Requesting Behaviour of Saudi Arabian Women in Contemporary Arabic-Speaking Situations

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Hessah Al-Ageel

Bachelor of Languages and Translation (King Saud University, Riyadh)

Master of Applied Linguistics (La Trobe University, Melbourne)

School of Global Urban and Social Studies

The College of Design and Social Context

RMIT University

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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Hessah Al-Ageel

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Abstract

Based on socio-pragmatic, sociolinguistic and linguistic perspectives, this research project aimed to examine requesting behaviour and linguistic interaction in contemporary Arabic amongst Saudi females in various contexts. To provide a wider scope on those different contexts and to examine emerging phenomenon resulting from globalization through examining the practices of requests, the study was divided into four studies: one main study and three sub-studies. The main study aimed to examine politeness behaviour and to focus on the speech act of requests in Saudi Arabic using Brown and Levinson’s model of politeness and applying it in the Arabic context. The coding scheme of Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) in the Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSAR) was adapted for the data analysis of the main study.

The role play method was used to collect data because of its effectiveness in controlling the social variables in addition to being more comprehensive in eliciting oral production data. The main study also aimed to provide an insight into the cultural aspects and the impact of the social variables of gender of the hearer, social distance, power status and the degree of imposition on spoken requests amongst Saudi women. The study investigated whether there were any potential differences between two generations of Saudi women: the first is in the age range of 20-39 and the second from 40-60. Forms of address were also examined since they play a vital role in politeness behaviour and provide an interesting reflection on the cultural and social norms according to age, social and power status and gender. The study focused on the impact of religious values related to politeness among Saudi women.

The role-play scenarios were designed to elicit data within the dimensions of the social variables. For the main study, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used for the data analysis through the socio-pragmatic lens in comparing and contrasting the request strategies of two age groups using ANOVA and T-tests in the quantitative analysis.

The results showed that there was a preference for using direct strategies by the two female age groups when making requests and this suggests that the Saudi spoken form of Arabic has a tendency towards positive politeness. The socio-pragmatic analysis showed that there was a significant impact of the social variables of power status, social distance, and the degree of imposition on requesting behaviour in social situations and study/work contexts and this impact was manifested in the positive relationship between the factor of power status and negative strategies. The data of the main study also showed that there was a positive relationship between the degree of imposition and the use of the strategies of negative politeness. The analysis also showed that in a social context the impact of the gender of the hearer was particularly evident in distant relationships through the preference of negative politeness or opting out strategies.
Further analysis showed that using forms of address and religious expressions also varied in accordance with the changes of the social variables. The statistical analysis showed that the most influential and significant factor was social distance. The impact of power status and degree of imposition was also significant in the analysis of the data of each pair of scenarios measuring high and low power status and high and low degree of imposition. There were significant differences between the two age groups in their request behaviour in some situations. The statistical analysis also revealed that the informants showed behavioural differences in their use of politeness and request strategies although all their requests in both social and study/work contexts were to female hearers which means that the contextual differences and other surrounding circumstances can affect politeness behaviour amongst the individuals of one culture.

In relation to Hofstede’s framework on cultural dimensions, the analysis showed that Saudi culture is classified as a culture with high acceptance for hierarchical status with a collectivist nature. Regarding the dimension of masculinity/femininity, the results of this study showed that Saudi communicative patterns show a greater tendency towards femininity.

As previously mentioned, this project aimed to explore various issues that surround the practices of requests in contemporary Arabic. For this reason, the other three sub-studies were designed to shed light on the linguistic features and on sociolinguistic issues that distinguish two linguistic forms of communication i.e. Saudi Pidgin Arabic (SPA) and the emerging phenomenon of Arabizi (using Latin letters and the Arabic numeral system) in addition to Arabic written requests in its formal context i.e. exchanged emails in a Saudi governmental institute.

The first sub-study focused on requests made by the female Saudi participants to non-native female speakers of Arabic by using SPA. The data for this sub-study were collected by recording the participants in natural conversations with female Asian workers. The results showed that this variety is characterized by some features in relation to its linguistic system. The use of SPA is restricted by a limited structure of vocabulary items, simple verbal expressions and noun phrases and is not subjected to the system of verbal and noun phrasing in spoken Arabic.

The second sub-study focused on the linguistic features and sociolinguistic dimensions that distinguish informal written requests amongst Saudi females. Authentic mobile texting messages exchanged between twenty female participants and some of their friends and relatives were collected and analysed. In addition, there were another twenty participants who answered a number of questions in a questionnaire for the purpose of exploring additional features about the phenomenon of Arabizi.

The findings showed that the use of Arabizi is distinguished by the representation of some Arabic consonants by Arabic numbers and this feature results from the lack of equivalents for these consonants.
in English. The second sub-study also showed that there is a flexibility in spelling words that include vowels because of the shared linguistic background that both interlocutors have (Arabic), so they can distinguish the words that they use in the spoken variety. The analysis of the data of the questionnaire showed that the use of *Arabizi* is a fashionable style that has been created by young people using modern technology. However, the analysis of the questionnaire also showed the use of *Arabizi* might have a negative impact on the Arabic language and its Islamic identity because it destroys its beauty.

The third sub-study examined some of the linguistic features of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) by focusing on politeness strategies through formal written requests that were exchanged by emails. Sixty written formal emails were collected for the data of the third sub-study from female employees in a Saudi governmental educational institute. As in spoken requests, the data showed that the use of formal Arabic written requests has a tendency towards directness.

Politeness behaviour in written Arabic requests also includes the use of external and internal strategies such as politeness markers and religious expressions that function to make the requestive expressions sound more polite. The data showed that the use of forms of address reflects formality by employing various occupational and formal terms in addressing other employees. In addition, the data focused on the general structure of formal letters in MSA i.e. the receiver’s details, the sender’s details, the subject, the opening section (Islamic greeting/opening greeting), the content, the closing section (respectful/closing salutation) and the electronic signature.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, and due to many interwoven factors such as the technology revolution and the phenomenon of globalisation, Saudi society - one of the most conservative societies in the world - has encountered several challenges regarding change. It has been forced to be more open and to interact with social groups from different cultural backgrounds. However, the events of 11th September 2001 have made the situation more complicated and led to unjustified stereotyping and negative judgments about Saudis by several means of media and throughout the world.

There are also other issues that could have arisen that focus particularly on Saudi women. In Saudi Arabia, women generally have fewer chances to be involved in most governmental sectors and organizations than men. Hence, their communication behaviour might also be misjudged and stereotyped like other social practices in Saudi society. It can be said that the critical political and regional situation of Saudi Arabia has led to more complexity when focusing on Saudi cultural norms and values. The communicative style of Saudi women is one of the cultural aspects that might also not be properly interpreted for specific reasons. It can be said the communication system between Saudi men (mainly strangers) and women is controlled by a unique combination of Islamic instructions and other cultural values.

Hence, it is important to mention that in the field of research, there is a gap in the literature concerned with Saudi women’s language and behaviour (Al Ageel, 2010; Al-Qahtani, 2009) and the conservative nature of Saudis that relatively control Saudi women’s behaviour could be one of the results for this gap in the social research literature. However, it is also important to mention that not only in Saudi Arabia do women have less chances in public life; women in various countries around the world lag behind men in getting involved in leadership positions in both public and private sectors. For example, Greene states that women encounter discrimination around the world in their professional lives:

> Although the women’s rights movement took a great leap forward with the passage of the 19th Amendment, females still face discrimination in the professional world. This discrimination can take several forms, including exclusion from specific industries and lower pay for hours worked (Greene, 2015: 1).

To shed light on cultural dimensions, socio-pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects and linguistic features of various styles of interaction by Saudi women in the Arabic context and by focusing on requesting behaviour, this study aims to answer the following question:

What are the practices of requesting behaviour amongst adult Saudi women speaking contemporary Arabic in both spoken and written forms, and how are these changing?
1.1 Research background

Over the past few decades, the field of pragmatics - the study of languages from their functional perspective - has attracted many researchers from various disciplinary fields including psychology, anthropology and sociolinguistics (Harris, 1995). In fact, both pragmatics and sociolinguistics are concerned with language usage in the communicative system (Barron, 2005; Barron and Schneider, 2009; Harris, 1995). According to Clyne (2006), the study of pragmatics has contributed considerably to understanding the relationship between language and culture. Several sub-disciplines have emerged as a result of the increasing scholarly interest in pragmatics from various perspectives. For instance, Inter-Language Pragmatics (ILP) concerns the process of second language learning through analysing levels of pragmatic competence that a learner achieves in the second language (L2) (Fe´lix-Brasdefer, 2008).

Socio-pragmatic variation and variational pragmatics both focus on the intra-lingual differences and cross-cultural variation in speech act realization amongst speakers of the same language (Barron, 2005; Barron and Schneider, 2009; Fe´lix-Brasdefer, 2008). However, it is important to mention that, unlike research on ILP or cross-cultural variation, research on socio-pragmatics and intra-lingual differences has had little attention over the past few decades (Barron, 2005; Barron and Schneider, 2009; Fe´lix-Brasdefer, 2008). The development of the field of pragmatics has also been combined with the emergence of influential frameworks such as speech act and politeness theories suggested by Austin (1962) and Brown and Levinson (1987) respectively.

Politeness has been investigated by many researchers through the analysis of the speech act of requests (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Atawneh, 1991; Al-Gahtani, 2010; Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989; Wierzbicka, 1985; Yu, 2005). Several issues have been debated regarding requests, including universality (Brown and Levinson, 1987) versus cultural specificity (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Atawneh, 1991; Al-Gahtani, 2010; Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989; Wierzbicka, 1985; Yu, 2005). In addition to this, the social variables of age, social and power status, and gender all play a significant role in the communication process and have a direct impact on the speech act of requests. The relationship between gender and language usage has given rise to several contradictions which will be discussed. (Al Falasi, 2007; Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Al-Qahtani, 2009; Holmes; 1995; Kouletaki, 2005; Mills, 2003).

1.2 Statement of the problem

It could be helpful to provide a brief background about a number of problematic issues associated with the context of the current study and one of those is the contradictory generalisations in the literature about female politeness behaviour (Al-Qahtani, 2009). Since Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) proposed their model of politeness, several studies have been conducted examining women’s politeness
strategies and debates have emerged among scholars regarding the categorising of women’s speech and politeness behaviour (Al-Qahtani, 2009). On the one hand, some scholars have classified women as more sensitive toward positive politeness when they show friendliness and concern for others’ needs and feelings when using compliments, apologies and requests as in Al Falasi (2007), Holmes (1988, 1993, 1995) and Kouletaki (2005) respectively.

According to Holmes (1988, 1993), there are significant differences between men and women in their linguistic behaviour. For example, in performing the speech act of complimenting, women tend to compliment each other more than men do (Holmes, 1988; 1993). While in the context of apologies and responding to them, Holmes (1993) claims that women pay more attention to the addressee’s face needs. On the other hand, scholars such as Mills (2003) have tended to stereotype women’s speech towards negative politeness through the features of conflict avoidance and exaggeration in the use of deference expressions (Al-Qahtani, 2009). According to Al-Qahtani (2009), negative evaluations of women’s politeness behaviour can result from mistaken presumptions. This also has been proposed by scholars such as Takano (2005), who believes that women can be both negatively and positively polite according to the communicative situation.

Another major issue is that the literature that has been previously discussed does not concern itself with female politeness within Arab societies (Al-Qahtani, 2009). This means that generalisations on the basis of previous studies that were heavily focused on female politeness behaviour in western societies can negatively affect the judgment of the politeness behaviour of women who belong to other cultures such as Arabian cultures (Al-Qahtani, 2009).

In addition to the gap in the literature concerning Arab women’s politeness behaviour, there is another problematic issue: dealing with all Arabian cultures as one unit and neglecting the cultural diversity among Arab societies. This situation can also lead to misjudgement and overgeneralisation within the Arabic context.

In addition, there are literature gaps in relation to changes in contemporary Arabic in both its spoken and written forms. It can be said that the Arabic language is being challenged by the rapid growth of globalisation and the use of modern technology. In addition to the linguistic differences among generations, the impact of globalisation is clear through the emergence of new spoken varieties used for specific communicative purposes such as Saudi Pidgin Arabic, Gulf Pidgin Arabic or Pidgin Madam. Written Arabic on the other hand, has been affected by the impact of using the Latin alphabet among Arab youth as a means of communication. Despite the importance of these linguistic phenomena in the Arabic context, they have only been examined by a few studies (Aboelezz, 2009a; Aboelezz, 2009b; Alkawas, 2011; Palfreyman and Al Khalil, 2003; Yaghan, 2008).
1.3 Rationale of the current study

This research project will provide more knowledge about cultural elements, sociolinguistic and linguistic strategies that are used to perform the speech act of requests amongst Saudi women in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia in various contexts. The focus of the current study will be on Saudi women for several reasons. One of these reasons is that many characteristics of Saudi women’s daily behaviour may be misunderstood or misjudged by the rest of the world because of the common belief that many of them used to be subjected to being more responsible for and restricted to domestic affairs, while political, economic and governmental matters are mainly controlled by men.

However, it is important to mention that Saudi women’s role has recently undergone a number of changes. For instance, Saudi women finally got the chance to vote in elections for the kingdom's municipal councils and some of them also got the chance be appointed full members of the Majlis al-Shura, the consultative national assembly Melly (2011). In addition to their significant roles in both education and health sectors.

Additionally, this research project is important and will provide an important contribution to the literature for scholars from various fields for more than one reason. Firstly, there is the lack of scholarly literature on Arabic in general (Atawneh, 1991; Al-Adaileh, 2011; Al-Gahtani, 2010) and on the spoken Saudi variety in particular (Al Ageel, 2010; Al-Gahtani, 2010; Al-Qahtani, 2009). According to Al Ageel (2010) and Feghali (1997), researchers usually encounter the problem of the lack of literature when they work in the context of Arabian cultures and communication systems. As a result, this significant study as mentioned will contribute to filling the literature gap in this area.

While the focus of most studies has been either on EFL Arabic learners or cross-cultural studies comparing Arabic and English contexts, the current study will be culturally specific and will focus on the Saudi variety of the Arabic language. This will provide more specific knowledge in addition to being among the fundamental studies for researchers who are interested in examining social interaction and human behaviour within the Saudi context.

Secondly, examining the speech act of requests amongst Saudi women will also enrich the literature on general distinct cultural norms and values and linguistic features of politeness behaviour amongst this group of individuals. According to Atawneh (1991), there is a biased and offensive stereotyped misunderstanding among some research studies on Arabic which describe it as an indirect language and difficult to be understood. Some studies show that compared to English, Arabic tends to be more direct with less elaborate ways of indirectness (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Atawneh, 1991).
Hence, this research project will reveal more about requesting behaviour and thus the ambiguity issues in relation to directness and politeness in the Arabic context. Moreover, this study will investigate a number of areas which have not been examined before. One of these areas is examining any possible differences between two generations of Saudi women: the first in the age range of 20-39 and the second from 40-60. Examining Saudi women’s politeness strategies will provide an insight into and more understanding of the cultural aspects such as the impact of gender of the hearer, age, social distance and power status on requests and the communication system among Saudi women. This study also aims to analyse some linguistic and cultural dimensions correlated to the spoken form of the Arabic language.

According to Hussein (1995), in order to achieve an effective communicative level in Arabic, it is important for Arabic learners to understand the pragmatic use of the Arabic address system. From a sociolinguistic perspective it can be said that, in every language, speakers’ choices of address forms are systematic and subject to the social and cultural rules and values that control the use of the language. Forms of address will be examined since they play a vital role in politeness behavior during the making of requests and provide an interesting reflection of the cultural and social norms according to age, social and power status and gender.

The importance of the speech act of requests also lies in its role in daily linguistic interaction among members of every society. They have been analysed by many researchers because of their effective reflection of many sociolinguistic and linguistic aspects such as showing respect, saving face, avoiding or minimizing imposition and exercising good manners (Al-Marrani and Sazaliee, 2010 a). The speech act of requests will be examined not only to investigate politeness behaviour but also to explore further linguistic and sociolinguistic characteristics of contemporary Arabic. Arabic requests will be also examined in this study because, as mentioned, they are very apparent in daily interaction and commonly used in both spoken and written communications in their formal and informal contexts amongst Saudi females.

In addition to examining the strategies of politeness behaviour in the Saudi variety of Arabic, this research project will discuss further issues related to both spoken and written forms of Arabic requests. In the context of spoken Arabic the study will examine the phenomenon of Saudi Pidgin Arabic, usually used by Saudis when they make contact with non-native speakers of Arabic, mainly Asian workers. In fact, it can be said that this study contributes in casting some light on the phenomenon that has resulted from the economic development of the last few decades that has affected social life in Saudi Arabia. This new element of the Saudi sociolinguistic context has been driven by the presence of the contract workers brought into the country. For instance, in 2001 alone, Saudi Arabia was second among the top 20 country sources of remittance payments which were estimated at US$ 15.1 billion (Ratha, 2003). This has resulted in the significant movement to Saudi Arabia of hundreds of thousands of foreign
workers both females and males from many countries and from different language backgrounds. Their interaction with women in Saudi Arabia will be another focus of this study.

This study will contribute to the literature concerning the impact of modern technology which has taken place in recent times on the linguistic features of written Arabic in an informal context i.e. exchanging texts amongst Saudi youth through mobile phones. The first style (informal written Arabic), which has emerged recently among Saudi youth as a means of informal communication, is the phenomenon of Arabizi, or texting spoken Arabic using the Latin alphabet and Arabic numerals instead of Arabic script (Yaghan, 2008).

In addition to investigating politeness behaviour in Arabic spoken requests, light will also be shed on another context of politeness i.e. formal written Arabic which will be examined in the third sub-study. For this reason, it can be said that the importance of this study will also be clear by providing an insight into most sociolinguistic dimensions and some of the linguistic features that distinguish the use of MSA in exchanging emails.

1.4 Thesis outline

The first chapter provides an introduction and a brief background to some of the important issues and the rationale for this study. The literature review, the issues of culture, language and religion, and the theories on cultural dimensions and politeness in the context of requesting behaviour will be discussed in chapter two. Chapter Two also reviews the concept of face, which is one of the most important elements in politeness theory, in addition to providing a general discussion for a number of issues related to the speech act of requests in the English and Arabic contexts. It also will focus on some of the linguistic features and phenomena that distinguish Arabic from several languages. The final section in Chapter Two will summarize the research question and objectives.

Chapter Three focuses on the general methodology employed in this study: a description of the participants, the instruments and procedure of data collection and data analysis for the main study and the three sub-studies. Chapter Four analyses the collected data for spoken Arabic requests in a social context and Chapter Five provides analysis for the data of spoken Arabic requests in study/work contexts. The data of requests to female Asian workers in Saudi Arabia using Saudi Pidgin Arabic will be analysed and discussed in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven will focus on informal written requests i.e. using mobile texting and the data of formal written requests i.e. formal emails that have been exchanged in a governmental institute will be discussed and analysed in Chapter Eight. The final chapter provides a conclusion for this research project, in addition to some suggestions for future research based on the results of the study.
CHAPTER TWO
REQUESTING BEHAVIOUR IN THE CONTEXT OF SAUDI ARABIAN CULTURE AND ITS LANGUAGE: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

According to Scollon and Scollon (1995), in each culture, beliefs, values, religions and social organization are amongst the elements that are reflected in and expressed by the linguistic varieties used by members of the cultural groups. Kleiner (1996) also believes that variation of form in language used amongst interactants can be one of the most important elements that reflects the interrelationship between language and social context.

It can be said that as a result of the interrelationship between language and cultural values in a social context, performing the speech act of requests is a relatively complex task not only for the learner of languages, but in some situations for the native speakers of such languages Krulatz (2012). Since this research project aims to provide more understanding on the practices of requests amongst Saudi women who represent a cultural group in Saudi society in various social contexts, light will be shed in the current chapter on some issues related to the strong relationship between language and cultural and religious values.

2.1 The relationship between language and cultural and religious values

It is important within our selected context to cast light on the concept of speech community as one of the most significant concepts of sociolinguistics. According to Mesthrie (2011), speech community is defined as the basic unit of study for the linguistic features of the social setting of a language. For this reason, examining the linguistic features used by members of a speech community can be one of the most helpful methods in understanding the cultural features that distinguish politeness behaviour within this community.

One of the most important features that distinguish a speech community are the density of communication (which means that members of each speech community speak to each other more than they speak to those who belong to other speech communities) (Mesthrie, 2011). The second feature is the shared norms that are defined as the common knowledge shared by the members of a speech community as to what are the appropriate (linguistic) norms used to describe a social phenomenon (Mesthrie, 2011).

In addition to its strong relation with culture, Jemiriye (2006) claims that in many particular contexts, language is also deeply related to religion, which is considered a key cultural aspect (Scollon and Scollon, 1995). For example, understanding Classical Hebrew and Koine Greek is the key to understanding the Old and New Testaments. In the Arabic context, one of the most significant features that distinguishes Arabic from other languages is that it is the language of the Qur'an, the holy book of Muslims (Jemiriye, 2006). To understand the Qur'an and most instructions of Islam, all Muslims, even if they are non-native
speakers of Arabic, should have some knowledge of classical Arabic. For instance, all Muslims must perform their five daily prayers by memorizing and reciting certain religious expressions from the holy Qur’an and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad.

The role of religion in society also extends further than being one of its cultural components; it partly determines the identity and the social values, and on certain levels, religion shapes the culture of individuals within social groups. According to Güngör, Fleischmann and Phalet (2011), religion is an influential source of truth and goodness that contributes in framing the daily activities of religious individuals through serving their social relationships. Those religious ties can be achieved either through similarity such as religious appearance i.e. dress codes such as wearing the veil among Muslim women or through synchronicity such as the practices of daily prayers and fasting (Güngör, et al., 2011).

Religion also can be one of the reasons for conflict on various levels (Roccas, 2005) and those conflicts can be either across religious boundaries such as conflicts among Muslims, Jews and Christians or it can even be between religious and non-religious individuals (Roccas, 2005). In fact, relationships amongst the practices of religion, culture and other social and personal attributes are complex and hard to define (Güngör, et al., 2011; Roccas, 2005; Saroglou and Galand, 2004; Saroglou and Munoz-Garcia, 2008).

Saroglou and Mathijsen (2007) have focused upon the conflict between religiosity and acculturation. By focusing on young Muslim immigrants in Belgium Saroglou and Mathijsen (2007) found that they were challenged when confronting multiple identities and cultures. In this situation individuals usually find themselves torn between their home culture and the new (Belgium). The role of religion cannot be neglected when focusing on cultural aspects and it can be seen as a vital part of human beings at various levels of daily interaction. When particularly focusing on Saudi Arabia which is categorized as a strongly monocultural society, it is clear that the role of religion is obvious, as will be discussed later, through the dominance of Islam as the only religion that is officially recognized in Saudi Arabia. It can be also said that most Saudis, if not all, are deeply affected by Islamic beliefs, values and concepts.

As mentioned, the current study aims to analyze requests in the Saudi variety of Arabic. Consequently, it is essential to provide an insight into some of the cultural, religious and historical features that distinguish Arabic from many other languages. According to Zaharna (1995), for Arabs, the power of Arabic is derived from its significant role as the language of religion (the most prestigious of its forms is Classical Arabic or alfussha, the language of the Qur’an) and of art, in addition to being an identity tool that distinguishes Arabic speakers from members of other speech communities. Zaharna (1995) also believes that Arabic is considered a social conduit with the emphasis on spiritual and emotional resonance.
As well as religion, culture is deeply related to the context of the current study, thus it is could be helpful to understand the notion of cultural ethos which will be discussed in the following section because of its importance in the context of the practices of requests (Yates, 2000).

### 2.2 The notion of culture from various perspectives

One of the significant issues that should be considered in understanding the communicative patterns within a speech community is the cultural value system practiced and followed by the members of a particular community (Yates, 2000). On the other hand, it is also important to understand that the notion of culture is itself problematic and hard to define (Boayo, 2011; Scollon and Scollon, 1995; Yates, 2000). The word *culture* comes from the Latin word *cultura* which refers to the cultivation of the soil, art, or the practice or the manner of cultivating. However, the broad usage of the term *culture* to describe and to refer to a constellation of social, historical and intellectual elements has led to some problematic issues related to describing and defining the term (Boayo, 2011).

Because of the extensive debate about what people mean by the concept of culture, the term *culture* is likely to raise more problems than it solves (Scollon and Scollon, 1995: 125). For example, one of the problematic issues related to the word *culture* in English is that it is used to define two concepts *high culture* and *anthropological culture*. The concept of *high culture* is used to describe intellectual and artistic achievements or a historical period of a certain social group, while the term *anthropological culture* (i.e. *culture in the anthropological tradition*) is used to describe and to understand the concepts of customs, worldview, language, kinship system, social organization and other daily practices that distinguish groups of people from each other (Scollon and Scollon, 1995: 126). In the context of intercultural communication behaviour, Scollon and Scollon (1995: 126) believe that the focus should be on *anthropological culture* and should be restricted to the four elements of ideology, face systems, forms of discourse and socialization. The term *anthropological culture* also reflects the relationship with anthropology, a field of study concerned with gaining knowledge of human beings and their encompassing cultural context usually through direct observation.

Because it is beyond the scope of the current study to examine the many approaches to culture derived from the various academic disciplines, the focus of this study will be on specific aspects of culture. From the perspective of applied linguistics, Holliday (1999) believes that there is a need to distinguish two paradigms of “culture”. The first paradigm is *large culture* which refers to prescribed ethnic, national and international entities, and this paradigm will be considered in the context of the current study. The second paradigm is *small culture* which refers to small social grouping or activities with the avoidance of culturist ethnic, national or international stereotyping (p.237). Holliday (1999) believes that the tendency of reification has taken place in the literature regarding the paradigm of *large culture*. Holliday (1999) claims that reification of culture can be problematic and could lead to the danger of reductionism and prescription. As a result, Yates (2000) suggests that culture draws on the history of a group in relation
to knowledge, assumptions and values that they share; however, culture should be seen as dynamic rather than deterministic or static.

As mentioned earlier, cultural aspects are among the most significant elements to be considered in examining and understanding requesting behaviour within a speech community. Consequently, it is also important to cast light on some of the issues related to concepts of cultural ethos since the cultural values are amongst the most significant issues within the current context.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the term ethos is defined as “a label for the quality of interaction characterizing groups or social categories of persons in a particular society.” (p. 243). On the other hand, Halloran (1982) suggests that the notion of ethos contains more than one concept; one of these concepts was suggested by Aristotle who refers to ethos as ‘character’ and focuses on personal attributes and individualism; the other contrasting concept emphasizes the conventional and the public, rather than the idiosyncratic and individual notions (Halloran, 1982). Moreover, Halloran (1982) believes that the notion of ethos includes both individual and collective meanings as follows:

The word ethos has both an individual and a collective meaning. It makes sense to speak of the ethos of this or that person, but it makes equally good sense to speak of the ethos of a particular type of person, of a professional group, or a culture, or an era in history. (Halloran, 1982:62)

The dimensions of culture and cultural ethos have been discussed by various researchers with opposing views. Some support the universal view of these dimensions (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Hofstede, 1983, 2001), while others claim that they should be addressed and described as culturally specific and subjected to the use of emically-defined cultural values (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989; Wierzbicka, 1985; Yu, 2005).

Although the universal view of culture provides an effective framework in cross-cultural studies, it has been criticised because it is ethnocentric and encourages stereotyping (Wierzbicka, 1985). On the other hand, the culturally specific view which provides more insight into the cultural values within a society has also been questioned because of the challenges of providing an effective and understood description to those who belong to other societies (Wierzbicka, 1985; Yates, 2000). Since the current study investigates politeness strategies and requesting in the Saudi social context which represents just one of many Arabic speech communities, it is important to provide an insight into the concept of “culture” in the Arabic language.

In Arabic, the equivalent for the term culture is thaqafah and this word comes from the root thaqiifa which has more than one meaning. One of these meanings is to be skillful, clever or smart. In the Alwaseet dictionary (2004), for instance, thaqafah stands for sciences, knowledge and arts that are learned
skillfully and acquired by human beings. In other contexts, the word *thaqfu* means ‘straightening of’; for example the expression ‘*thaqfu a-rumh*’ means ‘straightening of the spear’ (Al-waseet, 2004; Boayo, 2011). In the Qur’anic context, although the word *thaqafah* is not mentioned, its derivations have been used in three contexts and they either refer to the meanings of ‘to encounter a war’ or to the meaning of ‘to gain mastery over something’ (Boayo, 2011). According to Boayo (2011) the usage of the term *thaqafah* as a concept of a social phenomenon was not used in Arabic to refer to any social context in Islamic history. Nevertheless, the current usage has come recently from the west as a result of intellectual contact between European and Arab countries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

It is clear therefore that the word *thaqafah* is complex and hard to define in Arabic, like its equivalent *culture* in English. For example, it is common that the term *thaqafah* is used in a wide range of contexts interchangeably with several terms such as *madaniyyah* and *hadarah* and both are translated into English as ‘civilization’ (Boayo, 2011), which could create confusion when attempting to define its meaning.

The other crucial issue is related to the translation of the word *culture* into Arabic. As mentioned the word *thaqafah* in Arabic stands for *culture* and both terms are problematic in both, so this also could create confusion when translating from English to Arabic or vice versa. Mu’nis (1994:369) has observed:

> Nowadays, we use the word *thaqafah* to refer to the meaning of the Western term *culture*. The usage of the two terms to stand for each other is a common mistake because both meanings do not correspond to each other. In addition, the usage of the two terms to stand for each other is hard to be corrected because it took its final form and cannot be changed.

In addition to the problematic issues in translation, there is another issue related to defining cultural dimensions in the Arabic context. One of these issues is the use of the term “Arabs” and generalising the term to describe any cultural or social phenomenon in the Arabic context. For this reason, it is important to cast light on some of the problematic issues that may result from using this term without being aware of its limitations as will be discussed in the following section.

### 2.3 Arabs and cultural diversity

According to Feghali (1997), who provides an interesting explanation for the problematic issues related to the term “Arabs”, one of the most important factors that is required to design valid and reliable cross cultural research and training programs is understanding the similarities as well as the diversities among societies in the Middle East, the Islamic world and Arab countries. This means that, while defining the term “culture” is problematic in itself, in the Arabic context the situation is even more complex. For example, the use of the term “Arab World” to describe the countries in the Middle East could be problematic because the area includes non-Arab countries like Turkey and Iran, both with a large majority of Muslims and who share borders with some Arab countries (Al Ageel, 2010; Feghali, 1997).
On the other hand, using the term “Islamic world” could be also problematic because this includes non-Muslim minorities in Arab countries such as the Christian Maronites in Lebanon and Coptic Orthodox and Catholic Egyptians (Al Ageel, 2010; Feghali, 1997).

An interesting question of whether to deal with all Arab countries as one unit or separately is posed by Obeidat, Shannak, Masa’dah and Al-Jarrah (2012), and also provides some understanding of the complexity of this situation. According to Dedoussis (2004) and Obeidat et al. (2012) there are two different views among researchers when investigating Arab culture. Some researchers believe that it is important to deal with each Arab country as a separate unit and even consider the cultural differences within the same country (Abbas and Comp, 1995; Alkailani, Azzam and Athamneh, 2012; Sidani and Gardner, 2000). Other researchers, on the other hand, believe that generalisations are unavoidable and expected, since many Arabs share certain beliefs and attitudes resulting from the same linguistic background and geographical borders (Dedoussis, 2004; Obeidat et al, 2012). In fact, generalisation at some levels of Arabian cultures is helpful to provide a general understanding for the most common norms and values shared by Arabs.

To conclude this discussion, while generalisation in describing some elements of Arabian culture is inevitable, it is also important to be aware of its limitations and to also consider the major differences within Arab societies (Dedoussis, 2004; Obeidat et al. 2012). Since Saudis share beliefs, attitudes, linguistic background and geographical borders with many Arabs, general terms such as “Arabs”, “Arab culture” and “Arab world” may be used in the context of this study to describe the general cultural norms and values that are shared by Arabs, in addition to other cultural norms that distinguish Saudis from other Arabic-speaking societies.

Since this study partially examines the cultural norms of Saudi society, it is important to focus on Hofstede’s conceptual framework of national cultures, which is one of the most significant cultural analyses to date. The main reason is to provide more understanding of Saudi cultural norms and social habits within the framework of cultural dimensions.

### 2.4 Hofstede’s perspective and cultural dimensions

The main focus of Hofstede’s framework is on cultural dimensions in organizations; however, this perspective, known as cultural dimensions theory, also provides an effective interpretation of the cultural norms and values of social groups. In defining and finding cross-cultural differences among national cultures, Hofstede (1983, 2001) proposed the theory be based on four dimensions of values, according to the analysis of data gained from IBM employees across the world (Minkov and Hofstede, 2010). These dimensions are Large versus Small Power Distance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity versus Femininity, and Uncertainty Avoidance. In 1991, Hofstede added a fifth dimension based on the analysis of a Chinese value survey published by Chinese Culture Connection in 1983, and
named it Long versus Short Term Orientation. The sixth dimension that was added in 2010 is based on
the analysis of recent World Values Survey items and known as Indulgence versus Restraint (Hofstede,
2011).

It is important to point to the significant role of Islam in shaping the cultural norms and values and even
the daily life of most Arabian societies. According to Obeidat et al. (2012), Arab culture at many social
levels is characterized by religion and a high degree of familism. In other words, it can be said that the
loyalty of individuals at most social levels is to their families, tribes or religious sects (Obeidat et al.
2012).

The following section will discuss the first four cultural dimensions only, because Saudi Arabia is not
classified according to the last two dimensions.

2.4.1 Large/small power distance

According to Hofstede (1991) ‘power distance’ is defined as “a measure of interpersonal power of
influence between (a superior) and (a subordinate) as perceived by the (subordinate)”. The main
principle of this concept depends on the inequality in power distribution of physical and intellectual
capabilities and sometimes extends to be affected by the level of wealth among individuals within
societies (Hofstede, 1983, 2001).

With a scale range of 0 (low) to 100 (high), Saudi Arabia scores 95 which is extremely high. (Hofstede,
2010). This means that Saudi society is classified as having a large power distance society with high
acceptance of hierarchical status by its citizens (Al Ageel, 2010; Hofstede, 2010).

As mentioned previously, Islam has significantly shaped many aspects of Saudi culture. The following
Qur’anic texts, for example, show how Muslims are ordered to obey and show a high degree of deference
to their superiors.

“O ye who believe! obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you.
If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if ye do believe in Allah
and the Last Day: that is best, and most suitable for final determination”. (4:59).

“وَقُلْ أَيُّهَا الْيَهُودُ وَالأَبَرَارُ كُفُّواْ أَيُّهَا الْيَهُودُ وَالأَبَارِ لمَنْ ذَلِكَ الْأَكْبَرُ أَخْضَعْنَٰ يُبَلِّغْنَ إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالأَوَّلِينَ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبْلُغُنَّ عِندَكُمُ الْكُبْرَ أَخْضَعْنَٰ إِنَّا نَأْمَرْنَٰكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ أَمِينِينَ لَّهُمَا فَلَتَنَّى لَهُمَا وَلَّ لَّهُمَا أَمَامَهَا كَمَّا رَبِّيَّانِي كَثِيرًا وَالْخَفْشُ لَحُسْنٌ فِي الْزَّمَنِ وَقُلْ رَبَّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبِّيَّانِي صَغِيرًا)
“Your Lord has decreed to you that: You shall worship none but Him, and you shall be kind to your parents; if one or both of them live to their old age in your lifetime, you shall not say to them any word of contempt nor repel them and you shall address them in kind words. And out of kindness lower to them the wing of humility and say: "My Lord! Bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood”. (17:23-24).

As can be seen, in the first Qur’anic text showing obedience to authorised members is one essential principle in the Islamic system of Muslims and this includes all levels of everyday life. The second Qur’anic text also shows how it is important for Muslims to show a high degree of politeness and respect to their parents.

Since polite behaviour and requests are among the fundamental dimensions that form Saudi culture, it is also helpful to shed light on how Arabic requests are also culturally subjected to the large power distance dimension. For example, according to the findings of the study of Atawneh (1991) which examined directive speech acts in Arabic-English bilinguals, when addressing superiors, Arabs show a greater tendency to use more high ranking politeness strategies than Americans. The study provides examples of requests in both Arabic and English for the following situation:

You work as a driver to an important person in a high government position. What would you say to request him to give you a raise in your salary? Atawneh (1991:152).

As stated in Atawneh (1991:145), one typical Arabic way of forming the request in Arabic for this situation is as follows:

\[ \text{ya Hadrit lwaziir, ?ili fi lxiidi mudda Tawiili w?iza samaHt ti’mal ma’ruf wta’tiini zyaadi li’nnu lma’aash mish kaafi wtakaaliif /Hayaa ghaaly. “Your grace minister, I have been in service for a long time. Please do me a favor and give me a raise because my salary is not enough and living expenses are high.”} \]

On the other hand, the following is an example of a typical equivalent request in English, which uses fewer high politeness strategies:

(‘I believe I have been doing a good job. I wish if it is possible to have a raise.’) Atawneh (1991:155).

2.4.2 Individualism/collectivism

This dimension focuses on the relationship between the individual and his/her social group (Hofstede, 1983, 2001). A culture is classified as individual when there is no high level of interest and loyalty between its members and their groups. On the other hand, a culture is defined as collectivist when there is a high degree of loyalty and trust between individuals and their groups (Hofstede, 1983, 2001). According to Hofstede (2001), there is a negative relationship between collectivism and the dimension of power distance. That means countries with a large power distance tend to be more collectivist.
Among some social groups, loyalty among individuals can be a result of biogenetic relationships such as family relationships. For instance, the personal status of an individual in many Arabian societies is determined by her/his family background and social class (Al-Khatib, 2006; Feghali, 1997). In other social levels, loyalty also extends beyond family relationships such as being obligated to other individuals who belong to the same tribe and extends further to include neighbourhood, friendship and patronage (Al-Khatib, 2006; Feghali, 1997).

In Hofstede’s scale of this dimension, Saudi Arabia scores 25 towards collectivism and thus quite low in individualism. This reflects the collectivistic nature of Saudi society, meaning that Saudis are very loyal to their social groups such as families and friends.

As mentioned, one of the most significant factors in shaping Arab culture is religion. Several verses of the Qur’an and several sayings of Prophet Muhammad support and encourage brotherhood and loyalty among Muslims, such as the following verse in Surat al-Hujurat, 10:

(إِنَّمََا الأمَُؤأمِنُونَ إِخأوَةٌ فَأَصألِحُوا بَيأنَ أَخَوَيأكُمأ وَاتَُُّوا اللَََّّ لَعَلَّكُمأ تُرأحَمَُونَ)

“All believers are brothers, so make peace between your brothers and be mindful of your duty to Allah that you may be shown mercy.”

The collectivist nature of Saudis is also reflected linguistically by the use of polite expressions and forms of address. For example, in the context of requests it is very common to use forms of address that stand for brotherhood or kinship terms, as will be discussed in more detail later such as *akhii* (my brother), *ukhtii* (my sister), *khalii* (my uncle) and *khaltii* (my aunt), which refer to a mother’s brother or sister.

2.4.3 Masculinity versus femininity

According to Hofstede’s cultural framework this dimension shows the distribution of the emotional roles of the two genders among individuals of social groups. Masculine cultures, for instance, focus more on achievements, performance and success and men are expected to be tough and assertive, whereas in feminine cultures caring for others and the quality of life are more important. While role differentiation between males and females is high in masculine cultures, it is not considered between members of feminine cultures (Alkailani et al, 2012).

With a high score on this dimension a society is characterized as masculine and its individuals are driven by competition, achievements and success (Hofstede, 2010). While low scores on this dimension indicate that a society is feminine and characterized by the dominant values of caring for others and quality of life (Hofstede, 2010).
In Hofstede’s scale of masculinity Saudi Arabia scores 60 while Arab countries score an average of 52. That means that Saudi society is classified as masculine while Arabs in general are classified to have moderate characteristics of both masculinity and femininity (Dedoussis, 2004; Obeidat et al. 2012). On the other hand, it is important to mention that in a previous study by Bjerke and Al-Meer (1993) Saudi culture is classified as a feminine culture with a score of 43. Consequently, it is important to shed light on some issues that could be behind these differences.

Firstly, Saudi Arabia, which holds the largest amount of the world’s oil, has been subjected in the last few decades to several economic and political changes that may have increased the competitive nature and masculine dimension among Saudis. The second issue is related to both the dominance of gender segregation in some Saudi governmental sectors and minimizing women’s role in public life which could be a significant factor in reflecting the dominance of masculinity among Saudis, particularly in the field of work, which is subjected to the dominance of males. In addition to the little literature related to Saudi culture in the scope of Hofstede’s dimensions, the study of Bjerke and Al-Meer (1993) was limited to 38 part-time Saudi MBA students at King Faisal University in the eastern area of Saudi Arabia. This justifies the need for more studies to provide more reliable evaluation with a wider view that covers more about cultural dimensions within the Saudi context (Noer, Leupold and Valle, 2007).

Since there are some problems regarding the masculinity dimension in the Saudi context, it could be more reasonable to refer to the evaluation of all Arab countries, as it includes more statistics for Arab women. As mentioned, Arabs are rated as moderately masculine with a score of 52 on Hofstede’s scale. According to Weir (2001), masculinity among Arabs is mediated by feminine and “high relationship” attributes. This is clear from the high tendency of Arabs to be concerned with the establishment of friendly relationships with others in addition to being socially obligated towards family members and other social groups (Dedoussis, 2004).

Studies on politeness behaviour in Arabic have shown that Arabs show a strong tendency to use expressions to reflect the femininity dimension in Arab culture and the evaluation of personal relationships. For instance, the study of Nelson, El Bakary and Al Batal (1993) on Egyptian compliments shows that Egyptians tend to use several expressions that reflect the appreciation of family relationships such as huwwa zayy akhuuya (he is like a brother to me).

2.4.4 Uncertainty avoidance

The main focus of uncertainty avoidance dimension is on the future. According to Hofstede (2010), this dimension deals with the fact that the future never can be known. It is also defined as “the extent to the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 161).
Saudi Arabia scores 80 on the dimension of uncertainty avoidance. According to Bjerke and Al-Meer (1993), the strong Islamic belief in fatalism is one of the most significant factors in classifying Saudi culture as high in uncertainty avoidance. Uncertainty avoidance in Arab culture is also reflected by the common use of religious formulaic expressions such as *in shaa Allaah* ('with God's will or 'God willing'). It can be said that the use of these expressions that refer to the future as something only controlled by God results from following the instructions of Islam as in the following Qur’anic verses in Surat al-kahf, 23,24:

(وَلَّ تَُولَنَّ لِشَيأءٍ إِنَّمَا فَاعِلٌ ذَٰلِكَ غَدًا إِلَّا أن يَشَاءَ إِلَّا أَن يَهُدِيَنِ رَبِّي لَِْقأرَبَ مِنْ هَٰذَا رَشَدًا)

“Nor say of anything, I shall be sure to do so and so tomorrow”- Without adding, "So please Allah!" and call thy Lord to mind when thou forgettest, and say, "I hope that my Lord will guide me ever closer (even) than this to the right road."

According to Farghal (1995), such expressions are uttered when one is making future plans. In addition, one of the linguistic purposes is to express politeness and deference to God, as He is the controller of the universe and the ultimate agent who can will the occurrence of future events.

Because of the importance of culture and cultural ethos in understanding and reflecting knowledge of the practices of requests amongst members of speech communities, the following section will provide a discussion about the history and cultural ethos of Saudi Arabia.

### 2.5 Saudi Arabia in historical and cultural perspectives

Saudi Arabia, the keeper of one-third of the world’s known oil, occupies most of the Arabian Peninsula with a population of 28.7 million people: 23.1 million Saudis and 5.6 million non-Saudis. The official religion in Saudi Arabia is Islam which is the source of its civil and criminal legislation. In Islam, *Sharia* is the main source of Islamic instructions or the system of law and the two main sources for Sharia are the holy Qur’an and Prophet Muhammad’s traditions (hadith) (Al-Olayan & Karande, 2000; Feghali, 1997). Most of the population is Sunnii Muslim and there is a minority Shii’a community who differ in some of their Islamic beliefs from Sunnii Muslims (Al-Sabaie, 1989). Moreover, one of the central religious and cultural features that distinguishes Saudi Arabia is being the place of the holy cities (Mecca and Medina), where the prophet lived his life, and the Hajj (annual pilgrimage to Mecca).

While not all Arabs are Muslims (e.g. Coptic Egyptian and Maronite Lebanese Christians) and not all Muslims are Arabs (e.g. Turkish and Iranian Muslims) (Feghali, 1997), Saudis are known as both Muslim and Arab and they are consequently controlled and affected by both their Islamic values and Arabic traditions (Al Ageel, 2010; Bjerke & Al-Meer, 1993). For this reason, it is important to provide
some understanding of the Islamic and Arabic norms and values that distinguishes Saudis from other societies.

Like many other Arabs, Saudis are known for their loyalty to their family and social life (Feghali, 1997). Children in Arab countries have a strong bond to their social groups and they are educated from an early age to give total submission and respect to their parents and the elderly in their families and this reflects the importance of age as a factor of social and power status among Saudis (Al Ageel, 2010; Bjerke and Al-Meer, 1993). Moreover, the high dependence on social relationships is not biogenetic; it extends to other types of relationships such as friendship (Feghali, 1997).

In the context of requests for example, Saudis are strongly obliged to respond to those who ask for help or assistance from their family members and friends or even from other Muslim people. The main reason is that in addition to the collective nature of Arab culture, Islam is highly collectivist and supports the brotherhood notion (Al Ageel, 2010; Bjerke & Al-Meer, 1993). This concept is represented by many verses in the Qur’an and the Prophet’s sayings which urge Muslims to support their families and help each other. For example, the following observation represents the meaning of one of the Prophet’s hadith:

 عن أبي موسى - رضي الله عنه - قال: قال رسول الله - صلی الله عليه وسلم - : (المؤمن للمؤمن كالبنيان يشد بعضه بعضًا)

*It is related by Abu Musa Ash’ari (ra) that The Messenger of Allah said "The connection between Muslims is like that of a strong building - one part strengthens another."*

Hospitality which is mainly associated with generosity is also among the most significant virtues that distinguish and affect the social life of Saudis. It also has a strong association with the Islamic values that encourage generosity as one of the positive attributes (Feghali, 1997). Making welcome and respecting guests are among the most important values that Saudis start to teach their children from an early age (Al Ageel, 2010). Moreover, hospitality is considered one of the most positive elements in the context of politeness and requests. For example, it is expected of Arabs to interpret compliments as requests and to show a high degree of generosity by offering the complimented items to the person who made the compliments; this situation may cause embarrassment for those who are not aware of this cultural micro-behaviour of Arabs (Al Ageel, 2010). It is also common among people who belong to tribes to be very obligated to respond to those seeking help. The attributes of loyalty to social groups and hospitality are both pre-Islamic virtues and were encouraged and supported after the beginning of Islam to be among the positive values followed by Saudis and many other Muslims (Al Ageel, 2010).

