1	-Good	1
-Very good	2		
Total	5	Total	4
Form 2		Form 2	
-Good	1	-Good	2
		-You are right	1
		-Very good	1
		-You are doing well	1
		-You can do it	1
		-Neat	1
Total	1	Total	7
Form 3		Form 3	
-Excellent	1	-Good	2
-Very good	2	-Very good	2
Total	3	Total	4
Form 4		Form 4	
Good Boys	1	Good	2
Very good	1	Very good	1
You can do it	1		
You are on the right track	1		
TOTAL	4		3
TOTAL	4		18

The table above shows the praise phrases used by the teachers when talking to the students, these are the locutionary acts as would have been referred to by Austin (1962).

Table 3a above, shows that form one recorded the highest number of praise (5), followed by form four (4) then form three (3) and form two (1) in school A, while in school B, form two recorded the highest (7) followed by form one and form three (4 each) and form four (3).

The table also shows that the most commonly used praise phrase was “Very Good” which was used eleven (11) times in both schools, followed by “Good” (ten times). The phrases “Good Trial” ”You are right” and “you can do it” are used twice each, while “you are on the right track”, “Excellent”, “you are doing well” and “Neat” are used once each.

A list of suggested praise words was given by the students in the questionnaire as shown in table 3b below.

Table 3b: Examples of phrases that teachers should use to enhance learning.

Respondent: 110 from school A and 130 from school B

Phrase	Frequency									
	F1		F2		F3		F4		TOTAL	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Fair	10	15	22	17	19	26	20	30	71	88
Good	23	25	28	20	25	32	29	39	105	116
Very good	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	41	110	126
Excellent	25	19	23	22	21	30	32	29	101	100
Keep it up	19	24	23	19	18	27	29	34	89	104
Be faithful	-	-	18	-	22	-	23	-	63	-
Be confident	-	-	17	-	19	-	15	-	51	-
Good attempt	-	-	22	17	23	15	27	13	72	45
Keep trying	14	10	19	5	11	7	8	4	52	26
Well done	-	-	7	3	4	7	9	3	20	13
Don't lose hope	-	-	-	21	-	26	-	18	-	65
You can do better	-	-	17	5	9	3	14	17	40	25
You have tried	-	-	25	23	19	27	28	37	72	87
Try again	16	21	19	22	20	23	17	14	72	80
Be courageous	-	-	15	-	10	-	9	-	34	-
TOTAL	132	142	283	199	245	255	292	279	952	875

KEY: A – School A

F1 – Form One

F3 – Form Three

B – School B

F2 – Form Two

F4 – Form Four

The table above shows the phrases that the students would like their teachers to use to encourage them in class and enhance learning. There was a total of fifteen (15) phrases listed and most of these phrases were repeated by most learners resulting to a frequency of 925 in school A and 875 in school B. The locutionary acts (praise phrases) listed above have the perlocutionary force of encouraging the students in their learning.

Table 4a: Criticisms recorded during the forty minutes observation in each class

School A		School B	
	Frequency		Frequency
<u>Form One</u>		<u>Form One</u>	
You are a cheeky boy	1	You look so dull	2
You are not serious	1	You are not serious	3
You are always dreaming	1	You are joking	1
What a moody boy!	1	You are always sleeping	1
You always do the wrong things	1	You are jokers	1
		You don't want to answer	1
TOTAL	5	TOTAL	9
<u>Form Two</u>		<u>Form Two</u>	
You have no manners	1	You are not serious	1
Shame on you	1	You are careless	1
You are irritating me	1	You are untidy	1
You are a thief	1		
Dirty work	1		
You have no respect	1		
Liar	1		
TOTAL	7	TOTAL	3
<u>Form Three</u>		<u>Form Three</u>	
You are a liar	1	This class is not serious	1
Lazy boy	3	You have all forgotten	1
You never do your work	1	You can never answer a question	1
You came here to eat	1	You don't want to learn	2
You are cheeky	1	You are lazy	2
		The girls can continue sleeping	1
TOTAL	7	TOTAL	8
<u>Form four</u>		<u>Form four</u>	
Girls are sleeping	1	You are all sleeping	2
Liar	1	You are not serious	3
Untidy work	2	Who is the fool?	1
You are lazy	1	You are not using your brains	2
You have done nothing	1	You don't understand simple instructions	2
You always do your own work	1		
TOTAL	7	TOTAL	10
TOTAL	26	TOTAL	30

Table 4a above shows the criticism phrases recorded during the observation while the table below (table 4b) shows the criticism phrases used by teachers that were listed in the students' questionnaire by students from the two schools. After this table the criticism listed by students in the questionnaire and those recorded during the observation in the eight classes are compared.

Table 4b : criticism listed in the student's questionnaire

School A		School B	
	Frequency		Frequency
<u>Form One</u>		<u>Form One</u>	
Stupid	5	Stupid	14
Shame on you	12	<i>Mjinga</i> 'silly'	7
You are careless	8		
You are lazy	15		
TOTAL	40	TOTAL	21
<u>Form Two</u>		<u>Form Two</u>	
Stupid	20	Stupid	13
Shame on you	13	Idiot	3
You are lazy	15	You are dreaming	17
Nonsense	7		
TOTAL	55	TOTAL	33
<u>Form Three</u>		<u>Form Three</u>	
Shame on you	17	I am not your grandfather or mother to sing lullabies	10
<i>Unakula mingi</i> 'You eat a lot'	4	You like attracting attention	3
	6	<i>Ndugu ya shetani</i> 'brother to devil'	11
<i>Umeharibika</i> 'You are spoilt'	1	<i>Mtoto ya shetani</i> 'child of the devil'	13
<i>Nyang 'au</i> 'animal'	23	<i>Mtoto mbaya</i> 'bad child'	14
You are careless	1		
You are lazy	11		
Wild cat			
You have done nothing			
TOTAL	83	TOTAL	51
<u>Form four</u>		<u>Form four</u>	
Shame on you	23	I am not your grandfather or mother to sing lullabies	13
<i>Umeharibika</i> 'You are spoilt'	8	You like attracting attention	4
	5	<i>Ndugu ya shetani</i> 'brother to devil'	14
You are dangerous to the school	8	<i>Mtoto ya shetani</i> 'child of the devil'	16
You are thief	16	<i>Mtoto mbaya</i> 'bad child'	17
You have done nothing			
TOTAL	60	TOTAL	64
TOTAL	238	TOTAL	169

Table 4b shows that the form three students listed the most instances of criticism (83) followed by form four (60) then form two (55) and form one (40) in school A. In school B, form four listed the most (64) followed by form three (51), then form two (33) and form one (21).

The table also shows that the upper classes (form three and four) listed more instances of criticism than the lower classes (form one and two). In school A, form three and four listed 143 instances while form one and two listed 95, which can be represented as 60.1% and 39.9% respectively. In school B, form three and four listed 115 instances of criticism while form one and two listed 54, which can be represented as 68% and 32% respectively. In the comparison of the two schools, school A listed more instances of criticism (238) compared to school B (169), which can be represented as 58.5% and 41.5% respectively.

The criticism recorded during the class observations (table 4a) and those listed in the student questionnaire (table 4b) are not totally the same, that is, some criticisms in the questionnaire were not recorded during the observation sessions and also some criticisms that were recorded in class were not listed in the questionnaire, but some criticisms are common in both cases. The phrases identified in both cases include: 'shame on you'; 'You are lazy'; 'You have done nothing'; 'You are careless'; and 'You are dreaming.' However all the other criticisms were evident in either the student questionnaire or the observation schedules only. These locutionary acts (criticisms) used by the teachers when addressing the students have the perlocutionary force of discouraging learners in their class participation

The table below gives a summary on the frequency of teachers' use of praise and criticism in the classroom in the two schools.

Table 5: The frequency of teachers' use of praise and criticism in each class in forty minutes

School A					
	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Total
Praise	5	1	3	4	13
Criticism	5	7	7	4	26
TOTAL	10	8	10	11	39
School B					
	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Total
Praise	4	7	4	3	18
Criticism	9	3	8	10	30
Criticism	13	10	12	13	48
TOTAL					
School A & B					
	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Total
Praise	9	8	7	7	31
Criticism	14	10	15	17	56
TOTAL	23	18	22	24	87

The table above shows that teachers use both praise criticism in the classroom, however, criticisms are more common (56) than praise (31 which can be represented as 64.4% and 35.6% respectively. This can also be represented on a pie chart as shown below.

Fig. 1: The percentage of praise and criticism in the two schools.

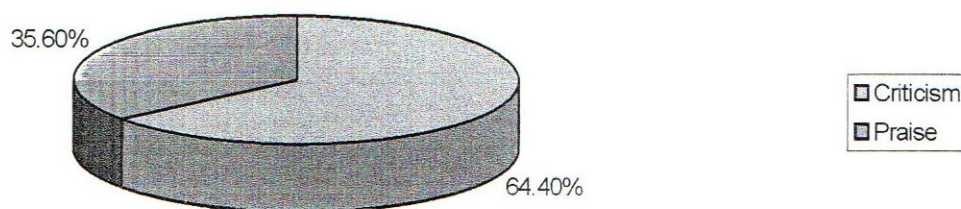


Table 5 above shows that in school A, both praise and criticisms are fewer compared to praise and criticisms in school B. The instances of praise in school A are 13 and criticisms are 26 while those for school B are 18 for praise and 30 for criticism. This presented in percentage is:

School A	Praise	41.9%
	Criticism	46.4%
School B	Praise	58.1%
	Criticism	53.6%

From table 5 also it is evident that the class that received the most praise words in school A, is form one (5) followed by form four (4) then form three (3) and form two (1). In school B, form two received the most praise words (7) followed by form one and three where each were praised four (4) times and form four got the least praise words (3).

Three classes (form two, three, four) received the same number of criticism (7) in school A whereas form one received the least (5). In school B, form four got the most criticisms (10) followed by form one (9), then form three (8) and form two got the least (3).

The number of praise words and criticisms used in each class can be represented in percentages as shown below.

The percentage of praise and criticism in the two schools

		PRAISE		CRITICISM	
School		A	B	A	B
Form	1	38.5%	22.2%	19.3%	30%
Form	2	7.7%	38.9%	26.9%	10%
Form	3	23.1%	22.2%	26.9%	26.7%
Form	4	30.7%	16.7%	26.9%	33.3%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%

From the foregoing discussion we have seen that the frequency of teachers' use of praise and criticism differs from one teacher to the other and from class to class. This section therefore

discusses the number of students praised and those criticized in each class (form one to four) in the two schools. During the observations schedules it was noted that praise and criticism were used in three ways:

- i) Directed to a single student or
- ii) Directed to the whole class or
- iii) Directed to a group of students. This group was either a combination of boys and girls doing some group work or a group of single sexed students in the class (either boys or girls)

Although a look into gender was not part of the objectives of this study, the aspect of gender still featured and is discussed briefly below. The classes observed were mixed (boys and girls) except for two classes (form one and two) in school A. This school is changing into a boys' school and therefore have girls, only in form three and four. The number of students in terms of gender is illustrated in the table below:

Table 6: The number of students in each class according gender

Class	School A			School B		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Form 1	25	-	25	17	11	28
Form 2	28	-	28	10	15	25
Form 3	15	10	25	20	12	32
Form 4	14	14	32	25	20	45
TOTAL	86	24	110	72	58	130

Table 6 shows that all the classes in the two schools comprised of more boys than girls except for form two, in school B which had more girls(15) than boys (10). In school A, boys represented 100% and girls 0% in form one, in form two boys represented 100% and girls %, while in form three the girls represented 40%and boys 60%, in form four the girls represented 43.8%and the boys 56.2%. In school B, boys represented 60.7% and girls 39.3%in form one, in form two boys represented 40% and girls 60%, while in form three the boys represented 62.5% and girls 37.2%, in form four the boys represented 55.6% and girls 44.4%. Generally, there were more boys (78.2% in school A and 55.4% in school B) than girls (21.8% in school A and 44.6% in school B). The total number of boys in the two schools was 158 (65.8%) and that of girls was 82 (34.2%). In general, boys received more praise and criticism compared to girls this could be because boys are more involved in class activities than girls.

The tables below illustrate the number of times different students were praised or criticized in each class. Some students were praised or criticized as individuals once or more than once, some in

groups that were single sexed or mixed and in some cases, teachers praised or criticized the whole class in general. These instances of praise and criticism are presented in the tables below:

Table 7: The number of students praised or criticized and the number of times the students are Praised or criticized in each class in forty minutes.

School A

	Praise				Criticism				Total
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F1	F2	F3	F4	
The whole class	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Boys as a group	—	—	—	1	—	4	—	—	5
Girls as a group	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Mixed group (B&G)	—	—	3	1	—	—	—	2&1	7
Individual boys once	5	—	—	1	—	1	—	3	10
Individual girls once	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Individual boys more than once	—	—	—	—	5	2	5&2	—	14
Individual girls more than once	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	5	1	3	4	5	7	7	7	39

School B

	Praise				Criticism				Total
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F1	F2	F3	F4	
The whole class	—	1	—	—	6	—	2	—	9
Boys as a group	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Girls as a group	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
Mixed groups (B&G)	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	3&1	6
Individual boys once	2	2	3	3	—	—	—	—	10
Individual girls once	2	4	1	—	—	1	—	—	8
Individual boys more than once	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	3	6
Individual girls more than once	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3	6
TOTAL	4	7	4	3	9	3	8	10	48

KEY: A- Moiben

F1- Form one

F3- Form three

B- Sosiyo

F2- Form two

F4- Form four

(B & G) – Boys and Girls

The table above for school A, shows that five boys were praised once each in form one and that a single boy was criticized five times in the same class bringing the total of praise and criticism to ten (10) in form one. In form two, the whole class was praised once and this was the only instance

of praise in the class while a group of eighteen boys (boys of two rows) were criticized four times and two other boys were criticized once each. In form three, a group of four students (2 boys and 2 girls) were praised thrice, while two individual boys were criticized five times and twice respectively. In form four, all the boys (25) in the class were praised once as a group, a group of two girls and two boys were also praised once, one boy and one girl were praised once each, bringing the number of praise to four in form four. Girls as a group (20 of them) were criticized once, three boys were criticized once each and two groups were criticized once and twice respectively. The data shows that more students were criticized compared to those who were praised, hence we can conclude that teachers use more of criticism than praise.

In school B, the table shows that, two boys and two girls were praised in form one once each, while the whole class was criticized six times and a single boy was criticized thrice. In form two, the whole class was praised once, two boys and four girls were praised once each while a group of three girls and two boys were criticized twice and a single girl criticized once. In form three, three boys and one girl were praised once each while the whole class was criticized twice, all the girls (12) as a group were criticized thrice and one girl was criticized thrice. In form four, three boys were praised once each, while one boy and one girl were criticized thrice each and two groups comprising of three girls and two boys each were criticized thrice and once respectively. This data concurs with what was observed in school A, that teachers criticize students more than they praise them.

Table 7 also shows that in school A, the number of individual boys praised was the highest (6) followed by mixed groups (4). Boys as a group were praised once, the whole class was praised once, while girls as a group were never praised. Individual girls and individual boys were never praised more than once. On the side of criticism, individual boys criticized more than once was the highest (14) followed by boys criticized as a group (4) and individual boys criticized once each (4). Mixed groups were criticized thrice, while girls as a group were criticized once and individual girls were never criticized.

The total number of praise and criticism directed to individual boys more than once was the highest (14), followed by the number of boys praised and criticized once each (10), then the number of times mixed groups were praised and criticized (7) and lastly the number of times boys were praised and criticized as a group (5). Girls' praise and criticism was very low in school A; girls as a group were only criticized once, a single girl was praised as an individual once and no girl was praised or criticized more than once, while the whole class (form two) was only praised once. Although the aspect of gender was not part of the objectives of this study it still featured and the

observation made was that boys were praised and criticized more than girls, this could be because boys are more involved in class activities than girls.

In school B, the instances of praise and criticism directed to the whole class contrasted to what happened in school A. That is, whereas only one class was praised as a whole and none criticized in school A, in School B one class (form 2) was praised and two classes (form one and form three) were criticized six times and twice respectively. Whole class praise and criticism amounts to nine (9) in school B and only once in school A.

In school B, ten boys and seven girls were praised individually once, while in school A, six boys and one girl were praised individually once. Boys as a group, girls as a group and mixed groups were never praised in school B compared to school A where boys as a group were praised once, and mixed groups were praised four times. Individual boys and individual girls were never praised more than once in both schools. In school B, girls as a group were criticized thrice compared to once in school A, mixed groups were criticized six times in school B compared to thrice in school A. Individual boys and individual girls were criticized six times each in school B, while in school A, girls were never criticized more than once as individuals and fourteen boys (14) were criticized more than once as individuals.

Table 7 also shows that boys as individuals and as a group received more praise and criticism compared to girls as individuals and as a group. This can be illustrated as shown below:

Table 8: The frequency of praise and criticism according to gender.

	School A			School B		
	P	C	Total	P	C	Total
Boys as a group	1	4	5	0	0	0
Girls as a group	0	1	1	0	3	3
Individual boys once	6	4	10	10	0	10
Individual girls once	1	0	1	7	1	8
Individual boys more than once	0	14	14	0	6	6
Individual girls more than once	0	0	0	0	6	6
TOTAL	8	23	31	17	16	33

KEY: P- praise

C – criticism

The table above shows that boys as a group were praised and criticized five times (55.6%) while girls as a group were praised and criticized four times (44.4%) Twenty (20) individual boys were

praised and criticized once whereas nine (9) individual girls were praised and criticized once. Individual boys praised or criticized more than once were twenty cases (76.9%) whereas individual girls praised or criticized more than once were six (23.1%).

4.1.1.1 Students' observed reactions

The observation schedules also recorded the students' reactions to praise and criticism in the classroom (refer to appendix D: Observation schedules I-IV in school A and observation schedules 1- 4 in school B pp80- 93). These reactions can be referred to as the perlocution force as was advocated by Austin (1962) in his Speech Act Theory. The reactions observed in school A from form one to four will be discussed first and those reactions observed in school B from form one to four will follow.

In school A, form one it was observed that: Three quarter of the students raised their hands most of the time to answer questions, they sat upright and listened keenly. The perlocution force here was one of encouragement as learners tend to participate more from the locution of praise There was a single boy (student 24) who was criticized five times and the boy did not raise his hand at any single point. He looked down most of the time and did not take notes as the others did until the teacher insisted that he writes (refer to observation schedule I pp80). This shows that criticism impacts negatively as the locution of criticizing leads to the perlocution force of embarrassment and discouragement as it was observed that the boy who was criticized never participated in class. In form two, there was a lot of excitement at the beginning of the lesson accompanied by shouts and murmurs. Five minutes into the lesson, the class became very quiet as the teacher criticized the students. Students in the side rows looked withdrawn but those in the middle row were attentive and did the reading. When student 9 was criticized for copying he frowned (refer to observation schedule II pp82). In form three, the students did not volunteer to calculate sums on the board and those who were picked by the teacher were only four (two girls and two boys). They got the right answers and were praised. Two students (student 9 and 23) who were both boys had not done their work and when asked to move to the front and do their work they kept whispering to each other (refer to observation schedule III pp84). In form four, boys appeared more active than the girls and moved into their groups faster while the girls dragged their feet. When student 7(a boy) was criticized he slept on his desk and also looked out through the window at some point. Student 12(a boy) sneered when criticized (refer to observation schedule IV pp85). The above observations show that criticism (locutinary acts) have the perlocutionary force of making the student not to conform to what is

expected in class whereas praise makes the learner to participate in answering questions. This was also evident in school B as discussed in the next paragraph.