In addition, the conservative nature in the relationship between the two genders is one of the cultural values that distinguishes Saudi society as being one of the many Muslim societies (Al Ageel, 2010).
prescribed by Surat Al-Noor-Aih-31 in the Holy Qur’an, the majority of Saudi women follow the orders from God and his Prophet Muhammad to cover their bodies and not show themselves to male strangers:

وَقُلَّلِلَّمُؤِمَّاتِ يَغُضِّبُنَّ مِنَ أَصَارَهُنَّ وَيَخْفُطُنَّ فُرُوجُهُنَّ وَلَا يَبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلَا يُبَادِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَو أَبَائِهِنَّ....

“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers.....”

As a result of this conservative nature, the contexts of requesting behaviour are affected as with all other practices of daily interaction between women and men in Saudi Arabia. For example, as shown in Al Ageel (2010) who examined the practices of compliments and compliment response among Saudi women, all compliments from male strangers were rejected and considered as offensive behaviour.

It is also important to provide some understanding of some of the cultural and linguistic issues that have emerged recently as a result of the increase in the employment of non-native Arabic speakers. Since the 1970s with the early period of the oil boom there has been increased recruitment of thousands of foreign workers from Asian countries such as Indonesia, Philippines, India and Sri Lanka. The workers contribute to the development of the infrastructure and industrialization, in addition to providing domestic help (Silvey, 2006; Kapiszewski, 2006) in Saudi Arabia and other countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), namely, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Consequently, this situation has created a significant linguistic change in the use of spoken Arabic among Arabs in Saudi Arabia, who tend to use a specific variety of spoken Arabic (Pidgin Arabic) when they interact with non-native Arabic speakers (Nawaz, 2008). In fact, Nawaz (2008) believes that the use of broken Arabic negatively affects the use of the Arabic language as one of the identity tools that distinguishes Arabs from speakers of other languages (2008:129). However, this phenomenon has become common and widespread in Saudi Arabia and the other countries of the GCC, and is one of the linguistic and cultural features between members of the Saudi speech community and non-native Arabic speakers, such as domestic workers or salesmen, from Asian countries.

The following section will discuss some of the most significant theoretical frameworks in the context of requesting behaviour. It also will review studies on both non-Arabic and Arabic requests.
2.6 Theoretical frameworks on requesting behaviour

This section will focus on the most significant issues and will discuss the literature related to the speech act of requests in politeness behaviour.

2.6.1 Speech act theory

Because the concept of speech act is widely used in the context of the current study, it is important to shed light on its philosophical and linguistic origin. Through a number of lectures published in 1962 as a book entitled *How to Do Things with Words*, Austin established the basic elements of speech act theory. The most significant principle of speech act theory is that some utterances in a language are in themselves acts. The framework of speech acts has been criticized by some scholars for its lack of consistency in the various classifications (Button, 1995; Derrida, 1976, 1986; Flowerdew, 1990; Petrey, 1990; Pratt, 1986). However, the framework has been adopted by many other researchers because it provides an effective method of analysing the different types of utterances (Atawneh, 1991).

2.6.2 Directives and the speech act of requests

*Directives* are one of the most significant concepts that provide an effective reflection for the strategies of both politeness and the speech act of request (Atawneh, 1991). According to Searle (1979:11), directives are defined as the attempt by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. In addition, Leech (1983) proposes that the concept of directives comprises the acts of ordering, commanding, requesting and advising. Because of the importance of directives in both contexts of politeness and the speech act of requests, it will be one of the most significant elements that this study will be concerned with in the Saudi Arabic context.

2.6.3 Politeness theory

The notion of face as one of the most significant elements of social identity has been investigated and examined by many researchers as an important factor that affects both social interaction and communication systems among members of speech communities (Al-Adaileh, 2011). In addition, Goffman’s (1967) concept of face was a starting point largely adopted by many scholars in investigating social interaction and linguistic behaviour (Al-Adaileh, 2011; Al-Gahtani, 2010; Chen, 1999). According to Chen (1999) research on politeness falls into three categories. The first category is the work that has established theories of politeness (Lakoff, 1973, 1977; Brown and Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983; Fraser, 1990; Escandell-Vidal, 1996). The second category is the work that investigates culturally specific concepts and strategies of politeness (Gu, 1990; Lindenfeld, 1990). The third category includes work that applies existing theories to data from various cultures (Scollon and Scollon, 2001; Chen, 1999).
2.6.4 Brown and Levinson’s principles of politeness theory and the notion of face

Brown and Levinson’s (1987) notion of face and politeness, which was drawn from Goffman’s (1967) notion of face as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” (as cited in Brown and Levinson, 1987:61), is considered one of the most famous works in the context of social interaction (Atawneh, 1991; Al-Adaileh, 2011; Al-Gahtani, 2010). The concept of public self-image was divided into two essential categories and these categories are positive face and negative face and consequently, positive and negative politeness.

Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest that cultures fall into two classifications in relation to the dimensions of social relationships or values for P (power) and D (social distance): positive politeness cultures and negative politeness cultures. For example, the cultural ethos of the west coast of the USA is considered as a positive politeness culture because of the low values for P and D. On the other hand the cultural ethos of Japan is represented as a negative politeness culture because of the high values of P and D.

Politeness strategies as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) are based on the notion of face-threatening acts (FTAs) defined as “acts which run contrary to the addressee’s and/or the speaker’s positive or negative face” (Brown and Levinson, 1987:65). Requests, offers, orders, threats and other acts are suggested to be intrinsically face threatening. For example, requests might be considered as a face threatening act for the hearer’s autonomy (negative face) and to avoid this situation, more polite requests should be used (Holtgraves and Yang, 1992). The expression “it’s really cold in here!” could be used instead of “could you close the window?” to minimize the imposition on the hearer.

Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that language use is also affected by a number of social variables and these variables are the hearer’s social and power relationship with the speaker and the degree of imposition of the act. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), when these variables increase, the extent to which the speech act is threatening (the weightiness of the speech act) will increase. For example, the imposition and the weightiness of requesting or asking for a loan is higher than the imposition of asking for information. The use of greater politeness comes as a result of increasing weightiness. The levels of politeness will be discussed in the following section.

Brown and Levinson’s model of politeness has been questioned by many researchers because of stereotyping and over generalisation that could result from the claim of universality. According to Bargiela-Chiappini (2003), a number of researchers from non-western cultures argue against the implied universality in the definition of politeness behaviour in the framework of Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). They claim that the concept of face is either not applicable or difficult to apply to their cultures.
Bargiela-Chiappini (2003) believes that the notion of “negative face” which refers to “negative politeness” is one element that generates criticism on cultural relativist grounds. For example, by providing examples drawn from Japanese formulaic expressions in the politeness contexts, Matsumoto (1988) suggests that the universal concept of constituents of face in Brown and Levinson's model weakens the theory when analysing politeness behaviour in Japanese culture.

Moreover, Matsumoto claims that there are more fundamental levels of cultural variability which should be taken into consideration before applying the constituents of face to a specific culture. For instance, in Japanese it is important for a speaker to indicate his/her perception and acceptance of the interpersonal relationships in conversations by using what is called by Matsumoto (1988:411) ‘relation-acknowledging devices’. In addition, Kitamura (2009) believes that although Brown and Levinson’s theory is applicable to the analysis of both goal and non-goal-oriented interaction in Japanese culture, there are some elements of Japanese politeness not included in Brown and Levinson’s list of politeness strategies such as manners of interaction while speaking and listening, and the sequence of the exchange in the conversation.

In addition, the universal concept of Brown and Levinson's model of face is also considered difficult to apply to Chinese culture, which represents another Confucian culture. Mao (1994) suggests that there are differences in the concept of face between Brown and Levinson's model and Chinese culture. One of these differences is that Brown and Levinson focus their concept of face on the individual rather than on other social and cultural elements, as in Chinese and Japanese cultures. For example, the concept of face in Chinese culture extends to include the views and the judgment of the community on the individual’s personality and behaviour (Mao, 1994).

Among the few studies which focus on Arabic, Al-Gahtani (2007) examined requests among Saudi male speakers of Arabic and found that they tended to use direct requests in addition to utilizing religious expressions such as “May God not insult you”, “May God protect you”, “May God increase your bounty” and “May God grant your health”. According to Al-Gahtani (2007) such expressions are used for several purposes such as praying, thanking and mitigating formulae. Furthermore, the findings of Eslami-Rasekh (1993) who investigated requests in Persian, and of Marti (2006) who examined indirect requests in Turkish, show that both Persian and Turkish speakers tend to use a relatively high level of direct requests. Since one of the principles of Brown and Levinson’s model is that the more indirect a speech act is, the more polite it is, it is clear from the findings of the studies that not all principles of the theory which is claimed to be universal are applicable to Arabic, Persian and Turkish. Consequently, examining the model in Saudi Arabic will provide more understanding for politeness strategies in Arabic, a non-western language, and will enrich the scant literature related to politeness behaviour in Arabic.
Although the Brown and Levinson model of politeness has been questioned by many researchers because of stereotyping and over generalisation that could result from the concept of universality, it can be said that the theory has attracted many linguists and pragmatists who have applied it to their studies and consider it an interesting area to be tested and investigated (Chen, 1999). Consequently, Brown and Levinson's framework model will be employed in the main study and the third sub-study (requests in formal written Arabic) of this research project for several reasons. Firstly, it will enrich the literature of politeness on both universal and cultural specific aspects. The second reason is that, while there is a large body of literature examining politeness models in both western (such as American and British English) and non-western cultures (such as Chinese and Japanese), the amount of literature related to politeness and the speech act of requests in Arabic, which is also a non-western language, is scarce. In addition, the study will apply this model because of its importance in the fields of pragmatics and sociolinguistics and this will provide more insight into pragmatics in Arabic.

2.6.5 Request strategies and politeness theory

According to Al-Marrani and Sazaliee (2010a), politeness is one of the most important components of daily human interaction. Although cultures are universal in practising politeness strategies (the universal aspect: Brown and Levinson, 1987), they differ in how they express politeness. That means each culture has its own ways of showing respect, deference, face saving and all other characteristics of politeness (the culturally specific aspect: Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989; Wierzbicka, 1985; Yu, 2005).

Brown and Levinson (1987) suggested a five strategies scale to evaluate the levels of politeness from the most direct with minimal loss of face to the most indirect with the greatest loss of face as follows:

1- Bald-on record: performing a FTA in the most direct and concise way, without redressive action, and with no risk of losing face.

2- Positive politeness: performing a FTA with redressive action, directed to the hearer’s positive face.

3- Negative politeness: performing a FTA with redressive action, directed to the hearer’s negative face.

4- Off-record: performing a FTA in an ambiguous way and where interpretation is left to the hearer.

5- Opting out: not performing a FTA.

For instance, losing face is not as likely to occur if the speaker is higher in power status than the hearer, so direct requests can be used. On the other hand, indirect requests are used when the speaker is lower in power status than the hearer because losing face in this situation is more likely to occur. The following are two examples of both direct and indirect strategies:

1- A professor is asking her/his students to be quiet by saying “stop talking so loudly!” direct (bald-on record).
2- A student is asking a professor to postpone the deadline of an assignment submission by saying “I was wondering if it were possible to postpone my submission date” indirect (negative politeness).

Other factors, as mentioned, such as the social distance (D) between the speaker and the hearer, the relative power (P) between the participants, and the degree of imposition (R) are considered independent variables that have a significant impact on practising politeness strategies among members of speech communities (Brown and Levinson 1987; Blum-Kulak et al. 1989).

2.6.6 Arabic context of requests and Brown and Levinson’s model on politeness

As the Brown and Levinson’s model will be applied to the current study, it is necessary to provide some examples of requesting strategies in Arabic based on politeness theory. Atawneh (1991) provides an interesting link between politeness theory and some Arabic requesting strategies as follows:

a) Positive politeness strategies
   i) Address forms
      i. As in English, expressions with address forms such as habibtii, saadini fe shial el-ghradh (help me with this/that stuff, love are used in Arabic to serve different social functions. In this expression, habibtii refers to love. Address forms will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.
   ii) In-group identity language
      i. Because of the diglossic situation in Arabic (see below), it is possible for speakers to vary their usage of the language according to both formal and informal situations (Atawneh, 1991). For example, an expression such as 'tell us the story' can take more than one version and this is marked by changes occurring to the consonant /k/ when pronounced in different Arabic dialects as follows:
         ii. qul lana l-qissa (standard Arabic)
         iii. ?ul ilna l-?issa (urban)
   iii) Make the request look like a joke
      i. When assuming sharing background knowledge, or between close friends, one finds expressions such as leesh ma ti’irni hal kadlak taba’ak? (‘How about lending me your Cadillac?’), where the speaker is referring to the addressee’s donkey as a Cadillac (Atawneh, 1991: 100).
   iv) Be optimistic when you request something
      i. Pointing to a pile of dishes, a female speaker may use an expression such as ana mitt’akidah innk rah ti sahdini fi ghasiil el sohoon (‘I’m sure that you won’t mind helping me clean those dishes’).
   v) Include speaker and hearer in the activity
      i. To show the equality between the speaker and the hearer an expression such as xliina nitghadda ma ba’adh (‘let’s have our lunch together’) is used for invitations and to express solidarity between participants (Atawneh, 1991).
   vi) Ask for a reason
i. According to Atawneh (1991), this strategy is usually used among close friends and considered as indirect suggestions that demand rather than give reasons. For example, an expression such as *ana m’falishah, leesh ma ti salfinii floos min e’ndik?* (‘I’m broke! Why don’t you lend me some money?’)

b) Negative politeness strategies

i) Be conventionally indirect

i. Although Arabic does not have the same modal system as in English, some expressions are used to make indirect requests and to show more deferential behaviour, such as *mumkin* (possible) and *law samaht* (if you permit) (Atawneh, 1991). The following expression is used for indirect requests:

ii. *mumkin law samaht tmarirri el milh* (Could you please pass the salt).

ii) Be pessimistic

i. Because Arabic has no past forms of modals as in English, this strategy is expressed by the use of the conditionals such as *law tigdar* (if you can), *itha fee fursah* (if there is a chance) or *min fadlak* (if you can do it as a favor).

iii) Minimize the imposition

i. In this strategy, a speaker tends to make the requested item appear as something with little cost (Atawneh, 1991:108). For instance, expressions such as *bas* (just) or *kammiyyah bassiitah* (little bit) are used in requests to minimize the imposition.

iv) Give deference

i. To give deference when making requests in Arabic, there were several common honorific forms of address. As mentioned, forms of address will be discussed in more detail later.

v) Apologies

i. In Arabic, apologies are used to express a high degree of polite requests. For example, the expression *aasif ala ez’aajik wa lkin……* (Sorry to bother you but…..) is used formally before any requests in situations requiring a person to be polite (Atawneh, 1991).

vi) Impersonalize the speaker and hearer

i. Expressions such as *min al-muhim anna…* (it is important that….) appear in Arabic requests to avoid imposing something on the hearer (Atawneh, 1991).

(viii) State the FTA as a general rule

ii. In this strategy, requests appear to refer to a general rule such as *?arrajaa ?adam ?a-tadkhiin* (Please do not smoke).

Given the emergence of these two theories of speech acts and politeness, they have been examined through a large number of studies to prove their validity in several languages. The following section will review some of the studies that have examined the speech act of requests.

2.6.7 Studies on requests

A large number of studies have been conducted covering several elements of the speech act of requests and politeness. Based on Brown and Levinson (1987), the work of Blum-Kulka (1982) is one of the most significant studies to have examined requests expressively and to have provided an effective
classification of the speech act of requests. The study was conducted to examine request behaviour in Hebrew in comparison with Canadian and American English. In addition to the impact of social distance and the power relationship, the findings of the study show that choosing the appropriate form for a speech act is not language specific, but culturally specific.

Marquez-Reiter (2000) conducted a cross-cultural study based on both the framework of Brown and Levinson and the coding scheme of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) to examine linguistic politeness in Britain and Uruguay. In considering the social distance between the interlocutors, the findings showed that Brown and Levinson’s concept of negative politeness is not applicable to Uruguayan Spanish. For instance, the Uruguayan participants employed higher levels of directness when making requests than the British. On the other hand, British participants tended to employ more non-conventional indirectness which had very low incidence in Uruguayan Spanish.

Byon (2004) compared the socio-pragmatic behaviour of Korean and American English speakers in the context of requests. The study included 150 women made up of 50 native Koreans, fifty American English native speakers and fifty American English native speakers who were studying Korean as a foreign language. The data were collected using a Discourse Completion Task questionnaire. The findings showed that there are differences in using politeness strategies and formulae when performing requests between American learners of Korean and Korean native speakers. For example, the American learners of Korean tended to use more politeness strategies and to develop longer expressions than was seen among the Korean native speakers.

In addition, there are several culturally specific studies such as Felix-Brasdefer (2005) who investigated requests in relation to the factors of power and social distance among native speakers of Mexican Spanish. The participants were university students carrying out an open-ended role play scenario. The findings showed that direct requests are situation-dependent and are expected behaviour among Mexicans. For example, the participants tended to use indirect requests in the context of high power and social distance, while they tended to practice more direct requests when the relationship was close.

The following section will discuss a number of issues concerning request strategies in Arabic in addition to both the spoken and written forms of the Arabic language. These include forms of address, the social factors of age, power status, social distance and gender.

2.7 Request strategies in the Arabic context

To provide an insight into politeness and request strategies in the Arabic context, it is important to shed light on the linguistic features of the speech act of directives in addition to some of the studies on Arabic requests.
2.7.1 Directives and the speech act of requests in Arabic

Because this study focuses on politeness strategies and requests in contemporary Arabic, it is critical to provide some explanation of the most distinctive features of requests and directives in the Arabic language. As in English, requests in Arabic can be made directly and indirectly. In addition, al-talab (directives) in CA and MSA refers to when a command is issued by a higher status person to a lower status person (Atawneh, 1991; Atawneh and Sridhar, 1993). Al-talab falls into two categories represented in the following expressions:

1- ‘atti waalidayka’, (obey your parents).
2- ‘la tuxaalif waalidayka’, (don’t disobey your parents).

In the first example al-talab refers to what is called al-?amr in Arabic, which means that the addressee is required to do something. On the other hand, the second expression is an example of al-nahiy. In Arabic al-nahiy is used by adding the prohibition particle la and changing the verb to the jussive mood. Also, al-nahiy refers to when the addressee must not do something.

As in many languages, the use of directives in Arabic varies according to the contexts and the other social and cultural factors that may control their linguistic usage. That means directives in Arabic are not only used for commands from a higher to a lower status person. However, the following are some of the metaphorical linguistic uses of directives:

a) Praying: ‘ya rab egfir li’, (oh God, forgive me). In this requestive example, it could be understood that a lower status person is addressing his God who is higher in status.

b) Requesting: such as a husband asking his wife to open the window. ‘iftahi eshshubaak’, (open the window). This expression can be used when both speaker and hearer are equal in status.

c) Expressing a wish: where someone is wishing for something which seems impossible or difficult to be achieved as in: ‘ya mawtu ?aqdim ?inna l-hayata damimatun’, (Oh death, come; life is awful) (Atawneh, 1991:93).

d) Advising: although directives are used in this case, the addressee is not obligated to follow the command, as in the expression: ‘fa la tu zimann a-annsa ghaira teba’ahum, fa tata’ab min toul el-itab wa ya ta’aboo’, (Do not force others to change their behaviour when they deal with you, otherwise you both will be tired from the long admonition.)

As mentioned, the factors of context and the relationship between both the speaker and the addressee are important to determine the degree of politeness and the use of both verbal and non-verbal mitigation when performing requests in Arabic (Atawneh, 1991; Atawneh and Sridhar, 1993). In addition, Arabic seems to have more complex strategies in performing direct imperatives than English. For example,

1The jussive mood in Arabic is called al mağżim and expresses pleading, insistence, self-encouragement, wishing, desiring, intention, commanding, purpose or consequence.
standard Arabic has a particular morphology for imperatives which are marked differently for singular, dual and plural for both male and female hearers (Atawneh, 1991).

On the other hand, Arabic provides simpler forms than English for the indirect requests expressed by modal verbs such as would or could; these are expressed in Arabic by conditional verbs such as ‘law samaht’, (if you permit) (Atawneh, 1991). For example, the expression ‘iftah eshshubaak’, (open the window) comes as a direct request, while the expression ‘law samahat iftah eshshubak’, which means ‘would you open the window’ comes as an indirect request. As with other speech acts, the Islamic expressions play an important role in the Arabic context of requests (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, b; Atawneh, 1991). For example, the expression ‘Allah yekhallak’, (May God preserve you) is used to show respect and politeness when making requests as the following expression shows:

‘Allah yekhallak mumkin tinathif maktabi?’, (May God preserve you, could you clean my office?)

2.7.2 Studies on requests in Arabic

There is currently a gap in the literature related to the Arabic context. Among the few studies conducted to investigate politeness and requests, Al-Marrani and Sazalie (2010b) examined polite request behaviour among male speakers of Yemeni Arabic in both male-male and male-female interactions. The participants were 168 male and 168 female university students. The study suggests that in male-female interaction, Yemeni speakers tend to mitigate their requests. According to Al-Marrani and Sazalie (2010b), the use of softeners and mitigation in male-female interaction is to show their Islamic behaviour in their dealing with women. On the other hand, the study shows that in male-male interaction, Yemeni speakers tend to use direct requests because it expresses solidarity. The research therefore shows that polite request strategies differ from culture to culture.

Alfattah and Ravindranath (2009), in examining politeness strategies in Yemeni Arabic requests among 330 Yemeni Arabic university students, found that the practices of requests are highly related to the choice of certain request formulae tied to polite behaviour such as min fadhlhak (please). Participants also showed a high tendency to perform direct requests without fear of losing face. According to the researcher, the use of a high level of directness among Arabs indicates the close social relationship among the interlocutors.

In an earlier study, Atawneh (1991) investigated politeness strategies in requests among Palestinian Arabic-English bilinguals, Arabic monolinguals and American English native speakers. The study aimed to analyse the cultural determination of the pragmatic norms in language. The findings show that there are fewer modals and linguistic features in Arabic than in English and that this contributes to the different politeness strategies applied by both English and Arabic when making requests.
Atawneh and Sridhar (1993) examined directive speech acts in both Arabic and English among 110 male and female adults in the age range of 20 to 60. Of the participants there were 30 speakers of American English and 30 Arabic-English bilinguals of Palestinian background living in the USA. Of the two groups living in Palestine, 30 were monolingual Arabic speakers, and a further 20 Arabic speakers used English as a foreign language. The study's findings support Brown and Levinson's theory in terms of politeness determinants R, P and D. This means that if the level of one of the three determinants rises, the degree of politeness also rises by using higher ranking strategies, and vice versa (Atawneh and Sridhar, 1993). In addition, the study found that in invitations Arabs tended to use fewer avoidance expressions like hints and silence than Americans. The results also show that speakers of both languages are influenced by the cultural norms and values of their societies. For instance, Arabs show more tendency to use higher ranking politeness strategies when addressing superiors, and this reflects the vital role of power distance in Arabic communication system.

2.7.3 Forms of address in Arabic

Forms of address play an important role as a significant social and linguistic phenomenon that is reflected in politeness behaviour in daily human interaction. In fact, the exchange of forms of address between speakers is a systematic process that is controlled by a number of social and cultural variables such as power status and social distance (Hussein, 1995). For instance, in many languages honorific expressions are used among speakers to reflect polite behaviour and to give deference. Moreover, the study of forms of address in languages from a sociolinguistic perspective is very useful in terms of providing an insight into the interpersonal relationships and other complex social variables that control human interaction (Abuamsha, 2010).

In the Arabic context both politeness behaviour and the speech act of requests are affected by the linguistic use of different forms of address. These are, as in many other languages, subject to the factors of age, gender, social relationships, power status and social distance (Hussein, 1995). Forms of address in Arabic have been examined in a study of Palestinian Arabic (Abuamsha, 2010), using the natural observation method. The researcher found that forms of address in Palestinian Arabic fall into 13 categories and they include 1) personal pronouns, 2) verb forms of address, 3) names and nicknames, 4) appellatives and terms of intimacy, 5) teknonyms, 6) kinship/family terms, 7) occupation-related terms, 8) terms of formality and general terms of respect, 9) age-related terms, 10) religion-related terms, 11) neutral address terms, 12) other terms of address and 13) zero address terms.

In addition to the classification of Abuamsha (2010), Hussein (1995) provides a list of some of the most common forms of address used in Arabic as follows:

1- Names such as Amal (feminine) or Ahmed (masculine), both used informally with friends and relatives.
2- Terms of formality and general terms of respect such as saiyyid (Mr.), aanisah (Miss) or saiyyddah (Mrs.)

3- Kinship terms such as khalii (my uncle) and khalii (my aunt) which refer to a person’s mother’s brother or sister. The terms ‘ammi (my uncle) and ‘amtii (my aunt) are used to refer to one's father’s brother or sister.

4- Occupation related address terms such as duktor or alduktor which refer to both M.D. and Ph.D. In addition, the title hadrat is used in formal letters before other titles to increase the prestigious style in the written document as in the following example:

    hadrat ma’aalii alwaziir .......

    (His honour and highness the minister……) (Hussein, 1995).

Moreover, the factor of religion is also obvious in the use of Arabic address forms. For example, when referring to the person who leads the prayer for Muslims, the title Imam must be used, while the title Khateeb is used to refer to the person who delivers the Friday prayer speech. Additionally, both titles are used in Arabic as in the following example because the same person usually does both duties. Imam wa Khateeb Al-Masjid An-Nabawi. Imam and Khateeb An-Nabawi Mosque. However, the term Imam is also used to refer to Islamic leaders or Islamic scholars amongst both Sunnii and Shii’a groups. Both titles are masculine in Arabic because, according to Islamic instruction, these duties are only carried out by men.

Importantly, one of the linguistic features that distinguishes the forms of address in Arabic is the preceding particle ya. For example, when someone addresses her/his uncle, it is common to use the expression ya ‘ammii (Hussein, 1995). Another significant issue is related to the social context for married persons with children. When addressing a married woman who is a mother of one child or more, it is common to use the tekonyms i.e. the term um + (mother of +) her first son’s name after the particle ya. It is also common to use this expression even if the woman does not have sons by using her first daughter’s name or the name that she intends to give to her first son (Hussein, 1995). The same social situation can be applied when addressing a married man by using the masculine term ya abuu + (father of +) his first son’s name (Hussein, 1995).

2.7.4 Factors of age, power status, social distance and gender in relation to requesting behaviour in the Arabic context

Age is another factor that plays a significant role in politeness behaviour and linguistic choices among interactants (Al Ageel, 2010; Al-Khatib, 2006). In examining invitations in Jordanian, Arabic Al-Khatib (2006) found that younger speakers were more likely to reject an invitation than speakers who are in their middle or old age. One of the main reasons is that older generations are more aware of their social role and tend to keep such social values (Al-Khatib, 2006). Al Ageel (2010) found that responding to compliments also varies according to the age of the complimentee. For instance, in responding to
compliments from grandparents and parents, participants suggested kissing their grandparents or parents’ heads or hands among convenient responses that show a high degree of politeness and respect (Al-Ageel, 2010). On the other hand, in responding to compliments from an equal or a younger age family member, participants used jokes and humorous responses (Al Ageel, 2010). The following expression was suggested as a response to compliments from a sister on her sister’s hair cut ‘Adree, sha’arii ‘ahla min sh’arik’, (I know, my hair is nicer than yours) (Al Ageel, 2010). Moreover, the role of age can determine the power status in Arabian societies.

Additionally, strategies of politeness can be determined by power status among interlocutors. A speaker with a higher status shows less tendency to use politeness strategies when interacting with a lower status hearer. For instance, Marrani and Sazalie (2010b) found that Yemeni requesters with higher power status used direct strategies in requests without the fear of losing face. As stated in Marrani and Sazalie (2010b), the expression ‘ya abni ‘ana ti mennak elmahmu:l dat sa:ah’, (My son I want your laptop for an hour) shows a request from a parent to her/his son. In addition to family relationships, Arab culture is also distinguished by the obvious role of power status reflected in a work by the hierarchical system of the employees (Al-Khatib, 2006). For example, forms of address reflect the style of contact among the interactants.

Social distance determines the relationship between interlocutors. As stated in Marrani and Sazalie (2010b), social distance can be defined as distant or close. Furthermore, politeness behaviour is affected by the social distance. The study of Al-Khatib (2006) shows that the social distance in relation to the gender and age of the interlocutors work together to determine the linguistic strategies used for inviting, accepting or refusing an invitation in Jordanian Arabic. In the context of invitations, Al-Khatib (2006) found that inviting can be explicit and formal with high level politeness strategies such as intensifiers in situations when individuals have a greater social distance. For instance, the invitation yareit titfadalu çina çala ?il çaša ?ileileh, “I much hope you would honour us by dining with us tonight” is used in such a situation. On the other hand, in situations of close social distance between the inviter and the invitee, inviting is implicit and less formal, as in yazalameh kam marah surt çazmak ta tzurna whua ?iħna muš gad ?ilmagam, “Hey man, how many times have I invited you to visit us? Are not we of the same (socio-economic status?)”

Gender can also affect the choice of politeness strategies amongst the interactants. Several studies of politeness behaviour in both western and non-western cultures have found that there are gender differences in linguistic choices (Al Ageel, 2010; Al-Khatib, 2006, Davis, 2008; Holmes, 1993; Holmes & Brown, 1987; Petit, 2006; Wieland, 1995). Among those, Al-Khatib (2006) found that in refusing invitations, Jordanian women tended to use more expressions of good wishes, while men employed other strategies such as explanations or justifying the refusal of the invitation.
It also is important to shed light on one of the factors that significantly affects politeness and request making behaviour amongst Saudis. These factors, namely mayanah (the high degree of informality and directness when making requests resulting from the close relationship between the interlocutors). The other factor is kulfah (the high degree of formality and respect that results from the large power status and/or social distance between the interlocutors) (Abuamsha, 2010). While the factor of mayanah has an obvious relationship with directness, the factor of kulfah, on the other hand, is more related to indirectness. For example, with a person who has a very close relationship and is equal or has less power than the speaker, it is very easy to make direct requests without fear of losing face or having more awareness of politeness strategies because of the high degree of mayanah as in requests between sisters.

Nevertheless, when making requests in Saudi Arabic with a person who has a higher power status than the speaker such as fathers and bosses, the expected behaviour is that the speaker tends to employ more politeness strategies, as a result of the degree of kulfah, regardless of the degree of familiarity between the interactants. The degree of Kulfah can be also obvious when interacting with persons in a context of distant relationships. When requesting an unfamiliar person, for instance, the speaker tends to employ strategies such as politeness markers or other deference formulaic expressions to show that there is an awareness about the distant relationship between interlocutors and hence the high degree of kulfah.

The impact of the factors of mayanah and kulfah can also be obvious in the Arabic address system through the use of terms to address persons in close and distant relationships. The use of first names and nicknames, for instance, is common amongst persons who are equal in power status and have close relationships. However, the use of such terms in Saudi Arabic is not common to address people who are higher in status or have distant relationships with the speakers.

To provide a broader perspective about the use of Arabic, the following section will shed light on some of the historical and religious issues related to the development of Arabic.

2.8 The Arabic language from historical, linguistic and religious perspectives

Because requests and all other speech acts are expressed and conveyed by languages, it is important to discuss some historical and Islamic issues, and to provide some of the most significant linguistic features of the communicating system in Arabic.

Before Islam, Arabic, part of the Semitic language family, was used among tribes in the Arabian Peninsula (Al-Azraqi, 1998). According to Al-Azraqi (1998), there are different views on Classical Arabic (CA) among linguists. For instance, some linguists believe that CA was the spoken form used by the people of a tribe settled in Makah and named Quraysh, while others claim that CA was the only form used all over the Arabian Peninsula. In fact, it could be said that the first claim is more realistic for several reasons: the Arabian Peninsula occupies a wide area; a large number of Arabian tribes used to
live and travel across the peninsula and the lack of communication at that time justifies the use of various dialects by the tribal members who used to occupy different regions in the Arabian peninsula (Al-Azraqi, 1998).

It is also important to mention that the people of Quraysh (the tribe of Prophet Muhammad), were acknowledged as the best speakers of the Arabic language among other Arabs (Al-Azraqi, 1998). For this reason, it is believed among many Arabs and Muslims that the Holy Qur’an was sent to the prophet as a linguistic miracle to challenge the Quraysh and other Arabs to produce something like it, and to prove that it is the speech of God. In fact, it can be said that before Islam, Arabs used to classify rhetorical speech as poetry and prose. However, after Islam, the classification has become poetry, prose and the Qur’an, which is considered the highest linguistic achievement in the Arabic language (Zaharna, 1995).

For the purpose of providing a wider scope on requestive behaviour in the Arabic context, it is also important to provide some knowledge of the linguistic features that distinguishes the communication style in Arabic. The following section will discuss some of these features.

2.8.1 Repetition

Several studies show that Arabs tend to use repetition or a number of similar words to describe one phenomenon, whether they communicate in Arabic or in other languages (Feghali, 1997). Although these two features might be considered negative in other contexts, they are considered positive in written and spoken forms of Arabic. Both repetition and exaggeration are used in Arabic to keep the attention of the listener or the reader and/or to provide more explanation. Requestitive expressions in Arabic can be also expressed in some contexts with repetition for various purposes. The following Qur’anic verse is from Surat An Nisa, 103:

(فَإِذَا قَضَي أُلُوِّهُ الْصَّلَاةَ فَاذَّكَروُا اللَّهَ وَقُلُوهُ اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَانَ كَالَّذِينَ كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ)

"When you have established the prayer, remember Allah standing, sitting, and on your sides. Then, when you are secure, establish the prayer, surely, prayer is timely written upon the believer"

The repetition for the word (prayer) in the Qur’anic text reveals the importance of prayer as one of the religious daily practices that stands for Muslims’ identity.

In addition, these features are used as rhetorical patterns and as components of linguistic beauty (Feghali, 1997). Moreover, it is common in Arabic, as stated in Marzari (2006), to find paragraphs written with parallel constructions and with repeated phrases.
2.8.2 Exaggeration
Likewise, exaggeration in Arabic can be found in many poetic texts and even in oral communication with the dominant use of different words and metaphors to describe details rather than the whole picture (Marzari, 2006). According to Zaharna (1995), while exaggeration has contributed to the stereotypical image of Arabs as insincere amongst some members of other social groups, this linguistic feature is used to construct vivid and powerful imagery.

In the context of Arabic requests, one of the functions of exaggeration is to show that the requester is emphasizing the high importance of either doing or avoiding the action in the requestive expression as in the following verse from Surat Al-Baqarah, 84:

وَإِذ أَخَذَنَا مِيثَاقَكُمُ لاَ تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمُ

(And remember We took your covenant (to this effect): Shed no blood amongst you)

The Arabic suffix (كم) that stands for amongst you has been included in this requestive context as a powerful linguistic tool that shows the importance of the prohibition of shedding blood (albahre, 2013). Furthermore, according to albahre (2013), this verse includes exaggeration in prohibiting shedding blood amongst the addressees and this is considered in Arabic as an emphasized and strong request to avoid such extremely prohibited action i.e. shedding blood.

2.8.3 Imagery
In an interesting comparison of Arabic and American communicative styles, Zaharna (1995) believes that in the Arabic oral tradition, it is common to use expressions with a high degree of imagination and feeling to the audience. In addition, there is a high tendency to use metaphors and to be very generous with descriptive adjectives and verbs.

This linguistic feature can be also reflected in some contexts of Arabic requests. Consider the various rhetorical representative expressions in the following Qur’anic verse from Surat Hud, 44:

وَقِيَ الْأَرْضَ يَا أَرْضُ إِلَيٍّ يَا مَاءَ وَقِيَ الْأَسمَاءَ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمَرُ وَاسَتَوتَ وَأَذَّنَ لُقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

(Then the word went forth: "O earth! swallow up thy water, and O sky! Withhold (thy rain)!" and the water abated, and the matter was ended. The Ark rested on Mount Judi, and the word went forth: "Away with those who do wrong!")
This verse includes imaginative and requestive expressions can be shown by addressing the earth and the sky and requesting them as human beings or creatures who do the swallowing up and withholding actions.

2.8.4 The common use of Islamic expressions

The Arabic communication system can also be characterized by the common use of Islamic expressions. According to Alfattah and Ravindranath (2009), Islamic formulaic expressions such as *allah yahfazak* (may God keep you healthy) are usually uttered either to show intimacy, appreciation or to soften the harshness of requestive expressions between the interactants.

According to its aims, this study focuses on the practices of requests in contemporary Arabic in various contexts. However, it should be understood that Arabic is amongst the languages that are characterized by its diglossic feature (cf. explanation on diglossia below). For this reason and since this research project is focusing on the Najdi dialect as the spoken form and on Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) as the written form, it might be useful to discuss some issues that have risen from a number of sociolinguistic studies in defining varieties of Arabic in both written and spoken contexts.

2.8.5 The Arabic language from a sociolinguistic perspective

One issue relates to the terms “prestige” and “standard” in the Arabic context. According to Abd-el-Jawad (1987), the majority of sociolinguistic studies of Arabic suggest that written Classical Arabic (CA) and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) are the only prestigious varieties. In addition, Abd-el-Jawad (1987) believes that this tendency among researchers resulted from the impact of sociolinguistic studies of Western languages such as English, in which the terms “prestige” and “standard” are explicitly or implicitly equated. Abd-el-Jawad (1987) argues that in order to provide an adequate description of sociolinguistic variation and to conduct sociolinguistic studies of spoken Arabic, it is important not to consider MSA as the only standard prestigious speech variety, but also to focus on other prestigious forms of spoken varieties that exist independently of MSA.

Hence, although both CA and MSA are considered standard and prestigious forms of written Arabic, the two terms “prestige” and “standard” should not be used interchangeably and equally to describe any sociolinguistic phenomenon in Arabic. It can be said that this situation is mainly related to the existence of several Arabic dialects. In addition, it is important to be aware that each Arabic speech community is represented by one or more prestigious spoken forms of its local varieties.

According to Abd-el-Jawad (1987), although urban Arabic dialects differ linguistically from both CA and MSA, they are commonly classified as more prestigious than rural dialects. In the Jordanian context, for example, although the uvular stop /q/ is one of the linguistic features of both CA and MSA, it was
found that many speakers of Nabulsi, the dialect of Nablus city, tend to abandon the use of this sound in favour of the urban variant /ʔ/ (glottal stop) (Abd-el-Jawad, 1987). Abd-el-Jawad (1987) believes that one of the main reasons for this tendency was because the sound /q/ is considered one of the linguistic features that distinguish some rural dialects among Jordanians.

Ibrahim (1984) provides further evidence of the problematic issues related to sociolinguistics in Arabic on the basis of sex-differentiation assumption. By examining some relevant sociolinguistic studies of sex-variants in Arabic, he found that some researchers used the terms “prestige” and “standard” interchangeably to describe the linguistic situation of Arabic. In addition, Ibrahim (1984) found that, while in several contexts Arab women do not use the standard linguistic features as frequently as men do, they often produce more urban linguistic variants which are locally and socially prestigious. On the other hand, when researchers refer to the standard form as the prestigious one, this may create a degree of ambiguity in non-diglossic contexts such as English and French (Abd-el-Jawad, 1987; Ibrahim, 1984). Therefore, it is important to realize that using the terms “prestige” and “standard” in Arabic sociolinguistics could be problematic and may be interpreted differently from the actual purpose of their use (Abd-el-Jawad, 1987; Ibrahim, 1984).

By investigating requesting strategies, this study aims not only to examine politeness behaviour, but also a number of other linguistic features of the Arabic language in both spoken and written forms. The following section will review the phenomenon of pidgins in languages, and in particular Saudi Pidgin Arabic as a linguistic feature related specifically to spoken Arabic.

2.8.6 The linguistic variety of pidgins

Ferguson (1971) refers to pidgins and creoles as simplified speech used to communicate with people who are considered unable to understand normal speech, such as babies or foreigners. According to Ferguson, in the Arabic-Armenian context, one of the linguistic features used in Arabic is the use of the third person masculine singular of the imperfect of the verb, which stands for the present tense in Arabic, for all persons, genders, numbers and tenses. For example, the form ‘ya’rif’ is used for ‘he knows’, ‘she knows’ and ‘you know’; and this linguistic feature is also common in Saudi Pidgin Arabic (SPA) during contact with non-native speakers from several linguistic backgrounds.

One of the essential points that should be clarified in this context is the link between the terms pidgins and creoles. These linguistic varieties are used in the contact between two speech communities from two different linguistic backgrounds (Al-Azraqi 2010; Al-Moaily, 2008). To define pidgins and creoles, Roberts and Bresnan (2008:272) state that:

Pidgins develop as auxiliary languages and thus lack native communities, at least initially. Creoles, on the other hand, serve as community vernaculars and are usually acquired as first
languages. They are not structurally restricted, as they must serve the complex needs of their speakers.

Although the contact is between two languages, the vocabulary of a pidgin comes particularly from one dominant language called the ‘lexifier’ or superstrate while the non-dominant language is called the substrate (Al-Azraqi 2010; Al-Moaily, 2008; Bizri, 2009). Pidgins also do not have a stable grammatical structure and they are usually used specifically among adults for a short period of time (Al-Azraqi, 2010). However creoles are classified as more developed and as a mother tongue with an expansive use of vocabulary and a more stable grammatical structure (Al-Azraqi 2010; Al-Moaily, 2008). Pidgins can be seen as creoles when they are used by children as their native tongue and when they enable their native speakers to produce the utterances necessary for their daily communication (Al-Azraqi 2010; Al-Moaily, 2008). It can be said that the birth of pidgins and creoles in languages is usually associated with several factors, or purposes, such as trade, migration and colonization, in addition to an international mobile work force (Al-Azraqi 2010; Bickerton, 1983). For example, while some pidgins such as Nigerian and Cameroon Pidgin English were used in trade, creoles such as Cape Verdian Criolou, lexified by Portuguese, were established in colonial settlements for agricultural purposes (Al-Azraqi 2010; Bickerton, 1983).

2.8.6.1 Saudi Pidgin Arabic

As mentioned, this study also focuses on the spoken variety that is used by native speakers of Saudi Arabic when they communicate with non-native speakers of Arabic, specifically Asian workers. This linguistic phenomenon will be referred as Saudi Pidgin Arabic hereafter (SPA), since this form of spoken Arabic meets the main features of pidgins. SPA is not a native language and is used as a lexifier and mainly by adults for a short period of time for a specific purpose i.e. work or trade.

Although the terms *pidgin* and *creole* have been technically defined by linguists, there have also been studies by scholars from several research backgrounds. The following discussion will provide a brief background to some historical, social and sociolinguistic issues that surround this linguistic phenomenon in spoken Arabic. Another important point that should be mentioned here is that for some reason, pidgin in Gulf spoken Arabic has been named differently in the literature. For example, it is called Gulf Asian Pidgin (GAP) in Al-Azraqi (2010) because it is specifically used in contact with Asian workers. On the other hand Smart (1990) and Wiswall (2002) use the more generalised term Gulf Pidgin (GP) to describe this phenomenon because it may include English in some cases of daily communication. To avoid complexity and confusion in describing this variety, Gulf Pidgin Arabic (GPA), as named in Naess (2008), will be used in the current context interchangeably with (SPA), since Saudi spoken Arabic linguistically, historically and regionally shares the features of Gulf spoken Arabic.
2.8.6.2 Saudi Pidgin Arabic in historical and sociolinguistic perspectives

As already mentioned, social life in Saudi Arabia has been affected by the dramatic changes that have occurred in the last few decades as a result of being one of the richest oil countries since 1938 (Al-Azraqi, 2010). After several decades and as a result of government development programs, workers from different parts of Asia started to arrive in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries to contribute to the growing of the infrastructure and to provide assistance in domestic work (Al-Azraqi, 2010; Wiswall, 2002). As a result of the contact between the speakers of Saudi Arabic and Asian workers who are non-native speakers of Arabic, SPA has emerged as a new linguistic variety.

As in other Gulf countries, it can be seen that the use of SPA is significantly associated with social dimensions such as power status and social distance. The dimension of power distance is evident in the contact between Asian workers and their Saudi masters, while the reflection of the social distance, and possibly also power status, appear in the contact between local Saudi and foreign workers in shops, markets or any other institutions (Smart, 1990). In other words, it can be said that the social gap between the local population in Gulf countries and the immigrant Asian workers was one of the factors that significantly contributed to the emergence of GPA. In this situation, the dominant group might create a register to address speakers of the non-dominant group in order to keep them culturally isolated and to keep the social distance between the two groups (Naess, 2008).

There is not a great deal of literature on Arabic-based pidgins. However, Smart (1990) is among one of the pioneer studies to discuss pidgin in Gulf countries. According to Smart (1990), the geographical area with the most widespread use of this variety is along the Gulf coast line from Oman to Kuwait, including the land of Saudi Arabia. The corpus of his study was from newspaper cartoon captions written by Arabic speakers imitating the pidgin produced by foreign workers. The work of Smart was later criticized by Wiswall (2002) because the data was insufficient and limited to the variety produced by native speakers of Arabic. For this reason, Wiswall (2002) provides a wider range for his corpus by proposing that there is considerable variation in the use of GPA that is characterized by Arabic speakers’ performance as superstrate and Indian speakers’ performance as substrate.

In a different context, Bizri (2009) discusses the variety used between Sri Lankan female domestic workers and their Lebanese female employers. She refers to this situation as ‘Pidgin Madam’ since the domestic workers use Madam to refer to their Lebanese employers. Here Lebanese Arabic (LA) is the lexifier or the superstrate and Colloquial Sinhala (CS) is the substrate. According to Bizri (2009), although Pidgin Madam has not reached a stable stage of language, it is distinguished by several grammatical and linguistic features. It shows, for instance, an extensive use of Arabic imperatives as verbal stems. According to Bizri (2009), Sri Lankan domestic workers use (LA) imperatives for their affirmative present or past tenses. For example, to express the meaning of ‘I am going to sleep’, or ‘I want to go to sleep’, a Sri Lankan worker may use “ana rayi nemi”, ‘I do go to sleep’. The verb “rayi”
‘go’ is used among imperatives in (LA). This frequent use of (LA) imperatives in the form of singular feminine also reflects a degree of the social power status since imperatives are used by female speakers of LA to address Sri Lankan domestic workers (Bizri, 2009). However, Bizri (2009) claims that Pidgin Madam is also used among native Arabic speakers for other purposes such as comic situations, to express jokes or to claim their innocence.

To answer the question “Can Gulf Pidgin Arabic be considered a separate variety with its own grammatical norms, different from the lexifier Gulf Arabic and with its own structural unity?” Naess (2008) examined the linguistic features of GPA. She collected her data in Oman and the United Arab Emirates through interviews with Asian migrant workers. Through the analysis of its grammatical features, Naess (2008) suggests that GPA is a variety on the way to becoming conventionalized as a first generation contact language. Naess (2008) also claims that although GPA is much less standardized than other Arabic-bases pidgins, it has a degree of stability. For this reason, Naess (2008) suggests that this variety should be called an incipient pidgin variety.

Another study conducted by Al-Azraqi (2010) examined the syntactic features of Gulf Asian Pidgin, as named by the author. Data for this study were collected in GPA from both native Arabic speakers and Asian migrant workers in Saudi Arabia. Al-Azraqi (2010) found that some Arabic grammatical features are used in GPA; however, the word order and the use of some particles is different from Gulf Arabic, the lexifier.

Since GPA is not only the linguistic phenomenon that distinguishes spoken Arabic, the following section will discuss some of the significant issues that correlate to another linguistic feature, i.e. diglossia.

2.8.7 The phenomenon of diglossia

It is important to cast light on diglossia which is one of the most significant linguistic features that distinguishes Arabic from many other languages. In the Arabic context, the diglossic situation means that each Arabic speech community is represented by its own spoken variety such as Saudi, Egyptian, Jordanian or Iraqi and all speakers of these varieties share the rules of Classical Arabic (CA) and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). For example, all the following expressions have the meaning of (I want to go now) which means Ureedu an ath-haba alaan in MSA, the written form of Arabic (Palmer, 2007:113):

1- Abgha aruuH alheen, Saudi Arabic.
2- Areed aruuH haessa, Iraqi Arabic.
3- Biddii ruuH haellae(q), Syrian Arabic.
4- Aawiz aruuH dilwa’ti, Egyptian Arabic.
5-Bgheet nimshi daaba, Moroccan Arabic.
CA is the older form of written Arabic and it is the language of the Qur’an and more ancient traditions while MSA is used in official contexts. Both CA and MSA share the same grammatical rules and need a high level of proficiency to be produced orally (Palmer, 2007). According to Palmer (2007) this situation generates a degree of difficulty in both processes of teaching and learning Arabic. The only forms used in teaching Arabic are CA or MSA, which are not used in daily life interaction, and this creates a lack of oral proficiency among learners of Arabic who aim to communicate with Arabic native speakers (Palmer, 2007). In addition, it can be said that CA and MSA are considered among Arabs as the prestigious forms of Arabic that mainly are used for linguistic attention or research purposes (Palmer, 2007).

On the other hand, the spoken varieties are considered in some situations as lower prestigious forms of the language and they are used at home or in daily interaction and are not taught in schools. Related to this situation is that the grammatical features of spoken forms of Arabic known as colloquial Arabic, dialects or vernaculars are not taught and there are not any textbooks for teaching them but rather they are acquired at home, which generates another level of difficulty in the process of teaching Arabic.

The linguistic phenomenon of diglossia is also related to other complicated issues related to Arabic culture. According to Palmer (2007) it is usually difficult for foreigners to integrate into Arabic societies on both linguistic and cultural levels. One of the main reasons is that spoken forms are usually used at home, among friends or in informal situations (in-group levels), whereas MSA is used in formal situations which require Arabic speakers to show more respect and this could lead to increasing the social distance among the speakers (Palmer, 2007). That means that learners of Arabic could encounter some situations of embarrassment when they use MSA in informal situations or they may be kept outside the in-group forums (Palmer, 2007).

Since this study focuses on the spoken form of Saudi Arabic, it is important to discuss some of the important issues about the current situation of spoken dialects in Saudi Arabia for the purpose of providing more understanding about the various varieties that Arabic expressions usually produced.

2.8.7.1 Dialects in Saudi Arabia
Regarding the diglossic situation in Saudi Arabia, spoken Saudi Arabic, as in many Arabic countries, includes a number of spoken varieties and dialects which vary according to the regional areas of each speech community. For example, the Hijazi represents an area in the western part of Saudi Arabia which includes the dialects of the cities of Makah, Al-Medina and Jeddah, as well as the areas surrounding these cities. The southern area of Saudi Arabia is represented by a number of dialects such as in Abha, one of the cities in the south west of the country (Al-Azraqi, 1998). The Eastern region of Saudi Arabia is also represented by dialects of cities such as Al-Ahsa and Al-Dammam.
The Najdi represents the middle and the north of Saudi Arabia and includes the dialects of the tribe of Shammar in the city of Hi:yl, the Al-Qaseem dialects and the speech of central Najd including Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia. Al-Moaily (2008) states that classifying Najdi Arabic extends further to include dialects of Arabian tribes who settled in countries such as Syria, Iraq and Jordan. According to Al-Moaily (2008), this classification was due to similarities observed between the dialects of these Arabian tribes and the dialects used in the middle area of Saudi Arabia. Since this study examines the speech act of requests in spoken variety used by Saudi women who live in Riyadh, it is important to aware that Najdi Arabic used in the centre of Saudi Arabia is the variety to be focused upon in this study. However, it is anticipated that the data do not only represent Najdi Arabic. This can be referred to that Riyadh as the capital of Saudi Arabia and the centre of all governmental institutions has the largest population which includes citizens from all areas of Saudi Arabia. Consequently, dialects from different regions in Saudi Arabia are expected to be part of the current study.

It can be useful to refer to some of the various factors that have led to changes in Arabic dialects. Al-Azraqi (1998) claims that although both dialects inside and outside the Arabian Peninsula, the situation of changes inside is different from the situation of changes that occurred to the Arabian dialects outside the peninsula. To support her claim, Al-Azraqi (1998) suggests that modern dialects outside the Arabian Peninsula have been affected lexically and morphologically by other languages such as Turkish and Persian as a result of the contact between Arabs and their Islamic neighbours from these countries. Additionally, Arabian dialects outside the Arabian Peninsula have been affected by colonising languages such as French and English (Al-Azraqi, 1998). On the other hand, the situation is different within the Arabian Peninsula, specifically in Saudi Arabia, since Saudi Arabia has never been subjected to colonization in addition to being geographically far from border contact with communities from different linguistic backgrounds. Changes in Saudi dialects have been caused by the exchanged contact between tribes and other nomadic groups (Al-Azraqi, 1998).

Besides the spoken form, this study focuses by examining Arabic requests on another linguistic phenomenon related to the written form of the Arabic language. The following section will provide a brief discussion about the phenomenon of Arabizi that has emerged recently as a Latinised texting style among Arab youth.

2.8.8 The emerging phenomenon of Arabizi

Although the recent phenomenon of Arabizi has become natural and widespread among Arab youth, it is important to mention that there have been several movements to write Arabic using the Latin alphabet over the last two centuries. It is important to mention that this phenomenon has been given several
names. This phenomenon has been referred as Latinized Arabic (LA) (Aboelezz, 2009a), Romanization (Beesely, 1998) and ASCII-Latinization ²(Palfreyman and al Khalil, 2003).

The first attempt was recorded in 1880 by Wilhelm Spitta when he suggested writing Egyptian Arabic in Latin characters and this attempt was followed by several others in 1890 and 1901 (Aboelezz, 2009a; Yaghan, 2008). However, because of the strong criticisms from many Arab nationalists and Muslims who considered it a threat to the Arabic identity and the Holy Qur’an, those attempts have remained limited up until recent times (Yaghan, 2008).

The phenomenon of Arabizi is considered one of the most significant changes resulting from the impact of modern technology and of the global use of English on the communication system of Arabic speech communities. Arabizi is a vernacular blend of the two words: arabi “Arabic” and engliszi” English”. It is used among the younger generation as a means of communication over cellular phones and the internet (Aboelezz, 2009b; Palfreyman and al Khalil, 2003; Yaghan, 2008). Arabizi was developed using the Latin alphabet and Arabic numbers to write spoken Arabic, and every Arabic dialect can be distinguished and represented by Arabizi (Palfreyman and al Khalil, 2003; Yaghan, 2008). It can be said that the low price and immediate communication were among the most important reasons that contributed to the widespread use of texting among youth around the world (Alkawas, 2011). The other reason is related to Arabic speakers living abroad who often have an English or Latin keyboard as the only option for communicating by the internet. In addition, the widespread use of Arabizi is considered an identifying feature of younger generations (Palfreyman and al Khalil, 2003). The following expressions are examples of Arabizi in different Arabic dialects:

- essalaaam 3laikom, sh7aalech? Peace be upon you, how are you? (Emirates spoken variety)
- Salamo Alyko, ezayak? Peace be upon you, how are you? (Egyptian spoken variety)
- Mar7abaa, kaif sa7tak, shu 3am ta3mil?How are you? How are you doing? (Lebanese spoken variety)

The following table illustrates the Arabic characters and their Arabizi counterparts (Aboelezz, 2009a; Palfreyman & al Khalil, 2003; Yaghan, 2008).

² In reference to ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange).
Table 2.1 The IPA Sounds and their Counterparts in Arabic and Arabizi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound (IPA)</th>
<th>Arabic characters</th>
<th>Arabizi representation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Numerals</td>
<td>letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʔ/</td>
<td>ء 2</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>١ 2</td>
<td>٢ /e</td>
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<tr>
<td>/aː//æː//eː/</td>
<td>ا a</td>
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<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>ب b</td>
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<tr>
<td>/g/</td>
<td>ج j/g</td>
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<tr>
<td>/h/</td>
<td>ح h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>خ ٧/5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
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<td>/z/</td>
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<td>/s/</td>
<td>س s/c</td>
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<td>/ʃ/</td>
<td>ش sh/ch</td>
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<tr>
<td>/sˤ/</td>
<td>ص ٩</td>
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<td>/dˤ/</td>
<td>ض ٩'</td>
<td>٩ d</td>
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<tr>
<td>/ع/</td>
<td>ع ٣</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>/ɣ/</td>
<td>غ ٣'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʕ/</td>
<td>ع f</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/q/</td>
<td>ق ٨/2</td>
<td>٨/2 k/q</td>
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<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>ك k</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>ل ١</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>م m</td>
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<td>/n/</td>
<td>ن n</td>
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<td>/h/</td>
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<tr>
<td>/w/</td>
<td>و w/o/ow</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>/y/</td>
<td>ي y/i/e</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

On the base of previous discussion the following section will review the research question and objectives of the current study.

2.9 Research question and research objectives

The research question is as follows:
What are the practices of requesting behaviour amongst adult Saudi women speaking contemporary Arabic in both spoken and written forms, and how are these changing?

Based on socio-pragmatic, linguistic and cross-cultural perspectives and by investigating the requesting behaviour in the Saudi variety of Arabic, this study aims to:

1. Investigate the strategies of politeness that are employed in the Saudi variety of Arabic used by Saudi women in making both spoken and written requests.
2. Examine the impact of age, power status, social distance and gender on politeness behaviour and the context of requests and the communication system among Saudi women.
3. Examine the impact of the Arabic address system on the practices of politeness and requests.
4. Examine the impact of religious norms and values related to politeness among Saudi women.
5. Examine the differences and similarities in practising the speech act of requests across two different generations of Saudi women.
6. Examine the differences and similarities in practising the speech act of requests across two different contexts i.e. social and work/study contexts.
7. Examine the linguistic features of requests performed by Saudi women in contact with non-native speakers of Arabic.
8. Examine the linguistic features of requests performed by female youths through mobile texting i.e. the phenomenon of Arabizi (a new form of informal written communication used by Arabic speakers).
9. Examine formal written requests by examining formal emails that exchanged in one of Saudi governmental institutions.
10. Provide an insight into the most significant factors that affect Saudi female politeness behaviour in comparison with female politeness behaviour in other cultures.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND INSTRUMENTATION

3.1 Design of the study

This study examines several issues related to the speech act of requests in spoken and written Saudi Arabic in various contexts. To provide a wider perspective, the study was divided into one main study and three sub-studies. The main study examined politeness behaviour through focusing on request performance amongst Saudi women from two generations (age ranges 20-39 and 40-60) using role play methodology. The first sub-study focused on the linguistic phenomenon of Saudi Pidgin Arabic by examining requests in spoken Saudi Arabic between Saudi women and non-native speakers of Arabic from Asian countries such as the Philippines, India and Bangladesh. The second sub-study examined the phenomenon of Arabizi by focusing on informal written requests exchanged via mobile texting, while the third sub-study examined the practices of formal written requests exchanged via email. Authentic data methods were used to collect data for the three sub-studies.

After discussing the methodology used for each study, there will be a discussion of the coding scheme that was used to classify the data in addition to the statistical analysis procedure.

3.2 Research strategy

Since this study aimed to provide a description for several issues related to the performance of requests in Saudi there is a need to combine several methods of data collection. Although there is a debate regarding the distinction between qualitative and quantitative paradigms, they are not incompatible and the distinction is not rigid (Clarke, 1998; Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991). Consequently, this study will adopt a qualitative approach because the study focuses on the description of the strategies of politeness used by the participants to perform requests. On the other hand, a quantitative approach will also be used because the main study in this research project will provide a comparison between two generations by calculating the frequencies of linguistic devices used by each generation and utilizing significance analysis.

3.3 Participants

Participants are the staff and trainees in one of the governmental administrative institutes in Riyadh. For the main study that focuses on politeness behaviour and request strategies in spoken Saudi Arabic, fifty participants from two generations were interviewed: twenty-five women in the age range of 20-39 and twenty-five women in the age range of 40-60. Each participant was asked to perform all role play scenarios depending on her own personal experience and on her reaction on the requestive situation and without considering her current position at the institute. The role play scenarios were performed by each participant as a requester and by the researcher as a requestee.
The sample size was chosen for the main study for two reasons: first, the number of the participants was adequate to provide the researcher with the required data for spoken requests and secondly to provide more opportunities to cover more dimensions about requests in different contexts within Saudi culture i.e. requests in Saudi Pidgin Arabic, Requests in Arabizi and written requests in formal contexts.

There were sixteen participants for the sub-study examining the use of Saudi Pidgin Arabic among the staff and trainees of the institute aged 20-60. In the second sub-study that examined the phenomenon of Arabizi in informal written requests, there were twenty participants aged 20-30. For the third sub-study, fifteen participants were asked to provide a total of sixty requestive formal emails exchanged recently with their trainees, trainers, colleagues, bosses or employees.

3.4 Instruments

The following discussion will focus on the methodology and instrumentation used to collect data for the main study in addition to the collection methods used for the three sub-studies.

3.4.1 Role plays

Amongst data collection methods, the role play method is considered an effective technique to elicit data in authentic situations (Al-Ghatani, 2010). Like all other methods of collecting data, role plays have been criticized by a number of scholars. For example, Kasper (2000) argues that this method may be influenced by the researcher rather than those who are involved in the interaction. In addition, some researchers claim that this method is limited and does not reflect the reality because the informants may perform imaginary conversations and that may affect the reliability of the elicited data (Golato, 2003; Martínez-Flor 2012; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011).

However, role plays are considered significant and useful in collecting pragmatic data, in addition to being representative of real-life performance (Al-Ghatani, 2010; Golato, 2003; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011). In comparison to other methods of data collection such as Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs), role plays can provide the researcher with more naturalistic data (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). Furthermore, some scholars argue that eliciting data by using the role play method can help the researcher to control for social variables similar to the DCTs, in addition to being more comprehensive than DCT questionnaires because they are used to elicit oral production data (Golato, 2003; Martínez-Flor 2012; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011; Rintell and Mitchell, 1989).

The main study focuses on politeness behaviour by examining the speech act of requests among Saudi women who live in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia. It also focuses on the most important social factors that play a significant role in daily interaction: age, power status, social distance and gender. Hence, the role play method was used to collect data for the main study, allowing the researcher to elicit a spoken form of the speech act of requests and to provide socio-pragmatic control for the social factors through
face to face interactions. Moreover, this method was chosen to elicit data for the main study because it is more ethnographic and similar to authentic language than the DCTs (Martínez-Flor 2012; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011)

3.4.2 Authentic data (naturally-occurring data)

This method of data collection is also considered one of the most appropriate choices among several researchers in the fields of pragmatics and sociolinguistics. For instance, Boxer (1993) believes that collecting data in its natural context maximizes the validity of the results. In addition, using this method will provide the researcher with data rich in semantic features, diversity and length (Al-Gahtani, 2010; Beebe & Cummings, 1996; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992). This method has also been criticized like all other methods of data collection in social contexts. For example, as Tran (2004) noted, natural data does not control for social variables when analysing speech acts. Another issue related to eliciting natural data only is that the researcher may end up with insufficient data that might not include all required elements i.e. social and cultural factors for the analysis.

The role play method was chosen for its validity for the context of the main study that mainly focuses on politeness behaviour and the impact of the social variables on the practices of requests amongst Saudi women. By employing role play method, the researcher was able to include all possible situations that might occur or have occurred with individuals who represent different levels of power and social distance for the participants. Choosing this method was also helpful to elicit data for spoken requests that usually are performed in both situations of low and high degree of imposition. For this reason, employing naturally occurring data for the main study might not cover all required data that include the different levels of power status and social distance in addition to the data of the two levels of the degree of imposition.

On the other hand, the naturally occurring data method was used to collect the data for the three sub-studies for several reasons. The first sub-study and the second sub-study, for example, focused on the linguistic features, on the grammatical structures and on some of the sociolinguistic issues that distinguish the phenomena of both Saudi Pidgin Arabic (SPA) and Arabizi. Additionally, the same method i.e. naturally occurring data were also employed to collect the data of the third sub-study since it also did not focus on the impact of the social variables and its main focus was on the most significant features that distinguish Arabic written requests in their formal context.

It can be said that all data collection methods in pragmatics have been criticized and there is no single method which is perfectly valid for all contexts. Thus, each method was chosen in accordance to its validity for each study. While the participants of the main study were asked to perform role play scenarios, authentic data was collected for the first sub-study that focuses on SPA through audio recording natural conversations between native and non-native speakers of Saudi Arabic. For the second sub-study, authentic data in the form of informal requestive texting were collected by focusing on the phenomenon
of Arabizi. For the third sub-study, authentic data were also collected in the form of formal requestive emails that have been exchanged amongst the employees of one of the governmental institutions in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

3.4.3 Background questionnaire

For the third sub-study which examines the phenomenon of Arabizi, twenty participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire that included multiple choice and open-ended questions (see Appendix 4) to provide the participants with more options to express their observations. The questionnaire was distributed in Arabic (Appendix 3) and its main purpose was to elicit the participants’ perception of the cultural and social aspects that surround this linguistic choice of writing amongst Saudi youth. For example, participants were asked:

1. Why do you sometimes write with Arabizi?
   - I find it easier and faster than using Arabic letters.
   - I feel cool when I write in this way
   - Because of the lack of support for Arabic script in my (computer/mobile)
   - I have to write with Arabizi because all my friends use it

3.5 Data collection procedure

The study was conducted at one of the governmental educational institutes in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. There are two types of programs undertaken at the institute. Pre-service programs from one to two years are provided for female high school graduates while in-service programs are provided for public employees from different governmental sectors.

The process of data collection was undertaken over a five month period. Both staff members and trainees were included in the process of data collection. At the beginning there were only a few responses from staff members, but the rest became more interested after they were informed by their colleagues who had participated that they could participate anonymously and all information would be kept confidential. First, the researcher had a friendly conversation with each participant to explain the research background and to guide her on how to participate. After that, appointments were assigned for the interviews to perform the role play scenarios (see Appendix 1) and for the audio recording for those who expressed their willingness to participate in the first sub-study.

For the data collected from the trainees, the researcher arranged with some trainers to have short meeting periods with the trainees in their classrooms in the last ten minutes of class times. After giving a brief background and distributing copies of an Arabic version of the information sheet that included a detailed explanation of the purposes of the study, trainees were asked to inform the researcher by email or come to her office to arrange appointments. The trainees in pre-service programs have two non-teaching periods.
The first period was their break times (usually for one hour) and the second was the last period on Mondays (usually for 45 minutes) and this period is assigned for the trainees’ affairs for general and non-teaching activities. To avoid interrupting the teaching process, interviews with the trainees were conducted in the non-teaching periods. For the trainees from in-service programs, interviews were conducted in their break times and in the last day of their program which is usually for non-teaching activities.

For the main study, all fifty participants were asked to perform a number of scenarios in response to different requestive situations in social and work/study contexts. For the first sub-study, authentic data were collected by using a telephone to audio record conversations between sixteen participants requesting breakfast and female workers in the institute’s cafeteria. The data only included the speech of the participants, not the cafeteria workers. In the second sub-study on informal written Arabic, twenty participants were asked to provide the researcher with twenty requestive texts they had exchanged recently through mobile texting.

In addition, twenty participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire to provide the researcher with more data on this phenomenon. For the third sub-study on formal written Arabic, fifteen participants were interviewed and asked to provide the researcher (via email) with sixty formal requestive emails recently received from colleagues or bosses. For both studies, the participants were informed that any identifying information related to the sender or the receiver would be removed from the data. All participants were asked to sign a consent form in Arabic.

3.6 Role play scenarios

All scenarios (see Appendices 1 and 2) were designed on the basis of the following research aims:

1. Investigate the strategies of politeness that are employed in the Saudi variety of Arabic used by Saudi women in making spoken requests.
2. Examine the impact of age, power status, social distance and gender on the context of requests and the communication system among Saudi women.
3. Examine the impact of the Arabic address system on the practices of politeness and requests.
4. Examine the impact of religious norms and values related to politeness among Saudi women.
5. Examine the differences and similarities in practising the speech act of requests across two different generations of Saudi women.
6. Examine the differences and similarities in practising the speech act of requests across two different contexts i.e. social and work/study contexts.

7. The most significant elements that were considered when designing the final version of the role-play scenarios were the social variables of the three degrees of power status in both social and study/work

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3 Sections 3.6-3.9 discuss the data collection method and the coding scheme for the main study that focuses on requests and politeness behaviour (see Chapters Four and Five).
contexts: high, equal and low. The second variable was the social distance showing two degrees of familiarity between the speaker and the hearer: close and distant. The gender of the hearer was considered only in the social context, while in the study and work contexts all scenarios were designed on the basis of female/female interaction since the study was conducted in the women’s branch of the institute. All fifty participants were asked to perform a number of scenarios in response to different requestive situations in social and work/study contexts. Each participant was asked to perform all scenarios as a requester while the researcher acted as the requestee in each scenario. The requestive responses of the participants were the ones that were included in the analysis parts of the main study. Furthermore, each participant was asked to choose one of the two forms of scenarios i.e. work or study contexts. The reason for providing two forms of scenarios i.e. work and study contexts was to help the participants to perform a higher level of reliable requestive situations that are closer to their real occupational situation either as trainers and trainees or as employees.

The fourth factor was the degree of imposition or the type of requested favour which varied from low to high. The combination of the social variables in all scenarios is illustrated as follows in Tables 3.1, Table 3.2 and Table 3.3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Power Status</th>
<th>Social Distance</th>
<th>Degree of Imposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing a watch</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for a loan</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for help to carry items</td>
<td>S&gt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for a loan from a child</td>
<td>S&gt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swapping seats with an old lady (on a plane)</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informing an old lady that she is sitting in</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the speaker’s seat (on a plane)</td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for directions</td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing a mobile</td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for information</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking a child to give up her seat</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

S= speaker, H=hearer, CSD=close social distance, DSD=distant social distance
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Power Status</th>
<th>Social Distance</th>
<th>Degree of Imposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- Asking for a lift</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2- Asking for a loan</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td></td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3- Asking for help to carry items</td>
<td>S&gt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>4- Asking for a loan from a child</td>
<td>S&gt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- Swapping seats with an old man (on a plane)</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- Informing an old man that he is sitting in</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the speaker’s seat (on a plane)</td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- Asking for directions</td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- Borrowing a mobile</td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9- Asking for information</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10- Asking a child to give up his seat</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

S= speaker, H=hearer, CSD=close social distance, DSD=distant social distance
### Table 3.3 Social Variables in Study/Work Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Power Status</th>
<th>Social Distance</th>
<th>Degree of Imposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asking about class/meeting time</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for deadline extension</td>
<td>S&lt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing a pen</td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for help to accomplish a homework/task</td>
<td>S=H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking a trainee/an employee to do a task</td>
<td>S&gt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking trainees/employees to work extra hours</td>
<td>S&gt;H</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

S= speaker, H=hearer, CSD=close social distance, DSD=distant social distance

### 3.7 Data Analysis and Coding Scheme

Many researchers have adopted the classification of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) in their Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project when coding and analysing requests in cultural and cross-cultural studies. This data analytical framework has been criticized by a number of scholars for weaknesses such as overlapping and lack of consistency across a large number of speech act classifications (Atawneh, 1991, Al-Gahtani, 2010). However, the CCSARP notion of head acts has proved its effectiveness and has been used in several studies to analyse and classify request strategies, for the Arabic context (Al-Khatib, 2006; Al-Momani, 2009; Marrani & Sazalie, 2010a; Marrani & Sazalie, 2010b).

#### 3.7.1 Directness level

The CCSARP proposes the term ‘Head Acts’ which is defined as “the part of the sequence which might serve to realize the act independently of other elements” (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989:17). According to the CCSARP, the coding of head acts is based on breaking down the concept of Brown and Levinson’s (1978) negative and positive face into sixty types of expressions. According to Blum-Kulka et al., (1989) speakers across several languages employ three main categories in accordance to the level of directness. These expressions are then classified into three levels of directness: direct, conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect as shown in Table 3.4.
Table 3.4 Requesting Strategies According to Blum – Kulka (1989)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>1. Mood Derivable (MDD)</td>
<td>‘sheelii el’aghradh’, (Pick up the stuff.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Direct Question (DQ)</td>
<td>mita elmow’ed?, (When is the appointment?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Pre-Decided Statement (PD)</td>
<td>‘tara bakhed sa’etik’, (I’ll take your watch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Locution Derivable (LD)</td>
<td>‘ana laazim alghii elmuhadarah al’aan’, (I have to cancel the class now)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Hedged Performatives</td>
<td>‘aamul teebaa’at al’elaan’, (I wish the announcement to be printed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Want Statement (WS)</td>
<td>‘abgha asta’eer qalamuk’, (I want to borrow your pen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Suggestory Formulae (SF)</td>
<td>‘laish ma titfaddal tijliss’, (Why don’t you sit down?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Query Preparatory (QP)</td>
<td>The expression contains reference to a preparatory condition for the feasibility of the request, typically one of ability e.g. ‘tigdar tiftah elbab, raja’an?’, (Can you open the door, please?), willingness ‘etha ma’endik mani, eftah ’eshubbak’, (If you don’t mind opening the window), or possibility ‘hal min almumkin tu’eeranii qalamuk?’, (Would it be possible to lend me your pen?), as conventionalized in the given language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>9. Strong Hints (SH)</td>
<td>‘almatbakh yahtaj tarteeb’, (The kitchen needs to be arranged), as a request for someone to arrange the kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Mild Hints (MH)</td>
<td>‘eash haalfustan elhiloo?’, (What a wonderful dress!), as a request to borrow a dress.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MD= Most Direct, CI= Conventionally Indirect, NCI= Non-Conventionally Indirect Strategies

3.7.2 Conventionally indirect strategies

There is more detailed analysis for the conventionally indirect strategies since their use is usually subjected to the cultural dimensions and the social aspects of languages (Al-Momani, 2009; Blum-Kulka et al, 1989). The analysis of conventionally indirect strategies was based on two components: request perspectives and conventions of means.
Request perspective

Conventionally indirect strategies are subjected to the analysis of request perspectives that are also employed as mitigating devices to soften the force of requests. The following are request perspectives as classified in Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) while the examples are from the Saudi spoken variety:

1- Speaker-oriented requests e.g. mumkin asta’eer galamik? ممكن استعير قلمك؟ “Can I borrow your pen?”

2- Hearer-oriented requests e.g. mumkin t’eernii galamik? ممكن تعيرني قلمك؟ “Would you mind lending me your pen?”

3- Inclusive requests e.g. ’eash raykum nit’akhar elyoum ‘ashaan nkhall al’taqreer؟ ايش رايكم نتأخر اليوم عشان نخلص التقرير؟ “How about if we stayed longer so we can finish the report?”

4- Impersonal request e.g. hal fi ’imkaneeyah ‘innik t’ajleen maw’d ettasleem؟ هل في إمكانية إنك تأجلين موعد التسليم؟ “Is there any possibility of getting the report done today?”

Conventions of means

According to the CCSARP, the choice of requests under the classification of conventions of means is classified as follows:

1- Ability, e.g. rigdireen tsheeleen ma’ay hathy el’agradh؟ تدررين تشيلين معاي هذي الأغراض؟ “Can you / are you able to carry this stuff with me?”

2- Permission e.g. mumkin t’eereenii sa’atik, albasha fi elhaflah؟ ممكن تعيريني ساعتك البسها في الحفلة؟ “Can I borrow your watch? I want to wear it at the party.”

3- Possibility e.g. hal fii ’imkaneeyah ‘innik t’ajleen maw’d ettasleem؟ هل في إمكانية إنك تأجلين موعد التسليم؟ “Is there any possibility to get an extension for the submission date?”

4- Willingness e.g. habeebii, ma’alaish tkhallii ‘ummii tijlis makanik؟ حبيبي معليش تُلي أمي تجلس مكانك؟ (Sweetheart, would you mind if my mum took your seat?), as a request to a child to give up his seat for the speaker’s mother.

5- Suggestion e.g. ’eash rayik trooh elheen biatkom wu tejii b’aden؟ ايش رايك تروح الحين وتجي بعدين؟ “How about if you go now and come back later?”, as a request for a neighbour's child visiting the speaker’s house to leave.

6- Knowledge e.g. habeebii, t’erif biat Mona؟ حبيبي، تعرف بيت مني؟ “darling, do you know Mona’s house?”

3.7.3 External modifications (supportive moves)

In the context of requests, external modifications are the strategies that are used before or after the head acts to serve various functions. According to the CCSARP, external modifications/supportive moves are used to mitigate the force of requests. In the current study, supportive moves were analysed according to the classification employed by Al-Momani (2009), as described in Table 3.5.
Table 3.5 The Classification of the External Modifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparator</td>
<td><em>Kaifik khalii, tara ‘endii mushkilah, mumkin salaf khams alaf riyal wa a’ridha ba’deen?</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(How are you uncle? I have a problem.</em>&lt;br&gt;“Can I borrow 5000 riyals and give them back to you later?”*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounder</td>
<td><em>‘ummii, ‘abgha essa’ah elli ‘endik li’annahaa tnaasib elfustaaan elli ‘endii</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(Mum, I want your watch, because it matches my dress.</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a pre-commitment</td>
<td><em>Ta’aalii habibii, mumkin ts’ae’deenii?</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(Come here, sweetheart. Can you help me?)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disarmer</td>
<td><em>m’alaish, ‘ana ‘aarfh ‘innik jideedah fii elqissim bas ‘ana ‘endii daght marrah….</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(It’s alright, I know that you are new in the department but I’m really backed up with work…)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise of reward</td>
<td><em>Mumkin taateenii elmeetain riyal wu’aw’idk nitla fii youm malahii ‘ow mat’um?</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(Would you mind giving me the 200 riyals and I promise you that one day I’ll take you to the fun city or to a restaurant.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposition minimizer</td>
<td><em>Mumkin taateenii galam ‘etha ma ‘endik ma’nii? inshallah baraj’ah lik</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(Could you lend me your pen? If Allah permitted, I’ll give it you back.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweetener</td>
<td><em>‘Enti ma sha Allah ‘aliak sare’eah be tibaha’ah. Mumkin ts’ae’deenii fii hatha ettaqreeer?</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(You are very good at printing. May Allah protect you. Would you mind helping me with this report?)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small talk</td>
<td><em>habeebii, ta’aal. law samahi, ‘ana adaawer ‘ala biat saahibtii bas habbiat bat’akkad, hatha bait-hum?</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(darling, come here, please. I’m looking for my friend’s house and I want to be sure. Is this hers?)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td><em>mumkin ts’ae’deenii? Wu’akoon lik shakrah.</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(Can you help me? I’d appreciate it if you did.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-introduction</td>
<td><em>Assalam aliakum, ‘ana Hana, ‘ana ashtghil fii hatha elqessim…</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(Peace be upon you. I am Hana and I work in this department……)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective appeal</td>
<td><em>Nouf, ‘ana elheen marrah mudghootah wu mub gadrah akhalus, Allah yiikhaleek tijeen ts’ae’deenii?</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(My name, I am honestly very busy now and I can’t finish. May Allah keep you, can you come and help me?)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apology</td>
<td><em>‘ana ‘aasfaah ‘innii ‘awaal marrah akhalus, wu lakin ithbarrari ‘ala endii ‘ella intii…</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>(I am sorry. This is the first time I talk to you, but I really have to because I don’t know anyone else…)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7.4 Internal modifications

Another significant element in the context of requests are internal modifications. Based on the CCSARP, there are two types of internal modifications: downgraders that mitigate the force and upgraders that add intensity to the speech acts. Unlike compliments and apologies, requests do not include upgraders. Thus, the focus in the current study is on the use of downgraders as a linguistic means to mitigate the force of requests (Al-Momani, 2009). The analysis of the internal modifications in the current study employed the
coding schema followed by Al-Momani (2009). Furthermore, religious expressions and in-group identity markers were added to the classification and were analysed as internal modifications. The classification of the internal modifications is shown in Table 3.6.

**Table 3.6 The Classification of the Internal Modifications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politeness marker</td>
<td>mumkin, ma’alaish, law samaht, “Is it possible?, Is it okay?, If you would permit.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional clause</td>
<td>‘etha ‘endik wagt “If you have time”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedding</td>
<td>Raah ‘akoon lik shakrah “I’d appreciate it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understater</td>
<td>mumkin astakhdim galamik shoayiah? “Would you mind using your pen a little bit?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogative</td>
<td>“Can you help me?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtoner/hedge</td>
<td>mumkin tsa’adeeni? Bas fii hathii eljuz’eeyah?, “Can you help me? Just with this part?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultative device</td>
<td>‘eash rayik ‘etha,, ‘etha ma ‘endik mani, “If you don’t mind, would you mind if, how about…”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the main study of this research project focuses mainly on politeness and request strategies in social and cultural contexts, the qualitative analysis was mainly from a socio-pragmatic approach. In addition, the analysis focuses on the role of power status, social distance, and the degree of imposition as significant social variables. The gender of the hearer was taken into consideration as another important factor in the context of requests.

### 3.8 Transliteration of Arabic

One of the important issues that should be clarified is converting Arabic into Latin letters. According to the absence of some of Arabic phonemes in English and because of the significant differences in both vowel and consonant systems between Arabic and English, the transliteration process was one of the challenges that have been encountered in this research project. The other challenge was the differences resulting from the diglossic situation in Arabic in representing the same term that might take various ways of pronunciation (see section 2.8.8). In fact, as a result for this situation and because it is hard to standardize this case of transliteration various ways in the Romanization of Arabic have been followed in different contexts. Thus, in an attempt to achieve the closest Romanization to Arabic expressions, the following includes the most common representations that have been employed in chapters 4, 5 and 8.
### Table 3.7 The Romanization of Arabic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic characters</th>
<th>Romanization of Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>م</td>
<td>m</td>
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<tr>
<td>ا</td>
<td>'a</td>
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<tr>
<td>إ</td>
<td>'e/i</td>
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<tr>
<td>ا</td>
<td>a</td>
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<td>ي</td>
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<td>j/g</td>
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<td>س</td>
<td>ss/c</td>
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<td>ش</td>
<td>sh/ch</td>
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<td>ص</td>
<td>s/ss</td>
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<td>ض</td>
<td>d/dh</td>
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<td>ط</td>
<td>t/tt</td>
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<td>و</td>
<td>wu/o/ow/wa</td>
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<tr>
<td>ي</td>
<td>y/i/i/i/ee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.9 Statistical analysis

The collected data for the main study i.e. requests in social, study and work contexts were analysed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 22.0) and the Excel software program. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on the data to examine the impact of the social variables of power status and social distance on performing requests in the two age groups. The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was chosen because it is the most appropriate test for examining significant differences between the means of three or more independent groups. For the variable of social
distance, there are two levels: close and distant. For the variable of power status, there are three levels: the speaker is higher than the hearer; the speaker is equal to the hearer; the speaker is lower than the hearer in power status. A T-test was performed to find the inter-group similarities and differences and for the impact of gender across the twelve situations and Paired-Sample T-test for intra-group similarities and differences and for the impact of power status across the twelve situations.

The results of the data analysis will be presented qualitatively and quantitatively by providing the frequencies and the percentages of variables in a social context in the following chapter (Chapter Four). In addition, there will be statistical analysis for the differences and similarities in request strategies across the two age groups in addition to examining the impact of the social variables in a social context. The data of the requests in work/study contexts will be presented and statistically analysed in Chapter Five.

3.10 Limitations of the current study

There are several issues that caused limitations for this study. One of these limitations is that the corpus of the main study stands only for the spoken variety used by Saudi women who live in Riyadh and this means that other spoken varieties in the other regions of Saudi Arabia are not included in the analysis of this study. Another limitation is that this study does not focus on politeness and request behaviour amongst Saudi men as speakers in both male-male and male-female interaction. Additionally, the data were restricted to educated Saudi women in the age range of 20-60 in one governmental institution and this means that uneducated women and other women whose ages are under or above the age range in this study are not included. For cultural reasons, other significant features that contribute in forming the styles of communication system i.e. body language and facial expressions are not included in the analysis that only focuses on the linguistic expressions and strategies.

Moreover, the data of the first sub-study: requests in Saudi Pidgin Arabic was restricted to the corpus of Saudi native speakers of Arabic which justifies the need to investigate the spoken form of SPA that usually used by non-native speakers of Saudi Arabic from other Asian nationalities. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that this study is significant because it contributes in filling the gap in the literature in relation to socio-pragmatic and sociolinguistic perspectives.

As discussed, Saudi society is characterized by its conservative nature and because of this it might be hard for the researcher to collect data include body movements and facial expression of female participants i.e. video recording.
CHAPTER FOUR

REQUESTS IN A SOCIAL CONTEXT

This chapter presents the results of the socio-pragmatic analysis of the first part of role play scenarios in the main study. In addition, it presents the analysis of spoken requests to individuals (hearers) of both genders across contexts that vary in degrees of social distance, power status between the interlocutors, and imposition level of requests. The relationship between the interlocutors is represented according to two levels of social distance (SD): close (CSD) and distant (DSD) and each level includes six situations. At the first level of social distance (CSD) the participants of each age group were asked to perform requests to their family members i.e. parents, siblings/husbands and children. The second level of social distance required requests in distant relationships (DSD) and included requests directed to both female and male strangers. The main focus of the generated data in each scenario was on the level of directness in Saudi requests. After the discussion of directness in both close and distant relationship contexts, there will be more analysis for all other linguistic strategies used in conjunction with request strategies for social and cultural purposes i.e. external, internal modifiers, forms of address and religious expressions.

4.1 Requests in contexts of close social distance (CSD)

The following sections will focus on requests to individuals in a close social distance for the subjects of an older age group (OAG) and the subjects of a younger age group (YAG). The first part will discuss requests in female-female interaction and the second part will discuss requests in female-male interaction.

4.1.1 Requests to females with a close relationship

The requests to females by the female participants of both age groups in the context of a close relationship is presented in Table 4.1. Requests were made to females from three levels of power status and each level included two scenarios according to the degree of imposition. Power status is illustrated as: S<H when the speaker is less in power than the hearer (such as requests from a daughter to a mother); S=H when the speaker is equal in power to the hearer (such as requests between sisters of a similar age); and S>H when the speaker is higher in power than the hearer (such as parents making requests to children). The degree of imposition is represented as a low degree of imposition (-DI) or a high degree of imposition (+DI). For instance, a request with variables CSD, S<H and –DI would represent a request to a female with a close social distance but higher in power status (i.e. from child to mother) where there is a low degree of imposition. Each scenario will be explained in detail in the following sections, together with an analysis of the figures presented in Table 4.1.
Table 4.1 Requests in a Social Context to Females with Close Social Distance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request Strategies</th>
<th>Most Direct</th>
<th>Conventionally Indirect</th>
<th>Non-Conventionally Indirect</th>
<th>Opting Out</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Request To Mothers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI- YAG</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI+ YAG</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Request To Sisters</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI- YAG</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAG</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Requests to daughters\ child sisters</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAG</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YAG=Younger Age Group, OAG=Older Age Group, DI=Low Degree of Imposition, DI+=High Degree of Imposition

4.1.1.1 Requests to mothers with a low degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, -DI)

In the first scenario of female-female interaction, the participant asked her mother if she could borrow her inexpensive watch. Both interlocutors are relationally close, the speaker has a lower power status than the hearer and the degree of imposition is low. The following section will focus on politeness behaviour and request strategies that have been shown by each age group.

As shown in Table 4.1, the participants tended to use a direct request strategy (68%) more frequently than the conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect strategies. The preference for direct requests in this scenario seems to have reflected the high level of solidarity and intimacy with the requestee (the mother). Although in a lower power status than the hearer, the close relationship between the interlocutors justifies the choice of using direct requests, such as want statement strategies (52%) (see Appendix 7). Most participants used direct expressions such as the following:

1. *yoummah 'abgha sa'atik, 'abgha albas-ha 'ashaan elhaflah*

“Mum, I want your watch, I want to wear it for the party.”

---

5 Tables that include the percentages of request strategies and sub-strategies are in Appendices (7-12)
Being direct with mothers without fear of losing face was the most common behaviour in this scenario amongst the YAG subjects. This can be justified since most of the participants of YAG are still students, are not married and live with their parents and thus have daily contact with their mothers.

The participants of OAG showed similar preference for using direct expressions, albeit not quite as frequently (56%). However, they also included more politeness strategies than the younger participants: 40% of OAG subjects employed conventionally indirect strategies compared to 28% for the same strategy used by the YAG subjects. The following is a conventionally indirect strategy used by one of the OAG subjects:

2. *ma’alaish ya mama asta’eer essa’ah elyoum?*  
معليش ياماما استعير الساعة اليوم؟

“Is it okay mum if I borrowed your watch today?”

4.1.1.2 Requests to mothers with a high degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, +DI)

In the second scenario of female-female interaction, the participant asked her mother for a loan. In this scenario the social distance between the interlocutors is close, the speaker has a lower power status than the hearer but the degree of imposition is high.

As shown in Table 4.1, most YAG participants (76%) preferred more direct strategies. As in the first scenario, most of the YAG subjects expressed their requests directly to their mothers without fear of losing face nor did they use more politeness strategies. However, some subjects tended to express their serious financial situation (the urgent need for money) by using longer expressions because of the high degree of request imposition. The following speaker is a YAG participant requesting her mother for a loan:

ماما، معليش، محتاجة فلوس، أنا عندي ضائُة مالية، وأدري إنك ماراح تُصرين.

“Mum, (sorry), I need money. I have a financial issue and I am sure that you will not let me down.”

When asking their mothers for a loan, the OAG participants also favoured more direct strategies with 68 per cent. However, they were less direct than the YAG subjects in this interaction. The higher tendency of using indirect strategies amongst the older participants might result from being socially independent, since most of OAG subjects are married, do not live with their parents and thus do not have daily interaction with their parents, unlike the younger ones who showed that they have a relatively higher degree of *mayanah* with their mothers (see Chapter Three). Similarly to the YAG subjects however, the tendency to be direct amongst the OAG subjects when making requests to mothers without fear of losing
face and regardless of the degree of imposition reflects the close relationship and the intimacy between the interlocutors.

The following section discusses requests to sisters with both low and high degrees of imposition.

4.1.1.3 Requests to sisters with a low degree of imposition (CSD, S=H, -DI)

In the third scenario of female-female interaction, the participant asked her sister if she could borrow her inexpensive watch. The participants tended to use more direct strategies when they performed requests to their sisters in female-female interaction (76%). It also can be seen from the data that the participants used both pre-decided and want statements equally (32%).

According to Al-Fetlawi (2008), pre-decided strategies are expressions that the speaker uses instead of making a request to show that she/he will take a certain action. Additionally, she believes that this strategy is employed when the speaker feels it would be more appropriate to help her/himself instead of asking the requestee to perform the requested action. However, pre-decided strategies were also employed by the participants in the current context to show that they do not need their sisters’ permission to use their possessions. This behaviour results from the close relationship and the equality in power status between the subjects and their sisters in addition to the low degree of imposition, since the requested item was an inexpensive watch.

The participants also preferred to use very direct expressions with fewer politeness strategies and without fear of losing face. For instance, the following expressions are examples of pre-decided strategies that were employed by the participants:

4. **Tara akhadt sa’atik.**

“Just letting you know, I took your watch.”

5. **Shiftii essa’ah ethahabiah theek? Balbas-ha tara.**

“You know that golden watch? I’ll wear it, just letting you know.”

Direct strategies were also employed as want statements as in the following example:

6. **Shoug, essa’ah abghaha lilhaflah.**

“When asking to borrow an inexpensive watch from their sisters, OAG subjects also tended to use direct strategies (62%). Similarly to the participants of YAG, the older participants performed either want or pre-decided expressions. They also showed similar behaviour to the YAG by including fewer politeness
strategies, illustrating their close relationship and the equality in power between them. This behaviour also reflects the high degree of mayanah resulting from the very close relationship between sisters.

4.1.1.4 Requests to sisters with a high degree of imposition (CSD, S=H, +DI)

In this scenario, each participant asked her sister for a loan. In this context the speaker has a close relationship and is equal to the hearer in status though the degree of imposition of the request is high. With 72 per cent, YAG participants employed direct strategies when they asked their sisters for a loan, and most of these direct strategies were want statements (52%). Despite the preference for direct requests to both mothers and sisters, the data showed that in requests to the sister, the participants used plainer expressions without employing any type of strategies to mitigate the force of the given context and without the fear of losing the requester’s face or even avoiding threatening the addressee’s face as follows:


منى، أنا محتاجة فلوسك، بارجعهم لك.

"Mona, I need your money. I’ll give it back to you."

As Table 4.1 shows, 80 per cent of the OAG subjects employed most direct strategies when they asked for a loan from their sisters. In addition to want expressions as in Example (7), other direct strategies such as mood derivable expressions were employed as follows:


إذا عندك زيادة 0555 ريال، عطيني أياها وأرجع لك أياها بعدين.

“If you have an extra SR 5000, give it to me and I’ll give it back to you later.”