In school B in form one, the students were very quiet and just stared at the teacher without any attempts to answer questions for the first seven minutes while the teacher was criticizing the students. A few students (three) raised their hands between the 10th and 15th minute and responded to questions. By mid of the lesson three-quarter of the students were actively involved in answering questions. A single boy (student 10) was criticized thrice; this resulted to the perlocutionary force of being irritated and the student did not participate in class activities (refer to observation schedule 1 pp86). In form two, the students were very active from the beginning of the lesson, almost all of them raised their hands, except for only three students, most of the time. A group of five students (3 girls and 2 boys) kept silent in their group and did not discuss the task given; these students stared at the teacher when he went to guide them. Within the last eight minutes all the groups were engaged in group discussion (refer to observation schedule 2 pp88). In form three, all the students took about three minutes searching for books in the lockers. A girl (student 26) could not respond verbally to the teacher's questions but nods and shakes the head. Within the first ten minutes only boys raised their hands but as the lesson progressed, both boys and girls actively participated except for student 26 who looked so sad (refer to observational schedule 3 pp90). In form four, all the students appeared attentive and actively participated in answering questions from the beginning of the lesson. Once the students were in groups, eight groups began their discussions immediately but one group took time to take off and was criticized for discussing irrelevant issues, this group was characterized by silent moments unlike all the other groups (refer to observational schedule 4 pp92). An unlikeable behaviour cannot be changed through criticisms all through as seen in the above observations made in school B that is, when the students were criticized they did not do what the teacher expected, they instead kept quiet and did not participate in the discussion. The locutions of criticism, which had the intention (illocutionary act) of discouraging unlikeable behaviour, resulted to the perlocutionary force of demoralizing the learners.

4.1.2 Data obtained from student questionnaire

Data obtained from students' questionnaires was categorized into two; data from school A and that from school B. One hundred and ten (110) students from school A responded to the questionnaire, that is, twenty five form ones, twenty eight form twos, twenty five form threes and thirty two form fours. Out of the one hundred and ten students, eighty-six were boys and twenty-four were girls. In school B, one hundred and thirty students responded to the questionnaire, that is,

twenty eight form ones, twenty five form twos, thirty two form threes and forty five form fours. Seventy-two out of the one hundred and thirty were boys and fifty-eight were girls.

The questionnaire aimed at finding out how often teachers use praise and criticism (locutions) in the classroom, the effect of these phrases on the students (perlocution force), the attitude of the students towards their teachers use of praise and criticism and suggestions on the use of praise and criticism to enhance learning.

The findings obtained from the response in two hundred and forty (240) students questionnaire are presented below. The analysis of each question was carefully done by taking each response per question (n) over the total number of responses per question (N) then multiplied by hundred (100) to get the percentage, that is, **Percentage (%) = $n/N \times 100$** .

This section will discuss the findings from the questionnaire beginning with question one to question eleven (1-11) in that order.

4.1.2.1 Teachers' use of praise and criticism

Question 1(a) and 1(b) asked how often teachers praised and criticized students in class. The tables below show the data obtained.

Table 1: The frequency of teachers' use of praise in each class.

Respondents in School A = 110

Respondents in School B = 130

Response	Frequency									
	F1		F2		F3		F4		Total	%
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
Never	8	5	3	3	10	6	9	4	48	20
Rarely	10	15	17	7	12	20	18	28	127	53
Sometimes	7	8	8	15	3	6	5	13	65	27
Often	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
TOTAL	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100

KEY: A – School A

F1- Form One

B – School B

F2- Form Two

F3- Form Three

F4- Form Four

Table 1 above shows that teachers rarely use praise in the classroom (53%). 27% indicates that teachers sometimes use praise while 20% indicates that teachers never use praise and none (0%) indicates that teachers often use praise in the classroom

Table 2: The frequency of teachers use of criticism

Respondents in School A = 110

Respondents in School B = 130

Response	Frequency										
	F1		F2		F3		F4		TOTAL	%	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B			
Never	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Rarely	-	-	5	-	1	2	2	4	14	6	
Sometimes	8	11	7	6	14	7	11	5	69	29	
Often	17	17	16	19	10	23	19	36	157	65	
TOTALS	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100	

KEY: A – School A

F1 – Form One

F3 – Form Three

B – School B

F2 – Form Two

F4 – Form Four

Table 2 above shows that teachers often use criticism in the classroom (65%). 29% indicates that teachers sometimes use criticism whereas 6% indicates that teachers rarely use criticism and none (0%) indicates that teachers never use criticism in class.

The tables above (1&2) show that teachers rarely use praise in the classroom but often use criticism.

4.1.2.2. The effect of praise and criticism on the student.

Question 2 asked how much the student participated in class when praised by the teacher and the table below shows the level of participation when praised. The question aimed at examining the perlocution forces resulting from the locutions (teachers' utterances).

Table 3: The level of students participation when praised by the teacher

Respondents: 110 from school A and 130 from school B

Level	Frequency									
	F1		F2		F3		F4		TOTALS	%
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
High	25	28	20	22	19	17	23	29	183	76
Average	-	-	6	-	5	13	7	13	44	18
Low	-	-	2	1	-	2	1	2	8	3.3
Nil	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	1	5	2.7
TOTAL	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100

KEY: A – School A

F1 – Form One

F3 – Form Three

B – School B

F2 – Form Two

F4 – Form Four

Table 3 above shows that the students' participation is high (76%) when praised, followed by average participation (18%). Low participation and nil participation are very minimal (3.3% and 2.7% respectively) when the students are praised. This shows that the use of praise in the classroom affects the students' participation as praise has the perlocution force of encouraging and motivating the students to answer questions. Table 4 and 5 below show the effects of praise and criticism on the student, as was observed from the responses for question 3 in the student questionnaire. Question 3a asked the students whether praise and criticism affected their performance in the class and 3b asked them to explain how praise and criticism affected their performance in class. The data obtained is presented below:

Table 5: The effect of Criticism on the student

Respondents: 110 from school A and 130 from school B

Effect	Frequency									
	F1		F2		F3		F4		TOTALS	%
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
Get encouraged	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	3	6	3
Hate the teacher	-	-	3	1	4	2	3	2	15	6
Get stressed	-	-	-	-	5	3	5	6	19	8
Become silent	2	4	3	4	6	2	4	2	27	11
Low concentration	10	13	15	13	2	2	10	14	79	33
Fear the teacher	7	8	3	2	1	4	-	-	25	10
Work harder	-	-	-	-	3	4	2	1	10	4
Develop negative attitude	6	3	4	5	3	13	8	17	59	25
TOTAL	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100

KEY: A – School A

F1 – Form One

F3 – Form Three

B – School B

F2 – Form Two

F4 – Form Four

The table above shows that criticisms have various effects which can be referred to as the perlocution force of getting encouraged, hating the teacher, getting stressed, low concentration, fearing the teacher, working harder, not participating in class and developing a negative attitude. Table 4 and 5 above show that both praise and criticism affect learners in varied ways. However, criticism has more effect (8) compared to the effects of praise (4). This can be presented in percentage as:

The effect of praise = 4 = 33%

The effect of criticism = 8 = 67%

TOTALS = 12 = 100%

We can further observe that praise has positive effects on the student whereas criticism has got both negative and positive effects. The negative effects of criticism however are more (224 = 93%) while the positive effects of criticism are less (16 = 7%) as shown in table 5 above. The minimal positive effect of criticism on learning can further be illustrated as shown below. Question 4 asked if criticism had ever had a positive effect on learning. The findings are illustrated in the table below:

Table 6: The level of positive effect of criticism
Respondents: 110 from school A and 130 from school B

Level	Frequency									
	F1		F2		F3		F4		TOTALS	%
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
Never	25	28	25	20	18	26	27	33	202	84
Once	-	-	3	1	4	2	1	2	13	5
Sometimes	-	-	-	4	3	4	4	10	25	11
Severally	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Always	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
TOTAL	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100

KEY: A – School A F1 – Form One F3 – Form Three
B – School B F2 – Form Two F4 – Form Four

Table 6 above shows that criticism rarely has positive effect on learning. 202 students, that is, 84% indicated that criticism had never had a positive effect in their learning. Whereas 11% indicated that criticism sometimes had a positive effect and 5% indicated that criticism had had a positive effect in their learning only once. From this we can say that criticism can at times contribute to learning positively but in most cases it contributes negatively.

Question 5 asked how often students want to be commended positively and the table below shows the findings.

Table 7: How often students want to be commended positively.

Respondents: 110 from school A and 130 from school B.

Level	Frequency									
	F1		F2		F3		F4		TOTAL	%
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
Always	20	19	26	18	6	3	9	22	123	51
Severally	5	9	2	4	15	24	16	22	97	41
Once in a while	-	-	-	3	4	5	7	1	20	8
Never	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
TOTAL	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100

KEY: A – School A

F1 – Form One

F3 – Form Three

B – School B

F2 – Form Two

F4 – Form Four

Table 7 above shows that students would like to be commended positively always (51%), followed by being commended positively severally (41%) and 8% want to be praised once in a while whereas none of the students (0%) say that they should never be commended positively. This shows that students appreciate when praised and do not like being criticized.

Question 6 asked the students whether teachers should at times use criticism in the classroom and the findings are presented in the table below.

Table 8: whether teachers should at times use criticism.

Respondents: 110 from school A and 130 from school B

Response	Frequency									
	F1		F2		F3		F4		TOTAL	%
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
Yes	-	-	1	2	5	4	2	10	24	10
No	19	24	18	19	17	24	27	29	177	74
Not sure	1	1	2	-	3	2	3	4	16	7
Don't know	5	3	7	4	-	2	-	2	23	9
TOTAL	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100

KEY: A – School A

F1 – Form One

F3 – Form Three

B – School B

F2 – Form Two

F4 – Form Four

Table 8 above shows that most students (74%) think that teachers should not use criticism in class while 10% think that teachers should use criticism. 7% are not sure if teachers should use criticism or not and the remaining 10% don't know if teachers should use criticism or not.

4.1.2.3 Students attitude towards teachers' use of praise and criticism

Question 7 and 8 asked how the students felt when praised and when criticized in the presence of their colleagues. Table 9 and 10 below present the findings respectively.

Table 9: Students feeling when praised in front of other learners

Respondents: 110 from school A and 130 from school B.

Feeling	Frequency									
	F1		F2		F3		F4		TOTAL	%
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
Encouraged	25	28	28	24	22	31	31	43	232	96
Normal	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	4	2
Flattered	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	4	2
No effect	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
TOTAL	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100

KEY: A – School A

F1 – Form One

F3 – Form Three

B – School B

F2 – Form Two

F4 – Form Four

Table 10: Students feeling when criticized in front of other learners

Respondents: 110 from school A and 130 from school B

Feeling	Frequency									
	F1		F2		F3		F4		TOTAL	%
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
Discouraged	18	20	15	10	18	21	18	36	156	65
Irritated	-	-	2	1	3	1	-	4	11	5
Embarrassed	7	8	11	14	2	10	12	14	68	28
Encouraged	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
No effect	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	1	5	2
TOTAL	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100

KEY: A – School A

F1 – Form One

F3 – Form Three

B – School B

F2 – Form Two

F4 – Form Four

Table 9 and 10 above show varied perlocutionary forces on the students from the locutionary acts of their teachers. Table 9 above shows that most students (96%) feel encouraged when praised in the presence of other learners, whereas 2% feel flattered and another 2% feel just normal nor think it has no effect. Table 10, on the other hand, shows that most students (65%) feel discouraged when criticized in the presence of their colleagues, 28% feel embarrassed while 5% feel irritated and 2% think it has no effect on them. From the two tables (9 & 10) it can be noted that students get encouraged when praised and discouraged when criticized in the presence of their colleagues.

Question 9 asked for the kind of relationship that existed between the students and their teachers. The data obtained is presented in table 11 below.

Table 11: The kind of relationship between teachers and students.

Respondents: 110 from school A and 130 from school B

Relationship	Frequency										
	F1		F2		F3		F4		TOTAL	%	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B			
Extremely friendly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Very friendly	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	2
Fairly friendly	6	8	5	10	9	11	7	10	66	28	28
Friendly	10	8	13	4	4	-	11	6	56	23	23
Not friendly	6	11	10	11	12	21	14	29	114	47	47
TOTAL	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100	100

KEY: A – School A

F1 – Form One

F3 – Form Three

B – School B

F2 – Form Two

F4 – Form Four

Table 11 above shows that none of the students (0 %) rate their relationship with their teachers as extremely friendly, very few students (2%) rate their relationship as very friendly. 23% rate it as friendly while 28% rate it as fairly friendly and most of the students (47%) rate it as not friendly.

Question 10 asked the students if they thought that the teachers' choice of words affects the learning environment and the findings are presented in the table below:

Table 12: Whether teachers' choice of words affects the learning environment.

Respondents: 110 from school A and 130 from school B.

Response	Frequency									
	F1		F2		F3		F4		Total	%
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
Yes	15	17	27	23	25	29	31	43	210	88
No	10	11	1	2	-	3	1	2	30	12
TOTAL	25	28	28	25	25	32	32	45	240	100

KEY: A – School A

F1 – Form One

F3 – Form Three

B – School B

F2 – Form Two

F4 – Form Four

Table 12 above shows that 88% of the students felt that teachers' choice of words affects the learning environment whereas 12 %of the students felt that teachers' choice of words had no effect on the learning environment.

Data was also obtained from teachers' interview, which involved eight teachers and students' interview, which involved sixteen students. The data obtained from the interview schedules is discussed in part II of this chapter as it is analysed qualitatively.

Part II

4.2 Data obtained from Interview schedules.

This section presents the data obtained from the interview schedules. The first section describes the teachers' views on the use of praise and criticism as obtained from the teachers' interviews. The second part describes the effect of praise and criticism (perlocutionary force) on the student as discussed by the students who were interviewed.

4.2.1 Presentation and Discussion of Findings from Interview Schedules for Teachers.

The following are findings obtained from the response of eight teachers who were interviewed. The interview schedule aimed at finding out the teachers' views on the use of praise and criticism, whether teachers' choice of words affects learning; how the students react to praise and criticism; whether teachers had any intentions when using praise or criticism and finally how praise and criticism can be used to enhance learning.

4.2.1.1 Teachers' views on the use of praise and criticism

The main purpose of this study was to find out:

1. How often teachers use praise and criticism in the classroom?
2. How praise and criticism affects the students?

The data obtained from the teachers' interviews (refer to Appendix B:

Interviews I – IV in school A and I – IV in school B pp62-78) shows that teachers use both praise and criticism in the classroom but criticism are more commonly used. Teachers felt that when learners were not doing as expected, then they needed to be corrected by criticizing, whereas when they were on the right, they would just proceed even without a comment, as no correction was needed in the second case. It is evident that criticisms are more often used compared to praise as seen in the following examples:

I use more of criticism as it is natural to criticize a child when they are on the wrong. When the students are doing the right thing it can go unmentioned...

(Appendix B, Interview I, School A, line 6, pp62).

I think criticisms are more common and even when you balance the two, that is, praise and criticism; criticism tends to have more weight. (Appendix B, Interview II, school A, line 6, pp64).

I rarely praise a student... when they make a mistake I have to criticize.

(Appendix B, Interview IV, school A, line 6, pp68).

Teachers tend to criticize more often because of students mistakes, as you know the can was banned and therefore the only weapon the teachers have is the tongue. (Appendix B, Interview I, School B, Line 6, pp70).

Whenever I notice a mistake it should not go unnoticed... I only praise when I want the others to emulate the student who has done well. (Appendix B, Interview III, School B, line 6, pp75).

The above quotations contradict what Parker (1986) advocates; he says that teachers should not attend to behaviour that they wish to weaken. He advises teachers to get involved with students showing the behaviour they wish to strengthen. The student should be praised for improvement in behaviour, catch the student being good rather than bad.

4.2.1.2 Students' Reactions to Praise and Criticism

Question 2 asked how the students reacted to praise and criticism.

Findings show that most teachers had never thought of the students' reactions but when the subject was mentioned during the interview, then the interviewees reflected back and gave the following responses: The responses can be referred to as perlocutionary forces as advocated by Austin (1962) in the Speech Act Theory.

1. Some students behave normally and do not react any differently.
2. Students like being praised and therefore participate actively when praised in front of other learners
3. Some students get withdrawn when criticized and tend to keep quiet during the lesson
4. Some students take criticism positively and tend to actively participate when criticized to please the teacher and avoid more criticism.
5. The undisciplined students may at times act in a manner to annoy the teacher after being criticized just to show the other students the much he/she can do. These students may put on a frown or look through the window to show they are not pleased.
6. The weak students tend to get withdrawn when criticized. They may feel unwanted, sulk and avoid answering questions.

The above responses show the effect of praise and criticism (the perlocution forces) on the students as students react differently to praise and criticism. The responses concur with what Griffin (1996) says. He explains that students bloom under the sun of appreciation whereas fear and frustration through criticism create stress which may trigger an outbreak of mass indiscipline. Praise and criticism should therefore be used with caution to avoid rebellion from the students.

4.2.1.3 Teachers' Intentions for using Praise and Criticism (Illocutionary Acts)

The third question asked teachers whether they had any intentions when using praise or criticism. The data obtained shows that some teachers felt that the use of these phrases was so natural and at times, teachers had no intentions but used them generally as part of their teachings. (Refer to Appendix B, Interview IV line 14 in school B pp78). However, most of the teachers interviewed felt that teachers had different intentions for using praise or criticism, the illocutionary acts are listed below

1. Teachers may criticize or praise with the intention of stating a fact.
 E.g Neat work
 You are a clever boy.
 You are untidy.
2. The intention of praise may be to encourage a student to keep on trying.
 E.g Good trial.
3. The intention of criticizing may be to discourage a certain behaviour.
 E.g you are always sleeping
 You are a lazy student.
4. The intention of criticizing may be to threaten a student. With the abolishing of the cane then the teachers option of taming a student could be to threaten the learner by criticizing.
5. The intention of criticizing may be to irritate a student. Some students may portray cases of indiscipline just to show off to the other students and teachers may criticize the student's behaviour just to irritate him/her and bring him/her to the level of other students.
6. The intention of praise or criticism may be to predict.
 E.g you will fail
 You will pass
7. The intention of criticizing may be to intimidate or embarrass a student, if the student is fond of repeating mistakes.

The responses listed above show that the intention of praise is always to encourage the students to keep up the good work or to keep on working or trying and also to encourage other students to emulate the praised student. The intentions of criticism on the other hand may be to discourage, threaten, intimidate or embarrass a student. Both praise and criticism may also have the intention of either predicting a future happening or stating a fact. The use of criticism therefore has more intentions compared to the use of praise.

4.2.1.4 The use of Praise and Criticism to Enhance Learning.

The fourth question asked teachers if praise and criticism could be used to enhance learning. The response from the interviewees showed that, the teachers agreed that praise and criticism can be used to enhance learning.