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the variety of both direct and indirect strategies are relatively available in all languages and this variety is probably socially motivated by the need to minimize the imposition of the act itself. Brown and Levinson (1987) believe that performing indirect strategies in such contexts is one of the ways that the speaker can minimize the speech act imposition. However, even when the speaker decides to perform the direct levels, s/he still has a variety of verbal strategies to manipulate the degree of the imposition that is involved in the situation (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

According to Faerch and Kasper (1989), such manipulation of the degree of imposition might take the form of either external or internal modifications. As defined in Chapter Three and as suggested by Faerch and Kasper (1989), while external modifications are localized within the immediate context of the speech acts, the internal modifications are achieved through the linguistic devices within the same ‘Head Act’. Brown and Levinson (1987) also claim that in neither case does the modification affect the level of directness of the act, nor does it alter its propositional content.

As can be noticed in the following example, although the participant employed direct requests i.e. a direct question for money from her sister and want statement at the end of the requestive expression, she also
imbedded a relatively long expression at the beginning of her conversation i.e. disarmer (an external modification). It can be assumed that including the external modification in this requestive situation was to mitigate the force of requests since it is context with a high degree of imposition i.e. asking for loan.

9. 'addrii 'inn 'endik mashakil wu 'endik 'eyalik wu tasrifeen 'alihum, hal feeh mablagh tigdireen tsaa'deenii feeh? b'asaddid qist essiyarah.

أدري إن عندك التزامات وعندك عيالك وتصرفين عليهم. هل فيه مبلغ تُدرين تساعديني فيه؟ باسدد قسط السيارة.

“I know that you have (financial) commitments and you have your kids to look after (disarmer). Is there any amount of money that you can help me with? I want to pay the car fees.”

When they were asked to perform the scenarios, most of the OAG participants showed that the best person to whom they could resort in a financial crisis was their sister. Firstly, their close relationship and similar age to their sisters make it easier for them to explain their financial situation than with their parents and brothers. Secondly, it is easier for them to give the money back to their sisters rather than their parents who may consider it as a gift and refuse to take it back. The data of both age groups show that there is a similarity in the general use of request strategies amongst both age groups.

As in requests to mothers, requests to sisters were very direct and the subjects of both groups expressed their requests without fear of losing face and showed a high degree of solidarity regardless of the weight of requests in all scenarios.

Requests to female children (daughters or sisters) in both contexts of low and high degree of imposition will be presented in the following discussion.

4.1.1.5 Requests to child sisters/daughters with a low degree of imposition (CSD, S>H, -DI)

The subjects were asked to request their younger sisters/daughters to help them carry some items (in the scenario: the speaker has just come home after shopping and needs someone to help her carry the items). The speaker has a close relationship with the hearer, higher power status and the degree of imposition is low.

The data show that 84% of YAG subjects used direct requests to female children. The close social distance between the interlocutors and the lower position of the hearer in addition to the low degree of imposition is seen through the use of requests as mood derivable. Mood derivable strategies are usually employed when the speaker has more power over the hearer or by seniors to juniors, as in the current context, otherwise requests might be considered impolite (Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010b; Atawneh, 1991). The following is an example of a direct request employed as a mood derivable (imperative) by one of the YAG subjects:

10. Shahad habibti, sheelii haalkees ma’ay.
Mood derivables and imperatives were also the most dominant strategies employed by the OAG subjects (76%) who showed similar behaviour through the use of imperatives in their requests to younger sisters/daughters (see Appendix 7).

4.1.1.6 Requests to child sisters/daughters with a high degree of imposition (CSD, S>H, +DI)

Each participant from both age groups was asked to perform the following scenario:

*You need to buy some stationery and you don’t have money at the moment. You need about 200 SR. You know that one of the children in your family has been saving money. What would you say to borrow this amount of money if this child is your sister/daughter?*

The speaker has a close relationship with the hearer, higher power status and the degree of imposition is high. Although the YAG subjects showed more preference to use direct strategies in both high and low imposition scenarios, they showed greater preference to use indirect strategies in the current scenario and this tendency resulted from the high imposition. They employed 36 per cent as query preparatory and 12 per cent as strong hints (see Appendix 7). Consider the following expressions:

11. Marwah, mumkin tsalfii elflous elli ma’ak? ba’raj’ihum ‘ala toul.

مره، ممكن تسلفيني الفلوس اللي معك؟ بارجعهم على طول؟

“Marwah, can you lend me your money? I’ll give it back to you as soon as possible.”


عهود حبيبتي، أدري إنك ما راح تراحل تعيش معني، أدري إن عندك مبلغ وإن شاء الله راح يثير لو أخذت مني شيء واعترفي موجود عندك.

“Auhoud, sweetie, I know that you won’t let me down. I know that you have money and with Allah’s willing it won’t bother you if I borrowed some (of your money) and be sure that I’ll give to you back.”

The preference of using indirect strategies shows that with YAG subjects, the high degree of imposition impacted on the context of the current scenario.

Nevertheless, the impact of the high degree of imposition was not obvious in requests behaviour of the subjects of OAG who also preferred employing most direct strategies (80%) as in their requests to child sisters/daughters in the context of the low degree of imposition. This tendency may have resulted from
the age difference between the two groups. While most of the YAG subjects performed the current scenario as sisters, most of the OAG subjects on the other hand performed the same scenario as mothers. In the context of Arabic requests and specifically in female-female interaction, mothers usually have the higher status and thus, when making requests they use direct expressions without fear of losing face. The speaker in the following expression is one of the OAG subjects:

13. *Ya mama, baakhid minnik elflous w’arajeeha lik.*

“(hey) mama, I’ll take (your) money and I’ll give it back to you.”

4.1.2 Requests to males in contexts of close social distance (CSD)

The requests to males with a close relationship were similarly performed as requests to females in the previous section. As in requests to mothers, sisters and child sisters/daughters in female-female interaction, the participants were asked to perform role-play requests to fathers, brothers/husbands and child brothers/sons in female-male interaction. Data of the requests to males with a close relationship is presented in Table 4.2 and will be discussed in the following section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request Strategies</th>
<th>Request To fathers</th>
<th>Request To brothers/husbands</th>
<th>Requests to sons\child brothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>DI+</td>
<td>DI-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YAG</strong></td>
<td>6 24 17 68</td>
<td>21 84 2 8 2 8 25 100</td>
<td>21 84 4 16 16 25 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OAG</strong></td>
<td>4 16 15 60</td>
<td>15 60 3 12 2 28 25 100</td>
<td>21 84 4 16 16 25 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DI+</strong></td>
<td>21 84 2 8</td>
<td>25 100</td>
<td>25 100</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>YAG</strong></td>
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<td>2 8</td>
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<td><strong>DI+</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Requests to sons\child brothers</strong></td>
<td><strong>YAG</strong></td>
<td><strong>OAG</strong></td>
<td><strong>DI+</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DI-</strong></td>
<td>21 84 4 16</td>
<td>25 100</td>
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</tr>
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<td>21 84 4 16</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>DI+</strong></td>
<td>17 68 8 32</td>
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<td>25 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OAG</strong></td>
<td>12 48 9 36 4 16</td>
<td>25 100</td>
<td>25 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YAG=Younger Age Group, OAG=Older Age Group, DI-=Low Degree of Imposition, DI+=High Degree of Imposition
4.1.2.1 Requests to fathers with a low degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, -DI)

In the current scenario, the participants of both age groups were asked to make requests to their fathers for a lift because they had been invited to a friend’s house. It is important to mention that the degree of imposition is considered low since females are not allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia.

The subjects of YAG tended to use a conventionally indirect strategy (68%) and this strategy is shown as query preparatory (Appendix 8). According to Brown and Levinson (1987) the three social factors, social distance (SD) between the speaker (S) and the hearer (H), power status (PS) between the interlocutors and the risk of imposition, or the degree of imposition are the most significant variables in the context of politeness. Since the hearer was the father, who has a higher degree of power status than the speaker, this justifies the high tendency of using more indirect strategies to show politeness and formality (the father in some social contexts in the Arabian culture is given higher authority). The following expression is one of the indirect request strategies that were employed in this situation:

14. *baba Allah yijzak khair, bintaʼabik maʼanna bas Omar taali wu essawaag moo feeh, maʼalaish twadinii mishwar?*

بابا الله يجزاك خير، بنتعبك معانا، بس عمر طالع والسواق مو فيه. معليش توديني مشوار؟

“Dad, May Allah reward you immensely, we will add more to your burden, but Omar is outside and the driver is not here, would you mind if I asked you for a lift?”

When requesting their fathers for a lift, 60 per cent of the requests performed by OAG participants were conventionally indirect. The OAG subjects showed a similar tendency to employ more politeness strategies when they performed requests to their fathers. However, they tended more than the YAG subjects to avoid requests in this scenario with 28 and 8 per cent respectively. When they were asked about the reason for avoiding requests, most participants found it inconvenient because of the age of their fathers, and as a mark of respect they preferred to ask someone else or to cancel going out.

4.1.2.2 Requests to fathers with a high degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, +DI)

In the second scenario of the requests to fathers, the subjects were asked to make requests for a loan. The participants interestingly showed a high tendency to use the most direct strategy when they performed requests for a loan from their fathers. The percentage (84%) is even higher than the percentage of the same strategy in female-female interaction.

The preference for directness when requesting money from the father can be interpreted by the financial dependence of young Saudi females on their parents, mostly the father, since most of the subjects are still students or not married. Consider the following example:

بابا، الله يعافيك، أنا محتاجة 5000 ريال، أنا أمر بأزمة وأحتاجهن ضروري.

“Dad, may Allah keep you healthy (invocation), I need SR 5000. I have some financial issues and I need (the money) urgently.”

The following illustrates direct requests employed by another speaker for a loan from her father:


بيه، أنا عندي ظرٍّ وأنا محتاجة خمَس آلٍَّّّ وآلاَف وبأرده لك.

“Dad, I have (a financial) issue and I need SR 5000. I will give it back to you.”

Employing request strategies to fathers, on the other hand, interestingly varied between conventionally indirect in the context of low imposition and most direct in the context of high imposition. To provide an explanation for this tendency, it is important to understand that politeness in Arabic is an expected behaviour and can be achieved through using both direct and conventionally indirect strategies and this mainly depends on the contextual variables surrounding the interlocutors (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Al-Qahtani, 2009; Mohammadi and Tamimi, 2013).

As can be observed, in both scenarios of the requests to fathers, the speaker and the hearer have a close social distance as daughter and father. In the context of low degree of imposition, the impact of power status is more obvious than the other social variables because the participants were asking for the father’s permission to go out and for a lift. As a result, most respondents avoided expressing their requests directly and employed indirect strategies instead. Although the degree of imposition was high in this context, most respondents employed most direct strategies with want/need wish statements. This behaviour could be justified through assuming that their fathers would provide them with the financial support any time. As a result and in addition to their close relationship and dependency on their fathers, the participant chose to express their requests directly. This behaviour also shows that the impact of mayanah is more obvious than the impact of power status which means that in Arabic requests the impact of social variables varies in accordance to the given context.

Additionally, although the impact of power status is more obvious in the requests to fathers than the requests to mothers, the factor of mayanah is also clear in the current context through the dominant use of most direct strategies amongst the participants. This means that the impact of power status and social distance varies in accordance to power status and the degree of familiarity between the interlocutors.

The following discussion will focus on the data of the requests to brothers or husbands in both low and high degree of imposition contexts.
4.1.2.3 Requests to brothers/husbands with a low degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, -DI)

The YAG participants showed a preference to employ more politeness strategies when they performed requests to their brothers/husbands with a relatively high preference for the conventionally indirect strategies that were expressed as query preparatory strategies (52%) (see Appendix 8). The following example used as a indirect strategy by one of the YAG subjects:

17. Abdullah, fii haflah ebbait Ghaida, ‘etha fii imkaneyah ti waddini?

عبد الله، في حفلة ببيت غيداء، إذا في إمكانية، توديني؟

“Abdullah, there is a party at Ghaida’s house. If there were a possibility, will you take me a lift?”

Employing the expression ‘If there were a possibility’ shows that the speaker does not use any other modifications to mitigate the force of requests, it can be said that there are two reasons for such behaviour. In addition to performing a request with low degree of imposition, she already employs the most significant strategy of showing negative politeness i.e. indirect requests (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Although this expression is relatively shorter than the use of indirect requests through employing the expression ‘If there were a possibility’ shows that the speaker assumes that there is no need to add any other modifications to mitigate the force of requests, since she already employs the most significant one of showing polite behaviour i.e. indirect strategies. The other reason of showing that there is no need to add additional linguistic modifications is that the requests here are classified as low in the degree of imposition.

When they performed the same scenario, the participants of OAG also showed a tendency to be indirect when they asked their brothers/husbands for a lift with a preference of query preparatory strategies (60%) (see Appendix 8).

The general preference for performing requests to males using indirect strategies even in requests in situations with low degree of imposition reflects the impact of the relatively dominant power of males within Saudi families. For instance, compared to the high tendency of using pre-decided and direct expressions with sisters, most of the participants chose to employ indirect strategies when they performed requests to their brothers/husbands.

4.1.2.4 Requests to brothers/husbands with a high degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, +DI)

Table 4.1 shows that in female-male interaction, YAG participants employed 72 per cent of their requests as direct strategies. It also illustrates that want statements were favoured (60%). The YAG participants

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6 Compare this example with Example (9).
tended to use expressions that included various linguistic strategies for minimizing the force of requests in the given context. Yet, compared to requests to fathers, participants tended mostly to employ strategies that showed they were closer in power status to their brothers and they could make their requests with a higher degree of *mayanah*. For instance, both Example (18) and (19) were used by one participant when she asked for a loan from her father and her brother respectively:

18. *Baba, ma’alaish wa la ‘aliak ‘amer, widdii ’atrub minnik talab, Allah yijzak khair, ma tgassir ‘ana mihtajah 5000 riyal.*

“Dad, sorry I’m not ordering you. I would like to ask you something, may Allah reward you. You always help me. I need SR 5000.”


“Amory (Nickname), sorry, I need SR 5000 and I want you to give me (money). Know I need you and tomorrow you might need me! (Arabian proverb).”

Although both expressions are direct requests expressed as want statements, in Example (18) the participant paid less awareness to deference strategies in the request to her brother by using less politeness markers and by employing a proverb as a means of joking. This behaviour shows that the father has a higher power status than the brother within Saudi families in Saudi society.

Older participants showed greater preference for direct strategies (64%). The data also show that OAG participants were less in their directness than YAG participants and this might be according to their independence in their financial situation. As expressed by those who chose to employ hints as non-conventionally indirect requests or to avoid requests, they find it inconvenient to borrow money from their brothers/husbands. The following is an expression employed by one of the older participants to her brother as a non-conventionally indirect request (mild hint):

20. *‘Ana mihtajah 5000 riyal, ti’rif ahad mumkin yesallifnii?*

“I need SR 5000. Do you know someone who can lend me (money)?”

Compared to requests to brothers, some participants of the OAG found it easier to request their husbands for money since they share the responsibilities in their family life. For instance, the following participant is using a direct request to her husband:

“(Oh) my life, oh sweetheart, I want SR 5000.”

It can be seen from the two age groups’ behaviour in this scenario that although the male hearer is assumed to be equal in status to the speaker, most participants preferred using indirect strategies. This could be again interpreted as reflecting the relative dominant role of males in Saudi society.

In the requests to brothers/husbands in both contexts of low and high degree of imposition, the subjects varied in employing indirect and direct strategies similarly to their behaviour in requests to fathers.

4.1.2.5 Requests to child brothers/sons with a low degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, -DI)

The participants of the two age groups were asked to perform the same scenarios that they did in requests to child sisters/daughters.

In the context of a low degree of imposition, the subjects of both age groups showed similar behaviour by using the most direct strategies. The data show that most requests were performed as mood derivable strategies (84%) (see Appendix 7). As in requests to child sisters/daughters the use of imperatives resulted from the very close relationship and the higher position that the speakers (the subjects) have on the hearers (the children) in addition to the low degree of imposition in the given scenario. The force of mood derivable and imperatives with children, however, is usually mitigated by linguistic strategies which show the solidarity and the close relationship between the interlocutors. Consider the following expression:

22. Sammoor, ta’aal shil hatha a’n mama Allah yi’aafeek.

“Sammoor (nickname), come and carry this for mum, may Allah keep you healthy.”

As can observed in Example (22), the speaker used her son’s nickname and invocation to soften the harshness of requests and to show the close relationship to the hearer.

Both external and internal modifiers used by the subjects of both YAG and OAG will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

4.1.2.6 Requests to child brothers/sons with a high degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, +DI)

When asked to perform requests for a loan from their younger brothers/sons, the YAG subjects preferred most direct requests (68%) relatively similar to their behaviour when they made requests to their younger sisters (52%). As mentioned, the YAG subjects tended to perform the scenarios of requests to children as sisters and this behaviour justified their tendency to use direct requests with younger siblings in both
contexts of low and high degree of imposition. The speaker in the following expression is using a direct question in requesting for money from her younger brother:


"Rayan, do you have the SR200 that you took from my father? When we get home, I’ll give it back to you."

Within the same context, the OAG subjects tended more to consider politeness strategies through the use of both conventionally and non-conventionally indirect requests (36 % and 16 % respectively) in the requests to their sons. As also can be observed from the data, the subjects of OAG employed only 48 per cent of their requests to sons as direct strategies compared to 80 per cent of the requests to daughters within the same context. This behaviour amongst the older subjects who behaved as mothers can be justified by the relatively dominant role of males which usually can be noticed through parenting in Saudi social life. The following are two expressions made by one of the OAG subjects when she was asked to make requests for a loan from both her daughter and son:

24. *Allah yi’aafeek, mumkin taateenii? wu a’aridaha e’tha rija’ana elbiat?*

"May Allah keep you healthy, is it possible that you give me (money)? I’ll give it back to you when we get home?"

25. *Nouf, Allah yi’aafeek, b’akhith minnik el 200 wu ’ariddaha lik bilbiat.*

"Nouf, Allah keep you healthy, I’ll take the SR 200 and I’ll give it back to you at home."

In Ex. (24) (request to son), the subject made requests through employing indirect strategies and used politeness strategies such as the politeness marker *mumkin* (is it possible?) and interrogatives. In Example (25) (request to daughter), the speaker used a direct request by informing her daughter that she would lend her money and assuming that her daughter would agree for that.

In fact, this behaviour shows that while being indirect in female-male interaction in such contexts may reveal their relatively dominant power, directness in female-female interaction reflects intimacy and can be an instance of solidarity and closeness.

As the previous sections discussed request strategies in both female-female and female-male interactions in the context of a close relationship (requests to family members), the following discussion will focus on
request strategies in both female-female and female-male interactions in a context of a more distant relationship (requests to strangers).

**4.2 Requests in contexts of distant social distance (DSD)**

The following two sections will focus on requests to strangers made by the female speakers (DSD). As represented in Table 4.3, the data shows the percentages of requests in both female-female and female-male interactions. As in requests in the context of a close relationship, each scenario stands for a different level of power status according to the age of the requestee. These levels are: when the hearer is older than the speaker (S<H), when the hearer is of the same age as the speaker (S=H) and the third level is when the hearer is younger than the speaker (S>H). Additionally, requests to strangers is represented by the two imposition levels. Additionally, it is important to understand that since the factor of mayanah has a significant role in the context of a close relationship, the impact of kulfah on the other hand is more obvious in the context of a distant relationship (see Chapter Three).

**4.2.1 Requests to female strangers**

The following six scenarios will discuss the data for requests to female strangers who represent different age ranges to the subjects. The following discussion also includes requests to female strangers with both levels of low and high imposition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request Strategies</th>
<th>Most Direct</th>
<th>Conventionally Indirect</th>
<th>Non-Conventionally Indirect</th>
<th>Opting Out</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Requests to elderly females</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>YAG</td>
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<td>OAG</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI+</td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Requests to same age females</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI+</td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Requests to unknown girls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>YAG</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI+</td>
<td>YAG</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YAG=Younger Age Group, OAG=Older Age Group, DI-=Low Degree of Imposition, DI+=High Degree of Imposition
4.2.1.1 Requests to older female strangers with a low degree of imposition (DSD, S<H, -DI)

The elicited data of the current context was for the following scenario:

You are on the plane with your husband and you find your places are separate. You have found an old lady sitting between you and your husband. What would you say to ask her to swap her place with you? The findings show that only 12 per cent of YAG subjects opted out requests. On the other hand, most participants of the same age group chose to ask the older lady to swap the seat and this because that they found it might be uncomfortable for their husbands to sit beside a female stranger (see Appendix 9).

Most of the performed requests were indirect and they were employed as query preparatory. The preference for indirect requests with relatively longer expressions that include both internal and external modifications shows that the speaker is aware about the large social distance exists between herself and the interlocutor and assumes that the hearer has a higher power status as an older lady. This situation requires her to employ more polite expressions such as in-group identity marker, apology and interrogatives and this seems as instance of negative politeness (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Al-Qahtani, 2009; Mohammadi and Tamimi, 2013). This behaviour can be also interpreted as a result for the impact of the high degree of kulfah between the interlocutors. The following expression is one of the request strategies that were employed in this situation:


معليش يا أمي، لو سمحتي ولا عليك أمر، هذا زوجي. ممَكن أجلس معاه؟ إذا مايضايُك؟

“I am sorry (oh) my mum, if you permit and I am not ordering you. This is my husband. Can I sit beside him? If it does not bother you.”

While most YAG participants preferred to ask for a place swap with an old lady, a percentage of 52 of the OAG participants interestingly favoured opting out rather than making the requests. When they were asked about such behaviour, they responded that it is not appropriate to ask an old lady to move from her place given her age and it does not matter if they sat separately from their husbands.

Both request patterns of the two age groups show that individuals of the same society might respond differently to the same situation in accordance with more than one social factor. While the factor that affected the response of YAG participants to the given scenario was gender segregation, the age of the hearer (power status) was the dominant factor and has an impact on the data of the OAG.

4.2.1.2 Requests to older female stranger with a high degree of imposition (DSD, S<H, +DI)

In the context of a high degree of imposition, the participants were asked to perform the following scenario:
You are on the plane and you found a person sitting in your place by mistake. What would you say if this person is an elderly lady about 70?

As shown from the data all YAG and OAG subjects avoided direct request strategies. Clearly the factors of the distant social relationship, the age of the hearer in addition to the high degree of imposition had an obvious impact on the context through showing that there was a high degree of kulfah between them and the hearers. While the majority of the subjects of both groups chose to opt out by asking the stewardess to find her another place, those who chose to make requests tended to employ very polite expressions as follows:

27. Ya khalah, mumkin 'ashoof elqart hag elkursii? li'an mumkin yikoon feeh khata’ fii elmakan.

(oh) aunty, can I have a look on your boarding pass? There might be a mistake in our seats.

The speaker is using indirect requests through employing mild hints by asking the hearer to show her the number of her place. In addition to the in-group identity marker (Aunty), the speaker used a politeness marker mumkin and interrogative to show a higher degree of politeness.

4.2.1.3 Requests to same age female strangers with a low degree of imposition (DSD, S=H, -DI)

The subjects were asked to perform a scenario in which they asked a same age female stranger for directions in a shopping mall. The data show that most participants of both age groups made requests and most of their requests were indirect with a high preference for employing query preparatory strategies (72 per cent for both age groups) (see Appendix 10). The high preference for employing indirect strategies even with the low imposition of the given context resulted from the impact of the distant social relationship between the interlocutors. The following request was made by one of the YAG subjects:

28. law samahtii, mumkin soua’l? wain mahal e’shounat?

Excuse me, can I ask you a question? Where is the purse shop?

As a result of the large social distance between her and the hearer (a female stranger), the speaker in Example (28) tended to show more politeness by employing indirect requests and including internal modifiers such as a politeness marker (if you permit).
4.2.1.4 Requests to same age female strangers in the context of a high degree of imposition (DSD, S=H, +DI)

When they were asked to perform the scenario (borrowing a mobile from a female stranger in a shopping mall), the highest percentage of requests made by YAG subjects was for indirect strategies with the preference for query preparatory (52%) (see Appendix 10). Additionally, 12 per cent of YAG subjects chose to opt out of the request and when they were asked for the reason, they preferred to ask the information desk in the mall or to wait until one of their relatives came instead of requesting strangers. Twenty per cent of the YAG participants made their requests through the use of want statements. The following expression, for instance, was employed by one of the YAG subjects:

29. law samahtii, ma’alaish ana wa Allah nseet jawalii wu widdii ‘attasil ‘ala ‘ahalii.

“Excuse me, I am sorry, I swear to Allah, I forgot my mobile and I would like to call my family.”

The older subjects showed a higher tendency to employ indirect strategies (72%) when they were asked to perform the same scenario. As in requests in the context of high power status, the use of indirect strategies is an expected behaviour when there is a large social distance between the interlocutors (Brown and Levinson, 1987). In Example (30) the speaker is one of the OAG subjects and the hearer is a female stranger:

30. ma’alaish habibtii, ‘ana nseet jawal bilbiat. Mumkin asta’eer jawalik ‘ashaan ‘attasil?

“Sorry darling, I forgot my mobile at home. Can I borrow your mobile to call (someone)?”

Moreover, 20 per cent of OAG subjects chose to avoid requests in this context and they gave the same reason (better to ask for help from the information desk rather than using a stranger’s mobile).

4.2.1.6 Requests to younger female strangers with a low degree of imposition (DSD, S>H, -DI)

The scenario of this context was asking a girl stranger for information. The data showed that most of the participants of both age groups used direct strategies (76% and 80% respectively). It is clear that the most significant factors in the context of the current scenario were power status (S>H) and the low degree of imposition. The following is an expression employed as a direct question by one of the YAG group subjects:

31. habibtii, hatha biat Huda?

“Sweetie, is this Huda’s house?”
Since the hearer was a child, the speaker is assuming that she has a higher position than the hearer by making her requests directly without fear of losing face as a mean of positive politeness.

As the data show, the subjects of the OAG preferred to use most direct strategies similarly to the behaviour of the YAG. This tendency amongst both age groups reveals that most direct strategies are highly expected behaviour in Arabic requests in contexts when the requester has a higher status than the requestee (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Al-Qahtani, 2009; Mohammadi and Tamimi, 2013), as in requests to children.

4.2.1.5 Requests to younger female strangers with a high degree of imposition (DSD, S>H, +DI)

The subjects of both age groups were asked to make requests to a girl stranger to give up her seat for the participant’s mother in a hospital waiting area.

Although the speaker has a higher status than the hearer, the impact of the high degree of imposition can be shown through the preference of using indirect strategies amongst the subjects of both age groups. While 80 per cent of the YAG subjects tended to use query preparatory, 68 per cent of OAG subjects preferred making their requests through using the same strategies (see Appendix 9). Consider the following example:

32. habibtii, Allah yi’aafeek, mumkin tigoumeen? li’an mama marrah ta’abanah wi e’ntii lissah sigheerah.

حبيبتي، الله يعافيك، ممكن تُومين؟ لْن ماما مرة تعبانة وإنتي لسة صغيرة.

“Sweetie, may Allah keep you healthy, would you mind if you stand up? Because my mum is very sick and you are still young.”

Unlike requests to young female strangers in the context of (DI-), the speaker in Example (32) employed a longer expression that include more politeness strategies such as invocation (may Allah keep you healthy) and politeness marker (mumkin) with this, as mentioned, resulting from the awareness of the high degree of the imposition in the current context.

Within the context of the requests to strangers, the following discussion will focus on requests in female-male interaction.

4.2.2 Requests to male strangers

The following discussion will analyse the data shown in Table 4.4. It also will focus on directness and requests to male strangers in different contexts and with the three levels of power status (S<H, S=H, S>H) in addition to both levels of the degree of imposition (DI-, DI+).
Table 4.4 Requests by the Two Age Groups to Male Strangers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request Strategies</th>
<th>Most Direct</th>
<th>Conventionally Indirect</th>
<th>Non-Conventionally Indirect</th>
<th>Opting Out</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests to elderly male strangers</td>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DI+</td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests to same age males</td>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DI+</td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests to unknown boys</td>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DI+</td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YAG=Younger Age Group, OAG=Older Age Group, DI-=Low Degree of Imposition, DI+=High Degree of Imposition

4.2.2.1 Requests to older male strangers with a low degree of imposition (DSD, S<H, -DI)

The participants were asked to perform the scenario of asking an old man to swap seats in a plane. The findings show that the highest response pattern was for opting out. As also can be observed from the data, 76 per cent of YAG subjects and 92 per cent of OAG subjects chose to avoid requests and this means that the OAG subjects showed more preference towards negative politeness.

When asked the reason for opting out, the participants explained that their cultural values prevent them from making conversations with male strangers, especially in the presence of their husbands and instead they would let their husbands ask the old man about swapping seats.

It is clear from the behaviour of the subjects of both age groups that avoiding talking to male strangers in the presences of their male relatives as in the given scenario (husbands/brothers) shows the dominant role of males in Saudi society.

4.2.2.3 Requests to older male strangers in a high degree of imposition (DSD, S<H, +DI)

The participants were asked to perform the same scenario (informing an old man, in the plane, that he is sitting in the speaker’s seat). Similarly to their behaviour in female-male interaction in the three status
scenarios, most YAG and OAG subjects showed a high tendency to opt out rather than make a request (76% and 88% respectively).

When asked the reason of avoiding requests, they varied in their responses. Some of the participants found it inconvenient to ask an old man to leave his seat and it is better to ask the stewardess for help. They found it preferable to avoid requests rather than talking to male strangers and the third group chose to avoid requests for both reasons. That means, since the speaker is not accompanied by a male relative, the significant impact on request behaviour in this context was the age of the hearer i.e. the power status difference in addition to gender segregation.

4.2.2.2 Requests to same age males in a low degree of imposition (DSD, S=H, -DI)

The subjects were asked to perform the scenario (asking a same age male stranger for directions in a shopping mall). The data varied in the behaviour of the two age groups. While 28 per cent of request strategies employed most direct strategies and 24 per cent employed indirect strategies, almost half of the YAG subjects chose to opt out (48%). Their avoidance of making requests was because they found it necessary to ask a male stranger for directions and they would rather try to find out by themselves or ask the information desk. In addition, they found that they might be bothered by the male stranger who might misinterpret their request.

Most OAG participants, on the other hand, preferred to make requests through employing both most direct strategies (20%) and indirect requests (56%) and there were only 24 per cent who avoided making requests. Differences in request behaviour of the two age groups might be justified by the age range of the subjects. The older subjects preferred to make requests since the degree of the imposition in the given scenario was low and since the older females are potentially less than the younger ones to be bothered by male strangers.

As in requests in female-female interaction in the same context, employing indirect strategies was a means of showing that the speaker is assuming a large social distance between her and the requestee. However, they tended to use shorter expressions in female-male interaction. Compare Examples (33) and (34) to see the difference employed by one OAG subject in female-female and female-male interaction:

33. *law samahtii 'endik khalfiah 'ann essoug? Te'rifeen mahal e'shounat? law samahtii mumkin tidilleenii 'aliah?*

 ولو سمحتي عندك خلفية عن السوق؟ تعرفين محل الشنط؟ ممكن لو سمحتي تدليني عليه؟

“Excuse me, do you know this mall? Do you know where the purse shop is? Would you mind showing me where it is?”

34. *Law samahnt te'rif wain mahal e'shounat?*

"Law samahnt te'rif wain mahal e'shounat?"
“Excuse me, do you know where the purse shop is?”

4.2.2.4 Requests to same age male strangers in a high degree of imposition (DSD, S=H, +DI)
In female-male interaction in the context of high imposition, the subjects were asked to perform the scenario (borrowing a mobile from a male stranger in a shopping mall). The highest percentages employed by YAG and OAG subjects were for the opting out strategy (52% and 60% respectively). Avoiding requests by females to male strangers in this scenarios is justified by both the impact of social distance (gender segregation) and high imposition.

The data also showed that 48 per cent of YAG subjects and 40 per cent of OAG subjects chose to make requests and both percentages stand for the total use of both direct and conventionally indirect strategies. As in the requests to same age male strangers in the scenario of low imposition, the factor of gender segregation impacted on making requests in this scenario. The following request was made by one of the YAG subjects:

35. ‘ana nseet eljawal, mumkin 'astaakhdim jihaazik?

أنا نسيت الجوال، ممكن استُدم جهازك؟

“I forgot (my) mobile. Can I use your (mobile)?”

As can be observed in Example (35), the speaker tended to employ a short expression with the avoidance of using strategies such as endearment terms as those that were employed in female-female interaction.

4.2.2.5 Requests to younger male strangers in a low degree of imposition (DSD, S>H, -DI)
The subjects were asked to perform the scenario (asking a younger male stranger for information). As in their requests to unkown female children, all subjects of both age groups made requests and showed a tendency to employ direct requests to unknown male children with 84 per cent using most direct strategies in the requests of the subjects of YAG and with 80 per cent of the strategies employed as direct requests by the subjects of OAG.

The participants also tended to use direct expressions since their requests were in the context of low imposition in addition to the factor of power status (S>H). They also made their requests by using similar expressions that they used in their requests to girl strangers. The following example was used in the given scenario:

36. habeebii, t’erif biat Ibrahim?

حبيبي تعرف بيت ابراهيم؟

“Darling, do you know where Ibrahim’s house is?”
4.2.2.6 Requests to younger male strangers in a high degree of imposition (DSD, S>H, +DI)

Through performing the scenario (asking a younger male stranger to give up his seat for the speaker’s mother in a hospital waiting area), the participants showed a similar tendency as in their requests to younger female strangers. The data show that 80 per cent of the subjects of YAG and 72 per cent of the subjects of OAG made indirect requests.

It also can be shown that although the speaker has a higher position than the hearer, they tended to use conventionally indirect requests as a result of the high degree of imposition in the given context as follows:

37. habeebii, mumkin tguom wu tig’ed elwaldah? Li’an hii kibeerah fiissin. ‘ana bawgaf halii halik.

حببي بي، ممكن تقوم وتفقد الوالدة؟ لأن هي كبيرة في السن. أنا باوقف حالك.

“Darling, would you mind giving up your seat for my mother? Because she is old. You and I will stand together.”

As can be observed from the data, the participants showed similar behaviour when they made requests to child strangers in both female-female and female-male interaction and this tendency shows that the impact of gender segregation is often more obvious in the interaction amongst adults.

Despite the tendency to employ most direct strategies in Arabic requests, the use of conventional indirect expressions is also a common strategy in the daily interaction amongst speakers of the spoken Saudi variety. The following discussion will analyse some of the linguistic strategies employed by the subjects of both age groups in the context of conventionally indirect requests.

4.3 The use of conventionally indirect strategies in a social context

Although it was found that it was generally characteristic to employ direct strategies in Arabic requests, there is several studies have found that the use of conventionally indirect strategies is widely employed in various contexts (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010b). As discussed, the use of conventionally indirect strategies is highly expected in situations when there is a difference in power status between the interlocutors i.e. when the hearer has higher power than the speaker or as a result of the impact of the distant relationship between the requester and the requestee.

In addition to their wide use in Arabic requests, the other reason for focusing on conventionally indirect strategies is that because this type of head act is a major category that, based on the CCSARP and according to Al-Fetlawi (2008), comprises utterances that are not employed for requests and rather have been conventionalized to convey such a speech act. The following discussion will focus on the most
significant features of the conventional indirect strategies and its sub-categories: request perspective, conventions of means and conventions of forms in Arabic requests.

4.3.1 Request perspective in a social context

It can be said that although the use of conventionally indirect strategies reflects negative politeness behaviour, the variation in request perspective in the use of such strategies can also reflect more about requesting behaviour within contexts. According to Marquez-Reiter (2000), although conventionally indirect strategies were the most frequent in both British English and Uruguayan Spanish, British speakers showed that they were more concerned than Spanish speakers in avoiding referring to the hearer in their requests. While the Uruguayan, on the other hand, tended to be less sensitive to intrusion into their privacy by showing a higher tendency in focusing on hearer-oriented perspective.

On the base of CCSARP, the variation in the request perspective in the use of conventional indirect strategies can be reflected in emphasizing the role of the speaker, the hearer, both interlocutors and neither interlocutor (Al-Momani, 2009). These perspectives are: speaker oriented, hearer oriented, inclusive oriented and impersonal oriented respectively. The following table illustrates the data of Arabic request perspective in a social context. The following table illustrates the data of request perspective of each age group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request perspective</th>
<th>YAG N</th>
<th>YAG %</th>
<th>OAG N</th>
<th>OAG %</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker oriented</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearer oriented</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As presented in Table 4.5, the subjects of both groups showed a high preference to employ hearer-oriented perspectives in their use of conventional indirect strategies with 76 per cent of their total use of request perspectives. The tendency of employing hearer-oriented perspectives in Arabic requests is because that Arabic is more oriented towards expressing solidarity and informality than emphasizing formality in such contexts (Abuarrah; Lochtman and Lutjerhams, 2013). The following expressions were taken from the data:
38. *baba Allah yijzak khair, binta’abik ma’an na bas Omar taalii wu essawaag moo feeh, ma’alaish twadinii mishwar?*

كابا الله يجزاك خير، بنتعبك معانا، بس عمر طالع والسواقة موفي. معليش توديني مشوار؟

“Dad, May Allah reward you immensely, we will add more to your burden, but Omar is outside and the driver is not here, would you mind giving me a lift?”


حبيبي، ممكن تقوم وتقعد الوالدة؟ لأن هي كبيرة في السن. أنا باوقف حالي حالك.

“Darling, would you mind giving up your seat for my mother? Because she is old. You and I will stand together.”

40. *law samahtii ‘endik khalfiah ’ann essoug? Te’rifeen mahal eshounat? law sa mahtii mumkin tidilleenii ’aliah?*

لو سمحتي عندك خلفية عن السوق؟ تعرفين محل الشنط؟ ممكن لو سمحتي تدليني عليه؟

“Excuse me, do you know this mall? Do you know where the purse shop is? Would you mind showing me where it is?”

In Example (38), the participant makes a request to her father, in Example (39) the speaker makes a request to an unknown child and in Example (39), another speaker asks a female stranger for directions. As can be noticed, the hearer-oriented perspective was employed in the expressions to show that the speakers, as mentioned, is focusing on showing familiarity and solidarity although all requests were employed as indirect strategies.

Notwithstanding the high preference for the hearer oriented perspective, the data also show that some participants employed other perspectives as in the following request:

41. *law samaht, mumkin asta’eer jawalik ’attasil?*

لو سمحت، ممكن استعير جوالك اتصال؟

“Excuse me, is it possible if I borrow your mobile to make a call?”

In Example (41), the speaker employs speaker-oriented perspective in her requests i.e. borrowing a mobile from male stranger. In addition to requesting an individual from the opposite gender, there is a large social distance between the speaker and the hearer. As a result, the speaker employs a speaker-oriented strategy, which means that she shows that she is more sensitive to intrusion to her privacy by avoiding focusing on the hearer (Abuarrah; Lochtman and Lutjerhams, 2013; Marquez-Reiter, 2000). Abuarrah et al. (2013) also believe that although the use of conventional indirect strategies are oriented towards negative politeness, the preference of using hearer-oriented strategies amongst Arabic native speakers reveals that the requester is more oriented toward showing solidarity and familiarity. The use
of the speaker-oriented perspective shows that the speaker tends to be more formal and prefers to address the negative face of the hearer since this perspective is less threatening speech act (Abuarrah et al., 2013).

### 4.3.2 Conventions of means and conventions of forms in a social context

According to Blum-Kulak et al. (1989), while conventions of means in English are the sentences that are usually employed as indirect requests, conventions of forms on the other hand specify the linguistic forms that are usually chosen to make the requestive expression. For instance, while the speaker initiates the requests by questioning the hearer’s permission i.e. the main convention of means in the expression: “Can I use your mobile?”, the choice of the linguistic form such as: “May I….” instead of “Can I….” is specified by conventions of forms (see Chapter Three for more details).

Coding of the data in the current study was based on the closest interpretation of the role play scenarios and on the base of requests’ context. The translation is based on the closest possible meanings of the terms and expressions that were used by the subjects such as mumkin? “is it possible?” and the expression hal fii ’emkaniah? “is there any possibility?”. Conventions of means in Arabic requests were classified as illustrated in Table 4.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conventions of means</th>
<th>YAG N</th>
<th>OAG N</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibility</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>209</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As found in Al-Momani (2009), the subjects of the current study tended to use possibility as the preferred convention of means. As the data show, 40 per cent of the total use of request expressions was employed as possibilities. Both permission and suggestion strategies were employed equally with 18 per cent. Nevertheless, Abuarrah et al. (2013) classified conventions of means into two categories: ability and permission.

Unlike the wide range of modals that are employed elaborately in the use of conventions of means and conventions of forms in English, in Arabic employing such strategies is restricted and mainly comprise the basic semi-formulaic terms such as: mumkin and ma’alish, ’aadii or ’agdar (Al-Momani, 2009).
Additionally, each term can be translated approximately “May I?,” “Can I?,” “Could I?,” “Will you?,” “Would you?,” or “Is it possible?” to express conventional indirectness (Al-Momani, 2009).

Classifying the conventions of means of the data of this study therefore, was based on the closest meaning to the whole context of the requests. Also, as a result of this problematic issue in translation, it was not possible to find the exact linguistic forms that stand for each strategy of convention of means, hence there is no statistical data for the conventions of forms in Arabic conventional indirect requests. However, the following examples can be interpreted to be the closest to the given conventions of means:

a. Ability: ‘can I? can you?’ اقدر؟ تدرين؟
b. Permission: ‘is it fine? Is it okay?’ عادي؟ معليش؟
c. Possibility: ‘is it possible? Is there a possibility? If possible?’ ممكن، فيه إمكانية، إذا ممكن؟
d. Willingness: ’if you do not mind, would you mind?’ إذا ماعندك مانع، تسمحين

In addition to directness strategies, the following section will focus on the use of both external (supportive moves) and internal modifiers in addition to the address forms and religious expressions that were employed by YAG and OAG subjects in their requests in the social context.

4.4 The use of supportive moves (external modifiers) in a social context

As mentioned in the previous chapter, supportive moves are the external strategies that are used before or after the head acts to mitigate the force of requests, or to establish solidarity between the interlocutors (Blum-Kulak et, al, 1989).
Table 4.7 The Use of Supportive Moves by Group in a Social Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supportive moves</th>
<th>YAG</th>
<th>OAG</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparator</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounder</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a pre-commitment</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disarmer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise of reward</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposition minimizer</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweetener</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small talk</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-introduction</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective appeal</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apology</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in Table 4.7, grounders (giving the reason for making the request), imposition minimizers (reducing the imposition placed by requests on the hearer), and preparators (prefacing the requests) were the most common strategies employed by the participants with percentages of 35, 21, 16 of the total respectively. Consider the following expression employed by one YAG subject:

42. *Mama, Allah yiaafeek*, *mihtajah sa’atik dharoury ‘ashaan ‘endii haflah.*

Mama, الله يعافيك، محتاجة ساعتك ضروري عشان عندي حفلة.

“Mum, may Allah keep you healthy, I need your watch urgently because I have a party (grounder).”

The speaker gives a reason for borrowing the watch (grounder) to soften the force of her requests.

In Arabic requests, the impact of social distance, power status and the degree of imposition usually affect the use of supportive moves amongst the interlocutors. Consider the following expressions:

43. *Yummah, tathkreen theek essa’ah elli sharianaha thak elyoum? ’abghaha.*

يمه تنكرين ذيك الساعة اللي شريناها ذاك اليوم؟ أبغاها.

“Mum, do you remember the watch that we bought? (preparator) I want it.”

7 Religious expressions were counted as internal modifiers since they function as linguistic down-graders that are used to mitigate the force of requests.
44. Masa elkhair, kaifik ya khalah? Mumkin nbaddil el’amaakin? Li’an widdii ’ajlis janb zoujii.

Good evening, how are you (oh) aunty? (small talk) Would you mind if we swapped our seats? Because I want to sit beside my husband (grounder)."

45. Baba, Allah yikhaleek, ’etha ‘ant fathii elyoum, twaddeenii lbiat sadeegtii ’alashaan elhaflah?

“Dad, may Allah keep you, if you are free today (preparator), would you mind giving me a lift to my friend’s house? Because (she has) a party (grounder).”

46. Ahmed, Allah yi’aafeek, ti waddinii?

“Ahmed, may Allah keep you healthy, would you mind giving me a lift?”

47. habeebi Hammody, ta’aal sheel el’akyas, wu rah ‘ateek hadiah minha.

“Hammody (nick name) darling, come pick up the bags and I’ll give a gift (reward).”

48. habeebi, ’adrii ‘inn ma’ak flous, wu ‘ana maa widdii ’akhallis-ha ’aliak bas baakhith shway, wu insha Allah ’araj’ah lik wu ’ant ’etabrah mowjood.

“darling, I know that you have some money (disarmer) and I don’t want to take all of it (imposition minimizer). I’ll just take a little and with Allah’s willing, I’ll give it back to you, so consider it with you from now (imposition minimizer).”

In Examples (43) and (44) requests were made by the same speaker and the only changing variable was the social distance. In Example (43), the speaker employed a relatively short expression that only includes one external modification (preparator) in the request to her mother, while in Example (44) she used a longer expression and employed more than one supportive move strategy in her request to an older female stranger. Firstly, she prefaced her requests with small talk i.e. a greeting and using in-group identity marker, then she ended her expression with a grounder i.e. explaining the reason for making the request.

As can be observed in Example (45) the impact of the hearer’s power status can be clear through the tendency of employing more than one supportive move in requests to the father. While in the request to her brother, the speaker did not employ any supportive moves as a result of assuming the (relatively) equal power status between her and the hearer as in Example (46). Both expressions were employed by one of the YAG subjects and the changed variable was the power status.
The impact of the imposition of the request is obvious from the last two expressions that were employed by one of the OAG subjects to the same hearer in both contexts (her son). In Example (47) she only used one supportive move (reward) while in Example (48) the speaker tended to employ more than one strategy (disarmer) and (imposition minimizer) to mitigate the force of the requests resulting from the high degree of imposition.

The total use of supportive moves by the two age groups, as illustrated in Table 4.7 reveals that YAG subjects showed a relatively greater preference to employ such strategies than OAG subjects. This tendency might be a result of the age difference between the two age groups which means that it is easier for older individuals to make requests without paying greater awareness to employing such strategies. In addition to the external modifiers (supportive moves), the next section will focus on the internal modifiers that were employed in the context of the current study.

4.5 The use of internal modifiers in a social context

Based on the CCSARP and as adapted by Al-Momani (2009), internal modifiers are the linguistic down-graders that are used to mitigate or, in some contexts, intensify the force of requests.

Table 4.8 The Use of Internal Modifiers by Group in a Social Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal modifications</th>
<th>YAG</th>
<th>OAG</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politeness marker</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Down</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Clause</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedding</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understater</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appealer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogative</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtoner/hedge</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultative Device</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-group Identity Marker</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Expressions</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>714</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a general trend in the Arabic context, the use of a wide range of internal modifiers was found in both age groups. As illustrated in Table 4.8, the participants of both age groups varied in their use of the internal
modifiers. However, the most common strategies were: politeness markers (38%) such as *mumkin* (is it possible?), *ma’alaish* (is it possible?) and *law samaht* (if you permit/allow) followed by interrogatives (30%) and religious expressions (15%) such as invocation and swearing.