Teachers felt that praise can be used to create a conducive environment for learning, to motivate the learners to participate during lessons, to encourage a likeable behaviour and to encourage other learners to emulate the praised student. Though there was an observation that criticism mostly discouraged a learner and made them withdrawn, the teachers felt that it was still important to criticize a student to correct them and discourage certain behaviours. Criticisms therefore are to be used with caution to avoid demoralizing the student and hindering learning.

4.2.2 Presentation and Discussion of Findings from Interview Schedules for Students.

The interview schedule for students aimed at finding out the effect of teachers' use of praise and criticism on the students. The students who were interviewed explained how they felt when they were praised or criticized by their teachers. The students further explained why they reacted in the way they did when they were praised or criticized.

4.2.2.1 Student's views on the use of Praise and Criticism.

There was a general observation from the students' interviews that teachers both praised and criticized students. However the criticisms were more often used in comparison to the use of praise. It was also noted that even when both praise and criticism were used the criticisms tend to carry more weight. A student who was praised at one point and criticized at another had this to say:

The teacher told me good when I answered the question but then he also told me I was dreaming and that I always do my own things. I don't think it is true why does he have to say I am dreaming.

4.2.2.2 The Effect of Praise and Criticism on the students.

The students gave varied responses on how they felt when they were criticized as listed below:

1.. Hate the teacher.

E.g I think the teacher hates me because he always tells me I am not serious, he also said I am a moody boy and when I tried to explain he said I am a liar. I also don't like this teacher.

I came to school because I am serious and I want to learn but the teacher likes saying you are not serious which I don't like at all. I don't like this teacher.

The perlocution force here makes the student hate the teacher.

2. Discouraged

E.g When we were doing group work, the question was difficult but the teacher told us that we had done nothing and she said what we had written was untidy. I felt so discouraged because we had tried but she did not appreciate.

The perlocution force is one of discouragement.

3. Develop a negative attitude

E.g I don't like Kiswahili because I don't enjoy the lessons. Every lesson the teacher tells me something bad like she told me I am a thief and I was not looking at my desk mate's work.

The perlocution force makes the student develop a negative attitude towards the subject.

4. Get stressed.

E.g I feel stressed when someone tells me I don't want to learn and that I can never answer a question and yet I came to school to learn. I felt so bad when the teacher told me this.

The perlocution force is one of creating stress for the learner.

5. Fear the teacher

E.g The teacher told me that I don't use my brains and that I don't understand simple instructions. After the lesson my friends told me I don't understand simple instructions, I know they were joking but I fear talking to the teacher because he might tell me something bad.

The perlocution force is one of creating fear in the student.

6. Encouraged.

E.g When the teacher told me I was not serious, I did not mind because I knew I had done something wrong. Infact this comment encouraged me to pay attention and I answered the next question where she praised me.

The perlocution force is one of encouragement.

7. Demoralized

E.g I was trying to be active in class but then the teacher called me a cheeky boy and I felt demoralized. I therefore lost interest in the lesson and kept quiet throughout the lesson.

The perlocution force here is demoralizing.

The above responses show that criticisms have a negative effect on the students except for only one situation where a student felt encouraged. All the other cases show that when the students were criticized they felt demoralized, got to hate the teacher, got stressed, developed a negative attitude, got discourage and also got to fear the teacher.

Findings from the interview sessions show that students generally felt encouraged whenever they were praised. The perlocution force is one of encouragement as the students behaved in the following ways:

1. When I am praised I want to attempt any question.
2. I become attentive
3. I put more effort so that I can be praised more
4. I listen keenly to the teacher and I learn a lot because I enjoy the lesson.

The above responses show that the perlocution force of praise is positive on students as students get encouraged to attempt questions, work harder and become attentive in class. Praise should therefore be used in class to encourage the students and foster learning. Criticism on the other hand should be minimized because of its negative effect on the students, which may hinder learning. However teachers felt that criticism at times had its benefits in correcting the students by discouraging unlikeable behaviour and keeping the class under control. Criticism should therefore be used with caution by considering the kind of students one is dealing with. During the study it was evident that the academically weak students were the most affected by criticism. Praise on the other hand should not also be over used. Praising should be genuine and be used when the student deserves it.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter makes a summary of the research, draws conclusions and gives recommendations based on the findings obtained from the field. Suggestions for further research bring the chapter to an end.

5.1 Summary

The main purpose of the study was to establish how much teachers use praise and criticism in the classroom and to determine the effect of praise and criticism on the students. The study was based on the assumptions that teachers use more of criticism than praise words in the classroom and that students react differently to praise and criticism.

The frequency of praise and criticism was analysed to establish how often teachers praised and criticized students. The students' reactions to praise and criticism were also analysed to determine the effect of praise and criticism on the students.

The findings of the study were that though teachers use both praise and criticism in the classroom, criticisms were more common than praise hence confirming hypothesis 1. Students reacted differently to these phrases and most of the learners liked being praised whereas very few appreciated criticism on few occasions. The use of praise and criticism affected their participation in class as praise encouraged them and hence enhanced learning whereas criticism discouraged them and made them avoid answering questions hence confirming hypothesis 2. Findings also showed that teachers had different intentions for praising or criticizing students. However most of the teachers interviewed admitted using the phrases without being conscious of their effects on the students. They claimed that their use of praise and criticism was so natural and part of daily teaching. They acknowledged that they were now aware and would henceforth use the phrases cautiously to enhance learning.

5.2 Conclusion

This section concludes the findings of the research based on the objectives of the study.

5.2.1 Teachers' use of praise and criticism in the classroom.

Findings from the study show that teachers use both praise and criticism in the classroom. However, criticisms are more commonly used compared to praise as was observed during the observation schedules, in the students' questionnaire, and during the students and teachers' interview sessions. It was also observed that the praise and criticism were either single words, phrases or complete sentences. The study also established that praise or criticism was at times directed to the whole class as a group or to a group of students in the class or to individual students in the class.

5.2.2 The effect of praise and criticism on the students

The study established that students reacted differently to praise and criticism. Findings show that most students liked being praised, this encouraged them to actively participate in class by attempting questions asked, paying more attention to the teacher and putting more effort in their class work. Criticism, on the other hand, was not appreciated by students, this made the students get discouraged, hate the subject and the teacher concerned, fear the teacher, get stressed, feel embarrassed, irritated, avoid questions and lack concentration. Praise therefore enhanced learning while criticism hindered learning.

5.3 Contribution of the Study

The current study is useful to linguists, as it gives a description of how a speaker's choice of words affects the listener's reaction. The study focuses on the effect of praise and criticism used by the teacher on the student. This can be considered as the locutionary act (which is the uttering of the praise or criticism by the teacher) and the perlocutionary force (the effect of praise or criticism on the student).

The study is also beneficial to teachers in secondary schools as the findings show the effect of praise and criticism on the students. Effective use of praise and criticism can be used to enhance learning.

5.4 Problems in Research

The students selected for the interviews were initially suspicious and did not want to be interviewed for fear of victimization. This situation was overcome by assuring the students of confidentiality and that there would be no victimization. Visiting the school severally before interviewing also encouraged the students to open up.

The recording of the classes was not readily accepted by the students at first and it was only after assuring them that it was only for purposes of research that the lesson was being audio recorded that they gave their consent. The tape recorder also could not capture all the talk in the class as some

students were not audible enough and there was also noise in some cases. This was overcome by the use of observation schedules, which came in handy to aid the recording. The recorder that was placed on teacher's table to capture the teacher's talk at times missed the words when the teacher moved round the class, these words were noted down in the observation schedule.

These problems however did not interfere with the study as efficient data was collected.

5.5 Recommendations

From the foregoing study the student researcher wishes to make the following recommendations:

1. Teachers should be cautious when using praise or criticism in the classroom. The following praise words suggested by the students could be used as opposed to the criticism phrases commonly used by the teachers:

Suggested praise words

- Good trial
- Good attempt
- You have tried
- You can make it

Criticisms commonly used by teachers

- You have done nothing
- You can never answer a question
- You are always sleeping

2. Teachers should use more of praise than criticism in the classroom to create a conducive learning environment. Criticism should be minimized especially when dealing with weak students, as they are the most affected by criticism.

Since the sample in this study was very small and also owing to the limited period of time suggestions for further research is recommended on a larger sample. For example, to investigate teachers' use of praise and criticism in the whole province and also at other levels of learning such as primary and post secondary levels. Research should also be conducted on the effects of teachers' non-verbal communication on the student and on how much boys and girls are praised and criticized. Further research should also be conducted to look into teachers' written comments in relation to praising and criticizing students.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire for student

1. This questionnaire is designed to collect data on the effect of teachers' use of praise and criticism on students in the classroom. Please indicate the correct option as honestly as possible by ticking (3) on one of the options. For the answers that require your opinion, use the spaces provided. Kindly respond to all items.

All the information provided will be kept confidential, therefore do not write your name anywhere in the questionnaire.

Part A

1. Sex of the respondent
Male () Female ()
 2. Which class are you in ?
 - a) Form one ()
 - b) Form two ()
 - c) Form three ()
 - d) Form four ()
 3. Please indicate the name of your school
-

Part B

1. a) How often do your teachers praise you in class ?
Never ()
Rarely ()
Sometimes ()
Often ()
b) How often do your teachers criticize you in class ?
Never ()
Rarely ()
Sometimes ()
Often ()

2. a) How is your participation in class when a teacher uses praise words ?

High ()

Average ()

Low ()

Nil ()

3. a) Does praise and criticism affect your performance in any way ?

Yes () No ()

b) If yes, explain

4. Have criticism ever had a positive effect on your learning?

Never ()

Once ()

Sometimes ()

Severally ()

Always ()

5. How often do you want to be commended positively by your teachers?

Always ()

Severally ()

Once in a while ()

Never ()

6. Do you think teachers should at times use criticisms?

Yes ()

No ()

Not sure ()

Don't know ()

7. How do you feel when praised in front of other students?

Encouraged ()

Normal ()

Flattered ()

No effect ()

8. How do you feel when criticized in the presence of other students?

Discouraged ()

Irritated ()

Embarrassed ()

Encouraged ()

No effect ()

9. How would you term your relationship with your teachers?

Extremely friendly ()

Very friendly ()

Fairly friendly ()

Friendly ()

Not friendly ()

10.a) Do you think teachers' choice of words when talking to students affects the learning environment in any way?

Yes ()

No ()

b) If yes, explain your answer.

11.a) How would you like your teachers to talk to you? What kind of words would you like them to use?

11. b) Are there any words which teachers use which you don't like or which discourage you? If yes, please list some examples.

Appendix B: interview Questions for Teacher

- 1 a) Does teachers' choice of words affect learning?
 - b) Tell me something about teachers' use of praise and criticism
 - c) How do you feel when you praise or criticize a student in class?
2. How do the students react to praise and criticism?
3. Do teachers have any intentions when using praise or criticism?
4. Can praise and criticism be used to enhance learning?

Appendix B: Teachers' Responses in the interviews

Interview 1

School A

Tr. – Teacher

R- Researcher

Date: 25th May 2006

Time: 3.30 – 4.00pm

1. **R:** Thank you so much Madam for allowing me to join your class and record your lesson. I have a few questions that I would like to ask you concerning my research topic, on teachers' use of praise and criticism.
2. **Tr:** You are welcome
3. **R:** First madam, do you think teachers' choice of words affects learning?
4. **Tr:** Yes, the way you talk to your students affects them during your lessons.
5. **R:** Tell me something about teachers' use of praise and criticism.
6. **Tr:** Teachers use both praise and criticism when talking to students. But I can say I use more of criticism myself as it is natural to criticize a child when they are on the wrong. When the students are doing the right thing then it can go unmentioned, whereas when a student does a mistake then you have to criticize them to stop the habit.
7. **R:** Thank you, madam, how do you feel when you praise or criticize a student in class ?
8. **Tr:** When I praise or criticize then I feel it is the right thing to do because I only praise when the learner deserves it and I criticize to correct any mistakes.
9. **R:** How do the students react to praise and criticism?

10. **Tr.** They react differently. Of course students love being praised and therefore participate actively during your lessons when you praise them. On the other hand, most students get withdrawn when criticized and they tend to keep quiet during your lessons. This applies especially to low achievers or rather slow learners.
11. **R.** Do you think teachers have any intentions when using praise or criticism in the classroom.
12. **Tr.** I can say yes and No. What I mean is that at times teachers have no intentions at all. The use of praise or criticism is so natural and part of daily teaching. On the other hand I would say teachers have different intentions, for example, they may want to encourage or embarrass a student when they do something wrong, by criticizing.
13. **R.** Madam, can praise and criticism be use to enhance learning?
14. **Tr.** Yes. When you praise the students then you encourage the learners to answer questions and also when you praise a student then the others want to try to also get the praise.
15. **R;** Thank you very much madam for your cooperation. This interview session has been a great contribution to my research.

Interview II

School A

Date: 23rd May 2006

Time: 9.30 – 10.00am

1. **R:** Good morning Sir. I am privileged once again to interact with you. I have a few questions that I would like to ask you concerning my research topic as I had informed you earlier.
2. **Tr:** I am also privileged to be interviewed. You can proceed with the questions.
3. **R:** Thank you. Firstly, do you think teachers' choice of words affects learning?
4. **Tr:** Yes, because if you talk to them kindly then you create friendship and if you are always negative then you create enemy.
5. **R:** Now *Mwalimu* 'teacher' tell me something about teachers' use of praise and criticism.
6. **Tr:** I would like to say that teachers do praise and also criticize learners. But I think criticisms are more common and even when you balance the two, criticism tends to have weight as you know the negative normally stands out.
7. **R:** How do you feel when you praise or criticize a student.
8. **Tr:** I do not have any hard feelings because praising or criticizing is part of my duty while I am teaching. During the lesson I am in control and I give the learners what they deserve.
9. **R:** How do the students react to praise or criticism?

10. **Tr:** They react differently depending on the kind of student you are addressing. The bright students do not show any change of attitude when praised but the average student wants to do better when praised. Most students do not like being criticized and when you do so, they tend to keep quiet to avoid the criticism.
11. **R:** Do teachers have intentions when using praise or criticism ?
12. **Tr:** Of course yes. Teachers praise to encourage the students to do better, also to reward them for the good work and to encourage others to emulate the praised student. With the ban of the cane teachers use criticism as a weapon to tame students. So a teacher may criticize to intimidate, embarrass and even threaten a student.
13. **R:** Do you think that praise and criticism can be used to enhance learning?
14. **Tr:** Yes, praise can encourage learners a lot to try and therefore learn, that is, it can create room for student centered teaching. As the learners keep trying, whereas when criticized then they tend to fear the teacher. On the whole, I am not saying that criticism should be done away with but it should be restricted.
15. **R:** Thank you *Mwalimu* 'teacher' for your contributions.
16. **Tr;** You are welcome.

Interview III

School A

Date: 25th May 2006

Time: 4.00 – 4.30pm

1. **R:** Thank you *Mwalimu* for granting me the opportunity to interview you.
2. **Tr:** I am privileged to be one of your interviewees.
3. **R:** I will go straight away to my questions. To begin with, do you think teachers choice of words affects learning ?
4. **Tr:** Yes, because if you are too harsh then you create fear and when you are friendly then you bring the learners closer to you hence creating room for learning. But also if you are too friendly then learning may not take place, as the learners may not give room for you to teach.
5. **R:** Tell me something about teachers' use of praise and criticism.
6. **Tr:** I would say that teachers praise and also criticize praising and criticizing are part of daily teaching depending on how the learners behave during a lesson.
7. **R:** How do you feel when you praise or criticize a student in class?
8. **Tr:** I have no problem because it comes naturally depending on what is at hand at that moment. Though on rare occasions I regret especially when I criticize a weak student and the student gets withdrawn.
9. **R:** Do teachers have intentions when they praise or criticize in the classroom?

10. **Tr:** Yes, they do because praise and criticism play different roles. A teachers intention for praising may be to encourage a likeable behaviour. Whereas criticism may be to discourage a certain behaviour, threaten a student or intimidate them to show that you are in control. At times the words may just be stating what already exists (facts), For example, when one says a certain boy is rude or clever then the teacher is just stating.
11. **R:** Finally, please tell me if praise and criticism can be used to enhance learning?
12. **Tr:** The two can be used to enhance learning depending on how a teacher balances the two. Praise as well as criticism should be used only when necessary. Too much of either can hinder learning as too much praise can make the learner contented and criticism on the contrary may make the learner withdrawn.
13. **R:** Thank you so much for your contribution
14. **Tr:** All the best and thank you too.

Interview IV

School: A

Date: 27th May 2006

Time: 9.00 – 9.30 am

1. **R:** Good morning madam. I enjoyed your lesson a great deal and now I would like to take you through the interview session. I intend to find out your views on the use of praise and criticism in the classroom.
2. **Tr:** That is okay with me. You can proceed.
3. **R:** To begin with madam, do you think teachers' choice of words affects learning in any way ?
4. **Tr:** Yes I think it does.
5. **R:** please tell me something about teachers' use of praise and criticism.
6. **Tr:** To start off, I would say I rarely praise a student. This is because when they are on the right then they can continue without interference but when they make a mistake I have to criticize to discontinue the behaviour.
7. **R:** Madam, how do you feel when you praise or criticize a student in class?
8. **Tr:** I have no problem so long as I have done what I feel is right. Infact, my duty is to mould the student, so I criticize them to check on their behaviour and I praise when they perform exceptionally.
9. **R:** How do the students react to praise and criticism?

10. **Tr:** They react differently. The indisciplined students in most cases, do not accept criticism and tend to defend themselves by arguing or putting on a frown, others look through the window to show they are not pleased. Most students love praise and participate actively to get more
11. **R:** Do you think teachers have any intentions. When using praise or criticism
12. **Tr:** At times, the teacher may have no intentions the teacher may state a fact as they praise or criticize, for example, you are careless or you are tidy? A teacher's intention may be to encourage when they praise or discourage an undesirable behaviour when they criticize.
13. **R:** Finally, madam do you think praise and criticism can be used to enhance learning?
14. **Tr:** I would say yes, so long as the students know that you are genuine. The two should be used for the benefit of the learner by praising or criticizing when the student deserves it.
15. **R:** I am grateful for your contribution.
16. **Tr:** Thank you madam for bringing to light these issues. I have also benefited from the interview as I will try to balance the praise and criticism as I told you at the beginning that I rarely praise.
17. **R:** Thank you.

Interview I

School B

Date: 30th May 2006

Time: 2.45 – 3.15pm

1. **R:** Good afternoon sir. I am privileged once again to have you for an interview session. I would like to ask you a few questions on the use of praise and criticism in the classroom. I hope you will assist me.
2. **Tr.** Welcome madam. It is a privilege for me too, to have to contribute to your project.
3. **R:** Thank you. To begin with, I would like you to tell me if teachers' choice of words affects learning ?
4. **Tr.** The way you talk to student affects their response If you are polite then of course you expect a polite response and if you use abusive language then the students tend to rebel.
5. **R:** Okay. Tell me something about teachers' use of praise and criticism.
6. **Tr:** Here I would say that teachers praise as well as criticize their students depending on a number of factors. Even a teacher's mood determines whether a teacher will criticize or praise all through the lesson or balance the two. However, teachers tend to criticize more often because of students mistakes, as you know the cane was banned and therefore the only weapon the teacher have is the tongue.
7. **R:** How do you feel when you praise or criticize a student in class?
8. **Tr:** I become settled because I feel that I have played my part by congratulating a student for a job well done or criticizing them to correct what is wrong.