The formulaic expression *ma’alaish* which functions as a politeness marker serves more than one purpose in Arabic requests (Al-Qahtani, 2010). The term was employed in the following examples by two of the participants:


Mama, معيش، محتاجة فلوس، أنا عندي ضائِة مالية، وأدري إنك ماراح تقصرن.

“Mum, (sorry), I need money. I have a financial issue and I am sure that you will not let me down.”

50. *ma’alaish ya mama asta’eer essa’ah elyoum?*

معليش ياماما استعير الساعة اليوم؟

“Is it okay mum if I borrowed your watch today?”

In Example 49 the term *ma’alaish* serves the function of apology, while in Example 50 the same term serves the function of asking for permission.

It also important to focus on other formulaic expressions that were employed by the subjects and are used in Saudi Arabic requests to serve the same purpose i.e. saving face through mitigating the force of the request in addition to showing solidarity or a higher degree of politeness to the hearer. These linguistic formulas such as *takfian* and *takfa* (please) and the expression *wa la ‘aliak ’amr*, (I am not ordering you). Consider the following expressions:


ماما تكفين إفزعي لي، أنا محتاجة 0555 ريال ولا أدري لمَين أروح.

“Mum please, help me, I need SR 5000 and I don’t know to whom I can to go.”

52. *Baba, ma’alaish wa la ‘aliak ‘amr, widdii ’atlb minnik talab, Allah yejzak khair, ma tigassir ‘ana mihtaajah 5000 riyal.*

بابا، معليش، ولا عليك أمر، ودي أطلب منك طلب، الله يجزاك خير ما تقصر، أنا محتاجة 0555 ريال.

“Dad, sorry I’m not ordering you. I would like to ask you something, may Allah reward you. You always help me. I need SR 5000.”

---

8 In Arabic, suffixes are usually added to distinguish the two genders and to distinguish the singular and plural forms.
In Example (51) the speaker is showing that she is aware that the hearer has a higher status through using the begging expression *takfian* (please), while in Example (52) the speaker employs the expression *wa la ‘aliak ‘amer* (I am not ordering you) for the same purpose in her request to her father.

Religious expressions were also employed by the subjects of the two age groups for the same purpose of softening the force of requests. Fifteen per cent of the total use of internal modifiers were employed as religious formulaic expressions and they will be explained with more detail in a following section. Another strategy usually employed in Arabic requests is the use of forms of address. The following analysis will discuss the use of address forms by both age groups.

### 4.6 The use of forms of address in a social context

Employing external and internal modifiers are not only the strategies that are used to mitigate the force of requests in Arabic. Address forms are also used by Arabic speakers to show a higher degree of politeness and intimacy or to express solidarity.

The following discussion will focus on forms of address employed by the participants in close social relationships (Figure 4.1), distant relationships i.e. addressing strangers (Figure 4.2) and when addressing children (Figure 4.3). The forms of address represent different levels of power status between the speaker and the hearer i.e. parents, siblings, husbands, children, older strangers, strangers of the same age and young female and male strangers.

As expected, the participants used forms of address differently in close and distant relationships. Each figure in the following section presents the data in both female-female and female-male interactions in the contexts of close and distant relationships. The address forms employed in interaction with children will be presented separately, since the impact of segregation is only obvious in the interaction with male strangers.

#### 4.6.1 The use of forms of address in a context of close relationship

This part of the discussion will focus on the data illustrated in Table 4.9 and Figure 4.1 and will focus on the terms that were employed by the two age groups in addressing members who have close relationships with the speakers; parents, siblings/husbands. As displayed in Figure 4.1, the participants showed relatively similar behaviour in their use of forms of address in female-female and female-male interaction in a context of close relationships. They employed 50 per cent of the total use of forms of address in each interaction. The data reveal that the highest percentages were for the use of kinship and family terms (30 per cent in female-female interaction and 27 per cent in female-male interaction). Fourteen per cent and 12 per cent of forms of address were also used as first names in female-female and female-male interaction respectively.
Table 4.9 *Forms of Address Used in Close Relationships*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of Address Used in Close Relationships</th>
<th>F-F N</th>
<th></th>
<th>F-M N</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First names</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship and family terms</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick names</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endearment terms</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tekonyms</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious expressions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politeness markers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (%)</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Forms of Address Used in Close Relationships**

![Chart showing forms of address](chart.png)

**Figure 4.1**

In addition to the percentages of the total use of each category of forms of address used by the subjects of the two age groups, the following section will discuss the use of terms employed to address relatives and members who have close relationships to the speakers in more detail.

**Addressing parents**

In their requests to parents, the participants employed various linguistic modifiers and showed a higher tendency to show intimacy and closeness to their mothers and a high degree of awareness in their use of politeness strategies in addressing their fathers. In addressing their mothers, the data show that the subjects used the forms *yummah*يمَهَ ‘mother’ and *‘ummii* ‘my mother’, in addition to the form *mama, ماما* ‘mammy’. While both forms *yummah* and *‘ummii* are used in spoken Saudi Arabic as
traditional forms, the form **mama** was used more frequently by the YAG subjects and is considered a more modern form of address. Additionally, the participants used the form **‘umaiti**’ (the nickname for **‘ummii’** ‘mother’) as a means of emphasizing the close relationship with the mother. As with directness strategies, addressing parents shows that the subjects tended more to show their close relationship to their mothers by using various endearment expressions. In requests to their mothers, for instance, some participants used politeness markers such as **law samahtii**, ‘if you permit’ while other participants employed endearment expressions such as: **habibti**, ‘my love/my sweetie’, **ya ba’ad eddinia** ‘oh, you are equal to the world’, **ya ba’ad galbi** ‘oh, my heart/darling’, **ya ‘oyounii** ‘oh, my eyes/darling’.

It is also important to mention that one of the common features in Arabic address system; the use of contracted terms of address with the vocative particle **ya** which stands for ‘oh’ in formal interaction such as **ya ‘ustathah** ‘oh teacher’ or such as **ya hilwaah** ‘hey sweetie’ in informal contexts. The vocative **ya** is mainly used in the Arabic addressing system to attract the hearer’s attention.

When addressing their fathers, the participants used the form **yubah**, ‘father’, the form **baba**, ‘dad/daddy’ and the form **‘ubouy**, ‘my father’. The traditional forms were represented by both **yubah** and **‘ubouy**, while the form **baba** is a more modern form in the spoken Saudi variety. Both traditional forms **yummah** ‘mother’ and **yubah** ‘father’ are used more frequently in Najdii Arabic, the spoken variety in the middle region of Saudi Arabia. In addressing fathers, modals such as **mumkin** ‘is it possible/please’ were also employed to show deference.

**Addressing siblings**

When addressing their sisters, the data showed that the participants employed reciprocal personal names, nicknames and formulaic endearment expressions both separately and in conjunction with the vocative particle as in:

53. **Mona, ya galbi** …

Mona, (oh) my heart (darling)…..

However, some OAG participants used the forms **wana ikhtis**, ‘and I am your sister’, **ikhtii** ‘my sister’ and both terms are used to define the addressee as a sister and as an instance of the very close relationship. Consider the following expression:

54. **E’sme’ii wuana ikhtis, ‘ana ‘endii ‘uazeemah wu sa’atis jayztin lii wu balbasha.**
“Listen and I’m your sister”, I have a party and I like your watch and I’m going to wear it.”

The data show that the subjects of both age groups used various strategies to address their brothers, the most frequent being reciprocal personal names. As with their sisters, the participants employed both nick names and endearment terms. Kinship terms e.g. ‘ukhouy ‘my brother’ were also used to address brothers for the same purpose i.e. showing intimacy to the hearer.

Addressing husbands

Since husbands represent persons who have both a close social distance and equal power status, the subjects employed relatively similar strategies as with their siblings: for example, reciprocal personal names, nick names and endearment terms.

However, some OAG subjects employed other strategies such as teknonyms (the use of the name of the first born son to address his parents): abu Abdulaziz ‘father of Abdul-Aziz’. Other terms such as 'ubouna ‘hey our father’ and abu el’eyaal ‘father of the kids’ were also used in addressing husbands as an informal expression that reflects the very close social relationship.

According to Abuamsha (2010), endearment terms amongst middle aged spouses are mainly used in private. Additionally, the use of teknonymous forms is usually one of the strategies to show deference and intimacy between the interlocutors, especially when they are in front of other people (Abuamsha, 2010). Additionally, the use of nicknames is one of the features that distinguishes addressing females and males in a context of close relationships.

For the same purpose of showing intimacy and playfulness nicknames that are usually derived from the personal names are used in the Arabic address system to interact with persons who are close in social distance and of the same age or younger than the speaker. Table 4.10 shows some of the nicknames that are usual in Saudi Arabic and reported in the data of the current study.

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9 The use this form i.e. adding the suffix –is to the end ikht-is is used in traditional Najdi dialect that is more common amongst older generations and relatively more common in urban areas.
Table 4.10 Some of the Common Nicknames in Saudi Arabic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Nickname</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah/Summaih/Samar</td>
<td>Soso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatemah</td>
<td>Fatoom/fofo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leena/Alaa</td>
<td>Lolo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadiyah</td>
<td>Haddo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghiadaa/Ghadah</td>
<td>Ghaddoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateefah</td>
<td>Lattoof</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following section will examine the address system and terms employed by the two age groups to address individuals in distant relationships.

4.6.2 The use of forms of address in distant relationships

In this section, the discussion will focus on the terms of address employed to interact with female and male strangers. The data represented in Table 4.11 and Figure 4.2 show that the participants displayed different behaviour when they addressed female and male strangers. While 66 per cent of the total use of forms of address were used to address females, only 34 per cent used to address males. As in the requests to male strangers, the impact of gender segregation can also be obvious in the use of forms of address in female-male interaction in a context of distant relationships. The data also show that 31 per cent of forms of address in female-female were used as politeness markers in addition to 24 per cent were used as kinship and family terms. In female-male interaction, the participants also preferred politeness markers and kinship and family terms with percentages of 16 and 14 respectively.
The following section will present more detail about the use of terms and expressions to address female and male strangers.

**Addressing older strangers**

As can be observed from the data, most terms employed to address older strangers are either kinship terms like *khalah*، خالة (maternal aunt) to address an older female or *‘ammii, ‘amm* عم، عم (my paternal uncle, paternal uncle), *khal* خال (uncle, maternal uncle). The term *‘ummii* أمي (my mum) also appeared in the data to address an older lady. This use of kinship terms to address unknown individuals is very common in Arabic (Abuamsha, 2010; Al-Qahtani, 2009). Age is also significant when making requests to older strangers. Thus, the use of such terms by juniors to address elderly people is to show deference,
express solidarity and to soften the harshness of requests to the seniors in the given situation (Abuamsha, 2010; Al-Qahtani, 2009).

As shown, some subjects employed kinship terms with the first person possessive pronoun. This tendency shows that the speaker is emphasizing showing intimacy and minimizing the social distance by showing that both interlocutors metaphorically belong to the same social group (Abuamsha, 2010; Al-Qahtani, 2009). Compare the following expressions that were employed by two of the participants:

55. **Law samaht ya’amm, mumkin nitbadal el’amakin? li’an biddii?’ ajlis janb zoujii.**

Lo smahht ya’amm, mمكن نتبادل الأمكان؟ لأن بدي أجلس جنب زوجي.

“Excuse me (oh) uncle, would you mind if we swapped seats? Because I want to sit down beside my husband.”

56. **ma’alaish ya ‘ammii, ‘etha tigdar wu tismah fii makani ‘ashaan ’ajlis janb zoujii.**

معلش ياعمئ إذا تُدر وتسمح تجلس في مكاني عشان أجلس جنب زوجي.

“Excuse me (oh) my uncle, if you can and if you don’t mind to sit down on my seat, so I can sit down beside my husband.”

According to Al-Qahtani (2009), the use of in-group forms to indicate family membership by Saudi females in conventional indirect contexts shows that the speaker considers their elderly person like a person in her family. This means as claimed by Al-Qahtani (2009), that the speaker is trying to establish a would-be family tie to clear any misunderstanding in the interaction especially in requests made to male strangers.

Additionally, the use of such terms to address elderly people results from Islamic instruction in Saudi culture that encourages people to show deference and to treat elderly people with mercy and kindness as follows:

Imam Ahmad, Al-Hakim and Al-Tabarani reported that ‘Ubada bin Al-Samit stated that the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

“Whoever does not respect our elders is not one of us.”

“من لم يوقر كبيرنا ويرحم صغيرنا، فليس منا”

Other strategies employed in requests to older strangers include: the use of verbs of address: **law samahtii, law samaht** (if you permit) as a polite method to show deference and awareness of the large social distance between the interlocutors. When addressing an unfamiliar person, it is very common in Arabic to use verbs as a convenient way especially when the speaker is not sure how to address the

---

10 The expression *biddii* (I want) is commonly used in Hijazi variety (the one that is used in the western area of the Arabain Peninsula).
hearer (Abuamsha, 2010). One of the main reasons, as stated in Abuamsha (2010), is that because Arabic is a language where the use of subject pronoun is not compulsory and thus the verb can be the only deliverer of the interlocutor reference. For example, while the verbs: *law samahtti* and (if you permit) *law takarramntii* (if you become generous) refer to the subject (the hearer) as a singular female, the use of the same verbs with a different suffix change the reference to a singular male as in *law samaht* and *law takarrmt*.

The data reveal that in addressing older female strangers, the participants used a wider range of strategies. Greetings, for instance, were amongst the strategies most employed


مساء الخير، كيفك يا خالة؟ يمكن نبدل الْماكن؟ لأن ودي أجلس بجنب زوجي.

“Good evening, how are you (oh) aunty? Would you mind if we swapped our seats? Because I want to sit down beside my husband.”

The speaker in Example (57) used a greeting to open the conversation and a kinship term to establish solidarity, to minimize the social distance and to show deference before making the request to the older lady. Furthermore the use of politeness markers such as *mumkin, ma’alish* (is it possible, okay) is another strategy that is usually employed to open conversations and address unknown persons in the Arabic context.

**Addressing strangers of the same age**

Speakers with a distant relationship employed various strategies to address both female and male strangers. As discussed, the use of kinship terms is common to address both known and unknown individuals. While the subjects used kinship terms usually used to address elderly people, they used terms such as *ukhtii* and *ukuhii* (my sister, my brother) to address individuals of the same age.

Although the frequency of using a first person possessive pronoun when addressing strangers of the same age was higher in addressing female strangers, some of the participants also employed it when addressing male strangers. Consider the following expressions:

58. *Law samahtii ‘ukhtii, ta’arfeen wain mahal ‘eshoonat ellii bissoog hatha?*

لو سمحتي أختي تعرفين وين محل الْشَنط اللي بالسوق هذا؟

“Excuse me my sister, do you know where the purse shop in this mall is?”


لو سمحت أخوي، ممكن استخدم جهازك؟ لأنني مضطرة أكلم وما عندي جوال.

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“Excuse me my brother, can I use your mobile? Because I have to make a call and I don’t have a mobile.”

Nevertheless, kinship terms were not the only strategies employed in addressing strangers. The subjects used a wide range of politeness markers, address verbs, greetings and religious expressions to start their conversations with the strangers. Consider the following example:

60. Alla yi’teek el’aafiah, ‘ana naasiah jawalii, ma’alaish ‘attasil rannah min ’endik ’ow ’arsil SMS ’alaashan ’akhallii zoujii yejeenii?

الله يعطيك العافية، أنا ناسية جوالي، معليش اتصال رنة من عندك أو أرسل SMS علشان أخلي زوجي يجيني؟

“May Allah give you health. I forgot my mobile. Can I (use your mobile) just for one ring or send an SMS to my husband to ask him to come?”

In addition, the data show that while some of the subjects employed endearment terms, they avoided employing such terms when addressing male strangers of the same age. This is evidence of the significant impact of gender segregation in Saudi society. Compare the following expressions:

61. ma’alaish habibtii, ‘ana nseet jawali bilbiat, mumkin asta’eer jawalik ‘attasil?

معليش حبيبتي أنا نسيت جوالي بالبيت، ممكن استعير جوالك اتصال؟

“Excuse me darling, I forgot my mobile. Can I borrow your mobile to make a call?”

62. Law samaht, mumkin asta’eer jawalik ‘attasil?

لو سمحت، ممكن استعير جوالك اتصال؟

“Excuse me, can I borrow your mobile to make a call?”

Both expressions were employed by one subject. However, in Example (61) the speaker uses an endearment term (darling) to express solidarity with the hearer (female stranger of the same age), while in Example (62) the speaker mitigates her requests to the male stranger by using politeness markers.

In sum, many participants showed different preferences in their use of the address forms in distant relationships. As shown in Figure 4.2, 66 per cent of the address forms were employed in female-female interaction, while only 34 per cent were employed to address male strangers in female-male interaction, evidence of the impact of gender segregation.

The following discussion will present the data of the address forms employed by both age groups when interacting with children (both relatives and strangers).
Addressing children

Since the subjects of the two age groups showed a similar behaviour in the use of the forms of address with children in both female-female and female-male interactions, the data were analysed in one part and represented in Table 4.12 and Figure 4.3.

Table 4.12 *Forms Used to Address Children*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F-F</th>
<th>F-M</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First names</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship and family terms</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick names</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endearment terms</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teknonymes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious expressions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politeness markers</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data show that the subjects employed relatively similar terms. While some of the participants employed the first personal name to address younger siblings or children (9 per cent to address females and 6 per cent to address males) other subjects used nicknames (5% to 7%) when addressing females and
males respectively. Endearment terms were used far more frequently and mostly the term: *habibti* and *habibi* (sweetie, darling) to address female and male children respectively, by subjects of both age groups.

The participants also used the reverse kinship terms *mama, ummi* ‘my mother’ and *baba, ‘ubuy* ‘my father’ to address their daughters or sons respectively. The term *bannuti* (the smaller form of *binti*) i.e. my daughter was also used by one of the OAG subjects.

To address unknown children, endearment terms ‘darling, sweetie/love’ used by the subjects of both age groups. Some of the OAG subjects employed kinship terms i.e. *mama* ‘mum’ and *binti* ‘my daughter’ to address child females, *baba* ‘dad’ and *ibni, wulaidi* (the smaller form *wulidi*) i.e. my son. The term *ibni* (commonly used in Hijazy Arabic) and the term *wulaidi*, (more common in Najdii Arabic), were also employed by the subjects of the OAG. However, the modern terms *mama* and *baba* were used more frequently amongst the YAG subjects.

The use of kinship, endearment and other strategies such as religious expressions in addressing unknown children also shows that the speaker is bent on showing intimacy and kindness to minimize the distance of the relationship with the hearer.

As shown from the data in Figure 4.3, the forms of address used similarly by the two age groups in addressing girls and boys (50% in each interaction). This tendency shows that when addressing children, showing sympathy, intimacy and kindness are the significant features of the Arabic address system. This behaviour can also be seen through the use of a wide range of endearment and compliment terms that are usually employed to address girls and boys such as *ya battal* ‘hey hero’ and *ya shatir* ‘hey good boy’ to address an unknown boy or *ya hilwaah* ‘hey sweetie’ and *ya shatrah* ‘hey good girl’ to address an unknown girl.

The behaviour of politeness and making requests in Arabic includes other strategies in addition to the use of address forms. Amongst the significant linguistic features is the use of religious expressions. The data in the following discussion will present the use of religious expressions by both YAG and OAG subjects in a social context.

**4.7 The use of religious expressions in a social context**

According to several studies on politeness in Arabic, religious expressions are used frequently to serve various purposes (Al Ageel, 2010; Abduljawad, 2000; Al-Qahtani, 2009). They are used as a major function of positive politeness and to express gratefulness, solidarity or deference (Abduljawad, 2000). Furthermore, in Saudi Arabic, religious expressions that are considered as in-group language are usually
used to indicate that both interlocutors belong to the same religious group of Muslims\textsuperscript{11} (Al-Qahtani, 2009).

### Table 4.13 The Use of Religious Expressions by Group in a Social Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Expressions</th>
<th>YAG</th>
<th>OAG</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invocation</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulaic expression</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeting</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swearing by God/Allah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.13, Islamic expressions were used by both YAG and OAG subjects in their requests either as invocations such as *Allah yirda 'aliak*, الله يرضى عليك, “May Allah be pleased with you” or *Allah yi’aafeek*, الله يعاافيك, ‘May Allah keep you healthy’ (70%) or as formulaic expressions such as *inshallah*, إن شاء الله, “with Allah willing” and *bi’ethnillah*, بالله بإذن الله “with Allah’s permission” (17%). Additionally, the religious expressions were employed to greet someone in other contexts such as the formulaic Islamic greeting *assalamu ‘aliakum*, السلام عليكم, “Peace be upon you” (7%). Other religious expressions were also used by the subjects such as *wallah\textsuperscript{12}*, والله, “Swear by God/Allah” (6%).

As can be seen from the data, the highest use of religious expressions was invocations. The main reason for this is that this study focuses on requests which are considered face threatening acts. Arabic speakers, therefore, tend to employ invocation as one of the most convenient means to address the positive face of the hearer, to mitigate the harshness of the request and to show that both the requester and the requestee belong to an Islamic background. Furthermore, invocation is an appreciated behaviour by Muslims because it is widely believed that a Muslim can gain good deeds when other Muslim/s, make *dua*, (invocation) for her/him. The following is a translation of one of the Prophet Muhammad’s sayings that narrated in *Sahih Muslim\textsuperscript{13}*:  

“The dua of a Muslim for his brother (in Islam) in his absence is readily accepted. An angel is appointed to his side. Whenever he makes a beneficial dua for his brother the appointed angel says, ‘Aameen. And may you also be blessed with the same.”

\textsuperscript{11} The data include requests from speakers who belong to both Sunna and Shi’ah groups.

\textsuperscript{12} Swear by God/Allah in Arabic has different meanings such as giving credibility and truthfulness to the given context as in English. It sometimes means promising or emphasizing on something and when it comes as a question the expression *wallah?* Means “really?”

\textsuperscript{13} *Sahih Muslim* is one of the six major books of hadith that is considered by Sunni Muslims as the second book after *Sahih al-Bukhari*. 

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The religious formulaic expressions *inshallah* and *bi’thinillah* employed by the subjects also function as an in-group linguistic form and show that Saudi speakers as Muslims give authority to Allah as the only controller of one’s destiny. Consider the following Qur’anic text in Surat Al-Kahf, 23; 24:

“Nor say of anything, I shall be sure to do so and so tomorrow”- Without adding, “So please Allah!” and call thy Lord to mind when thou forgettest, and say, “I hope that my Lord will guide me ever closer (even) than this to the right road.”

The following example was taken from the data of the OAG:

63. *habeebii, ’addrii ‘inn ma’ak flous, wu ‘ana maa widdii ’aliak bas baakhith shway, wu ‘insha Allah ’araj’ah lik wu ’ant ’etabrah nowjood.*

حبيبي، أدري إن معك فلوس، وأنا ماودي أخلصها عليك بس بأخذ شوي إن شاء الله أرجعه لك وأنت أعتبره موجود.

“darling, I know that you have some money and I don’t want to take all of it. I’ll just take a little and with Allah’s willing, I’ll give it back to you, so consider it with you from now.”

Additionally, the term *wallah*, has various purposes in spoken Saudi Arabic. As stated in Al-Qahtani (2009), for instance, swearing in an offering context serves the function of saving the offerer’s face by showing her/his serious intention, meaning that the offeree should accept the offered item or service, otherwise the offerer would be offended.

However, in the context of this study the swear by God (wallah) was employed to mitigate the force of the request and to save the requester’s face by emphasizing the hard situation of the requester as in the following expression that was employed by one of the YAG subjects:

64. *law samahtii, ma’alaish ‘ana wallah nseet jawaly wu widdii ’attasil ’ala ’ahlii.*

لو سمحتي، معليش أنا والله نسيت جوالي وودي اتصل على أهلي.

“Excuse me, I am sorry, swear by Allah, I forgot my mobile and I would like to call my family.”

The following section will provide a more detailed discussion on the statistical analysis of the data across the two age groups.

4.8 Statistical analysis for the data of requests in a social context

This study aimed to investigate politeness behaviour and the practices of requests across two age groups of Saudi females. In addition, it examines the impact of the social variable of power status, social distance and the degree of imposition in the context of Saudi Arabic requests. For this reason, more than one test was applied as will be discussed later in this section.
4.8.1 Directness in a social context

According to Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), across several languages speakers usually employ directness at three levels. As discussed previously these levels are most direct, conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect in addition to their sub-categories. Since this study aims to investigate the similarities and differences in practising the speech act of requests across two different generations of Saudi females, the first procedure in the statistical analysis was to apply a T-test as shown in Table 4.14 to find out whether there was any significant difference in directness level across the two age groups.

Table 4.14 Similarities and Differences between the Two Age Groups on Directness Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of directness</th>
<th>YAG</th>
<th>OAG</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most direct</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventionally indirect</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-conventionally indirect</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opting out</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.14 there is a greater tendency amongst the participants of both age groups to employ most direct strategies. It also indicates that there is no significant difference between the two age groups (p > .05). In fact, the great similarity in the general behaviour of the two age groups in employing such strategies results from the fact that Arabic language has a tendency toward positive politeness and therefore directness (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Al-Qahtani, 2009; Mohammadi and Tamimi, 2013). Although conventionally indirect strategies were not the most dominant in the context of the current study, the data shows that they were used by the participants of the two age groups. According to Reiter (2000), the use of conventionally indirect strategies shows that the speaker tends to balance clarity and to avoid the force of the given speech acts, thus ensuring that the correct message will be interpreted with the right impact.

The following discussion will focus on the impact of social variables on the total use of request strategies in a social context.
4.8.1.1 The impact of social variables on directness

To examine the impact of social variables on directness in the requests, ANOVA test was applied as shown in Table 4.15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of directness</th>
<th>Social distance</th>
<th>Power status</th>
<th>Degree of imposition</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most direct</td>
<td>.000***</td>
<td>.326</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventionally indirect</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.434</td>
<td>.728</td>
<td>.459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-conventionally indirect</td>
<td>.018*</td>
<td>.397</td>
<td>.544</td>
<td>.941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opting out</td>
<td>.006**</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.847</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* the mean difference is significant at level: 0.05, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01, ***the mean difference is significant at level: 0.001

While there is an obvious impact of social distance on the level of directness, the ANOVA test did not show any significant impact for the data of the other variables (p > .05). The data support the view of Al-Qahtani (2009), Holmes (1995) and Brown and Levinson (1987) about the strong relationship between social distance and females' politeness behavior: the tendency to show more politeness and to employ negative strategies increases when addressing unfamiliar individuals regardless of the differences in power hierarchy or the degree of imposition of the speech act.

As Table 4.15 indicates, the impact of power status on directness level is insignificant. While the results of the current study contradict the view of Holmes (1995) and Brown and Levinson (1987) in relation to English, they support the findings of Al-Qahtani (2009) on Saudi Arabic offers. According to Al-Qahtani (2009) and Mills (2003), power status is one of the most difficult variables in the analysis of female linguistic behaviour. Although the statistical analysis did not show any significant relationship between power status and the use of general strategies of directness, the impact of power status can be shown in various ways. For instance, the use of the sub-strategies of most direct requests in the Arabic requests varies according to the differences in power status. As discussed in section 4.1.2.5, although both want statements and imperatives are direct strategies, the use of imperatives might be interpreted as impolite behaviour if the hearer is higher in power status than the speaker. This tendency is also shown in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 that reveal that the highest percentages for using imperatives were in requests to children who are lower in power status than the speakers.
Moreover, the data did not reveal any significant difference in the impact of the degree of imposition on the use of the general strategies of directness. However, similarly to the impact of power status the impact of the degree of imposition affects the use of the sub-strategies of most direct requests. Hence, there was a need to examine the impact of power status and the degree of imposition on the use of the sub-strategies of most direct requests. ANOVA test was applied (Table 4.16).

**Table 4.16 ANOVA Test for the Impact of Power Status and Degree of Imposition on Most Direct Sub-Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Direct sub-strategies</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
<th>Power status</th>
<th>Degree of imposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mood Derivable</td>
<td>.008**</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Question</td>
<td>.052*</td>
<td>.001***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-decided Statement</td>
<td>.785</td>
<td>.027*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want statement</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*the mean difference is significant at level: 0.05, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01, ***the mean difference is significant at level: 0.001

As indicated, power status significantly affects the use of mood derivable i.e. imperatives and direct question strategies (p<0.05). Additionally, the use of both direct question and pre-decided statements is significantly affected by the degree of imposition (p<0.05). That means while requests in a direct way is considered as conventionally accepted behaviour in Saudi Arabic (Al-Qahtani, 2009), the impact of social variables can be shown by the various use of the sub-categories.

Although the data did not show any significant differences for the impact of the gender of the hearer on directness, the differences can be shown in other ways such as the use of the linguistic strategies that include employing both external and internal modifiers or the choose of the forms of address. For instance, as discussed in section 4.6.2, all subjects avoided using endearment terms such as dear, sweetie and darling when they made requests to male strangers. In addition, the statistical analysis in the current section was only for the impact of social variables on the total use of request strategies in all scenarios and did not include the individual differences across the twelve situations. Thus, it is important now examine the individual behaviour of each age group to provide a detailed analysis for the impact of the social variables and for the similarities and the differences across the two generations.
4.8.2 Similarities and differences between and within the two age groups in requests across the twelve situations

This section focuses on the inter- and intra-group similarities and differences and it provides additional statistical analysis for the impact of the social variables on politeness behaviour across the twelve situations that were included in the role play scenarios.

4.8.2.1 Inter-group similarities and differences

In addition to examining the general preference of the two age groups for request strategies, it is important to examine the inter-group similarities and differences. For this purpose, a t-test was applied to investigate the behaviour of both age groups across the twelve situations. The results are shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17 T-Test for Inter-group Similarities and Differences across the Levels of Social Distance and Degree of Imposition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests in close relationships</th>
<th>Requests in distant relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Elderly strangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings/Husbands</td>
<td>Same age strangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child relatives</td>
<td>Unknown children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>DI+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>DI+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>DI+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>DI+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.479</td>
<td>.029*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.629</td>
<td>.430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.658</td>
<td>.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.633</td>
<td>.047*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DI-=low degree of imposition, DI+=high degree of imposition, * the mean difference is significant at level: 0.05, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01, ***the mean difference is significant at level: 0.001

There are similarities in the behaviour of the two age groups in their requests in close relationships (p>0.05). However, the analysis shows that there are significant differences between the two age groups in their requests across three situations in distant relationships (p<0.05). The first situation is requests to elderly strangers in the two degrees of request imposition: swapping seats with and elderly stranger (DI-) and informing an elderly stranger that she/he is sitting in the speaker’s seat (on the plane) (DI+). The main reason for the significant differences was, as discussed in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, because the participants of the OAG showed more preference towards opting out strategies instead of making requests to elderly individuals. The analysis also shows another significant difference between the two age groups in their requests to unknown children due to a difference in the preference of politeness strategies between the two groups. For instance, the majority of the informants of YAG showed a greater tendency to use conventionally indirect strategies, whereas the informants of OAG used more varied strategies with more preference for opting out of asking an unknown child to give up her/his seat for the speaker’s sick mother in a hospital waiting area.

The following section will discuss the intra-group significant differences in accordance to request behaviour across the twelve situations.
4.8.2.2 Intra-group similarities and differences

To examine how speakers change their preferences of request strategies from one situation to another and to find the similarities and differences within each age group, a Paired-sample T-test was applied (Table 4.18).

**Table 4.18 Paired-Sample T-Test for Intra-Group Similarities and Differences across the Levels of Social Distance and Degree of Imposition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P-Value YAG</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.002*</td>
<td>.000***</td>
<td>.151</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Value OAG</td>
<td>.322</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>.012*</td>
<td>.000***</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DI-=low degree of imposition, DI+=high degree of imposition, YAG=younger age group, OAG=older age group, * the mean difference is significant at level: 0.05, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01, ***the mean difference is significant at level: 0.001

Table 4.16 shows that there are significant differences in the individual behaviour of the participants in a number of request situations. For instance, the intra-group data is significant amongst the YAG subjects in making requests to children related to them (p < 0.05): the younger age subjects changed their strategies across the two situations according to the degree of imposition. In their requests for help with carrying some items, they mainly used direct requests i.e. imperatives, because the degree of imposition in this context is low. However, when they asked a child in a close relationship for a loan, they employed more negative politeness strategies to mitigate the force of the request.

The differences in request behaviour amongst the younger subjects are also significant in their requests to elderly strangers. Although the participants avoided direct strategies and instead tended to employ negative politeness strategies as a result of the distant relationship between the interlocutors, they showed more preference for opting out of making requests to an elderly stranger sitting in a wrong seat as a result of the high degree of imposition. The differences in the requests amongst YAG subjects are significant when they made requests to unknown children (p < 0.05). While the majority of YAG informants used direct requests to ask an unknown child for information, they showed a greater tendency to employ negative politeness strategies such as conventionally indirect requests when they asked an unknown child to give up her/his seat for the speaker’s sick mother in a hospital waiting area.

For the older subjects the intra-group differences are insignificant in the requests in close relationships; however, they showed changes in their behaviour when they made requests in distant relationships (p < 0.05). Similarly to the younger ones, the older subjects used different strategies in making requests to elderly strangers in accordance to the degree of imposition. Additionally, in requests to strangers of the
same age, the differences amongst the older subjects are also significant. In asking a stranger for information the majority made their requests by using both direct and indirect strategies, while requesting to borrow a stranger’s mobile the impact of the high degree of imposition led most speakers to employ negative politeness or opting out strategies. The older subjects showed similar behaviour to the younger ones when they made requests to unknown children. The differences are significant in their requests to an unknown child in the two levels of request imposition (P < 0.05).

The following section will discuss the impact of power status and the gender of the hearer on the general request behaviour amongst the participants across the twelve situations.

4.8.2.3 The impact of the social variables across the twelve situations
To examine the impact of the social variables across the twelve situations, a paired sample T-test was applied and the data are shown in Tables 4.19 and 4.20 respectively.

Table 4.19 Paired-sample T-Test for the Impact of Power Status across the Twelve Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair-Situation</th>
<th>CSD</th>
<th>DSD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td>P-Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests in a low degree of imposition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S&lt;H), (S=H)</td>
<td>.048*</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S&lt;H), (S&gt;H)</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S=H), (S&gt;H)</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests in a high degree of imposition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S&lt;H), (S=H)</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S&lt;H), (S&gt;H)</td>
<td>.239</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S=H), (S&gt;H)</td>
<td>.287</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CSD=close social distance, DSD=distant social distance, * the mean difference is significant at level: 0.05, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01, ***the mean difference is significant at level: 0.001

In close relationships, the data show that there is a significant impact of power status only in requests in contexts of low degree of imposition (p>0.5). Consider the following examples:

65. *ma’alaish* ya mama asta’eer essa’ah elyoum?

mitilish yamaama asta’ir elsaatata alyoum?

“Is it okay (politeness marker) (oh) mum if I borrowed your watch today?”


تَرَى أَخْذتِ سَاعَتِكَ.
“Just letting you know, I took your watch.”

In Example (62) the speaker addresses her mother while in Example (63) the speaker addresses her sister. Although the requests in both examples are for borrowing a watch (CSD, DI-), it can be obvious that the speaker is more aware of the power status of her mother by using negative politeness strategies i.e. conventional indirect in addition to employing internal modifiers (politeness marker and interrogative). In Example (63), the speaker addresses the hearer’s positive face by employing a pre-decided statement.

The impact of power status is insignificant, however, in contexts of high degree of imposition (p>0.05). According to Al-Qahtani (2009), the closeness in social distance diminishes when the degree of impositions becomes higher. Similarly, the impact of power status diminishes in this context as a result of the high degree of imposition. The following requests were taken from the data and both were made by the same speaker who has power over the hearer:

67. habeebii Hammody, ta’aal sheel el’akyas, wu rah ‘ateek hadiah minha.

حبيبي حمودي تعال شي الْكياس، وراح أعطيك هدية منها.

“Hammody (nick name) darling, come pick up the bags and I’ll give a gift (reward).”

68. habeebii, 'addrii 'inn ma'ak flous, wu ‘ana maa widdii 'akhallis-ha 'aliak bas baakhith shway, wu ‘insha Allah 'araj’ah lik wu 'ant 'etabrah mowjood.

حبيبي، أدري إن معك فلوس، وأنا ماودي أخلصها عليك بس بأخذ شوي, إن شاء الله أرجعه لك وتنت اعتبره موجود.

“darling, I know that you have some money and I don’t want to take all of it. I’ll just take a little and with Allah’s willing, I’ll give it back to you, so consider it with you from now.”

In Example (67) due to the low degree of imposition, the speaker addresses the positive face of the hearer (her son) by using imperatives while in Example (68) the same speaker employs negative politeness strategies and using various modifiers to soften the force of the requests as a result of the impact of the high degree of imposition. This behaviour shows that when the degree of imposition went higher, more negative politeness strategies were employed.

In distant relationships the impact of power status yielded significant differences at both levels of the degree of imposition. That means when making requests to unfamiliar persons in contexts of a high level of kulfah (formality), the informants became more aware of the differences in power level between them and the hearers regardless of the degree of the imposition in the given contexts. This also can be shown by the tendency towards using most direct strategies by the informants with unfamiliar hearers who have equal or lower status (see Table 4.3 and Table 4.4).
Since the impact of the degree of imposition has been discussed in different parts of this section, the following discussion will focus on the effect of gender across the twelve situations. To investigate the impact of gender, a T-test was applied (Table 4.20).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Siblings/Husbands</th>
<th>Child relatives</th>
<th>Elderly strangers</th>
<th>Same age strangers</th>
<th>Unknown children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P-Value</strong></td>
<td>.000***</td>
<td>.439</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.300</td>
<td>.629</td>
<td>.633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DI</strong></td>
<td><strong>DI+</strong></td>
<td><strong>DI-</strong></td>
<td><strong>DI+</strong></td>
<td><strong>DI-</strong></td>
<td><strong>DI+</strong></td>
<td><strong>DI-</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DI</strong></td>
<td><strong>DI+</strong></td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.001**</td>
<td>.010*</td>
<td>.001**</td>
<td>.793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DI</strong></td>
<td><strong>DI+</strong></td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>.001**</td>
<td>.010*</td>
<td>.001**</td>
<td>.694</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DI=low degree of imposition, DI+=high degree of imposition, * the mean difference is significant at level: 0.05, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01

As indicated, the impact of gender is manifested in the requests to parents (p>0.5). As discussed in section 4.1.2.3, while the factor of mayanah (intimacy and informality) was more obvious in the requests to the mothers, the factor of kulfah (formality), on the other hand, was more obvious in the requests to the fathers. In fact, this behaviour is an instance of the dominant role of males in the hierarchy of Saudi society.

In the requests to unfamiliar individuals the impact of gender is significant in most situations (p<0.5). The informants showed different behaviour when they made requests to elderly strangers in both contexts of low and high degree of imposition. The first situation was asking an elderly stranger to swap her/his seat (DSD, DI-) and the second situation was asking an elderly person sitting by mistake to give up the seat (DSD, DI+). The impact of gender was insignificant in the requests to strangers of the same age (requests for information in a shopping mall) (p>0.5). However, the impact of gender was obvious in a context of high degree of imposition (borrowing someone’s mobile in a shopping mall) (p<0.5). The impact of gender segregations was significant when the participants were asked to make requests to elderly strangers because they were required to perform the scenarios while they were accompanied with one of their male relatives (see sections 4.2.2.1 and 4.2.2.2).

4.9 Summary

This chapter investigated the main features of politeness behaviour and spoken requests comparing two age groups of Saudi women in a social setting. The part of the analysis of the data in this chapter was for Arabic requests and politeness strategies. As found by several studies on Arabic requests, the findings of this study showed that Saudi Arabic requests have a general tendency towards direct strategies (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, b; Al-Momani, 2009; Atawneh, 1991). This means that the use of direct strategies is an expected behaviour in an Arabic context. However, showing a higher level of politeness with the use of direct strategies can be by employing various linguistic
expressions such as religious and politeness formulas. On the other hand, the use of conventional indirect strategies also reflects a higher level of politeness in the Arabic context.

The chapter has also provided a socio-pragmatic analysis for the elicited data in relation to the similarities and differences in practicing requests across the two generations. One of the aims of this study was to investigate the linguistic features of spoken Arabic requests amongst Saudi women in a social context. To achieve this aim, the study also aimed to investigate the impact of the social variables of age, power status, social distance, the degree of imposition and gender in each request’s context. Furthermore, the study aimed to examine the impact of the Arabic address system and the religious values on the practices of politeness.

The collected data was based on role play scenarios of requests to female and male hearers in close and distant relationships and each pair of scenarios included two degrees of imposition (DI-, DI+). Based on the role play scenarios, the first part focused on requests to female hearers in three levels of power status (S<H), (S=H) and (S>H) in contexts of close and distant relationships, while the second part of the discussion focused on requests to males in the same contexts. The main purpose was to find the differences and the similarities in the request behaviour that might be resulted from the impact of social variables.

The data showed that there was an obvious impact of social variables on the request behaviour of both age groups in each pair of scenarios. While they tended more to employ most direct strategies in contexts of close relationships as a way of showing intimacy and solidarity, they preferred, on the other hand, to employ face saving strategies in their requests to hearers more distantly related. The preference for using indirect strategies in requests to males even in close relationships highlighted the impact of power status and the dominant role of males in Saudi social life. In addition, the use of the most direct sub-strategies also varied in accordance with the differences between the speaker and the hearer. Imperatives, for instance, are usually used when the speaker is equal or has a higher status than the hearer, otherwise employing imperatives might be unacceptable behaviour.

The findings also show the role of the factors of mayanah and kulfah. In relation to the concept of face, the factor of mayanah is more related to positive politeness in which the speaker tends to employ most direct strategies as a result of the close relationship with the hearer. However, the factor of kulfah can be obvious when the speaker employs indirect strategies and addresses the negative face of the hearer and this tendency results from the distant relationship between the interlocutors.

The results revealed the impact of gender segregation as one of the significant cultural values that distinguish Saudi society. This impact was clear on the request behaviour when the participants showed a strong preference to avoid requests to the elderly and same age male strangers, while when they were
asked to make requests to children they showed similar behaviour when they interacted with boys and girls in distant relationships.

As discussed previously, since conventional indirect strategies are classified as negative politeness strategies and subject to more cultural dimensions and social values than other request strategies, there was more analysis for its sub-categories. The conventional indirect sub-categories are: request perspective and conventions of means. The data showed that the participants preferred using the strategies of hearer-perspective and this tendency reveals that the speaker shows a greater tendency towards positive politeness by using such strategies that function to create solidarity between the interlocutors. Additionally, the results showed that the most frequent strategy amongst the conventions of means were employed as possibility strategies.

Request and politeness strategies included other strategies known as external and internal modifications and the data showed that the participants of each age group used variations of both external and internal modifications for the purposes of saving face and softening the force of requests, since the speech act of requests is considered one of the face threatening acts within politeness theory. While grounders and imposition minimizers were the most external modifications employed by the participants, the data show that the most internal modifications were employed as politeness markers and interrogatives. The use of religious expressions when making requests also serves various functions in the spoken Saudi variety such as showing that both interlocutors belong to the same religious and social group.

In addition to request strategies, the data showed some interesting findings in relation to the use of the Arabic address system. In addressing parents, the younger age group used modern forms while the older subjects tended more to employ traditional terms. The use of address forms was also affected by the impact of the changes in social variables and therefore by the changes in the levels of kulfah and mayanah. As a result of kulfah, some participants tended to use formal address forms and other terms show that there was a degree of formality in the given contexts (distant relationships). Employing address forms was also affected by the factor of gender segregation and as shown by the data the participants avoided using endearment forms in addressing male strangers. The impact of power status was also obvious when the participant used kinship terms in addressing elderly strangers.

There was additional quantitative statistical analysis for the frequencies of politeness strategies employed by the participants. The main reason was to support the socio-pragmatic analysis and to find out whether there were significant differences in request behaviour between the two age groups and to find whether there is an impact of each social variable on request behaviour. The first part of the statistical analysis was conducted on the use of directness strategies in a social context. The tendency of Arabic towards positive politeness was shown in the data and also it was found that the two age groups were similar in their general behaviour in using politeness strategies in the context of spoken Arabic requests. The second part focused
on examining the impact of social variables on requesting behaviour comparing the two age groups shown by the data and the results of the ANOVA test, the most significant impact on the general use of directness strategies was related to the factor of social distance. However, the data showed that even employing direct strategies in Arabic requests is varied in accordance to the changes on the levels of both power status and the degree of imposition. This behaviour was shown in the data through the statistically significant differences in employing the sub-categories of direct strategies.

This chapter also provides more detailed analysis for both inter- and intra-group differences and similarities in their requests across the twelve scenarios. While the two groups showed similarity in request behaviour to hearers with close relationships, they showed differences in their requests to elderly strangers and unknown children in a context of (DI+).

To provide more analysis for the differences in the request behaviour within each age group in accordance with the variation in (DI), a T-test was performed, showing that the younger informants employed different strategies in their requests to child relatives, elderly strangers and unknown children. The statistical analysis on the other hand shows that there was a significant impact of (DI) in the requests of the older participants to hearers in contexts of (DSD).

In the requests to unfamiliar individuals, the impact of gender is significant in most situations (p<0.5). The informants showed different behaviour when they made requests to elderly strangers in both contexts of low and high degree of imposition. The first situation was asking an elderly stranger to swap her/his seat (DSD, DI-) and the second situation was asking an elderly person sitting by mistake to give up the seat (DSD, DI+). The impact of gender was insignificant in the requests to strangers of the same age (requests for information in a shopping mall) (p>0.5). However, the impact of gender was obvious in a context of high degree of imposition (borrowing someone’s mobile in a shopping mall) (p<0.5). The impact of gender segregation was significant when the participants were asked to make requests to elderly strangers because they were required to perform the scenarios while they were accompanied with one of their male relatives (see sections 4.2.2.1 and 4.2.2.2).
CHAPTER FIVE

REQUESTS IN STUDY AND WORK CONTEXTS

This chapter presents the results of the socio-pragmatic analysis of the second part of the role play scenarios in the main study, focusing on the requests in work/study contexts. As mentioned previously, according to certain cultural and religious values, work and study contexts are subject to gender segregation in Saudi Arabia. Consequently, the requests collected in work/study contexts are restricted to female-female interaction.