9. **R:** Allow me also to ask you how the students react to praise and criticism.
10. **Tr:** They react differently in that they like being praised and when you praise them then you tend to bring them closer to you. In this case they become attentive in class and try to participate more in the answering of questions. On the other hand, when you criticize the students then you may create a barrier as you make the learners feel unwanted, they may avoid answering questions, sulk or get withdrawn especially those students who are weak in class.
11. **R:** Would you say that teachers have any intentions when using praise or criticism in the classroom?
12. **Tr:** Well, I would say that in most cases teachers have different intentions. When they praise them of course there is something they have liked and therefore want to encourage the student to keep it up. However, when they criticize then they may have the intention of either discouraging a behaviour, intimidating or threatening a student. A teacher may also want to irritate a student who is rude so that the student can behave as expected as deviation will lead to more criticism and conformity leads to praise.
13. **R:** Thank you. Finally, do you think praise and criticism can be used to enhance learning?
14. **Tr:** Yes. If you use the two appropriately then you might create a conducive environment for learning. Because the learners love being praised, when you do so then you capture their attention and they participate more but when you criticize frequently then you make the learners fear you and create a threatening atmosphere. However, criticism should not be left out completely but be used with caution.
15. **R:** Thank you so much for your contributions.
16. **Tr:** You are welcome. I have also benefited a lot from this discussion as I

now realize that my choice of words can enhance or hinder learning. I had never thought about the teacher's language in relation to students' participation but I think it is a true picture of what happens in class I appreciate what you are doing.

17. **R:** Thank you.

Interview II

School B

Date: 30th May 2006

Time; 4.10 – 4.40pm

- R:** Thank you madam for allowing me to be part of your class to observe the teaching session this afternoon. The lesson was very lively, I enjoyed the session.
1. **Tr:** You are welcome.
 2. **R:** Madam, I am here to request you to allow me ask a few questions concerning my research topic I intend to find out the teachers views on the use of praise and criticism.
 3. **Tr:** I have no problem with the whole idea. You may ask your questions straight away.
 4. **R:** To begin with, please tell me if you think teachers' choice of words affects learning.
 5. **Tr:** The choice of words determines the environment you create in class so it affects learning.
 6. **R:** Please tell me something about teachers' use of praise and criticism.
 7. **Tr:** Teachers praise as well as criticize depending on what the learners do during that particular lesson.
 8. **R:** How do you feel when you praise or criticize a student in class?
 9. **Tr:** Well, praising and criticizing is so common that I may not even notice when I do either, It is part of my daily teaching and so it is normal

10. **R:** Okay. How do the students react to praise or criticism?
11. **Tr:** They react differently depending on your relationship with them. In most cases students shy off when criticized and keep quiet during the lesson, although a few of them, especially the bright ones take criticism positively by trying to improve to avoid criticism. However teachers have to criticize to check on the students' behaviour especially with the ban of the cane, then we have to use the tongue to control the students.
12. **R:** Do teachers have any intentions when using praise or criticism
13. **Tr:** Yes. I just told you that with the ban of the cane then the better option is lashing with tongue. A teacher's intention may be to embarrass intimidate or threaten a student for not behaving accordingly when they use criticism. Praise in most cases is meant to encourage a likeable behaviour and also to encourage other students to emulate the praised student. At times teachers may praise or criticize as they declare facts, for example, when they say a student is lazy or hardworking. A teacher may also be predicting what he hopes will happen, for example by telling a student that he/she will pass or fail the coming exams.
14. **R:** Thank you so much. Finally I would like to ask you if praise and criticism can be used to enhance learning.
15. **Tr:** If the two are used appropriately then it can aid teaching and enhance learning. Teachers should criticize genuinely and be cautious to check on the students' reactions. Praise on the other hand should not also be over used.
16. **R:** Thank you for your contribution.
17. **Tr:** You are welcome.

Interview III

Student B

Date: **2nd June 2006**

Time: **4.10 – 4.40 pm**

1. **R:** Good afternoon madam. It is a pleasure to meet you once again. Thank you for accepting to be interviewed.
2. **Tr:** It is my pleasure, you are welcome.
3. **R:** Let me start off by asking you if you think that teachers' choice of words affects learning.
4. **Tr:** Well, I think it does because your relationship with the students determines the classroom situation. What I mean is that a teacher who is kind to the students creates a conducive environment whereas a teacher who keeps threatening may create fear making the students withdrawn.
5. **R:** Kindly tell me something about teachers' use of praise and criticism.
6. **Tr;** Teachers use both praise and criticism in the classroom. But I would like to say that criticism overdoes praise in my case. This is because whenever I notice a mistake it should not go unnoticed, just to ensure that the learners are doing the right thing. However when a student is on the right track then I do not have to interfere, I only praise when I want the others to emulate the student who has done well.
7. **R:** How do you feel when you praise or criticize a student in class?
8. **Tr:** It is normal to either praise or criticize and I have no feelings about it so long as I have done my part.
9. **R;** How do the students react to praise or criticism.

10. **Tr:** They react differently depending on the student involved. Other students may rebel when criticized while others take it positively. On the whole students like being praised and will do more to please the teacher and get more praise.
11. **R:** Do teachers have any intentions for praising or criticizing in the classroom.
12. **Tr:** Teachers may have the intention of discontinuing an unacceptable behaviour when they criticize. They may also want to embarrass or threaten a student who constantly does wrong. A teacher may also be predicting a situation for example, when learners are hardworking a teacher may predict their success by saying they will pass. Praise is meant to encourage students in most cases.
13. **R:** Can praise and criticism be used to enhance learning?
14. **Tr:** Yes, a teacher should encourage students by praising and correct them by criticizing , however, criticism should be used with caution depending on the type of students one is handling
15. **R:** Thank you madam for your contributions.
16. **Tr:** You are welcome.

Interview IV

School: B

Date: 31st May 2006

Time: 3.00 – 3.30pm

1. **R:** Good afternoon madam. I enjoyed your lesson this afternoon.
2. **Tr:** Welcome again.
3. **R:** I still need your assistance in answering a few questions on the use of praise and criticism in the classroom.
4. **Tr:** I hope I will be of help to you.
5. **R:** You are, thank you madam, do you think teachers' choice of words affects learning in any ways ?
6. **Tr:** Yes, to some extent it does. Teacher's choice of words will determine the learning environment. When a teacher uses positive words it reinforces learning and creates a conducive environment. The students feel free and motivated but when a teacher uses negative words, some fear is created which affects learning.
7. **R:** Thank you. In your opinion, what can you say about teachers' praise and also criticism ?
8. **Tr:** Teachers praise and also criticize their students depending on the situation.
9. **R:** How do you feel when you praise or criticize a student in class ?
10. **Tr:** At times I don't feel anything, especially if my objective has been met. For example, if my intention was to correct a student and the student notices and changes, I won't feel anything. Sometimes the student's interpretation may go beyond your words as a teacher and this is when I wish I had used another word.

11. **R:** How do the students react to praise or criticism?
12. **Tr:** This will depend with the type of student some students will take it positively, feel encouraged and motivated when they are praised. At the same time, they will take criticism as a challenge and will use it to correct their mistake or find out why they are wrong and change.
13. **R:** Do teachers have any intentions when using praise or criticism ?
14. **Tr:** Not always. Some words just come depending on the nature of the teacher and in such a case the teacher might not have had any intentions in most cases, teachers have the intentions of reinforcing a certain behaviour, motivating the student or encouraging a weak student when they use praise, criticism may be used with the intention of discouraging a bad behaviour or wanting to show that the teacher is in control.
15. **R:** Can praise and criticism be used to enhance learning?
16. **Tr:** Yes so long as the teacher understands and knows when to use them. The nature of the student is also a factor to consider when choosing to use praise and/or criticism and this means the teacher should understand his/her students well.
17. **R:** Thank you so much for your contribution.
18. **Tr:** You are most welcome.

Appendix C: Interview Questions for Students

1. Do you like the way your teachers talk to you?
2. Does the way your teacher talks to you affect your performance in class?
3. How did you feel when your teacher praised (or criticized) you during the lesson?
4. Why did you react the way you did when you were praised (or criticized) during the lesson?

Appendix D: Observation Schedules

Observation Schedule 1

School A

Class: Form I

Lesson: Business Studies

Topic: Human needs and wants

Teacher: Mr. Were

Gender: Male

Date: 22nd May 2006

Time: 2.00 – 2.40 pm

Duration: 40 Minutes

No. of students: 25

Girls: 0

Boys: 25

√ - Every time a student is praised

X - Every time a student is criticized

Teacher's Table

Entrance

1 √ B	2 B	9 √ B	10 √ B	17 B	18 √ B
3 B	4 B	11 √ B	12 B	19 B	20 B
5 B	6 B	13 B	14 B	21 B	22 B
7 B	8 B	15 B	16 B	23 B	24 X B X X X X
					25 B

Researcher

Comments

- $\frac{3}{4}$ of the students raise their hands most of the time
- Most students sit upright and listen keenly
- When student 24 is criticized the class is very quiet no hands are raised and the teacher has to select a student to answer without hands being raised.

- Student 24 does not raise his hand at any point to answer a question, Stares at his desk and looks down most of the time during the lesson. Does not take notes like the others until he is forced to do so.

- Praise** - Good Trial
- You are right
- Good
- Very good

- Criticism** - You are a cheeky boy
- You are not serious
- You are always dreaming
- What a moody boy?
- You always do the wrong things

Observation Schedule II

School A

Date: 25th May 2006

Class: Form II

Time: 2.00 – 2.40pm

Lesson: Kiswahili

Duration: 40 Minutes

Topic: Kusoma Ufahamu

No. of students: 28

Teacher: Mrs. Tallam

Girls: 0

Gender: Female

Boys: 28

√ - Every time a student is praised

⊙ - The whole class or a group of students is praised

X - Every time a student is criticized

⊗ - The whole class or a group of students is criticized.

Teacher's Table

1 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	2 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	11 ⊙ B	12 ⊙ B	21 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	22 ⊙ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
3 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	4 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	13 ⊙ B	14 ⊙ B	23 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	24 ⊙ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
5 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	6 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	15 ⊙ B	16 ⊙ B	25 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	26 ⊙ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
7 ⊙ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	8 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	17 ⊙ B X	18 ⊙ B	27 ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	28 ⊗ B ⊙ ⊗ ⊗
9 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	10 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊙	19 ⊙ B	20 ⊙ B		

Researcher

Comments

- At the beginning of the lesson, a lot of excitement with shouting and murmurs. After 5 minutes, the class is very quiet.

- Most students in the side rows look withdrawn; the middle row is very attentive and does the reading.
- Student 9 frowns.

Praise - Vizuri 'Good'

Criticism - Mumekosa adabu 'You have no manners'

- Ona haya 'Shame on you'

- Mwanikera 'You are irritating me'

- Wewe ni Mwizi 'You are a thief'

- Mhongo 'Liar'

- Kazi chafu 'dirty work'

- Hamuna Heshima 'You have no respect'

Observation Schedule III School A

Class: Form III

Lesson: Mathematics

Topic: Commercial Arithmetic

Teacher: Mr. Kiplagat

Date: 25th May 2006

Time: 12.10 – 12.50 pm

Gender: Male

Duration: 40 Minutes

Boys: 15

No. of students: 25

√ - Every time a student is praised

X - Every time a student is criticized

√ - The whole class or a group of students is praised

X - The whole class or a group of students is criticized.

Teacher's Table

1 ○○○ ^B	2 ○○○ ^G	10 ○○○ ^G	11 ^G	18 ^B	19 ○○○ ^B
3 ^B	4 ^B	12 ^G	13 ^B	20 ^G	21 ^G
5 ^G	6 ^G	14 ^G	15 ^G	22 ^B	23 XX ^B
7 ^B	8 ^B	16 ^B	17 ^B	24 ^B	25 ^B
9 XXX ^B	Researcher				

Comment

- Only 4 students are involved in calculating sums, they are picked by the teacher, no volunteers.
- Student 9 & 23 have not done the work, they don't look bothered, a student lies that their book is lost. The two copy sums from the board while whispering to each other.

Praise - Excellent, very good

Criticism - You are a liar, lazy boy, you never do your work.

Did you come here to eat?, You are cheeky.

Observation Schedule IV School A

Class: Form IV Lesson: English Topic: Adjectives
 Teachers: Miss Too Date: 26th May 2006 Time: 3.20 – 4.00pm
 Gender: Female Duration: 40 Minutes
 Boys: 18 Girls: 14 No. of students: 32

- √ - Every time a student is praised
- X - Every time a student is criticized
- ⊙ - The whole class or a group of students is praised
- ⊗ - The whole class or a group of students is criticized

Teacher's Table

1 ⊗ G	2 ⊗ G	13 ⊗ ⊗ G	14 ⊗ ⊗ G	23 ⊗ G	24 ⊗ G
3 ⊗ G	4 ⊗ G	15 ⊙ B √ ⊗ X	16 ⊙ ⊗ B	25 ⊙ B	26 ⊙ B
5 ⊗ √ G	6 ⊙ B	17 ⊙ B	18 ⊙ B	27 ⊙ B	28 ⊗ G
7 ⊙ X B	8 ⊙ B	19 ⊙ B	20 ⊙ B	29 ⊙ ⊗ G	30 ⊙ ⊗ G
9 ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ G	10 ⊙ ⊗ ⊗ B	21 ⊙ B	22 ⊙ B	31 ⊙ ⊙ B	32 ⊙ ⊙ B
11 ⊗ ⊗ G	12 X B ⊙ ⊗ ⊗				

Researcher

Comments

- At the beginning of the lesson, boys sit upright and move to their groups faster than girls who drag their feet.
- Student 7 sleeps on the desk, looks out through the window
- Student 12 sneers
- **Praise** - Good boys, Very good, John can do it, you are on the right track.
- **Criticism** - Girls, you are sleeping, you are always doing your own things
 You have done nothing, you are lazy, liar.

Observation Schedule 1 School B

Class: Form 1 Lesson: English Topic: Poetry reading
 Teacher: Mrs. Maina Date: 30th May 2006 Time: 3.20 – 4.00pm
 Gender: Female Duration: 40 Minutes
 Boys: 17 Girls: 11 No. of student: 28

√ - Every time a student is praised

X - Every time a student is criticized

⊙ - The whole class or a group of students is praised

⊗ - The whole class or a group of students is criticized

Teacher's Table

1 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	2 ⊗ ⊗ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	11 ⊗ ⊗ √ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	12 ⊗ ⊗ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	21 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	22 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
3 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	4 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	13 ⊗ ⊗ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	14 ⊗ ⊗ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	23 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	24 ⊗ ⊗ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
5 ⊗ ⊗ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	6 ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	15 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ √	16 ⊗ ⊗ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	25 ⊗ ⊗ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	26 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
7 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	8 ⊗ ⊗ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	17 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	18 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	27 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	28 ⊗ ⊗ G ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
9 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	10 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	19 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	20 ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗		

Researcher

Comments

- Within the first 7 minutes all the students stare at the teacher and no attempts to answer questions.

- Between the 10th and 15th minute only 3 hands (student 4,11,12) are raised and answer all questions
- The number of hands keeps increasing and half way into the lesson, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the learners actively participate.
- Student 10 looks irritated and does not answer even a single question.

Praise - Good trial

- Very good
- Good

- Criticism**
- You look so dull
 - You are not serious
 - You are joking
 - You are always sleeping in my class
 - You are jokers
 - You don't want to answer

Observation Schedule 2 School B

Class: Form 2

Lesson: Chemistry

Topic: Atoms

Teacher: Mr. Chepkwony

Date: 30th May 2006

Time: 2.00 – 2.40pm

Gender: Male

Duration: 40 Minutes

Boys: 10

Girls: 15

No. of students: 25

√ - Every time a student is praised

X - Every time a student is criticized

⊙ - The whole class or a group of students is praised

⊗ - The whole class or a group of students is criticized

Teacher's Table

1 ⊙ B	2 ⊙ G	10 √ ⊙ G	11 √ ⊙ B	18 ⊙ G	19 ⊙ G
3 ⊙ G	4 ⊙ G	12 ⊙ B	13 ⊙ G	20 √ ⊙ G	21 √ ⊙ G
5 ⊗ ⊗ ⊙ G	6 ⊗ ⊗ ⊙ G	14 ⊙ G	15 ⊙ G	22 X ⊙ G	23 ⊙ B
7 ⊗ ⊗ ⊙ B	8 ⊗ ⊙ G	16 ⊙ B	17 ⊙ B	24 ⊙ B	25 √ ⊙ B

Researcher

9 ⊗ ⊗ ⊙ B

Comments

- Class very active from the beginning. Most of them raise hands and answer questions
- Students (5, 6, 7, 8, and 9) keep quiet in the group and stare at the teacher when he tries to guide the group.

Praise – Good

- you are right
- very good

- you are doing well
- you can do it
- Gladys is neat.

Criticism - You are not serious

- You are careless
- Vivian is very untidy.

- At some point all the boys have their hands up but no girl.
- Within the last 15 minutes both boys and girls are very active except for student 26 who does not make an attempt, she looks very sad.

Praise- Good

- Very good
- Girls, you have always done better than boys.

Criticism- This is not a serious class

- You are lazy
- You have all forgotten
- You can never answer a question
- You don't want to learn
- The girls can continue sleeping

Observation Schedule 4 School B

Class: Form

Lesson: Agriculture

Topic: Crop Production

Teacher: Miss Tanui

Date: 31st May 2006

Time: 2.00 – 2.40pm

Gender: Female

Duration: 40 Minutes

Boys: 25

Girls: 20

No. of students: 45

√ - Every time a student is praised

X - Every time a student is criticized

√ - The whole class or a group of students is praised

X - The whole class or a group of students is criticized

Teacher's Table

1 B	2 G	17 G	18 G	31 G	32 ✓ B
3 G	4 G	19 G	20 G	33 G	34 G
5 B	6 ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ G	21 ✓ B	22 G	35 G	36 B
7 ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ G	8 ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ G	23 B	24 B	37 G	38 B
9 ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ B XXX	10 ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ B ⊗	25 G	26 B	39 B	40 B
11 B	12 B	27 B	28 B	41 ⊗ G	42 ⊗ G
13 B	14 B	29 B	30 B	43 ⊗ G XXX	44 ⊗ B
15 B	16 ✓ B				45 ⊗ B

Researcher

Comments

At the beginning of the lesson all the learners are very attentive and actively participate in answering questions.

- After 10 Minutes, students move into groups except for five students to take time to move. The group is discussing irrelevant issues in relation to the topic of discussion when the teacher approaches them and criticizes them. Even then they are not ready to pick up the discussion.

- All the other groups get on well with their discussion except for the group that is characterized by a lot of silent moments.

Praise - Good, Very good

Criticism - You don't understand simple instructions, who is the fool? You are not using your brains, you are not serious, you are all sleeping.

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