The chapter presents the analysis of spoken requests by two age groups of Saudi females in work/study contexts to female hearers across contexts that vary in degrees of social distance, power status and the degree of request imposition. As in Chapter Four, the age range is 20-39 for the younger age group and 40-60 for the older age group and the relationship between the interlocutors in the work/study context is represented according to two levels of social distance: close (CSD) and distant (DSD). Each of these levels includes six situations according to the power status S<H, S=H and S>H, and requests imposition: low degree of imposition (DI-) and high degree of imposition (DI+). The scenarios will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

The main focus of the generated data in each scenario was on the level of directness in Saudi requests in a work or study context. After the discussion of directness in both close and distant relationship contexts, there will follow more analysis for all other linguistic strategies used in conjunction with request strategies for social and cultural purposes i.e. external internal modifiers, forms of address and religious expressions.

5.1 Requests to females in contexts of close social distance (CSD)

This section presents the analysis of requests employed in close relationships by the participants of the two age groups in study and work contexts. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the participants are students and employees. Students were asked to perform the role play scenarios in a study context with hearers from three levels of power status i.e. requests from a student to her teacher, requests from a student to her classmate and requests from a teacher to her students.

Employed participants were asked to perform the role plays as follows: in the first scenario the request was from an employer to her boss, in the second scenario the request was made by an employer to her colleague and in third scenario the request was made by a boss to a lower status employee(s.). The requests also involved two degrees of imposition: low (DI-) and high (DI+).

It is also important to mention that the data of each of the two scenarios was interpreted and analysed in accordance with the given division of social variables. For example, low imposition requests in close relationships from a student to her teacher or from an employee to her boss were both analysed in
accordance with the social variables as: (CSD, S<H, -DI). The data of the requests in close relationships is shown in Table 5.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests to bosses/teachers</th>
<th>DI- YAG</th>
<th>DI+ YAG</th>
<th>DI- OAG</th>
<th>DI+ OAG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Direct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventionally Indirect</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Conventionally Indirect</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opting Out</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests to classmates/colleagues</th>
<th>DI- YAG</th>
<th>DI+ YAG</th>
<th>DI- OAG</th>
<th>DI+ OAG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Direct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventionally Indirect</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Conventionally Indirect</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opting Out</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests to students/employees</th>
<th>DI- YAG</th>
<th>DI+ YAG</th>
<th>DI- OAG</th>
<th>DI+ OAG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

YAG=Younger Age Group, OAG=Older Age Group, DI=Low Degree of Imposition, DI+=High Degree of Imposition

5.1.1 Requests to a teacher/boss with a low degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, -DI)
In this scenario student/work participants asked their professors/bosses for information (see Appendix 2). As can be seen from the data, the subjects of both age groups preferred to employ most direct strategies. However, the older subjects showed a higher preference for direct requests (84%) than YAG subjects (60%). Consider the following expressions:

1. Mona, ‘ela mita teghaiyar elwagt?
منى، إلى متى تغير الوقت؟

“Mona, to when has (the meeting) time been changed?”

2. ‘ustathah, wallah daiye jadawalli wu ’abgha ’as’al ’an wagt e muhathararah.
أستاذة، والله ضاع جدولي وأبغى أسأل عن وقت المحاضرة.

“Ma’m, swear to Allah my timetable is lost and I want to ask about the class time.”
In Example (1), the speaker is an employer from the older age group who asks her boss about the time of a meeting. In Example (2), the speaker is a student from the younger age group who asks her teacher about the class time. As can be seen, both expressions are direct requests: Example (1) is a direct question and Example (2) is a want statement. However, compared to the older participant, the younger one employed both an external modification i.e. (grounder) and an internal modification such as the address form (Ma’m) and religious expression (swear to Allah) to mitigate the force of requests and to show deference. Amongst the direct strategies 76 per cent of OAG subjects employed direct questions, since the request was asking for information (see Appendix 11).

This behaviour might result from the age difference between the age groups, meaning that in the case of the younger ones the age difference between them and their teachers is more obvious than the age difference between the older participants who might be of the same age or sometimes even older than their bosses. For the same reason, the data also reveal that the YAG subjects (36%) preferred to employ conventional indirect requests more than the OAG subjects (4%).

5.1.2 Requests to a teacher/boss with a high degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, +DI)

The participants were asked to make high imposition requests i.e. an extension for submitting an assignment/report from their teachers/bosses (see Appendix 2).

The data show that the participants preferred conventional indirect strategies with 64 and 52 per cent for YAG and OAG subjects respectively. As mentioned, the social variables of power status, social distance and the imposition of the requests usually affect request strategies. Consequently, the tendency by the subjects of the two age groups to use conventional indirect requests was as a result of the high imposition in the given context. The following example comes from one of the OAG participants:

3. Habibti Majdah, ‘ana ‘endii daght amal elyoum kitheer, feenii a’a’jjil ‘ettassleem youm ’ow youmain?

حبيبتي ماجدة، أنا عندي ضغط عمَ  اليوم كثير، فيني أأج  التسليم يوم أو يومين؟

“Majdah, darling, today I have a big job. Is it possible to postpone the submission (of the report) one or two days?”

The speaker asks her boss for an extension for a report submission, using a conventional indirect request as a means of addressing the negative face and mitigating the harshness of the request by using both external and internal strategies. Both of these will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

Non-conventionally indirect strategies were also employed by OAG subjects (16 per cent) as follows:

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4. Ma addrii, tara el’alam kinna binkhalsuh elyoum bas t’erifeen adaafoo lana ziyadaah ‘alam wu ‘ehn muddtareen ‘enna nakhdooh, ‘aw ‘etha tuhubboon yeejee ‘ahad ziyadah ‘ashaan yesa’edna weenkhalliss bilwagt elmuhaddad. li’an ma yeekfii thentian yeekhalsoon el’alam elyoum.

“I don’t know, just letting you know that we were working to finish the task today, but, you know, they added more work to our load and we have to do it, so if you like to send someone to help us to finish it on time, because two persons are not able to finish it today”

The speaker in Example (4) uses strong hints i.e. suggesting that the boss send someone to help in finishing the required task.

5.1.3 Requests to a classmate/colleague with a low degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, -DI)

In this scenario, the participants asked their classmates/colleagues whom they have known for a long time, if they can borrow their pens.

As can be seen from the data the preferred strategy by both the YAG (60%) and the OAG (64%) was the most direct requests. The preference for direct strategies here might be for two reasons: the close relationship and the low imposition of the request (borrowing a pen). The following examples were taken from the data of the two age groups:


“Bashayer, give me a pen.”

6. Fattoom, habibti, ’ahtaj ghalam.

“Fattoom (nickname), darling, I need a pen.”

Example (5) shows how the YAG subject employed a mood derivable strategy (imperative). The use of imperatives in Arabic requests requires the interlocutors to have a very close relationship and to be equal in power status, otherwise it might be considered impolite behaviour (Al-Marrani and Saizalie, 2010a and 2010b; Atawneh, 1991). As in the requests to sisters, requests to very close friends can be affected by the impact of the social factor of mayanah (see Chapter Three) and this can be seen by the use of imperatives or pre-decided statements. In Example (6) the OAG subject employs another direct strategy (want statement). It can also be observed from the expressions that the speakers address positive face by...
using direct requests without the fear of losing face. This tendency results from the close relationship between the interlocutors.

5.1.4 Requests to a classmate/colleague with a high degree of imposition (CSD, S=H, +DI)

In this scenario, students were asked to request their classmates to explain the lessons that they missed because they were absent. Work participants were asked to request their colleagues to help them in writing a report. The hearer in both scenarios has a close relationship with the speaker.

As seen above, the subjects of the two age groups showed a higher preference for direct strategies when making low imposition requests (DI-) to their classmates/colleagues. However, for high imposition requests the subjects displayed different behaviours. The YAG participants showed a preference to be indirect (56 per cent). The following expression was taken from the data of the YAG subjects:


منى إنتي، تدرين إني غايبة، ممَكن تشرحين لي اللي فات؟

“Mona, you know that I was absent. Is it possible for you to explain the missing (classes)?”

As can be seen in Example (7), the subject makes an indirect request as a means of mitigating the force of requests. The subjects of the OAG on the other hand, employed both direct and indirect strategies equally (48 per cent). As discussed in Chapter Four, politeness is an expected behaviour in Arabic requests, achieved by using both direct and indirect strategies. While the impact of the high imposition was clear from the indirect strategies employed by the YAG subjects, the OAG subjects employed both external and internal strategies to mitigate the force of requests. The following is an example of a direct request made by one of the OAG subjects:

8. *Allah yi’tek el’aafiah ‘entii mashghoolah el’aan? ‘etha ma ‘entii mashghoolah ’ahtaajik teemali ma’aay shughul?*

الله يعطيك العافية إنتي مشغولة الآن؟ إذا ماأنتي مشغولة أحتاجك تعمَلي معاي شغل.

May Allah give you health (invocation), are you busy now? (getting a pre-commitment) If you are not busy, I need you to do some work with me.

The participant makes her request by using a need statement strategy; however, she prefaces the requests by an internal modifier (invocation) in addition to getting a pre-commitment as an external modifier (supportive move). This behaviour in Arabic requests (to be discussed further) functions as a means of mitigating the harshness of such speech acts (Alfattah & Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani & Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Mohammadi & Tamimi, 2013).

5.1.5 Requests to a student/employee with a low degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, -DI)

In a study context, the participant asked one of her students to inform her classmates that their professor (the participant) had cancelled their class, while at work, each participant asked one of the lower status
employees to inform her colleagues that their boss (the participant) had cancelled their meeting (see Appendix 2). The imposition of requests is low and the speaker has a close relationship with the hearer in both scenarios.

Although the subjects of YAG and OAG showed preference toward directness (52 per cent and 76 per cent respectively) in this scenario, the data show that the YAG participants tended to employ more indirect requests than the OAG subjects with 44 per cent and 12 per cent respectively.

The older subjects on the other hand preferred to employ imperatives as direct requests. As discussed in the previous chapter, using imperatives is a common behaviour in Arabic requests when the speaker has a higher status than the hearer. The following expressions were taken from the data of YAG and OAG subjects respectively:

9. *Mona, Allah yi’tek el’aafiah, ’etha ‘endik wagt, mumkin tballghee elbaageen inn elejitimaa ‘ulghee bsabab…..*

منى، الله يعطيك العافية إذا عندك وقت، ممكن تبلغ الباقين إن الاجتماع ألغي بسبب……

“Mona, may Allah give you health. If you have time, would you mind telling the rest (employees) that the meeting has been cancelled because………”

10. *hala Layla, ma’alaish ballghii ezzameelat ennooh etta’jjal elmow’ed li’anii sirt murtabtah bel’edarah.*

هل ليلى، معليش بلغي الزميلت إنه تتأجل الموعد لأنني صرت مرتبطة بالإدارة.

“Hi Layla, please tell colleagues that the meeting is delayed, because I am busy with the department.”

In Example (9), although she has a higher status than the hearer, the younger subject makes her request by using an indirect strategy in addition to invocation and a politeness marker to soften the force of the request, while in Example (10), the older participant makes her request without the fear of losing face by using mood derivable strategies (imperatives). As outlined in Alfattah and Ravindranath (2009), Al-Marrani and Sazalie, (2010a, 2010b) and Mohammadi and Tamimi (2013), the tendency amongst older Saudi females to employ imperatives or to address positive face in requests can result from the age factor, and hence their higher power status, that provides them with more authority to employ imperatives.

5.1.6 Requests to a student/employee with a high degree of imposition (CSD, S<H, +DI)

In a study context, each participant performed a scenario in which she was a university professor asking her students to attend extra classes to finish the curriculum. For the work context, each participant performed a scenario in which she was a departmental head asking her employees to stay for an extra hour (for free), because they had to submit a report. The speaker in both scenarios has a close relationship with the hearers and the imposition of requests is high.
As can be shown from the data, interestingly YAG subjects showed that they tended more to be direct than the older participants (56 versus 36 per cent respectively). This tendency could be due to the different contexts of study and work scenarios. Although they are both high imposition requests, it seems that it was easier for a university professor to ask her students to attend some extra classes. The data also show that the highest percentage of the direct strategies is for want statements (36%) (see Appendix 11). As in requests to fathers in a social context, want statements were used interchangeably with other indirect strategies and this also is an expected behaviour in Arabic politeness. Consider the following direct expression employed by one of the YAG subjects:

11. banat, ‘ana ma gdart ’akammil elmuqarrar. ‘etha tigduroon wu habbeen, abgha ’aakhuth min wagtkum ‘ashaan nkammil.

بنات، أنا ماقدرت أكمَل المَُرر إذا تُدرون وحابين، أبغى أخذ من وقتكم عشان نكمل.

“Girls, I couldn’t finish the curriculum. If you can and if you like, I want to take some extra time from you so we can finish.”

The older subjects preferred indirectness: 36 per cent of their requests were conventionally indirect strategies and 28 per cent were non-conventionally indirect strategies. That means that in a work context the requests to employees to work extra hours has a higher degree of imposition than the requests to students to take extra classes. The two following expressions were taken from the OAG data:

12. Ya jama’ah, tara ehna malzoomeen ‘inna nsallim ettaqreer bukrah essabaah. Mumkin ‘atlub minkum ‘inna nishtigh l ’aaliah wagt ’edafii?

ياجمَاعة، ترى أحنا ملزومين إنا نسلم التُرير بكرة الصباح. ممَكن أطلب منكم إنا نشتغ عليه وقت إضافي؟

“Hey guys, we are required to submit the report tomorrow morning. Can I ask you to work on it for a bit longer time?”


ياجمَاعة حنا مضغوطين ولَّزم نُلص العمَ  اليوم. فاللي ظروفها تساعدنا وتكدر إنها تُعد عشان نُلص شغلنا ونسلمَه في الوقت المَناسب. واللي ظروفها ماتساعدها براحتها.

“Hey guys, we are overloaded and we have to finish the work today. If there is anyone who can stay, so we can finish and submit it on time, but for those who cannot stay that’s fine.”

As can be seen, in Example (12) the speaker uses a query preparatory strategy as a means of showing more awareness of the high imposition in the given situation. She also employs linguistic strategies for
the purposes of showing intimacy by addressing the employees (girls). In addition, the speaker uses the politeness marker *mumkin*, (can I?) and an interrogative to mitigate the force of the high imposition.

By employing a long expression that includes non-conventionally requests (mild hints), the speaker in Example (13) realizes that she is making a high imposition request and thus she employs various linguistic strategies to save face and to show intimacy such as addressing the hearers (hey guys) that function to mitigate the force of her request and to show the close social distance between the speaker and the hearers.

While this section has focussed on requests in close relationships, the following section will examine requests to unknown female hearers in a study and work context.

5.2 Requests to females in contexts of distant social distance (DSD)

As in the requests in close relationships in study and work contexts, the participants of the two age groups were asked to perform the same scenarios with female hearers with whom they had a distant relationship. The hearers also represent three levels of power status to the speakers: unknown university professor/boss, unknown classmate/colleague and unknown students/employees. The data for low and high imposition requests to females with distant relationships are presented in Table 5.2.

<table>
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<th>Requests to bosses/teachers</th>
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<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>OAG</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI+ YAG</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests to classmates/colleagues</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>24</td>
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<th>Requests to students/employees</th>
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<th>%</th>
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<td>4</td>
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YAG=Younger Age Group, OAG=Older Age Group, DI-=Low Degree of Imposition, DI+=High Degree of Imposition
5.2.1 Requests to a teacher/boss with a low degree of imposition (DSD, S<H, -DI)

The participants were asked to perform the same scenario in distant relationships (asking a university professor/boss for information). As shown in the same scenario in close relationships, the current scenario shows that the participants of the two age groups preferred direct requests: 64 and 72 per cent for YAG and OAG subjects respectively. The low degree of imposition is obvious from the direct strategies. The following requests were taken from the data of the two age groups:


السلام عليكم، أنا طالبة عندك وأبي أعرف وقت المحاضرة.

“Peace be upon you. I am one of your students and I want to know the time of the class.”

15. assalamo ‘aliakom, ‘ana Wafa min qeetaa ellughah. Kan elmefroud elyoum ejteemaa bas ‘et’ajal. mita elejtimaa mow’ed eljideed?

السلام عليكم، أنا وفاء من قطاع اللغة. كان المفروض اليوم اجتمَاع بس اتأج . متى موعد الاجتماع الجديد؟

“Peace be upon you, I am Wafa from the Language Sector. There was supposed to be a meeting today. What is the (time) of the new meeting?”

Both speakers employed the Islamic greeting (peace be upon you) before making their requests. As discussed in Chapter Four, the use of Islamic expressions functions as in-group language and shows that both interlocutors belong to the same religious group. The second linguistic feature that both speakers employed when they made their requests to their unknown hearers was to introduce themselves as a means of deference and to show a higher level of politeness behaviour.

5.2.2 Requests to a teacher/boss with a high degree of imposition (DSD, S<H, +DI)

In the high imposition requests, the participants were asked to perform the same scenario as previously (to request an extension for submitting an assignment/report from their university professors/bosses). The percentages of the direct requests made by the two age groups in this scenario are similar to the percentages in the same scenario of close relationships (28%). The data also show that YAG subjects employed non-conventional indirect strategies (16%) or opting out the requests (12%). Although OAG subjects employed the same percentage of non-conventional indirect requests (16%) as they employed in their requests in close relationships, they showed a higher tendency to opt out of requests in addressing unknown hearers (24%). This is due to the high degree of imposition and the distant social relationship between the interlocutors. The following requests were employed as non-conventional strategies by two subjects of YAG and OAG:


‘USTATHAH RASHA KAIFIK? BIKHSOUS ERRIPORT, ’ANA BASALMAH ELYOUM GABIL BUKRAH, LAKIN FIĪ ‘UMOOR THANIAH B'TIT'AKHAR ’ALAASHAN ASLLMAH.
5.2.3 Requests to a classmate/colleague with a low degree of imposition (DSD, S<H, -DI)

In this scenario, the participants asked an unknown classmate/colleague if they could borrow their pens. The same scenario was employed in both close and distant relationships. However, the participants showed different behaviours in each scenario. In close relationships, they showed a preference for direct strategies i.e. addressing positive face, possibly due to *mayanah* (close relationship) between the interlocutors. The impact of the larger social distance in the current scenario was clear although the imposition of requests was low. The data show that 56 per cent of requests were used as query preparatory strategies. While OAG subjects used fewer indirect strategies (44%) than the younger subjects, the impact of the larger social distance was also clear in their request behaviour since they chose to opt out of the requests in 32% of cases. When one of the OAG subjects was asked to request a pen from her colleague in a context of close relationships, she responded that she will take the pen without even asking to borrow it. However, when she made a request for a pen to an unfamiliar colleague, she used the following expression:

18. *law samahtii, law 'endik galam zayid?*

 لو سمحتي، لو عندك قلم زايد؟

As shown in Example (18), the participant uses an indirect request and addresses the negative face of the hearer. This behaviour is also shown by the use of more than internal modification i.e. politeness marker *law samahtii* (if you permit), the conditional clause and the use of an interrogative.

5.2.4 Requests to a classmate/colleague with a high degree of imposition (DSD, S<H, +DI)

In this scenario, students requested their classmates to explain the lessons that they had missed because they were absent. Work participants on the other hand, made requests to their colleagues to help them
with writing a report. The degree of imposition in both scenarios is high and the speaker has a distant relationship with the hearer.

As shown from the data, the impact of the variables of social distance and high imposition was clear amongst YAG subjects by their use of indirect requests (48%) i.e. addressing the negative face of the hearers and showing more awareness of politeness strategies. Consider the following expression:

19. *law samahtii, 'ana ma kint mawjoodah el’usboo elmadii. Mumkin ts’a’adeenii fii elgrammar ellii fatt?*

لو سمحتي، أنا ماكنت موجودة الإسبوع الماضي. ممكن تساعديني في الُرامر اللي فات؟

“If you permit, I wasn’t there last week (preparator). Is it possible that you help me with the grammar (lessons) that I missed?”

In the previous example, the speaker makes an indirect request and employs more than one strategy to show awareness of politeness and formality. For example, she employes an external modifier (preparator) in addition to other internal modifiers such as: politeness markers; *law samahtii* (if you permit, excuse me) and *mumkin* (is it possible? Could you?) and the interrogative.

The younger subjects also tended to opt out of requests in this scenario more than the previous scenario (24%).

The impact of the variables of social distance and high imposition in this scenario was obvious in the request behaviour of OAG subjects. While most YAG subjects requested help from their classmates/colleagues, the data show that most subjects chose to opt out of requests (56%) because they found it inconvenient to ask a colleague whom they see for the first time for help.

5.2.5 Requests to a student/employee with a low degree of imposition (DSD, S<H, -DI)

In the study context, each participant asked one of her students to post an announcement to inform her classmates that their professor (the participant) had cancelled their class, while in the work context each participant asked one of the lower status employees to inform her colleagues that their boss (the participant) had cancelled their meeting (see Appendix 2). In both scenarios, the speaker is meeting the hearer for the first time and the degree of imposition is low.

As shown from the data, the YAG participants used almost equal direct (40%) and indirect (44%) strategies. As might be expected, they also showed less preference for direct strategies than with hearers with whom they have a close relationship (52%). Although most OAG subjects preferred more direct strategies (56%) in this scenario, the data show that the percentage of direct strategies is higher in their requests in close relationships (76%). Additionally, the impact of age in this scenario is clear through the preference for imperatives amongst the OAG subjects. The following expressions were taken from both age groups:
20. *law samahtii,* ‘etha t’allgeen el’elaan ala elqa’ah li’annii marah a’athher.

“Excuse me, if you can do me a favour (preparator). I want you to post this announcement in the classroom, because I am not coming (for the class) (grounder).”

21. *law samahtii,* balghii elmouwaddafat inn elejtimaa t’aijal.

“Excuse me, tell the employees that the meeting has been delayed.”

The speaker in Example (20) is a YAG subject. Although she uses a direct request i.e. want statement (I want you), she employs a number of other strategies to mitigate the force of her requests. She uses an internal modifier (politeness marker) *law samahtii* (excuse me) and two supportive moves, preparator and grounder. The older participant on the other hand, (Example (21) makes her request using an imperative (tell), using a shorter politeness marker than in Example (19).

As mentioned in Chapter Four, the use of direct strategies in Arabic requests, for example, requests to persons who have a close relationship show that there is a degree of intimacy and *mayanah* (very close relationship) as a result of addressing the positive face of the hearer. In addition, the use of imperatives is also an expected behaviour in the requests from an older person who has higher status to a person of lower power status, even in contexts of distant relationships (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Mohammadi and Tamimi, 2013).

5.2.6 Requests to a student/employee with a high degree of imposition (DSD, S<H, +DI)

In the study context, each participant was asking her students to attend extra classes to finish the curriculum. In the work context, each participant performed a scenario in which she was a boss asking her department’s employees to work for an extra hour (for free), because they had to submit a report. In both scenarios, the speaker is meeting the hearers for the first time.

As a result of the impact of the two variables: social distance (DSD) and high imposition (+DI) of the requests, the YAG subjects tended more towards indirectness by using non-conventional indirect strategies (52%). The impact of the two variables was also clear in the request behaviour of the OAG subjects. The data show that most of the OAG participants employed non-conventional indirect (32%) or simply opted out (24%). Consider the following non-conventional indirect expressions:

22. *banat,* huttoo fii balkom innii mumkin ‘ahtaajkom fii youm min el’ayaam. Faakoonoo musta’eddeen fii ‘aii wagt.
بنات حطوا في بالكم إني ممكن أحتاجكم في يوم من الأيام فكونوا مستعدين في أي وقت.

“Girls, keep in mind that I might need you one day (to give you extra classes). So be ready anytime.”


أنتم مخيرين إذا حابين تكرما منكم أنا أحتاج أوفر تايم ساعة أو ساعتين إذا مو حابين ترى عادي وماراح يأثر على التقييم.

“It’s your own choice. If you would like to and are generous / would you like to be generous? I need overtime of one or two hours. If you can’t, that is fine and this will not affect your evaluation.”

The YAG subject in Example (22) uses a strong hint for her students to be ready for extra classes anytime she would ask for them. The older participant in Example (23), by employing a long expression that includes non-conventional requests (mild hints), realizes that she is making a high imposition request and thus addresses the negative face of the hearers and employs various linguistic strategies to save face and to mitigate the force of her request.

As requests in study and work contexts in the two levels of social distance have already been discussed, the following section will focus on the use of conventionally indirect strategies within the same contexts.

5.3 The use of conventionally indirect strategies in study and work contexts

The use of conventionally indirect strategies in Arabic requests, as discussed, is an expected behaviour that reflects significant features such as the impact of social variables amongst the interlocutors, in addition to showing that the requester is more aware of employing negative politeness strategies while making the requests (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010b). The following section will provide more analysis for the sub-categories of the conventionally indirect strategies.

5.3.1 Request perspective in the study and work contexts

The first sub-category of conventionally indirect strategies is the request perspective. The data of the variation of request perspectives in the study and work contexts is illustrated in Table 5.3.

---

14 See section 4.3.1 for the explanation of request perspective.
Table 5.3 Request Perspective in Study/Work Contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request perspective</th>
<th>YAG N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>OAG N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker oriented</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearer oriented</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data show that the two age group participants showed a greater tendency to use hearer oriented perspectives in their requests in study/work contexts, this tendency shows that the use of the hearer oriented perspective functions as a means of showing informality and expressing solidarity between the speaker and the hearer. The following examples were taken from the data of the two age groups:

24. Miss, ‘ana kaanat ’endii dhouroof bilbiat. Mumkin tmadideen lii elwaght ‘alaashan ’akhallis elhomework?

"Miss, I had some issues at home. Is possible that you give me an extension, so I can finish the homework?"

25. ‘Ana muaadghootah marrah. Mumkin law samahtii ya moodhy ts’adeenii?

"I am overloaded. (oh) Nora, could you help me please?"

In Example (24) the YAG subject asks her teacher for an extension. In Example (25) the OAG subject asks her colleague for help, both speakers employing hearer oriented perspective in their requests. The data show that some speakers in study/work contexts also tended to employ a speaker oriented perspective and this preference shows that the speaker reveals more awareness of formality that results from the large social distance and therefore orientations towards negative politeness. Consider the following two expressions employed by the same participant:

26. Sarah, Allah yi’aafeek, mumkin t’algeen el’elaan ala elbab inn elmuhadarah t’ajjalat?

"Sarah, may Allah keep you healthy, could you post an announcement on the door (of your classroom) that the lecture was postponed?"

27. Law samahtii, mumkin ’atluub minnik tsaween ’elaan aan elmuhadarah?
"Excuse me, can I ask you to make an announcement about the lecture?"

Although both requests were made by the same speaker, in Example (27) the use of a speaker oriented perspective shows that the speaker assumes that there is a large social distance between her and the hearer and thus tends to be more formal than in her requests to a student with a close relationship to herself as in Example (26).

5.3.2 Conventions of means and conventions of forms

Conventional indirect requestive expressions include another significant subcategory: conventions of means and conventions of forms (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989). This section focuses on the conventions of means and conventions of forms employed by the participants of the two age groups as shown in Table 5.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conventions of means</th>
<th>YAG</th>
<th>OAG</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibility</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown from the data, possibility was by far the preferred strategy by two thirds of the two age groups. However, as discussed in Chapter Four, coding the data for this study was based on the closest meaning to the given request in each expression as follows:

28. ‘uthran ‘ustathah, ‘ana magdart ‘asallim elwajib. ‘etha mumkin ‘asalmuh bukrah?

عذرًا أستاذة، أنا ماقدر أسلم الواجب، إذا ممكن أسلمه بكرة؟

“Sorry teacher. I couldn’t submit the homework. If it is possible, I (will) submit it tomorrow?”

As discussed in Chapter Four, external modifications (supportive moves) and internal modifications are the additional strategies employed by speakers to mitigate the force of requests and to show a higher degree of politeness. The following section will provide the analysis for these strategies.
5.4 The use of supportive moves
As in the social context, the data of the current study show that the participants employed various external modifiers (supportive moves) in their requests as students and employees. Table 5.5 illustrates the supportive moves.

Table 5.5 Supportive Moves in Study/ Work Contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supportive moves</th>
<th>YAG</th>
<th>OAG</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparator</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounder</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a pre-commitment</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disarmer</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise of reward</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposition minimizer</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweetener</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small talk</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-introduction</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective appeal</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apology</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be shown from the data, preparators and grounders were the most frequently used strategies amongst the participants of the two age groups. YAG participants employed 16 per cent of their total use of supportive moves as preparators and 29 per cent as grounders, while OAG subjects used 31 per cent and 23 per cent of total use for the same strategies respectively.

The data also show that YAG subjects employed more supportive moves than the OAG subjects (raw scores of 322 and 222 for each age group respectively). It can be said that this behaviour resulted from the age difference between the two generations. The speakers in the following examples are YAG and OAG subjects respectively:

29. Mona, Allah yi’aafeek, ‘endii ejitimaa maa el’edarah wu 'abghak tblgheen elbanat ‘inn elejitimaa ’et’ajjal lilwagt (…..) wu ’atathir jeddan bas ethuroof kharjah ’ann ’eradii.
منى، الله يعافيك، عندي اجتماع مع الإدارة وأبغاك تبلغين البنات إن الاجتماع أتأج للوقت (…..) وأعتذر جدا بس الظروف خارجة عن إرادتي.

142
“Mona, may Allah keep you healthy (invocation), I have a department meeting (preparator) and I want you to tell the girls that the meeting has been postponed to (the time). I really apologize (apology) but the circumstances were unavoidable.”

30. hala Layla, ma’alaish balghii ezzameelat inn elmond’ed t’ajjal lee’anii srt murtabtah bel’edarah.

“Hi Layla, please tell your colleagues that the (meeting) appointment has been postponed, because I am busy with the department (grounder).”

Although the speakers have a higher status than the hearers and although the request in each expression is direct, the age factor is reflected in the differences in the use of the linguistic strategies employed. The younger subject in Example (29) shows a higher degree of politeness by using more than one external modifier i.e. preparator and apology and by using an internal modification (invocation). In addition, the requestive expression in Example (29) shows a code switch into a diglossic situation by the use of the term atathir jeddan (I really apologize) which is classified as standard Arabic. According to Brown and Levinson (1989), the situation of code switching is usually associated with in-group domestic values in order to establish in-group solidarity.

The older subject on the other hand addresses the positive face of the hearer and makes her request directly without the fear of losing face by using a shorter expression and by only using a grounder i.e. giving the reason for her request as in Example (30).

In addition to supportive moves (external modifiers), the following section will focus on the use of internal modifiers in the work and study contexts.

5.5 The use of internal modifiers in study and work contexts

Request behaviour in Arabic includes the use of internal modifiers that are employed by the requester for various purposes such as expressing a close relationship, showing a higher degree of politeness or showing that the interlocutors belong to the same group of the speech community. The internal modifiers employed by the subjects of the two age groups are shown in Table 5.6.
As in the requests in a social context, the data show that the most frequent use for internal modifiers amongst the two age groups was as politeness markers (44%). As discussed previously, the use of the formulaic expressions or attention getters, such as *mumkin* (is it possible?) *ma’alaish* (sorry, can I?) and *law samahtii* (if you permit/allow) is a very common strategy in Arabic politeness. Furthermore, the data also show that the participants employed semi formulaic expressions: *'afwan* (pardon) or *'uthran* (sorry) that contain a higher degree of politeness and formality as in the requests in work/study contexts. Consider the following expression:

31. *'uthran 'ustathah Ghaliah, bas li'annii endaghadt shway wu magdurt 'assalim elwajib……*

"Pardon me teacher Ghaliyah, because I was overloaded and I couldn’t submit the homework……"
The second common feature in the requests in work/study contexts was the use of interrogatives. The data show that in 33 per cent of the total use of internal modifiers, as interrogatives were used. According to Al-Qahtani (2009), the use of questions is one of the features that makes the expression sound more polite because it gives the hearer (the requestee) the freedom either to accept or to reject the requests. The following Example was employed by one of the YAG participants:

32. Law samahiti, ‘etha ‘endik galam zayed, taateenii iyyah?

لو سمحتي، إذا عندك قلم زايد، تعطيني إياه؟

“If you permit, if you have an extra pen, would you mind giving it to me?”

In addition to the interrogative, Example (32) shows that the speaker employs another internal modification i.e. if clause. Of the total use of internal modifiers, 12 per cent were employed as conditional clauses. Similarly to the use of the other internal modifiers, the use of softening/hedging expressions (if-clause) in Arabic politeness functions as another means of showing that the speaker respects the hearers’ freedom to accept or to reject the requests and also to distant herself from the hearer (Al-Qahtani, 2009).

The data show that the subjects employed 16 per cent of their total use of internal modifiers as religious expressions. Since the use of religious expressions serves various functions in the Arabic politeness system, they will be discussed in more detail in a following section.

The Arabic politeness system also includes other strategies besides external and internal modifiers and the use of address forms is one of these strategies. The following discussion will be focusing on the most significant features of the use of address forms employed by the participants of the two age groups in work/study contexts.

5.6 The use of address forms

The data of the current study showed that the participants employed different forms of address and their use varied in accordance to the given social variables: power status and social distance in each context. The data regarding of the use of forms of address used by the participants of the two age groups in study/work contexts is shown in Table 5.7 and Figures 5.1 and 5.2.
Table 5.7 Forms of Address in Study/Work Contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of address</th>
<th>Close relationships</th>
<th>Distant relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First name</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship and family terms</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick names</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endearment terms</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tekonyms</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious expressions</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politeness markers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation related and formality terms</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The subjects showed relatively different behaviour in their use of forms of address when they made requests to females in contexts of close and distant relationships and to females with different levels of power status. While most of the participants used first names to address hearers who have close relationships (48%), the data show that they tended to employ politeness markers in addressing unfamiliar females with 38 per cent of the total use of forms of address in the context of distant relationship.

As shown from the data there were 24 and 30 per cent of the total number of forms of address respectively were employed in close and distant relationships as occupation related and formality terms. The high preference of using such forms of address shows that the variable of power status has an obvious impact on politeness behaviour in study/work contexts. The data also show that the subjects used various terms and linguistic expressions such as endearment terms and religious expressions when they made requests to females in study/work contexts.

While Table 5.7 presents the data of the use of forms of address, Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2 show the differences and similarities in the behaviour of the subjects of the two age groups in their use of forms of address in study/work contexts.
As shown in Figure 5.1 the impact of social distance can be seen by the high preference for using first names in close relationships and by the preference of using politeness markers in addressing unfamiliar females. This behaviour also was resulting from the degree of *kulfah* i.e. showing that there was a high degree of formality between the speaker and the hearer. It is also important to mention that the use of politeness markers and endearment terms vary in accordance to the degree of *kulfah* between the interlocutors in Arabic politeness system. For example, the use of politeness markers or verbs of address in the form of an if a clause: *'etha can bil'emkan*, (if it’s possible) *'etha samahtii* and *law samahtii* (if you permit) shows a relatively higher level of formality than the single semi-formulaic terms *mumkin?*, *ma’alish?* and *'aadii?* (is it possible?).

The impact of power status is also obvious through the high tendency to use occupation related and formality terms to address higher status females in close and distant relationships with 34 and 33 per cent respectively.
Similarly to YAG subjects, Figure 5.2 shows that OAG subjects preferred to use first names to address other females in close relationships (52%). Nevertheless, they used fewer politeness markers and occupation related and formality terms compared to the younger subjects. For instance, while 34 per cent of the total use of forms of address were employed by YAG subjects as occupation related and formality terms in close relationships, only 14 per cent of the same category were employed by OAG subjects in the same social context. In addition, OAG subjects showed more preference for the use of endearment terms with 13 and 16 per cent relatively in close and distant relationships than the younger subjects who employed only 6 per cent of their total use of forms of address as endearment terms.

The OAG participants also showed greater preference to employ occupation related and formality terms (25%) and politeness markers (27%) in addressing unfamiliar females. However, the data in Figure 5.1 show that the impact of the power status variable was more obvious amongst the younger subjects. They tended more than the older participants to employ occupation related and formality terms than OAG subjects with 34 and 33 per cent in close and distant relationships respectively compared to 14 and 25 per cent for the same category in the same contexts.

The subjects who made their requests as students totally avoided using first names, without the job titles to address their teachers/professors in both close and distant relationships. Some of the employees, however, used their bosses’ first names in their requests. This tendency might result from the age difference between the two age groups and from the impact of the other social factors: kulfah (the high

**Figure 5.2**

Forms of Address Used by OAG in Study/Work Contexts
degree of formality) and mayanah (the high degree of informality). This implies that in a study context the impact of kulfah between students and teachers/professors is more obvious than the impact of the same factor between employees and their bosses. Nevertheless, the use of first names by some of the employees to address their bosses who have close social relationships was resulting from being in the same age of their bosses and sometimes older and hence mayanah.

As shown in Figures 5.1 and 5.2, OAG subjects tended relatively to employ endearment terms more than the YAG subjects with 13 and 16 per cent in close and distant relationships while the only endearment terms were employed by YAG in close relationships with a percentage of 6. It is also important to mention that the use of endearment terms varies in accordance to social distance and power status factors and thus the degree of formality. The endearment term azeezti (my dear) which was employed by the requester to address the requestee, for instance, is more formal than the terms habibtii, (my love), umrii (my life) and hayatii (my soul).

Religious expressions were also employed to address females in study/work contexts and because they employed for various purposes, they will be discussed in more detail in a following section.

After the discussion of the general statistics of the use of forms of address in study/work contexts, the following section will be focussing on the forms and terms used by the subjects of the current study in addressing females who represent different levels of social relationships and power status.

**Addressing females in study/work contexts**

The participants of the two age groups employed various forms of address in close and distant relationships when they made requests to females who have a higher status. However, occupation related and formality terms were highly preferred. The terms duktoorah (doctor) and 'ustathah (boss, teacher, lecturer, professor) were the most common terms that were employed by the subjects in a work context by the employees to address their bosses. The two terms were also used in a study context by students in addressing their teachers/professors in addition to the terms Miss, teacher in their English version. The use of first names and nicknames to address colleagues and classmates who have close relationships was the most preferred strategy amongst the subjects of the two age groups and this behaviour, as mentioned, resulted from the impact of mayanah.

In distant or formal relationships, however, the participants used occupation related and kinship terms that show a higher level of kulfah (formality) such as ya 'ustathah Mona (oh Ms Mona), zameelati el a'azeezat (my dear colleagues), ya ukht Mona, ukhtii (oh sister Mona, my sister) to address their colleagues.

Most of the subjects who were asked to make their requests as professors and bosses used first names to address hearers from students and employees in close relationships. Additionally, they used the terms
banat, ya banat (girls, hey girls) and jama’ah, ya jama’ah (guys, hey guys) to address a group of students or a group of employees in their departments. When addressing unfamiliar females who have lower status, the subjects employed politeness markers such as verbs of address to distant themselves from the hearers. The following requests were made by one of the subjects.

33. Sarah, Allah yi’aafeek, mumkin ti’alligeen e’laan ala elbab inn elmuhadarah ti’ajalat?

سارة، الله يعافيك، ممكن تعلّين إعلن على الباب إن المحاضرة تأجلت؟

“Sarah, may Allah keep you healthy, could you post an announcement on the door (of your classroom) that the lecture was postponed?”

34. Law samahtii, mumkin ’atlb minnik tisaween e’laan a’an el muhadarah?

لو سمحتي، ممكن أطلب منك تسوين إعلن عن المحاضرة؟

Excuse me, can I ask you to make an announcement about the lecture?

In addition to the use of forms of address, the subjects of the two age groups employed religious expressions that served various functions in their requests. Thus, the following discussion will focus on the most significant issues related to the use of religious expressions in study/work contexts.

5.7 The use of religious expressions in study/work context

As in requests in a social context, the data show that the subjects employed a number of religious expressions that are considered amongst speakers of Saudi Arabic as in-group language which indicates that both interlocutors are Muslims. The use of invocations when making requests in Saudi Arabic is one of the positive politeness strategies that the requester tends to show to the hearer. Table 5.8 illustrates the data of religious expressions used by the subjects of the two age groups in study/work contexts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.8 Religious Expressions Study/Work Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YAG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulaic expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swearing by God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown from the data, 53 per cent of religious expressions were employed as invocation such as Allah yi’aafeek, الله يعافيك (May Allah keep you healthy) or Allah yi’aafeek, الله يعافيك (May Allah be pleased with you) or assalamu ‘aliakum, السلام عليكم.
(Peace be upon you) (25%) was also amongst the positive politeness strategies that were employed to open conversations or to address hearers when making requests by the subjects of the two age groups.

Other formulaic expressions that reflect dominant religious beliefs in Saudi society were employed by some of the participants such as *ma shaa Allah* (with God willing). According to Al Ageel (2010), the belief in the harm that may be caused by the evil eye is one common belief in Saudi society. As Muslims, Saudis usually use the religious expressions from the Qur’an and the Prophet’s sayings that protect everything from the harm that may result from the cause of the negative power of the evil eye especially when they admire or compliment each other (Al Ageel, 2010). The following expressions were employed by one of the OAG subjects in her request for help from one of her colleagues:

**35.** *Tara ehna ma sha Allah shigheeleen wu daa’eman nkhalus el’amal bwagtu, bas hal marrah bndtarr n’ajlul li’annuh t’attal eljehaz wu’akhad minna wagt. Fa’etha mumkin ziadat youm ‘aw youmain ilain nkhallus.*

“Just letting you know that we are, **with God willing**, hard workers and we usually finish our tasks on time. But this time the computer stopped working and it took time (to be fixed). So it is possible to have an extra one or two days until we finish.”

**36.** *ma sha Allah ’entii shatrah bilhaasib, mumkin tshoofeen ettaqreer elli katabtuh……?*

“**With God willing,** you are skilled on the computer. Would you mind having a look at the report that I wrote…..?”

In Example (35) the speaker compliments herself and her colleagues and uses the religious expression as a means of protection from the harm of the evil eye that could be caused as a result of admiring. Moreover, in Example (36), the speaker compliments her colleague and at the same time employs the religious expression to make the hearer comfortable that she will not be harmed by the evil eye of the speaker or someone else listening to the conversation. In fact, this behaviour results from the Islamic instructions, as mentioned previously, as in the following Qur’anic text:

"Why didst thou not, as thou wentest into thy garden, say: 'Allah's will (be done)! There is no power but with Allah!'" (18:39).

As discussed in Chapter Two, this concept reflects the strong belief amongst Muslims that God is the controller and the protector of the universe.

The following section will focus on the statistical analysis for the data of requests in work and study contexts.
5.8 Statistical analysis for the data of requests in work/study contexts

One of the aims of this study is to investigate the request behaviour of Saudi females in work and study contexts. However, it is important to point out that the data in Chapter Four was for both female-female and female-male interactions in a social context which means that it provides a wider view for the general features of directness in Arabic than Chapter Five that focuses only on female-female interaction. Hence, the discussion of the statistical analysis in Chapter Five will only examine the individual behaviour of the requests in work and study contexts by focusing on inter- and intra-group differences and similarities and on the impact of the social variables across the twelve situations.

5.8.1 Similarities and differences between and within the two age groups in requests across the twelve situations

Similarities and differences in the request behaviour across and within the two age groups will be discussed in the following sections.

5.8.1.1 Inter-group similarities and differences in request behaviour in accordance with social distance and degree of imposition

To find out whether the behaviour of the fifty participants of the two age groups was changed across the twelve situations or not in accordance with the changes in the levels of social distance and degree of imposition, T-tests were applied and the data are shown in Table 5.9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests in close relationships</th>
<th>Requests in distant relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bosses/teachers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bosses/teachers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI-</td>
<td>DI+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P-Value</strong></td>
<td>.686</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DI- = low degree of imposition, DI+ = high degree of imposition. * the mean difference is significant at level: 0.05, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01

The statistical analysis shows that there are differences across the two age groups in a number of situations, but not all. In close relationships, for instance, there was a significant difference in the requests to persons who have lower status than the speakers (employees and students) in a context of high degree of imposition (p<0.05). Since most of the YAG made their requests as teachers/professors and all OAG made their requests as bosses. The differences in the request behaviour resulted from the difference across study and work contexts. That means it was easier for teachers and university professors to employ positive strategies in their request to students than bosses who tended to address
the negative face when they were asked to make a high degree imposition request to employees who have lower status (see Section 5.1.6).

In distant relationships there were more significant differences in the request behaviour across the two age groups. While the informants showed similar behaviour in their requests to persons of higher status, there were differences in their requests in both situations of the requests to equal status persons and in their request to a lower status person in a context of high degree of imposition. These significant differences as discussed in sections 5.2.3, 5.2.4 and 5.2.6 were because of the tendency amongst OAG informants towards negative politeness and opting out strategies in their request to unfamiliar colleagues or lower status employees. Differences in request behaviour within the two age groups will be discussed in the following section.

5.8.1.2 Intra-group similarities and differences in request behaviour in accordance with social distance and degree of imposition

To investigate the differences in the behaviour of the participants of each age group across the twelve situations T-tests were applied (see Table 5.10).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Requests in close relationships</th>
<th>Requests in distant relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P. Value</strong></td>
<td><strong>YAG</strong></td>
<td><strong>OAG</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>.001</strong></td>
<td><strong>.013</strong></td>
<td>.791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>.013</strong></td>
<td><strong>.923</strong></td>
<td>.188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DI−=low degree of imposition, DI+=high degree of imposition, YAG=younger age group, OAG=older age group.

* the mean difference is significant at level: 0.05, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01

As a result of the impact of the degree of imposition, the data show that there were significant differences in the behaviour of the younger subjects in their requests to higher status females although they have a close relationship (p<0.05). While they tended to employ positive politeness strategies in the request for information (DI−), they preferred addressing the negative face when they made a request for an extension for submitting homework (DI+). The younger informants also showed differences in their behaviour in accordance with the degree of imposition in their requests to females who have a close relationship and are equal in power status (p<0.05). In their request for a pen, the subjects preferred to employ most direct strategies such as: give me a pen (DI−). However, when they asked their classmates for help in explaining some parts of one of their subjects, they preferred to employ negative politeness strategies to soften the force of the request (consider Section 5.2.4).
In distant relationships, both age groups showed differences in their behaviour in the request to higher status females (p<0.05). Nevertheless, the differences across the two age groups can be shown by the data that indicates that the older participants showed more stability in their request behaviour by the non-significant results across all other situations (p>0.05).

The following section will focus on the impact of the social variables on request behaviour across the twelve situations.

5.8.2 The impact of the social variables across the twelve situations

The first procedure in this section was to examine the impact of social distance on requests in work and study contexts. Secondly, the impact of power status was examined. Paired sample T-tests were applied as indicated in Tables 5.14 and tables 5.15.

Table 5.11 Paired-sample Test for the Impact of Social Distance across the Twelve Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair-Situation</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requests to bosses/teachers in (CSD), Requests to bosses/teachers in (DSD)</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests to colleagues/classmates in (CSD), Requests to colleagues/classmates in (DSD)</td>
<td>.004**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests to employees/students in (CSD), Requests to employees/students in (DSD)</td>
<td>.001**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests to bosses/teachers in (CSD), Requests to bosses/teachers in (DSD)</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests to colleagues/classmates in (CSD), Requests to colleagues/classmates in (DSD)</td>
<td>.011*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests to employees/students in (CSD), Requests to employees/students in (DSD)</td>
<td>.002**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CSD=close social distance, DSD=distant social distance, * the mean difference is significant at level: 0.05, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01, ***the mean difference is significant at level: 0.001

As can be shown from the data (Table 5.11), the impact of social distance was manifested in most situations (p<0.05). The results in this chapter support the results in Chapter Four and support the claim of Al-Qahtani (2009) and Holmes (1995) about the strong relationship between social distance and female politeness. The significant impact of social distance as shown in the data reveals that social distance is the most critical factor in politeness behaviour. It also reveals that the degree of familiarity, intimacy and friendship between the interlocutors is the starting point that contributes in shaping the form of conversations.
Table 5.12 *Paired-sample Test for the Impact of Power Status across the Twelve Situations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair-Situation</th>
<th>CSD</th>
<th>DSD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td>P-Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S&lt;H), (S=H)</td>
<td>.654</td>
<td>.005**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S&lt;H), (S&gt;H)</td>
<td>.777</td>
<td>.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S=H), (S&gt;H)</td>
<td>.722</td>
<td>.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S&lt;H), (S=H)</td>
<td>.052*</td>
<td>.009**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S&lt;H), (S&gt;H)</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td>.487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S=H), (S&gt;H)</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CSD=close social distance, DSD=distant social distance, * the mean difference is significant at level: 0.05, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01, ***the mean difference is significant at level: 0.001

Additionally, the data show that the impact of power status yielded in close relationships when the informants made requests to higher and equal status females in a contexts of high degree of imposition (Table 5.12). However, they showed more awareness of the impact of power status when they made requests to unfamiliar females. This also indicates that the variances of the social variables of social distance and degree of imposition can affect the awareness of the impact of power status. This provides evidence that there is a positive relationship between power status and the other two variables i.e. social distance and degree of imposition.

The following section focuses on the similarities and differences in request behaviour across social and work/study contexts.

**5.8.3 Similarities and differences in twelve situations of request across two different contexts**

This section provides statistical analysis for the only data of the requests in female-female interaction in social and work/study contexts. The main reason was to examine whether the behaviour of the requester changes across various contexts or not. A test was applied in accordance with the levels of the social variables. For example, the situations of (CSD, S<H, DI-) stand for requests to mothers and bosses/teachers with close relationships in a context of low degree of imposition. The results are shown in Table 5.13.
Table 5.13 T-test for the Similarities and Differences in Twelve Situations across the Tow Contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests in close relationships</th>
<th>Requests in distant relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S&lt;H, DI-</td>
<td>S&lt;H, DI+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&lt;H, DI+</td>
<td>S=H, DI-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S=H, DI-</td>
<td>S=H, DI+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&gt;H, DI-</td>
<td>S&gt;H, DI+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&gt;H, DI+</td>
<td>S=H, DI-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S=H, DI+</td>
<td>S=H, DI+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&gt;H, DI-</td>
<td>S&gt;H, DI+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&gt;H, DI+</td>
<td>S&gt;H, DI-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.000*</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
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<td>.000***</td>
<td>.000***</td>
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<td>.000***</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.000***</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CSD=close social distance, DSD=distant social distance, DI-=low degree of imposition, DI+=high degree of imposition, **the mean difference is significant at level: 0.01, ***the mean difference is significant at level: 0.001

Although the distribution of the social variables’ levels in the role play scenarios was the same in both social and work/study contexts, the statistical analysis of the data shows that there were significant differences in request behaviour of the two age groups across all situations in close relationships and across most situations in distant relationships (p<0.05). This means that request behaviour and the choice of politeness strategies not only varies across different cultures. However, it varies across two contexts within the same culture. In other words, members of speech communities may change their choice of the linguistic strategies in accordance to the changes in the surrounding atmosphere such as social or work/study regardless of the stability of the levels of the social variables. For instance, pertaining to social distance, what Saudi females believe is close in a social context, they might consider it distant in other contexts (work/study).

One of the issues discussed in Chapter Two was Hofstede’s model on cultures. Thus it is important to examine the most distinctive findings of Arabic requests in social and work/study contexts in relation to this model. The following discussion will also incorporate the findings from Chapter Four.

5.9 Arabic requests and Hofstede’s perspective on cultures

As indicated by Hofstede’s scale, Saudi culture has a high acceptance of hierarchical status amongst its individuals (Hofstede, 2010). The high acceptance of power status in Saudi culture can be seen in various contexts. Saudi students in an academic context, for instance, show a high level of deference to their teachers and instructors (Alamri, Cristea and Al-Zaidi, 2014). The study of Noer, Leupold and Valle (2007), shows that there are significant differences in coaching style between American and Saudi managers with the latter showing a greater acceptance for hierarchical status. As shown by the present data, considering the power status of the fathers when the participants made requests to parents in a social context was apparent in the use of indirect strategies or expressions that show a higher degree of politeness and formality.

In addition, the impact of Saudi hierarchical status was shown by the tendency to employ imperatives in the requests to requestees with lower status, as well as the avoidance of imperatives in requests to hearers who are higher in status than speakers. The requests in work/study contexts also have highlighted the
significant impact of the hierarchical system in Saudi culture. As discussed previously, older individuals in Saudi culture are usually treated as higher in power status, thus as shown by the data the older participants tended to use more imperatives in their requests to younger colleagues. The use of forms of address in work/study contexts showed that younger subjects tended to use more politeness markers and formal occupational forms than the older subjects (see section 5.6).

In the second dimension of Hofstede’s model on culture, Saudi Arabia is classified as a collectivist culture. According to Alamri et al. (2014), the collectivist nature of Saudi students can be reflected by studying collaboratively in groups rather than individually and also by accepting the recommendations from their peers to help in their academic endeavours. The data of the current study support this classification and show that Saudi individuals tend to show their loyalty behaviour through their relationships by the use of various linguistic strategies such as brotherhood and kinship forms of address even when addressing unfamiliar individuals. The use of most direct strategies such as imperatives and other expressions that show intimacy in close relationships also show the collectivist nature of Saudis. In examining a model of managerial coaching with a sample of Saudi Arabian and U.S. managers and examining cultural influences on coaching behaviours, Noer et al. (2007) found that as a result of their Islamic values Saudi managers adopted a collectivist orientation and showed a less individualist style.

While some studies show that Saudi Arabia has a greater tendency towards masculinity (Alamri et al., 2014; Hofstede, 1985), other studies have shown that the collectivist nature of Saudi culture leads to building emotional connection and using relationship-based behaviours between Saudi individuals. This therefore, contributes to characterizing Saudi culture as a feminine culture (Al-Meer, 1993; Cassell and Blake, 2012; Dedoussis, 2004; Noer et al., 2007). According to Dedoussis (2004), Arab managers are closer to the feminine side of the masculine/feminine scale as they tend to establish friendly relationships and show a greater tendency towards socially imposed commitments of larger groups including one’s family and work organization. In the context of politeness, the findings of this study support Al Ageel (2010) on Saudi compliment responses and Nelson et al. (1993) on Egyptian compliments that show that Arabs use various kinship, endearment and religious expressions and this shows the feminine dimension in the Arabian culture. As discussed in Chapter Two (section 2.4.3) the classification of Saudi culture along the masculinity/femininity dimension raises some difficult issues.

Because of the factor of gender segregation and the dominant role of Saudi males in most sectors in Saudi society, there is only a small literature concerned with Saudi females’ behaviour under Hofstede’s model on cultural dimensions. In addition, because of the focus in several studies on Saudi males this might be one of the reasons of identifying Saudi culture as a masculine culture. The classification of Arab countries including Saudi Arabia on the scale of masculinity/femininity is mostly at the midpoint

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15 The relationship between the Islamic and cultural values that form the collectivist nature in Saudi society has been discussed in Chapter Two (section 2.4.2).
and this, according to At-Twaijri and Al-Muhaiza (1996), results from the impact of the Islamic values and the tribal system that encourage cooperating amongst individuals of the same groups that increases the feminine nature and on the other hand from the impact of the dominant role of males in Saudi society that maximizes the masculine nature amongst Saudi individuals. Thus, there is a need for further studies that focus on wider perspectives to minimize the ambiguity and to provide more understanding about Saudi culture in terms of this dimension.

As for the Islamic beliefs on fatalism, Saudi culture has a high score in the scale of the fourth dimension (uncertainty avoidance) (Al Ageel, 2010; Bjerke & Al-Meer, 1993; Noer et al. 2007). Managers in Gulf countries avoid uncertainties because they believe that they are threatened by ambiguous and uncertain situations and this behaviour reflect the high uncertainty avoidance in such a culture (At-Twaijri and Al-Muhaiza, 1996). The findings of this study supported this tendency for uncertainty avoidance by employing religious expressions that show that the participants as Muslims believe that God is the only controller of the universe and all surrounding events (see section 5.7).

The following discussion will provide an insight into some of the issues around the similarities and differences in politeness behaviour in the Saudi context compared with politeness behaviour in other contexts.

5.10 Saudi politeness behaviour in comparison with politeness behaviour in other cultures

The data analysis of Saudi requests based on Brown and Levinson’s model of linguistic politeness and on the CCSARP notion of request strategies showed that while there is a degree of universality in some of the aspects of these frameworks, there are on the other hand culturally specific features related to communicative patterns in Saudi culture. This study supports the classifications of Brown and Levinson and CCSARP that include three levels of directness: most direct, conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect. Because requests have a degree of complexity in Saudi culture especially concerning gender, this study also focused on the fourth category, i.e. the opting out strategy.

Brown and Levinson describe the levels of directness as universal and consider that the use of indirect strategies is associated with showing a higher degree of politeness. However, this study in addition to several studies on Arabic requests (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a; Marrani and Sazalie, 2010b), has shown that the use of direct requests does not contradict and can be interpreted as polite behaviour. Additionally, according to Ogiermann (2009), what Brown and Levinson believe (i.e. equating politeness with indirectness and associating pragmatic clarity and directness with the lack of the concern of the hearer’s face) is a reflection of Anglo-Saxon values. The concept also does not consider that some cultures appreciate clarity and associate directness with honesty.
While the use of direct strategies in the Arabic context is interpreted as a means of showing intimacy and close relationships, the use of direct strategies in some cultures, as Ogiermann (2009) claims, is associated with the preference for pragmatic clarity and hence showing honesty. Making direct requests in Russian, for instance, involves less face loss for a Russian speaker than a speaker from an Anglo-Saxon linguistic background. The main reason is that for a Russian hearer a request is not considered as an imposition on her/his freedom, since a refusal is an expected behaviour within such a context (Ogiermann, 2009).

The use of direct requests in such cultures is usually associated with employing various linguistic modifications such as forms of address and politeness markers to make the requestive expressions sound more polite (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a; Marrani and Sazalie, 2010b; Ogiermann, 2009). Another related issue is the use of imperatives when making requests. As shown by the findings of this study, the use of imperatives in Saudi Arabic is an accepted behaviour when the speaker has a higher status than the hearer or when both interlocutors are equal in power status. In other cases however, imperatives might be interpreted as impolite. The use of want statements, on the other hand, is the most preferred strategy for making direct requests since they sound more polite when the speaker has less power than the hearer.

According to Wierzbicka (2003), the use of imperatives in English is restricted to certain situations. One of these situations is public speech, such as advertisements, where the hearer is supposed to be anonymous. Nevertheless, the use of imperatives when making requests to a known hearer or in private, the use of imperatives might be interpreted as an impolite behaviour. The main reason is that because an English speaker does not assume that the hearer could be forced to do something and thus imperatives should be accompanied with interrogatives or other grammatical expressions to make the requests more polite (Wierzbicka, 2003).

However, in other western cultures such as Polish the use of direct requests as imperatives can be interpreted as an accepted and polite behaviour (Ogiermann, 2009; Wierzbicka, 2003). In fact, while the use of interrogatives and other grammatical constructions such as infinitives in English requests might be positively interpreted as distance-building devices since Anglo-Saxon culture associates this behaviour with respect for the individual, the use of such expressions in Polish requests on the other hand might be interpreted negatively as hostility and alienation (Wierzbicka, 2003: 37). This cultural aspect i.e. the use of direct requests as a means of showing closeness to the hearer is also applicable to the Arabic culture as supported by the findings of this study.

Regarding the use conventionally indirect request strategies, it can be said that Arabic is similar to Russian and Polish, and relies more on direct requests. However, all these cultures employ a wide range of conventional indirect strategies, similarly to English, to express a high degree of formality in various
contexts (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a; Marrani and Sazalie, 2010b; Ogiermann, 2009). The present findings showed that the participants employed a wide range of hearer-oriented perspective expressions and this tendency reflects Saudi cultural values on building close relationships between the interlocutors.

This study focused on two different age groups to find whether there is a difference in politeness behaviour across the two age groups. The findings showed that in some situations the two age groups used different request strategies. One of the tendencies amongst the older age group was the preference for direct requests (especially in study/work contexts) because older speakers in the Saudi speech community have relatively higher status than the younger ones. Additionally, the impact of age is also clear in the use of kinship and deference terms to show respect to older females and males. According to Tran (2010) politeness is a major concern for Vietnamese speakers and this can be shown through the use of terms of address that show that older individuals in Vietnamese culture have a higher power status. When younger Vietnamese females address females of the same age, they use terms that show familiarity and equal social status. However, they avoid imperatives and use different terms such as kinship terms to address older age females (Tran, 2010).

The factor of age is also significant in Bugis politeness behaviour (Mahmud, 2013). In Bugis society, age differences affect the choice of politeness strategies, and younger individuals are expected to show more deference through certain expressions and terms when addressing older ones (Mahmud, 2013).

According to Tao (2010), Japanese and Chinese speech communities’ members believe that the failure in producing polite expressions in a communicative situation might be interpreted as impolite behaviour. Furthermore, while the social variables of social distance, relative power and group membership have a greater impact on Japanese politeness behaviour, the four notions of respectfulness, modesty, attitudinal warmth and refinement that form the concept of Limao in Chinese culture show that Chinese have a greater tendency for using polite expressions with older people, strangers and unfamiliar hearers. This behaviour, according to Tao (2010) is because in Chinese culture polite behaviour is praised by the society and it increases one’s reputation (laiin and mainzi). Polite behaviour amongst the Japanese is related to the concepts of uchi (in-group) and soto (out-group) and this is usually shown in the use of polite expressions with one’s superiors and older members in the same school or workplace.

In addition to social distance and power status, gender is considered one of the distinctive social variables that affect the communicative patterns amongst interlocutors in Saudi society. Gender segregation is the most significant cultural factor affecting the communicative patterns between females and males in Saudi society. One of the findings of this study was the preference for opting out strategies to avoid interacting with male strangers. Nevertheless, the impact of gender was manifested even in close relationships when most of the participants preferred more formal and indirect strategies with their male
relatives, while informal and expressions of intimacy with their female relatives. The impact of gender is associated with differences in politeness behaviour in several other speech communities. For instance, sex-differences play an important role in the communication system of Buginese society. According to Mahmud (2013), even if both females and males have equal power status, Buginese females usually tend to choose more polite expressions when they address males. Additionally, differences in politeness behaviour across genders were found in Yemeni request behaviour. According to Marrani and Sazalie (2010a), while Yemeni males prefer using most direct requests when addressing other males, they tend to employ more conventionally indirect requests in male-female interaction.

Other studies on Japanese and Chinese cultures have also shown that females tend to be more verbally polite than males (Xuemei, Jinling, and Binhong, 2007; Tao, 2010). The impact of gender as shown by the findings of this study can be seen by the use of forms of address. In addressing unfamiliar females, for instance, the participants used various forms such as kinship and endearment forms. Nevertheless, the participants showed a greater tendency to avoid such expressions in addressing unfamiliar males.

Nevertheless, this discussion leads to other issues related to the impact of gender on politeness behaviour across various contexts. While sex-differences in Saudi communicative patterns play a significant role because they result from religious and cultural values, gender could be seen as a contradictive factor in other contexts. Holmes (2013), for instance, claims that the differences between the two genders result from the psychological nature of both women and men. While women are more concerned with establishing connection and seek involvement with others, men on the other hand are concerned with autonomy and seek independency (Holmes, 2013). Holmes (2013) and others (such as Zimmerman and West (1975); Fishman (1978, 1980); Tannen (1984, 1990)) characterize women as the ones who use more polite strategies than men and prefer mitigating devices and face saving linguistic expressions.

However, gender in politeness behaviour is seen by other researchers as a factor that should not be analysed in isolation from other norms of the community of practice (Lorenzo and Bou, 2003; Mills, 2002; Okamoto’s, 2002). Within this context, it is also important to mention that the findings of this study focused only on female speakers and the differences were in their behaviour when they made requests in female-female and female-male interactions and this means that Saudi male behaviour as a speaker is not included in the findings. This suggests a need for additional research on the role of gender in the Saudi speech community.

5.11 Summary

This chapter discussed the main features of requests in study/work contexts and as a result of gender segregations in the Saudi educational system the hearers in the role play scenarios were all females.

16 A language spoken by people of Sulawesi (an Indonesian peninsula).
Similar to the analysis in Chapter Four, the analysis included socio-pragmatic investigations for the impact of the social factors (PS, SD, DI) on requests in the given contexts. Based on the aims of the study the analysis also included comparison between the two generations.

As shown in Chapter Four, the data in this chapter showed that the informants preferred the most direct strategies when they made requests to hearers in close relationships. It can be suggested that this preference results from the nature of Arabic that is characterized as one of the languages oriented towards positive politeness (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a; Marrani and Sazalie, 2010b). As discussed previously, while Arabic native speakers use most direct strategies in addressing the positive face of the hearers, they use on the other hand strategies that function as softeners i.e. external and internal modifications for the requests’ impositional levels. The data showed that want statements were the most preferred sub-strategies amongst other direct strategies. This behaviour means that want statements are the most convenient and less threatening than imperatives, that requires a high degree of mayanah\(^{17}\). The data also showed that there was an obvious impact of the degree of imposition through the preference of using conventional indirect strategies in (DI+) even amongst interlocutors in close relationships, since they are the most convenient strategies in such contexts.

In distant relationships, the data revealed that there was a relative preference for opting out strategies by both age groups - this means that it is better to avoid making the request instead of making it to an unfamiliar person. As shown in a social context, the impact of the social factor of kulfah\(^{18}\) was also obvious in requests in work/study contexts. That means that in Arabic requests, when the kulfah is high between the requester and the requestee, the speaker usually tends to employ very polite strategies or in some contexts to not perform the speech act.

The data showed that conventional indirect requests and its sub-strategies were employed by the informants of the two age groups in various contexts with a relatively higher preference amongst the younger subjects. Hearer-oriented strategies were dominant amongst the perspectives of conventional indirect requests, and this tendency shows that Arabic is oriented towards positive politeness. Most of the informants also used expressions that refer to possibility as the most general amongst other conventions of means.

For the purposes of showing a higher level of politeness, solidarity or softening the force of requests, the results reveal that the participants included in their requests various external modifications. However, the highest frequencies were for preparators and grounders. Other linguistic strategies i.e. internal

---

\(^{17}\) As discussed previously, this social factor is achieved when the speaker has a very close relationship with the hearer, the speaker has a higher power status than the hearer or when both interlocutors are equal in power.

\(^{18}\) The factor of kulfah is achieved when there is a large distance and a high degree of formality between the interlocutors.
modifications were also employed in the requests in study/work contexts. The most frequent use was for politeness markers, interrogatives and religious expressions.

The results also showed that the younger subjects used more external modifications than the older ones. This behaviour shows that the older individuals have more power and because of their age they tend to make requests with less linguistic modifications. The data also showed some interesting results regarding the use of address forms in study/work contexts. In close relationships, most of the informants employed first names to address other female hearers. Nevertheless, politeness markers and occupation-related address forms were the most frequent terms that were employed in formal situations. This variation in using address forms can be also a result of the impact of both power status and social distance.

The use of religious expressions was also included in several situations and also referred, as shown by the data, to various functions such as invocation, greetings and other formulaic expressions.

The last section of this chapter provided the statistical analysis regarding the data of requests in study/work contexts. The first statistical task was to find whether there was a significant difference between the two groups across the twelve scenarios. In close relationships the T-test showed that the difference between the two age groups was significant only when they made requests to students or employees in a context of (S>H, DI+). In distant relationships however, there were more significant differences in the behaviour of the two age groups. The differences were in their requests to classmates/colleagues in contexts of (S=H, DI-) and (S=H, DI+) and these differences resulted from the tendency amongst OAG towards negative politeness and opting out strategies in making requests to unknown hearers.

As shown by the statistical results of the intra-group differences and similarities, the impact of (DI) was more obvious on the behaviour of the younger informants who changed their strategies in three situations (S<H, CSD), (S=H, CSD) and (S<H, DSD). The older subjects, on the other hand, showed more stability in their request behaviour and the only significant difference was in their requests in (S<H, DI+). A paired-sample test was performed to show the impact of social distance on requests that were made by the informants of both age groups and interestingly, it was found that there was significant impact for social distance in most situations. Another paired-sample test was performed to assess the impact of power status on request behaviour of the two age groups and the findings showed that the informants tended more to reward power status in distant relationships.

One of the aims of this study was to examine the differences in request behaviour in two different contexts i.e. social and study/work contexts. The data of requests to males were excluded since all requests in study/work contexts were made to female hearers. The results of the statistical analysis revealed that the informants showed behavioural differences in their use of politeness and request
strategies although all their requests in both social and study/work contexts were to female hearers. This means that the contextual differences and other surrounding circumstances can affect politeness behaviour amongst the individuals of one culture.

One of the issues discussed in this chapter was politeness behaviour within the context of Hofsetede’s dimensions of cultures. The use of request strategies by Saudi females showed that Saudi culture has a high acceptance of the male hierarchical status and is classified as collectivist, yet with certain feminine traits. Finally, this chapter discussed some issues related to universal and culture specific principles of politeness theory. The final section also focused on the impact of the social variables of age, social distance and gender on the communicative patterns in Saudi culture.
This chapter discusses the results of the socio-pragmatic analysis of the data of the second sub-study i.e. requests in Saudi Pidgin Arabic. Moreover, the chapter presents the analysis of this type of spoken request by two age groups of Saudi females in work/study contexts to female Asian foreign workers in Saudi Arabia.

As mentioned in Chapter Three, one of the significant advantages of collecting natural conversations in a social context is to provide more validity. However, the difficulty in controlling the social variables means that some researchers consider this method as a disadvantage. Since the social variables are stable in this study ($S>H$, CSD, D-) and since the first sub-study mainly focused on the linguistic and grammatical features of requests in Saudi Pidgin Arabic, authentic data was collected for this part of the study. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the data was collected by audio-recording natural conversations between Saudi native speakers and non-native speakers of Arabic while the former were ordering their breakfast from the cafeteria. The participants were divided into two generations. There were sixteen participants from the staff and the trainees in a Saudi governmental institute: eight female Saudi participants aged 20-39; and eight female Saudi participants aged 40-60. Because this study focuses on requests, the most convenient context was to collect data when the participants were requesting breakfast from the cafeteria by phone or face to face. Only the conversations of the Saudi subjects were included in the data analysis.

At the time of the data collection, there were two Asian females working in the cafeteria of the governmental institute. They were both from Nepal and aged 30-40. They are called Beth and Sonia19. In addition to their mother tongue i.e. Nepalese language, they speak English. As can be seen from the data, they were communicating with the subjects by using Saudi Pidgin Arabic (SPA) and English.

6.1 Transcription

As mentioned in an early section in this research project, one of the challenges in the transcription is the choice of orthography. Firstly, there is a great difference between Arabic and Roman orthography symbols (Al-Moaily, 2008). Secondly, the direction of writing is different in English (left to right) and in Arabic (right to left). According to Al-Moaily (2008), these differences can be problematic because the glosses and the interpretation should be both written from left to right and are also supposed to be exactly under each word. To overcome these issues, and as suggested by Al-Moaily (2008), a four part structure for the examples was opted for. The first line of each example has been written in Arabic followed by a second line in transliteration in Roman script. The third line includes interlinear glossing in a right-to-left direction and an English paraphrase for the Arabic sentence is given in the fourth line (Al-Moaily, 2008).

19 Pseudonyms.
6.2 Analysis and discussion

The following discussion focuses on the most significant features of SPA found in the elicited data. As mentioned, since the subjects of the current study were Saudi females, the analysis only includes the variety of SPA used by female native speakers of Saudi Arabic. Additionally, the analysis focuses on the most distinctive characteristics that are related to the linguistic and grammatical systems of a number of elements: the noun phrase, the verb phrase, affixation, the copula *fii*, pronouns and demonstrative pronouns and lexical features. All issues will be discussed in detail in the following section.

6.2.1 The verb phrase

This section focuses on the general features of the verbal system of SPA and provides the differences and similarities between the same feature in SPA and its lexifier (Najdi Arabic\(^ {20} \)). This section also focuses on the elements systematically associated with the verb i.e. tense and aspect, modality and mood.

6.2.1.1 The verb

The use of verbs in SPA is limited and when they do occur, they are usually employed as imperfect or imperative verbs in a predicate structure with a lack of tense, aspect or mood markers (Al-Azraqi, 2010; Wiswall, 2002). In Najdi Arabic, on the other hand, the verbal system is complex and the use of verbs is subject to systematic grammatical categorization. According to Wiswall (2002) who refers to Gulf Arabic\(^ {21} \), the grammatical forms of verbs can usually be affixed or suffixed by different object clitics. Nevertheless, the data of the current study shows that the verb in SPA is mostly used in its original form without any markers for tense and aspect or agreement in gender, number or person with the subject. Amongst the most common verbs employed in the elicited data were: *y-bgha* with a variant *yibee* ‘want’ (3rd Sing. Masc. Imperfect); *sawwii* ‘make’ (2nd Sing. Fem. Imperative); *y-jeeb* ‘bring’ (3rd Sing. Masc. Imperfect); *jeeb* ‘bring’ (2nd Sing. Masc. Imperative) and *jeebii* ‘bring’ (2nd Sing. Fem. Imperative).

Consider the following example:

1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>jubnah</th>
<th>crowason</th>
<th>wahid</th>
<th>yibgha</th>
<th>‘ana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cheese</td>
<td>croissant</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>he wants (3rd Sing. Masc. Present)</td>
<td>I (1st Sing. Pronoun)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I want one cheese croissant.

---

\(^{20}\) This variety is spoken by Saudis who live in the middle region of Saudi Arabia.

\(^{21}\) Gulf Arabic is similar to Najdi Arabic since both are dialects of the Arabic language and because both varieties represent dialects of Gulf countries.
As can be seen from the data, the imperfect verb *yibgha* that has the prefix */y/-* that indicates (3rd Sing. Masc. Subject) in Najdi Arabic is used in SPA instead of the verb *a’bgha* that has the prefix */a/-* that refers to (1st Sing. Subject) in the SPA lexifier. This supports the study of Bakir (2010) who believes that the verbal form in Gulf Pidgin Arabic is frozen and used in all sentences without agreement with the subject’s gender or number. According to Bakir (2010), the same verb form can also be used in various contexts of different time and subject references.

Nevertheless, the use of verbs in SPA is unstable, which means that two forms of a verb can be used alternatively within the same conversation by the same speaker. Consider the following example:

2-:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperatives</th>
<th>Imperfects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>sawii</em></td>
<td><em>y-sawwii</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>jeeb</em></td>
<td><em>y-jeeb</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You bring the yogurt then bring the bag.

As can be seen from the conversation, the speaker employs the verb ‘bring’ with different reflections i.e. (2nd Sing. Masc. Imperative and 3rd Sing. Masc. Imperfect). In fact, the data of this study support the study of Bakir (2010) who claims that the instability in the use of verbs in GPA is due to some of the linguistic features of its lexifier (Gulf Arabic). For instance, the imperfect verb stem in Gulf Arabic without the prefix */y/-* refers to the imperative of (2nd Sing. Masc. Imperative) (Bakir, 2010). Consider the following verbs that were taken from the data of the current study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperatives</th>
<th>Imperfects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>sawii</em></td>
<td><em>y-sawwii</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>jeeb</em></td>
<td><em>y-jeeb</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While Bakir (2010) believes the variability in verb use is a source of confusion amongst non-native speakers of Arabic, the use of verbs in such a way amongst the native Arab speakers, as the data of the current study shows, might result from imitating the Asian workers as a means of simplifying the language i.e. SPA. On the other hand, Salim (2013) claims that multifunctionality in the use of verbs in Kuwaiti Pidgin Arabic (KPA22) is a result of the limited vocabulary and the lack of inflections.

The following section provides a more detailed discussion of tense, aspect and mode (TAM) markers in SPA used in the data of the current study.

---

22 In several contexts, both Kuwaiti and Saudi pidgins belong to Gulf Pidgin Arabic.
6.2.1.2 Tense and aspect

Concerning its verbal system, one of the distinctive features of SPA is the absence of tense and aspect markers which means that the same form of one verb is used to represent two different tenses. Consider the following examples:

3.-

مفرود؟ خبز ما في سوي ليش

mafroua khubuz sawwii mafii liash

Lebanese (bread) bread Make (2nd Sing. Fem. Imperative) here no (negation, copula) why

Why did (you) not make Lebanese bread?

4.-

سوي مفرود... لازم إنتي

mafroud sawwii enttii laazim

Lebanese Make (2nd Sing. Fem. you) (2nd Sing. Fem. (Obligatory) (bread) (Imperative) Pronoun)

You have to make Lebanese (bread) (sandwich)....

As can be seen in both examples, the only way to determine the tense and the aspect of the verb is to consider the context of the conversation (Al-Azraqi, 2010; Al-Moaily, 2008; Salem, 2013; Smart, 1990).

6.2.1.3 Modality

The modality system in SPA is also derived from its lexifier (Najdi Arabic) that exhibits a wider range of modal forms (Bakir, 2010). Similarly to the verbal system in SPA, forms of modality are independent forms that are expressed as participles or verbs and are characterized by their limited grammatical use. The lexical items of modality maintain a functional status regardless of their lexical content (Bakir, 2010). For example, necessity/obligation in SPA was only expressed by the form laazim ‘obligatory’ and possibility was expressed by the form mumkin ‘possible’. The following examples were taken from the elicited data:

5.-

سوي مفرود... لازم إنتي

mafroud sawwii ‘enttii laazim

Lebanese Make (2nd Sing. Fem. Imperative) you (2nd Sing. Fem. Pronoun) (Obligatory)

You have to make Lebanese (bread) (sandwich)....
In addition to the participles laazim and mumkin, modality in SPA can be expressed using verbs. The verb yigdar ‘can’, for instance, was employed as follows by one of the participants in her requests for tea from the cafeteria worker:

Can you bring me some tea?

6.2.1.4 Mood

Verbs in Arabic and its dialects have a wide range of mood variation. However, as in other pidgins, SPA shows a limited use of mood, and verb use is mainly restricted to either the imperative form as shown by Bakir (2010) and Bizri (2009), or imperfect verbs without prefixes that indicate the gender and the number of the subject or tense (Al-Azraqi, 2010). Consider the verbs sawwii (make) and yijeeb (bring) in Examples (5) and (7).

6.2.1.5 Affixation

In Classical Arabic and its dialects, verbs are usually distinguished by the prefixes/suffixes that are used to indicate the tense of the verb and the gender and the number of the subjects (Al-Azraqi, 2010; Smart, 1990). However, the data show that verbs such as sawwii ‘make’ are commonly used in SPA in its imperative form in various contexts without its inflections. The following are some forms of the verb sawii in Najdi Arabic when it is attached to different prefixes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sawwa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd.Sing.Masc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saww</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>2nd.Sing.Masc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yi-saww-ii</td>
<td>yi-</td>
<td>-ii</td>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>3rd.Sing.Masc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saww-at</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-at</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>3rd.Sing.Fem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saww-ii</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-ii</td>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>2nd.Sing.Fem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following section focuses on the most significant features of the noun phrase in SPA.

**6.2.2 The noun phrase**

Before providing the data analysis for noun phrases in SPA, it is important to shed light on the most significant features that distinguish the noun phrase in Arabic and in its variety (Najdi Arabic). In Arabic, the basic element for the predication structure (the noun phrase) is nominal sentences and they consist of the predicand that provides the main theme of the sentence and the predicate\(^{23}\) that usually comes after the predicands and includes information about the predicand (Al-Azraqi, 2010). Predicands in Arabic and in Najdi Arabic that are usually definite have several forms and can be personal or demonstrative pronouns, proper nouns, nouns with definite articles or nouns annexed to annexes (Al-Azraqi, 1998; Al-Azraqi, 2010).

The data show that the use of the predication structure in SPA is limited and inconsistent, unlike Najdi Arabic. The following examples were employed in both SPA and Najdi Arabic. They were all taken from the data and they all stand for the expression ‘how\(^{24}\) are you?’:

8-

a-

إنتي؟

'entii? haal kaif

you (2\(^{nd}\) Sing. Fem. Pronoun)? condition how

b-

كيف حالك؟

haalik? kaif

condition + (2\(^{nd}\) Sing. Fem. Personal. Suffix) how

c-

؟

\(^{23}\) However, it is very common in Arabic that the predicate precedes the predicand.

\(^{24}\) All interrogative tools in these expressions come as proceeded predicates.
how + (2\textsuperscript{nd} Sing. Fem. Personal. Suffix)?

In example (8a), the participant uses SPA to greet the hearer and employs the interrogative tool (how) and a free pronoun (you). On the other hand, in examples (8b) and (8c) such as commonly used in Najdi Arabic for greetings, the predication structures include the suffix (-\textit{ik}) that is usually used to address the second singular feminine person.

In addition, predication phrases have also been accomplished in the data of the current study through the use of the copula \textit{fii} as follows:

9.

\textit{kwayes} \quad \textit{mafii} \quad \textit{ba’deen}

\begin{tabular}{lll}
good & (negation, copula) & then \\
\end{tabular}

It will not be good then.

The use of copula \textit{fii} extends to serve more functions in SPA. Hence, it will be focused on the following section.

6.2.3 The copula and the copula \textit{fii}

Both the current study and other studies found that one of the prevalent features of SPA is the use of the copula \textit{fii} (Al-Moaily, 2008; Smart, 1990; Salem, 2013; Wiswall, 2002). As claimed by Wiswall (2002), the copula \textit{fii} in Gulf Pidgin (GP\textsuperscript{25}) is not only prevalent, but is overused and considered a major feature. Since Najdi Arabic is the lexifier of SPA, it is important to provide more understanding of the concept of the copula and its main characteristics in both varieties (Najdi Arabic and SPA). Firstly, the copula in Najdi Arabic has the following features (Al-Moaily, 2008).

- In the past tense, the copula (\textit{kan} +subject agreement) is as follows:

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textit{Mona} \quad \textit{kanat} \quad \textit{maridah} \quad \textit{ams} \\
Mona & past.cop+agr.fem & sick & yesterday \\
\end{tabular}

\begin{tabular}{ll}
Mona was sick yesterday. \\
\end{tabular}

\textsuperscript{25} Saudi Pidgin Arabic is very similar to Gulf Pidgin and they are sometimes used alternatively to refer to the same variety.
In the present tense, Najdi Arabic is a null copula:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{hu} & \text{tabeeb} \\
\text{pro.3p.sing.masc.} & \text{doctor.masc.}
\end{array}
\]

He is a doctor.

In the future tense, the copula in Najdi Arabic is represented by the prefix \( b \) or the lexical term \( rah \) as future markers.

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{Ali} & \text{bykoon/rah yekoon} & \text{hina} \\
\text{Ali} & \text{fut.cop.sub.agr} & \text{here}
\end{array}
\]

Ali will be here.

Additionally, the inflection system is rich in Najdi Arabic and there is an agreement between the copula and the subject for number, person and gender (Al-Moaily, 2008).

The copula in SPA, on the other hand, has less complexity and the inflection system is more simplified than in Najdi Arabic (Al-Moaily, 2008). It is represented by the element \( fii \) that serves various functions according to the context. The copula \( fii \) is borrowed from Arabic (the lexifier of SPA) and as in English, \( fii \) together with its negative form \( mafii \) are both used to serve the meanings of (there is), (is there?) or (there is not) in addition to the meaning of the preposition (in) in Najdi Arabic (Bakir, 2010). The following examples were taken from the data:

10-
\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{اليوم؟} & \text{حليب} & \text{في} \\
\text{elyoum?} & \text{haleeb} & \text{fii}
\end{array}
\]

\text{Is there (any) milk today?}

11-
\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{مافي؟} & \text{’eash} & \text{في} & \text{ساندويتش؟} \\
\text{Mafii?} & \text{sandwich?} & \text{fii} & \text{‘eash}
\end{array}
\]

\text{What kind of sandwiches there is? There isn’t (any)?}
As can be seen, in examples (10) and (11) the copula represents both ‘there is’ and ‘there is not’.

Furthermore, the copula *fii* is considered to be a verb in some contexts (Smart, 1990) for two reasons: it is used before adjectives and nouns in equational sentences; and it is used before the main verb to form a compound verb. Consider the following examples that were taken from the elicited data:

12-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>العدد</th>
<th>الفعل</th>
<th>الجملة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>سيم سيم؟</td>
<td><em>fii</em></td>
<td><em>youn</em> <em>kull</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>السما*</td>
<td>(adj.)</td>
<td>there no there no (negation, copula)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same (food) is not available every day?

13-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>العدد</th>
<th>الفعل</th>
<th>الجملة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>أشترى</td>
<td><em>fii</em></td>
<td><em>'eash</em> <em>ashouf</em> <em>'ana</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>a'shtrey</em></td>
<td>(1st Sing. Present)</td>
<td>there (copula)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I will look (and decide) what I will buy.

In Example (12), the speaker (the subject) asks the hearer (the Asian lady who works in the cafeteria) if they serve the same food every day, while in Example (13), the speaker requests the hearer to bring the chocolate bars so she can decide what to buy. As we can see, the copula *fii* is used in conjunction with the adjective ‘the same’ in Example (12) and is used in conjunction with the verb ‘buy’ in Example (13).

Other researchers provide different definitions for the copula *fii*. Al-Azraqi (2010), for instance, defines the copula *fii*\(^{26}\) as a particle since it serves various functions in the sentences. Besides the functions already mentioned here, Al-Azraqi (2010) claims that the particle *fii* functions as a possessive pronoun. In the following example that was taken from the data of the older subjects, the copula *fii* is employed to serve such a function:

14-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>العدد</th>
<th>الفعل</th>
<th>الجملة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كيس</td>
<td><em>fii</em></td>
<td><em>'ana</em> <em>Beth</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>..…</td>
<td>(copula)</td>
<td>I (1st Sing. Pronoun)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{26}\) Or *fi* in the transcript of Al-Azraqi (2010).
Beth, I have a bag…..

While this example supports the claims of Al-Azraqi (2010) and Smart (1990) regarding the concept of this use of the copula *fii*, Naess (2008) argues that the use of copula *fii* is rare in this variety of pidgin.

The data analysis shows that in addition to *fii*, demonstrative pronouns also can function as a copula in SPA as in the following example:

15-

\[ \text{maktab} \quad \text{hatha} \quad \text{‘ana} \]

\[ \text{office} \ldots \quad \text{this} \quad \text{I} \]

I am in office…

The following section focuses on the use of pronouns and demonstrative pronouns in SPA.

### 6.2.4 Pronouns and demonstrative pronouns

As previously mentioned, each recorded conversation took place between two females (the participant and the cafeteria worker). Thus, the only pronouns that should have been employed in the conversations were: أنا, ‘*ana* ‘I’ (1st sing. Pronoun) and أنتي, ‘*entii* ‘you’ (2nd Sing. Pronoun). In fact, although some studies show more use of pronouns in SPA and GPA, it can be said that these varieties are still limited and have not been developed yet to achieve a systematic use of pronouns and other lexical features (Al-Azraqi, 2010).

The data show that free pronouns were employed to serve the function of the suffixes or the bound pronouns such as */-ik/* that was discussed in Example (8) and such as */-ii/* as follows:

16-

\[ \text{jeeb} \quad \text{‘entii} \]

\[ \text{bring (2nd Sing. Masc. Imperative)} \quad \text{you (2nd Sing. Fem. Pronoun)} \]

17-

\[ \text{jeebii} \]

\[ \text{bring (2nd Sing. Fem. Imperative)} \]
While both examples mean ‘you bring’, the free pronoun ‘entii’ in Example (16 a) employed by the participant in SPA serves the function of the suffix i.e. the bound pronoun (-i) in the same verb in Example (16 b) employed in Najdi Arabic. Additionally, as shown in Example (17 a) and (17 b) free pronouns in possessive expressions in SPA are used in place of bound pronouns that come as suffixes with nouns in noun phrases. The results of the current study support the results of Al-Azraqi (2010) who claims that one of the main reasons of the prevalence use of free pronouns is the limited use of bound pronouns in pidgin varieties. The data show that the use of demonstrative pronouns is limited and not consistent with the use of such pronouns in Najdi Arabic. For instance, the demonstrative pronoun ‘hatha’ ‘this’ was employed in Example (17) as a copula in SPA and this function does not exist in its lexifier (Najdi Arabic). Moreover, in Al-Azraqi (2010), the use of demonstrative pronouns in GP did not indicate gender or plurality.

Further features of SPA lexical items will be discussed in the following section.

6.2.5 Lexical features

It is important to focus on some of the lexical features that distinguish the use of SPA. Based on the data of the current study, the following discussion focuses on the use of English vocabulary and repetition in this variety.

6.2.5.1 Borrowing from English

One of the most significant features in SPA is the lack of a vocabulary system. The use of English words, hence, is common in the conversations between native speakers of Saudi Arabic and the speakers of Asian languages (Salem, 2013). The following example is a request by one of the participants:

18-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wahid</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law samahtii</td>
<td>if you permit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'abgha</td>
<td>want (1st Sing. Imperfect)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

chicken sandwich

Wahid 'abgha law samahtii

If you permit one to have a chicken sandwich if you permit

175
Excuse me, I want one chicken sandwich.

For the same reason i.e. the limitation of the lexical items, the data also show that other English words such as: yes, no, okay or Latin numbers are also commonly used in SPA.

6.2.5.2 The use of adjectives

Adjectives in most if not all dialects of Arabic are consistent with nouns in all grammatical aspects. When they are used in sentences they agree with their nouns in gender, number, and in definition (Smart, 1990). However, as claimed by Smart (1990), adjectives in GPA are used without the definite article and are employed in their masculine form. The data of the current study support the findings of Smart (1990) and show that there is inconsistency between adjectives and their nouns in SPA. The following examples were taken from the data:

19-

كويك؟
kwayes?  kaifik

good (Sing. Masc. Adj)  how are you (2nd Sing. Pronoun+ Fem. Suffix)?

How are you? Good?

20-

أصفر  جبنة  واحد  لي  جبي
asfar  jubnah  wahid  lii  jeebii

yellow (Sing. cheese (Uncount. One (Sing. Masc. for me bring (2nd Sing. Masc. Adj) Fem. Noun) Adj) Fem. Imperative)

Bring me one yellow cheese (sandwich).

21-

بيضاء؟
beeda  jubnah  sandwich  fii
Are there any white cheese sandwiches?

In Examples (19) and (20), the participants employ adjectives in SPA that stand for ‘good’ and ‘yellow’ and they do not agree with their nouns. However, the participant in Example (21) uses the adjective ‘white’ in Najdi Arabic with gender agreement.

As discussed in Chapter One, the Arabic language is characterized by the use of repetition for various purposes such as emphasizing or providing more explanation. For instance, the participant in Example (12) employs the adjective (same) in her request with repetition. This feature also supports the findings in the study of Smart (1990) who provides a wider classification for repetition feature in GPA to include adjectives, nouns and adverbs such as:

سريع سريع  
sarī sarī quick quick

boom boom  
bȗm bȗm

سوى سوى  
sawa sawa together

Grammatical characteristics that distinguish negation and employing numbers in SPA will be discussed in the following section.

6.2.6 Negation

One of the most significant markers used by the informants was the prefix /ma-/ , a negation particle in spoken Saudi Arabic, together with the copula fii to indicate negation in their conversations. Consider the following:

22-

a- مشكلة مافي  
mushkilah mafii  
problem (noun) there no (negation. copula)

There is no problem..

b- مافي  
kwayees mafii  
good (adjective) there no (negation. copula)

Not good..

c- مافي  
swa mafii  
 tyre (vehicle part) there no (negation. copula)
As the data indicate, the same formula is used to negate nouns, adjectives and verbs. In addition, the participants employed the negation particle /ma-/ in other contexts as a prefix with the main verb as follows:

23-

\[
Ma\ yi\text{-}jeeb?\quad taboolah\quad fii\quad Beth
\]

Did not bring (3rd Sing. Masc. Negated. Imperfect) taboolah there is (copula) Beth

Beth, is there (any) taboolah? You did not bring (it)?

The alternative use of negation markers /ma-/ and mafii in SPA is very similar to the use of the same strategy in GPA (Bakir, 2010).

6.2.7 Numerals

The data show that the participants employed a few numeric expressions in their conversations. Consider the following examples that were taken from the data:

24-

\[
zabadii\quad wahid
\]

yougurt (Masc Noun) one (Sing. Masc. Adj)

One yogurt

25-

\[
jabnah\quad wahid
\]

cheese (Fem. Noun) one (Sing. Masc. Adj)

One cheese (sandwich)
While the use of numerals in Najdi Arabic is subjected to a systematic order and agreement in gender in its cardinal, dual and plural forms, the use of the same linguistic feature in SPA is simplified and does not follow the same syntactic rules of its lexifier. In Examples (24) and (25), for instance, the use of number ‘one’ to describe both feminine and masculine nouns is expressed by the adjective 

\[ \text{واحد} \]  

\[ wahid \]  

Furthermore, Example (26) shows that the participant employs a simplified form of the adjective ‘second’ that does not agree with the noun.

As in Smart (1990), some participants employed English expressions to express ordinals. This tendency also shows that there is a limitation and a lack of a suitable numbering system of SPA. The following example was employed by one of the participants:

\[ \text{Bring (it) to room number one four seven.} \]

Sociolinguistic issues related to requests from non-native Asian workers will be discussed in the following section.

### 6.3 SPA from a sociolinguistic perspective

This sub-study also shows that all participants used most direct and direct strategies when making requests. The main reason is that the degree of imposition is low i.e. ordering breakfast. In addition, they employed various external and internal modifications. As in the requests in both social and work contexts, they used interrogatives and politeness markers such as:  

\[ \text{ممكن؟} \]  

\[ mumkin? \]  

‘is it possible?’ and  

\[ \text{لا سامتى} \]  

\[ law samahitii \]  

‘would you mind’. Furthermore, the data show that some of the older participants used religious expressions such as invocation and Islamic greetings in their requests. This behaviour as claimed by Al-Qahtani (2009) can be interpreted as a means of showing intimacy between the interlocutors (S>H, CSD, D-).

---

\[ ^{27}\text{The adjective 'one' is used to describe (Sing. Fem. Noun) in Najdi Arabic.} \]
The use of SPA amongst Saudi women also included terms such as *kwayes?*, ‘good?’ and *tayeb?*, ‘okay/fine?’ in most conversations. The use of these linguistic modifications might be similarly interpreted as ways of showing closeness and friendly behaviour between the speaker and the hearer.

Employing English in the conversation between some participants and the Asian workers was one of the linguistic tendencies especially amongst the younger participants\(^{28}\). Consider the following examples:

\(^{28}\) How are you Beth?
I’m fine thank you. Beth can you please send me two tea upstairs?
And can you also…Do you have fatayer cheese?
Okay can I also have one fatayer cheese?
Just one and make the tea three please.
Ya three tea and one fatayer please.
Okay yallah thank you.

---

كيف حال أنتي؟ كويس؟ سونيا في فلافل؟ طيب أغبي واحد فلافل.
طيب في تونة؟ طيب أنا هذا غرفة 147.
 فلافل وثونة وحمص ومتب؟ ما في مثل؟ طيب بابا غنوج فيه؟
طيب أغبي حمص واحد وواحد مثل وواحد فلافل واحد تونة وسفن أبي سفن نب سفن أبي جيببي الساعه 12 ممكن؟
طيب شكرًا.

\( \text{kaif hal 'entii? Kwayias? Sonia fii falafel? Tayeb 'abgha wahid falafel.} \)
\( \text{Tayeb fii tuna? Tayeb 'ana hatha ghurfah 147.} \)
\( \text{Falafel wu tuna wu hummus wu mutabbal fii? Mafii mutabbal? Tayeb baba ghannooj feeh?} \)
\( \text{Tayeb 'abgha wahid hummus wu wahid mutabbal wu wahid tuna wu seven up bas seven up jeebii essa'ah than 'ash, mumkin?} \)
\( \text{Tayeb shukran.} \)

“How are you? Good?”
Sonia, do you have falafel?
Ok, I want one falafel. Ok, do you have tuna?
Ok, I’m in room (number) 147.
Falafel and tuna and hummus and do you have mutabbal?”

\(^{28}\) As mentioned the participants are in the age range of 20-39 and the use of English was more common amongst the younger informants.
There is no mutabbal? That’s fine, so do you have baba ghannooj?

That’s fine, I want one hummus and one mutabbal and one falafel and one tuna and Seven Up, but for the Seven Up bring it at 12 o’clock, okay? “

Ok, thanks”

As can be seen in the following part, in Example (28), the participant employs English in the whole conversation, while the other participant in Example (29) employs both Arabic and SPA in her request to the cafeteria worker. In fact, the growing use of English in modern technology such as cell phones and computers is an obvious reason for the wide use of English words and expressions amongst the younger generations. According to Crystal (2004), one of the reasons that have been led English to be a world language is the power of people who speak it and because it is the language of technology which is associated with the Industrial Revolution.

By focusing on other sociolinguistic dimensions and based on its main linguistic features, it can be concluded that SPA does not have the characteristics of a creole and also does not have its own native speakers. In addition, the use of SPA or GPA can reflect one of the social features that distinguishes communities in Gulf countries. According to Bakir (2010), the reduced system of communication i.e. SPA and GPA, shows that there is a wide social distance between the two groups i.e. Gulf Arabic speakers and speakers from other Asian countries. This situation means that newcomers from those countries do not learn the language of the new country and do not become members of the new culture. The continual flow of workers who only stay for a limited period of time and who find it easier to communicate in a variety of languages that serves the specific purposes such as trade and domestic workers for which they stay (in Gulf countries) is another reason that has justified the existence of SPA and other Gulf pidgins until now.

Additionally, as claimed by Bakir (2010) this type of communication system has become an important source of stock humour, a favourite target of cartoons and other social commentary in the media. For instance, the analysis of Smart (1990) was based on humorous material published in Gulf newspapers, while Al-Azraqi (2010) used conversations from Saudi TV comedy series.

6.4 Summary

This chapter examined requests performed by Saudi women in contact with non-native speakers of Arabic, using Saud Pidgin Arabic (SPA). Based on analysis of the data, this variety has some linguistic features related to both verbal and noun systems. The use of verbs in SPA is limited and restricted to the simplest forms of verbs in most contexts. In addition, the use of verbs in SPA is also not subjected to the rules of the verbal system in Najdi Arabic, the dominant or the lexifier of SPA. The verb tense, aspect, mood and modality and other components of verbs do not reflect their exact features and their exact meanings and tense is usually figured out from the context of interaction. Although there are systematic rules for
affixation in Najdi Arabic, the same linguistic feature is not applied in most contexts of verbal phrases in SPA. Instead, the speakers tend to use the same verb in various contexts to serve different functions.

The most significant features that distinguish the use of noun phrases in SPA is that they do not follow the systematic features of a noun phrase in Najdi Arabic. Because of the reduction of the noun phrase in SPA, the speakers employ markers such as free pronouns to serve functions that differ from functions in the lexifier i.e. Najdi Arabic.

Another noticeable feature in SPA is the use of the copula *fii*. As found in the findings of Smart (1990) and Bakir (2010), the use of *fii* has become a dominant linguistic characteristic in this variety. This wide use of *fii* and its form of negation *mafii* is another consequence of the reduction in the linguistic system of this variety (Bakir, 2010). The analysis shows that there are some lexical features such as borrowing from English, the use of adjectives, repetition, negation and the use of numeric expressions that have been developed, modified or simplified.

The use of SPA also shows that some participants tended to employ more English expressions. Another important issue that has arisen from the discussion of the data is that the use of SPA can reflect one of the features that distinguish the social status of Asian workers in Saudi Arabia i.e. the wide distance between the two social groups.
CHAPTER SEVEN

INFORMAL REQUESTS IN WRITTEN ARABIC

This chapter presents the data of Arabic written requests in an informal context (Arabizi). Furthermore, this chapter focuses on some of the significant linguistic features that distinguish this form of written Arabic. As discussed in Chapter Three, two methods were used to collect data for this sub-study. Authentic data in the form of informal requestive mobile texts were collected. Twenty young female adults in the age range of 20-30 were asked to provide the researcher with twenty requestive texts they had exchanged recently with their friends or family members. Twenty other participants in the same age range were asked to fill in questionnaires that included both open ended and multiple choice questions.

As in Chapter Six, authentic data were collected for the current sub-study because the main focus in this chapter was on the most significant linguistic features and social factors that surround informal Arabic requests rather than social variables. The data include natural conversations and requests in informal contexts.

7.1 The Arabic writing system and some of the contemporary issues

Compared to English, Arabic has more consonants and fewer vowels and it includes twenty letters (Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003; Yaghan, 2008). The orthographic system in both Classical Arabic (CA) and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is phonemic; one letter stands for one sound, nevertheless there are some exceptions in vowel sounds in written Arabic. The short vowels are represented by a set of diacritics or vocalization marks that usually are placed on top or below the letters and they are mainly used in religious or literary texts that represent CA. Nonetheless, written texts in MSA such as handwriting, newspapers and magazines usually include long vowels and diacritics are used only to prevent confusion (Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003; Yaghan, 2008). The following two written forms of Arabic represent the expression al-basmalah, “In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful”. The first example is in CA and the second is in MSA:

1. بِسأمِ اللََِّّ الرَّحأمَََٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ (Classical Arabic)
2. بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (Modern Standard Arabic)

Distinguishing words and meaning in such texts mainly depends on the reader’s background and knowledge of the vowel system, similar to when a reader of an English text decides which pronunciation of the verb read should be used in accordance to the tense and the given context (Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003).

Another distinguishing feature of Arabic orthography is related to the definite article آل. Although it is always represented in the Arabic writing system as “al”, the pronunciation depends on the initial sound of the word that follows it (Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003). For example, while the article is written in
both of the following words, it is only pronounced in al-qamar, القمر, “the moon”; it is not pronounced in ash-shams, الشمس, “the sun”\(^{29}\).

As discussed previously, many other spoken varieties of Arabic have various sounds that are not included in either CA or MAS. Before the widespread use of modern technology, the use of spoken varieties in written forms was restricted to certain texts such as popular poetry, cartoons in newspapers and some TV advertisements (Aboelezz, 2010; Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003). Nevertheless, in recent times modern technology has created a significant change in the form of written Arabic that is used to represent the spoken vernaculars. One of these changes is the use of Latin letters and Arabic numbers to stand for Arabic sounds. As a result the reading direction has changed from left to right and not as in normal Arabic orthography (from right to left) (Aboelezz, 2010; Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003). As mentioned in Chapter Two, the use of electronic types of fonts has created the phenomenon of Arabizi as one of the most common systems of writing informal speech amongst younger generations over the internet and cellular phones (Palfreyman and Al Khalil, 2003; Yaghan, 2008).

In fact, the emergence of this phenomenon is a result of the impact of the writing system of Computer Mediated Communication that is based on Latin characters, and hence is also as a result of the impact of globalisation and the widespread use of English and its close link with technology (Aboelezz, 2010; Al-Khatib & Sabbah, 2008). However, it is important to mention that the purpose of using Arabizi is not to communicate with non-speakers of Arabic, instead it is used as a means of communication amongst Arabic speakers, especially Arab youth (Aboelezz, 2010).

The following section analyses a number of informal written requests in Arabic and focuses on the most significant features related to the phenomenon of Arabizi.

### 7.2 Analysis and discussion

The first part of this section focuses on both the linguistic and sociolinguistic features of informal written Arabic. It is important within this context to mention one of the issues related to the representation of Arabizi. Since this form of written Arabic represents the Najdi variety of Arabic and because it includes both Latin letters and Arabic numerals, it was important to include the phonetic forms of the words, as will be discussed later, to show their exact pronunciation.

The data from the questionnaires will be discussed in the second part of this section.

\(^{29}\) Thus, Arabic letters are divided into two groups: the moon letters and the sun letters according to the pronunciation of the definite article when it comes before the initial sound. The definite article is pronounced when it is combined with moon letters, however it is assimilated into sun letters and loses its sound, while the next sound is duplicated.
7.2.1 The linguistic features of informal written Arabic and the phenomenon of Arabizi

As a result of the diglossic situation of Arabic, informal written Arabic represents the different forms of spoken Arabic (Aboelezz, 2010; Palfreyman and Al Khalil, 2003). It is important to mention that the corpus collected for the current sub-study was for the spoken variety that is used in the middle region of Saudi Arabia i.e. Najdi Arabic. It also is important to mention that the data in this chapter include expressions from spoken Arabic written in both Arabic and in Arabizi. The main focus of the linguistic analysis in this section is on the expressions that have been written in Arabizi, since the focus in Chapters Four and Five was on spoken Arabic.

The following classifications for Arabic consonants and vowels were employed in Palfreyman and Al Khalil (2003). However, the examples were taken from the data of the current study.

7.2.1.1 Arabizi representation of Consonants

The findings of this study show that the Arabizi representation for several Arabic sounds is based on the pronunciation of this sound in English. For example, similarly to the findings of Palfreyman and Al Khalil (2003) and Yaghan (2008), the data of this sub-study show that the participants used the Latin letters : <s> and <t> to represent the sounds /s/ and /t/ respectively instead of the Arabic letters : <س> and <ت>. In addition, the findings of this study support the findings of the studies of Palfreyman and Al Khalil (2003) and Yaghan (2008) and show that the participants used the English representation for the sounds /θ/, /ð/ and /ʃ/ that stand for <th> as in “three”, <th> as in “father” and for <sh> as in “shark”. However, the data of the current sub-study also show that the sound /ð/ is also represented by the numeral 4. See Table 7.1.

One of the significant differences between Arabic and English orthography that has created some challenges in conveying the actual pronunciations of several words, is the absence of the equivalents of a number of Arabic sounds in English (Aboelezz, 2010). Nevertheless, while there are academic attempts to standardize the representation of these sounds, it can be said that the use of Arabizi has created an interesting solution for this problem. As shown in Table 7.1, Arabizi mainly depends on the use of Arabic numbers that have a degree of similarity either in shape or in the reflected shape to Arabic characters (Aboelezz, 2010; Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003). Furthermore, Arabic is characterized by the dots that are usually added above some letters to enable the reader to distinguish between their different pronunciations. While some of the dotted letters have exact correspondents in English such as <ณ> which is represented by <n> in Arabizi, other dotted letters are represented by Arabic numerals followed by an apostrophe, see Table 7.1.
### Table 7.1 The Use of Arabic Numerals to Represent Arabic Sounds in Arabizi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Arabic representation</th>
<th>Arabizi representation</th>
<th>Example &amp; English translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ð/ voiced dental fricative that stands for &lt;th&gt; as in “father”</td>
<td>&lt;ن&gt; *</td>
<td>&lt;4&gt;</td>
<td>٤٥٥ &quot;if&quot; “when&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ħ/ (a heavy /h/-type sound)</td>
<td>&lt;ح&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;7&gt;</td>
<td>٧٠٠ &quot;nice&quot;, ٧١ &quot;downstairs&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʕ/ (a tightening of the throat resembling a light gargle)</td>
<td>&lt;ع&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;3&gt;</td>
<td>٣٠٠ &quot;on&quot;, &quot;over&quot;, asma٣ &quot;listen&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/l/ (the emphatic version of /l/)</td>
<td>&lt;ط&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;6&gt;</td>
<td>٦١ &quot;okay&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/s/ (the emphatic version of /s/)</td>
<td>&lt;ص&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;9&gt;</td>
<td>٩١ &quot;you believe it (or not)&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/h/ (glottal stop)</td>
<td>&lt;ء&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;2&gt;</td>
<td>٢١ &quot;I&quot;, Msaa٢ al5eer &quot;good evening&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/x/ (final sound in Scots 'loch')</td>
<td>&lt;ع&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;5&gt;</td>
<td>Msaa٢ al5eer &quot;good evening&quot;, ٢٧ &quot;in a good health&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/y/ (voiced version of above)</td>
<td>&lt;ع&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;3&gt;</td>
<td>&quot;El a٣'yanee &quot;the songs&quot;,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/Ø/ (the emphatic version of /Ø/, the first sound in English &quot;that&quot;)</td>
<td>&lt;ط&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;6&gt;</td>
<td>٦٤ &quot;urgent&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/ (the emphatic version of /d/)</td>
<td>&lt;ض&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;9&gt;</td>
<td>Ma٩'awy &quot;a female name&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/g/ voiced velar stop. This sound is more common in the Najdi Arabic and some other spoken Arabic vernaculars.</td>
<td>&lt;ق&gt; *</td>
<td>&lt;8&gt;</td>
<td>٨٦٠ &quot;your taste is nice&quot;, ٨ &quot;he said&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Only these two sounds have correspondents in English, while all other sounds stand for Arabic letters which do not exist in English.

Another linguistic feature found in this corpus is related to the differences in the pronunciation of the letter <ق> between CA and MSA varieties and the Najdi vernacular. While the sound /g/ is used to represent the pronunciation for this letter in the Najdi vernacular, the sound /q/ is used to represent the pronunciation of the same letter in both CA and MSA varieties. For example, the word ٩ "he said".

---

[^30]: The classification in both Tables 7.1 and 7.2 is based on the classification in Palfreyman and Al Khalil (2003).

[^31]: This sound does not have a correspondent in English when it is represented in CA and MSA varieties. When it is represented in these two varieties the closest sound in pronunciation is /q/.
was used in this corpus and stands for the Najdi vernacular, is represented in both forms: \textit{qa:l} or \textit{qa:la} in CA and MSA varieties in accordance with the representation of the short vowels.

The findings also showed that while there is a degree of consistency in representing the Arabic consonants in \textit{Arabizi}, there is also variation in the use of letters and numbers to represent some consonants. For example, the sound /ð/ was represented in two different forms: 'etha and e4a (“if” or “when”). Moreover, the two words that were taken from the corpus: \textit{tg9den} “you mean” that is used to address singular feminine and the \textit{t89d} “you mean” for singular masculine show that the letter <g> and the number <8> are used alternatively to represent the sound /g/. The data show that in some cases the use of the apostrophe to represent dotted letters can be placed either before or after the number that represents the letter such as the numeral 3 with the apostrophe that represents the letter <غ> that stands for the sound /ɣ/. Consider the following example:

\begin{quote}
f '3rft mama (“in my mum’s bedroom”) and 3’orfety (“my bedroom”).
\end{quote}

\subsection*{7.2.1.2 Arabizi representation of vowels}

Compared to the consonant system, the corpus shows that the use of vowels in \textit{Arabizi} is optional and less consistent. The most frequent cases of \textit{Arabizi} vowels are shown in Table 7.2.
Table 7.2 The Representation of Vowels in Arabizi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Arabizi representations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/i/</td>
<td>&lt;a&gt; ra7t “I went”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/a/</td>
<td>&lt;a&gt; hala “hello”, ana “I”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/a:/ (long /a/)</td>
<td>&lt;a&gt; fe bally “in my mind”, aljay “the next”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/e/i/</td>
<td>&lt;a&gt; kaij “how”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/i/</td>
<td>&lt;e&gt; momken? “is it possible?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/au/</td>
<td>&lt;o&gt; la sama7ty “if you permitted”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/i:/</td>
<td>&lt;e&gt; al7een “now”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/u/</td>
<td>&lt;u&gt; bukra “tomorrow”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/u:/</td>
<td>&lt;o&gt; alesba3 “the week”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/o/</td>
<td>&lt;o&gt; moyaa “water”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/o:/</td>
<td>&lt;o&gt; shlonk? “how are you?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;o&gt; elyoun “the day”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data show a high level of variability in the use of vowels in Arabizi. According to Yaghan (2008), the use of vowels can be optional and sometimes vowels are omitted. This tendency can be a result of one or two factors: both readers share the same linguistic background or the meaning of the word is clear from the context. For example, as shown in Table 7.2, various words were employed in different forms showing that writers knew that they shared a linguistic background and that the reader would understand without the writer having to consider the spelling rules of each word. The optional use of the letters <y>, <e> and <i> can also be seen in the suffix ي/i:/ that is usually added to the end of verbs and pronouns to address a single female in Najdi Arabic. For example: لا سمحتي ("if you permitt") and اسم عي ("listen").

The use of vowels in Arabizi also provides an interesting reflection of the significant differences between Arabic and English vowel systems. One of these differences is the use of consonants to represent Arabic

---

32 This expression is used to address a singular female in Najdi Arabic. It does not mean its literal meaning, but it is used the requestee as a polite response that has the same meaning of “off course” or “sure” that are used as responses for an expression such as: “can I ask you something?”

33 In the context of Arabic requests this expression has the same meaning of the expression in Footnote (27).
words in Latin characters without involving any vowels. As discussed previously, the writing system in MSA usually does not focus on the representation of the diacritics that stand for the short vowels. The focus in this variety is more on long vowels and consonants because they have a greater impact on spelling and the grammatical rules in written texts. The spoken forms of Arabic also share this linguistic feature with MSA when they are used as written forms. The impact of this phenomenon is evident in the use of consonants and vowels in Arabizi by native speakers of Arabic. Table 7.3 includes various words from the corpus that are used in Najdi Arabic and share the same linguistic feature i.e. the representation in orthography with consonants only.

Table 7.3 Arabizi Representation for Arabic Words with Consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words represented by consonants only</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Words represented by consonants and vowels</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تحـ تحت “downstairs”</td>
<td>/taːt/</td>
<td>mumkin? “is it possible?”</td>
<td>/mumkin/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bs بـ “just”</td>
<td>/bas/</td>
<td>marra مـ “very”</td>
<td>/marra:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wsh وـش “what”</td>
<td>/wish/</td>
<td>Bsراها “quickly”</td>
<td>/bsiraːh/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gلـت “I said”</td>
<td>/gɪt/</td>
<td>bl bar بالبر “in the dessert”</td>
<td>/bilbar/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings show the participants used Latin letters for the same pronunciation in Arabic without including any vowels. This tendency shows that the writer is assuming that the reader understands the meaning because both share the same linguistic background. However, some words shown in Table 7.3 were used in Arabizi with vowels despite the fact that their equivalents in Arabic orthography do not include any long vowels. The main reason is to avoid any ambiguity that might result if vowels were omitted.

The use of sounds in Arabizi also provides reflection for other linguistic features. The first feature is related to the suffix <ah> for the feminine ending in nouns and adjectives in the Najdi Arabic vernacular such as: moya-h مويه “water”, furš-ah فرصة “chance” and marra-h مرة “time”;

or stands for endings in verbs that refer to masculine objects such as: ba ةkalm-ah باكلمه “I will talk to him”. The corpus shows that the participants omitted the sound /h/ in the words: moyaa, for9a, marra and bklima respectively.

The corpus shows that even words that were written in the Arabic transcript (Najdi Arabic) were affected by this feature. For instance, in words such as: buکرا بـكر “tomorrow” and liʔanu لأنـو “because it is…”, the final sound /h/ was omitted and the sounds that represent the short vowels were added to the end of

\[\text{furs-ah فرصة “chance” and marra-h مرة “time” also exist in both CA and MSA. However the focus here is on the Najdi Arabic vernacular.}\]
each word. The original forms of these words are *bukra*-h and *liʔanu*-h respectively. This tendency in fact distinguishes the modern feminine style of chatting which is considered amongst the younger generation as a “girlish” and “funky” way of writing.

The other grammatical feature is related to the use of the definite article in Arabic orthography. As mentioned, in CA and MSA the definite article is represented as *al* آل. However, the participants varied their use for it in Arabizi either as its form in CA and MSA such as: *al-esbo*3 “the week” and *al-jay* الجاي “the next”; or by representing it as: *el* as it is pronounced in the Najdi vernacular such as: *el-yoom* اليوم “the day” and *el-nnor* النور “the light”. The corpus also includes another form for the definite article as in: *b.l.6ree8* بالطريق “on the way”. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the pronunciation of the definite article varies in accordance with the sounds that proceed it although it is represented in the same form in Arabic orthography i.e. *al* آل. However, the corpus shows that the sound /l/ in the definite article was included even if it was silent as a result of a combination with one of the “sun letters” as in *el-nnor* النور “the light”. According to Palfreyman and Al Khalil (2003), the consistency of including the sound /l/ even if it is silent results from the impact of CA and MSA orthographies.

The findings of this study support the findings of the studies of Yaghan (2008) and Palfreyman and Al Khalil (2003) and show that the use of Arabizi is contextual and mainly dependent on the linguistic background that both the writer and reader share.

Additionally, the data showed that the use of Arabizi is related to the phenomenon of code-switching, defined as: A shift within the same speech exchange from one language (code) to another, where a language is identified as a distinct grammatical system or subsystem (Gumperz, 1982:59). It can be said that the phenomenon of code-switching here results from the impact of English as the language that is mainly related to modern technology for the younger generations (Aboelezz, 2010). Al-Kahtib and Sabbah (2008) also believe that one of the reasons for code switching while texting is because English has a special status amongst youth and educated individuals. Code-switching, hence, is seen as using a prestigious form of language. As shown from the data the occurrence of code-switching varied between borrowing single words or clauses from English. For example:

_Aby el **black ring** eli knty labstaa ams._

I want the **black ring** that you were wearing yesterday.

Other abbreviations that are used in the common World Web Wide and cellular phone messages such as: *plz*, *ok* and the numeral 2 that stand for ‘please’, ‘okay’ and ‘too’ respectively were also found in the corpus. The findings of this study support the findings of Aboelezz (2010) which showed that code-switching can reflect another linguistic feature i.e. including English words as parts of Arabic scripts. For example, the use of the definite article as a suffix with English words as in: *el channel* and *el black*. 
It is also important to mention that since this sub-study focuses on the use of *Arabizi* amongst Saudi young females, the most linguistic features that distinguish verbs and pronouns are the affixes that show the feminine forms of these parts of speech such as: *amrī* “give an order” and *law samahtī, ‘would you mind’* that are both used to address single female subjects.

The following section focuses on the phenomenon of *Arabizi* from a sociolinguistic perspective and provides a wider scope for some of the aspects that were included in this form of requests (informal written requests written in both Latin and Arabic letters).

### 7.2.2 *Arabizi* from a sociolinguistic perspective

With its role as a speech-like written linguistic form, *Arabizi* acts as a marker of “in-group” identity (Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003). According to Thurlow and Brown (2003), non-standard orthography is one of the powerful means to manifest the social identity of the young generations. By deviating from conventional forms of writing, they differentiate themselves from older generations. As with any other communicative style, the use of *Arabizi* amongst the youth includes various forms that can be interpreted as an in-group means of communication. In fact, this situation took place in the broad perspective of globalisation.

According to Palfreyman and Al Khalil (2003), who refer to the context of the United Arab Emirates’ vernacular, the informal use of *Arabizi* appears to be allowing a vernacular with local prestige through by-passing the classical Arabic writing system with its highly prestigious status and instead using an orthographic form for English that has a different prestigious status. In addition, the data of this sub-study also showed that the participants employed expressions that show a high level of close relationships i.e. *mayanah* between them and the readers (their close friends and cousins), as shown in Chapters Four and Five in the requests in contexts of (CSD, S=H). Consider the following expressions:

‘*etha ‘endik sowar min youm elbarti. ‘arsileeha lii.*

"If you have pictures for the day of the party, send them to me."

بسألك ياقرّ! *Tall’atii fustanii min elmashghal?*

"I just want to ask you (oh) moon (sweetie)! Did you take my dress from the tailor shop?"

It is important to mention that the context of this study focuses on the use of informal written requests amongst Saudi females. Thus, metaphorical expressions such as: “oh moon” are widely used amongst females and represents a type of feminine interaction.
The expressions in the previous example stand for:

_Haya.n (the name of the requester):

NONY (the nickname of the requestee) are you awake!!

_Haya.n (the name of the requester):

Please quickly I am in a hurry I want to sleep.

As can be seen from the copy of the instant chatting, the requester is using various strategies that show _mayanah_ (the close relationship) between her and the requestee. One of these strategies is the use of the nickname “Nony” that stands for Arabic names starting with the letter “N” such as: Norah. The second strategy that reflects the informal context is the use of the emoji samples.

The following section focuses on a number of social issues regarding _Arabizi_ through analysing and discussing the data gathered in the questionnaire.

**7.2.3 The phenomenon of Arabizi from a social perspective**

In order to provide a wider perspective on this phenomenon, twenty participants in the age range of 20-30 were asked to fill in a questionnaire that includes a number of questions about this written form (see Appendix 4) and their responses are summarized in Table 7.4.
As can be seen in Table 7.4, the answers for the first question\textsuperscript{36}: \textit{Why do you sometimes write with Arabizi?} varied and they chose more than one option. The most popular responses were: “It is widely considered as a fashionable style and an easy way of writing that makes its users feel cool.” and “Because it is a common style of writing amongst youth”. This tendency might provide one of the aspects of social

\textsuperscript{35} Table 7.4, only includes the frequencies of the choices of the first question and the frequencies of (Yes) and (No) choices. However, informative answers in each question will be discussed in the following section.

\textsuperscript{36} The first question has twenty five answers in its total, because the participants were informed that they can choose more than one option. The total answers for each of the rest questions of the questionnaire was twenty.
life for these young females and shows how young generations share interests. According to Al Kawas (2011), the youth, namely teens and young adults, are the users who significantly employ modern technology by adopting the process of communication effectively through texting and creating interesting styles of new languages or styles of writing.

For the second question: *Do you remember when and how you learned to write in this way? If yes please write about your experience?*, only nine participants answered positively and said that they remembered how they learned this style of writing through the use of various technological means of communication i.e. MSN Messenger, Facebook pages, chat rooms or by mobiles including Black Berry Messengers (BBM).

In the third question: *Do you know how and when writing with Arabizi started?*, nine participants responded with various periods: at the beginning of 2005, at the beginning of 2006, during the period of the use of BBM, Facebook and Twitter, three, four or five years ago. The other 11 participants said that they did not know when this phenomenon started.

For the fourth question: *Do you ever see or write Arabic like this in any other situations e.g. handwriting? If yes, please give an example*, only six participants confirmed that they use Arabizi in handwriting. The main reason for using this style was as a means of privacy such as the messages that they exchange during class and do not want their teachers to understand them. The following are some of the examples that were included in the questionnaire by the participants:

*Meta y5le9 al-class?*
When the class is going to finish?

*Sa3a kam?*
What time is it?

*Wsh 4a?*
What is this?

For question 5: *Do you think that Arabizi can negatively affect the Arabic language?* most of the participants (17) answered that Arabizi negatively affects the Arabic script and spelling and grammatical rules. They included various reasons for this:

- Because it is not a language. It is just numbers and letters, so overusing it will lead us to forget the rules of the Arabic language and the way of writing and expressing (the ideas). The Arabic language has its own beauty.
- Because most users of this style of writing are youth who have become less interested in using Arabic in their writing. This situation contributes to increasing spelling mistakes and thus threatens the Arabic language.
- Because it threatens our religion (Islam) and language (Arabic) that we should be proud of.
• It destroys the Arabic language e.g. being confused in distinguishing some Arabic letters and it weakens the grammatical rules of Arabic.

• In time, the Arabic letters and their use will be forgotten.

Nevertheless, three participants believed that the use of Arabizi would not affect the Arabic language:

• I believe that it is a communicating language amongst Arabs and it saves time by using shorter forms for some letters such as: (kh) that is represented as (ṣ).

• I do not think so, because the Arabic language has its own devotees and will be continue to be advocated and admired.

• It does not affect the Arabic language because it is only used in technology.

When the participants were asked about whether they thought the use of Arabizi had a negative impact on writing religious expressions, all twenty participants said yes. Interestingly, this means that although some of them used Arabizi when writing religious expressions, they are against it. Their responses were supported as follows:

• The religious expressions must be respected, so if they are written using numbers and symbols, this may change their meanings and the way we feel them. Yes, it has a massive negative effect.

• The difference in pronunciation might cause differences in the meaning.

• Sure, because it is dangerous to make mistakes in religious expressions. I think (using it) destroys the Arabic language.

• Because religion has its own respect and we all must show this respect.

• Because using it leads the human being to lose the greatness of the invocation and its beauty.

• Because the language of the Qur’an is Arabic.

• Because Islam reached us in Arabic by an Arabian prophet and the Qur’an’s language is Arabic and our prophet was the most fluent in Arabic. So, in my opinion this is kind of changing the Islamic instructions.

The data from the questionnaire provide some insight into some of the social and religious dimensions surrounding the phenomenon of Arabizi. The first issue is related to the use of Arabizi as one of the symbolic resources (Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003) and fashionable styles of writing that are widely exchanged amongst young females in Saudi Arabia. This is despite the lack of the Arabic transcript on the keyboards of computers and cell phones is no longer the case (Aboelezz, 2010). The impact of modern technology was obvious in the answers of the subjects who responded that they had learned this style of writing from the internet and texting on cellular phones from 2005 until the current time. Their use of Arabizi also had extended to purposes other than internet chatting or mobile texting. As mentioned, the participants also use Arabizi as a means of privacy when chatting with each other in class.
The findings of the questionnaire also provide some understanding of the prestigious status of Islam and the Arabic language in the social life of Saudis. The majority of the participants mentioned that the use of Arabizi threatens and affects the beauty of Arabic as the language of Qur’an.

7.3 Summary

This chapter has focused on the phenomenon of Arabizi by investigating written requests in an informal context. As presented in the first section of this chapter, this style of writing has some distinguishing linguistic features in its use of consonants and vowels. Latin letters and the Arabic numeral system are both used to represent the Najdi vernacular of spoken Arabic. According to Palfreyman and Al Khalil (2003), the interaction between English and Arabic created a combination of a transcription of spoken language and mediation from the properties of the Arabic and Latin systems. In addition, as a result of the lack of representation of some Arabic consonants in English, the use of Arabizi includes the representation of these consonants by using the Arabic numeral system.

Vowels in Arabizi have more flexibility in spelling: understanding and distinguishing the given words or a phrase is mainly dependant on the linguistic background that both the reader and the writer share. Additionally, the use of vowels in Arabizi reflects the differences in the Arabic and English vowel systems. As a result of these differences, some words that include short vowels in Arabic are represented in Arabizi only by consonants.

In terms of politeness behaviour, since the corpus was from conversations in an informal context (requests to close friends and cousins), the findings showed that the participants employed linguistic strategies that functioned more for the purposes of showing intimacy and close relationships, i.e. high degree of mayanah.

The questionnaire data show that using this style of writing reflects the fact that young generations usually behave in a similar way, such as creating a fashionable style of writing through the use of modern technology. The findings also showed that the subjects believe that the use of Arabizi has become more widespread during the last ten years since the emergence of the internet and later the cellular phones with BBM software. Furthermore, some of the participants also use this style of writing in handwriting for secret communication when they chat during class. The data also showed that all participants thought that the use of Arabizi has a negative impact on the beauty of Arabic and will affect understanding of its spelling and grammatical rules. Despite their own use of Arabizi to represent religious expressions, the findings showed that all participants were against it. They mentioned that the use of non-Arabic letters to represent Islamic expressions is a form of disrespect to Arabic and therefore Islam and the Qur’an.

From these findings, it can be inferred that, although the use of Arabizi shows technology and English as powerful tools which have a significant role in the communication system amongst young people
around the world, it also shows that Arabic speakers have created an unusual style of writing with its own significant linguistic features. On the other hand, the findings also showed an interesting reflection on the relationship between Saudis and Arabic language, their mother tongue. This relationship represents more than just a language and its speakers; it represents their identity as Muslims and their social status as Arabic native speakers who are responsible for protecting it, as they believe, from the influences of modern technology.
CHAPTER EIGHT

FORMAL REQUESTS IN WRITTEN ARABIC

This chapter focuses on written Arabic requests exchanged via emails in a governmental institution in Saudi Arabia. It also examines emails as computer mediated means of communication and how Arabic native speakers employ emails in making requests and what politeness strategies they employ within this context. As a result of the technology revolution, emails throughout the world have become accepted as an important means of communication that are widely exchanged across the world (Biesenbach-Lucas, 2007; Chen, 2006; Crystal 2001). Therefore, knowing how to make polite written requests is important for the purpose of communicating in formal or institutional contexts. In the case of Arabic with its diglossic situation, this sub-study is significant because it sheds light on some of the significant features and politeness strategies that are employed in its formal written form that is extremely different from its various spoken varieties.

As discussed in Chapter Three, for the analysis of the data of this sub-study, fifteen participants provided the researcher with sixty formal requestive emails recently received from colleagues or bosses. The participants were informed that any identifying information related to the sender or the receiver would be removed from the data. All participants were asked to sign a consent form in Arabic.

8.1 Directness level in Arabic requestive emails

This section focuses on the data of the requestive emails that were analysed in accordance with request strategies and directness level as shown in Tables 8.1 and 8.2.

Table 8.1 Directness Level in Requestive Emails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Most Direct</th>
<th>Conventionally Indirect</th>
<th>Non-Conventionally Indirect</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.2 The Use of Direct Strategies in Arabic Requestive Emails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Mood Derivable (MDD)</th>
<th>Direct Question (DQ)</th>
<th>Hedged Performatives (HP)</th>
<th>Want Statement (WS)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the analysis of spoken requests in Chapters Four and Five of the current study and according to various studies on Arabic requests, the use of most direct strategies in Arabic is an expected behaviour in formal and informal contexts, and the politeness level can be shown by the linguistic strategies employed to mitigate the force of requests (Al-Marrani & Sazalie, 2010a; Al-Marrani & Sazalie, 2010b; Atawneh, 1991). However, as shown above, the high percentage of most direct strategies (72%) shows that the requesters do not consider their requests as face threatening acts because it is part of their daily tasks to exchange what might be considered institutional requests such as requesting for maintenance or other technical tasks. Additionally, the use of most direct strategies via emails can also be justified by the power that bosses have over their employees in announcing or distributing institutional tasks.

Nevertheless, it is important to mention that the use of the most direct strategies in the Arabic context is affected by the politeness level and the degree of formality. For instance, while both imperatives (mood derivable) and hedged performatives are direct requests, the use of imperatives might be considered an impolite behaviour if the requester is lower in status or younger than the requestee’s (see Chapters Four and Five for more details). Hence, as shown in Table 8.2, the most frequent use of direct strategies was for hedged performatives (59%). According to Al-Fetlawi (2008), hedged performatives are used in requests as a softer way to perform the intended speech act and they sound more polite since they are less direct than the other strategies (imperatives). The following examples were taken from the data:

1. 

Assalam ‘aliakom wa rahmatu Allahee wa barkatuh
Lutfan wa laisa 'amran 'edafat film “-” 'ela majmoo’at al’aflam almurad naskhaha leetanfeeth haalaakat “......” fii almantiqah asharqiah.
Lakii minnii khalis ‘ashukur wa 'attaqdeer Tahiyatti,

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته
لطفا وليس أمرا إضافة فيلم "اسم الفيلم" إلى مجمَوعة الْفلم المَراد نسُها لتنفيذ حلُة "اسم الحلُة" في المَنطُة الشرقية.
لك مني خالص الشكر والتُدير تحياتي,

Peace be upon you and Allah’s mercy and blessings.
Kindly (and not commanding) add the film “name” to the film collection that is intended to be copied for the seminar “name” that will be held in the Eastern Region.
Most sincere thanks and appreciation from me to you.
My greetings

2.
Hadiah min fadlik
Shoofī ‘eash mrakkab indaha min baramij letashgheel elfeedeohat.

Hadiah please
Check what kind of software is installed (in her pc) to play videos.

As can be seen from the data, while both examples are direct requests, the use of hedged performatives in addition to the other linguistic strategies (the formal Islamic greeting at the beginning and expressions of appreciation at the end of the requestive letter) shows the high level of formality and politeness in the given requestive email. On the other hand, the request in the second example shows that the requester has higher status than the requestee, and can use imperatives without the fear of losing face. In addition, the use of the first name of the requestee shows that both the writer and the reader have a close relationship. Another issue is related to the diglossic phenomenon in Arabic and is shown in the use of MSA\textsuperscript{37} in the first example and the use of spoken Najdi Arabic in the second example. The requester in the first example employs a formal text that includes a relatively complex grammatical structure that is shown, as mentioned, by the avoidance of employing imperatives. In the second example, the use of spoken Najdi Arabic in the requestive email is another factor that shows the close relationship between the requester and the requestee.

8.1.1 The use of external and internal modifications

As discussed in several studies on requests, strategies that function as external or internal modifications are for various purposes such as showing a higher level of politeness, intimacy or as softening strategies. The data of both external and internal modifications are shown in Tables 8.3 and 8.4.

\textsuperscript{37} Since Classical Arabic is mainly used in the Qur’anic and hadeeth texts, the data in this chapter focus on Modern Standard Arabic and spoken Najdi Arabic in some less formal written emails.
Table 8.3 The Use of External Modifications in Arabic Requestive Emails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Modifications</th>
<th>Examples from the data</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparators</td>
<td>Because of the frequent malfunctions in the PC that I am working on, ……..</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounder</td>
<td>Please come to the department of …….. to be sure that the training technical aids are in a good condition and……..</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise of reward</td>
<td>There will be a competition for the best show and valuable gifts will be presented for the winners.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposition Minimizer</td>
<td>We wish to ask you to cooperate in filling the questionnaire that is expected to take (only) 10 minutes of your time.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>I am thankful for your cooperation</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apology</td>
<td>Darlings, I am sorry to bother you, but……..</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>76</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data show that a number of external modifications were employed in the requestive emails. However, the use of appreciation is the most preferred strategy with 45 per cent of the total use of external modifications. The frequent use of appreciation expressions can be justified by the nature of emails that are usually and should be concluded with appreciation and thankfulness phrases. Prefacing the requests by asking for help, stating the problem or asking about the requestee’s availability (preparators) is the second preferred strategy amongst other external modifications (30%).

Table 8.4 The Use of Internal Modifications in Arabic Requestive Emails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Modifications</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politeness Markers</td>
<td>Please, we wish, I wish من فضلك، نأمل، أمل</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogative</td>
<td>Does anyone know someone does cupping in a (clinic) or at home؟ من تعرف وحلة تسوي حجامة بمَركز أو تجي للبيت؟</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-group Identity Marker</td>
<td>My sister (s), my darlings, my colleagues عزيتي، أخواتي، عزيزتي، زميلتي</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Expressions</td>
<td>may Allah make your morning happy, may Allah reward you أسعد الله صباحكم، جزاك الله خير</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Requests via emails also included a number of internal modifications usually employed in Arabic requestive contexts. However, the data show that the use of internal modifications varied between Najdi spoken Arabic...
and MSA according to the level of formality and the social distance between the requester and the requestee. The following religious expressions were taken from the data:

3. 

_allah la yikhleena minkum jamee’an_

_الله لا يخلينا منكم جميعاً_

May Allah not deprive us from you all.

4. 

_jazakum Allah khairan_

_جزاكم الله خيراً_

May Allah reward you with goodness.

Example (3) is one of the religious expressions that are widely used in Najdi Arabic. This behaviour shows that the writer assumes that the reader belongs to the same speech community and religious group. The use of such expressions reflects the close relationship and intimacy between the interactants. On the other hand, although the expression in Example (4) is used in Najdi Arabic and MSA the writer shows that she is aware more about the formality and the distant relationship by adding the suffix to the noun _خیر-اً_ (khair-an) as an MSA expression. As shown from the data, the use of religious expressions is the most frequent (43%). The dominant use for religious expressions was for the Islamic greeting (Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah and his blessings) which came as the most convenient opening expression in the requestive emails.

The second common linguistic feature in the use of internal modifications was employing politeness markers (38%). The data also show that the writers employed various politeness markers in MSA. Unlike the use of politeness markers in spoken Arabic, the use of such expressions in MSA has more complexity according to the grammatical classification of nouns and verbs that are usually employed in formal contexts. The following examples are requests starting with politeness markers/prestigious forms in MSA:

5. 

_lutfan wa laisa ‘amran_

_لطفاً وليس أمرأا_

Kindly and not commanding

6. 

_fadlan wa laisa ‘amran_

_ففضلًا وليس أمرأا_

Generously and not commanding
Additionally, the use of politeness markers in MSA includes other forms of speech and linguistic features. The following classification\(^38\) includes the most common forms were employed in the data as politeness markers and which are used in Arabic requests and reflect a higher level of formality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>arrajaa</code></td>
<td>I hope (1st Sing. Imperfect)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>a-ruj</code></td>
<td>We hope (1st plural. Imperfect)</td>
<td>(passive voice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>Yu-ruj-a</code></td>
<td>It has been hopped</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>Aa-mul</code></td>
<td>We wish (1st Sing. Imperfect)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>N'-amal</code></td>
<td>We wish (1st plural. Imperfect)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>aa-mileen</code></td>
<td>We wish (an active participle that acts as an adjective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>a-wadd</code></td>
<td>We would like (1st Sing. Imperfect)</td>
<td>(the department) would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>Na-wadd</code></td>
<td>We would like (1st plural. Imperfect)</td>
<td>like (2nd Sing. Fem.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>Ta-wadd</code></td>
<td>We wish (an active participle that acts as an adjective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>Ta-wadd</code></td>
<td>(the department) wants</td>
<td>(2nd Sing. Fem. Imperfect)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from the classification, requests in MSA are usually preceded by a form of one of the verbs that stand for the meanings of: *wish, hope or would like*. However, it is important to mention that the use of the plural form in the requests in MSA reflects a prestigious use of the language and high level of formality and of course shows that there is a distant relationship in the requestive context. The following example is an email that was taken from the data:

7-

`'ela: azzameelat 'adaa' hay'at attadreeb
min: munissiqat albaramij al'oulia
besha'n: maw'ed 'attasleem
assalam 'aliakom wa rahmatu Allahee wa barkatuh`

\(^{38}\) It is important to show the grammatical features of the most significant expressions that reflect politeness behaviour and the prestigious form of requests in MSA.
لابيلنا بانتظار رغباتكم
اذي: موعد التسليم
بشير: موعد التسليم
سلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته
كما نود إفادتكم
لكم مني خالص الشكر والتّقدير.
وأقبلوا تحياتي...
Na'amal minkum atta'aawon fee ta’bee’at alestimarah wa allatii youtawaqa ‘an tastaghriq ‘asr daqa’iq min waqtikum.
Nashkurukum ‘ala waqtikum wa ta’aawunukum fee tahqeeq hatha alhadaf 
ma ‘atayab attahiyat
alfareeq alestisharii

سعادة
كما تعلمون
تجدون رابط الاستمارة على

نأمل منكم التعاون في تعبئة الاستمارة والتي يتوقع أن تستغرق عشر دقائق من وقتكم.
شكركم على وقتكم وتعاونكم في تحقيق هذا الهدف
مع أطيب التحيات,
الفريق الاستشاري

The Excellency of

As you know

You will find the questionnaire link on

We wish that you cooperate in filling the questionnaire that is expected to take (only) 10 minutes from your time.

We would like to thank you for your time and your cooperation in achieving this aim.

With best regards,

The consultative team

As can be seen in Example (8), the requesters employ another form of a prestigious use of MSA i.e. the use of masculine plural forms to address a single female. Although this does not appear in the English translation, the senders use all forms of verbs and possessive pronouns in plural masculine forms. In addition to the use of masculine plural forms in addressing feminine plural requestees, the use of such forms in addressing a feminine single requestee also provides a reflection about the dominant use of forms of masculinity over femininity in the Arabic context.

The only noun that is used in the requestive emails in MSA, as mentioned is: arraja’ (please). As stated in Atawneh (1991), the noun arraja’ (please) can be employed in MSA as a general rule and when the requester avoids imposing on the hearer and this strategy according to the principles of politeness in Brown and Levinson (1987) is also used when the requests are meant to be addressed “whom it may concern”. The following example was taken from the data of the current study:

9.

---

40 The receiver is a female trainer.
41 All pronouns in bold that refer to a single feminine requestee are in masculine plural forms.
42 In addition to their original use i.e. addressing masculine plural addressees, employing masculine forms is relatively common in addressing females in singular and plural forms. However, the use of feminine plural forms are restricted and only used in addressing feminine plural addressees.
The strategies of politeness in Arabic written requests include other linguistic expressions that function as significant factors of showing deference, working as saving face strategies or reflecting positive politeness behaviour i.e. showing close relationships. The following section focuses on the use of forms of address and religious expressions in written requests.

8.1.2 The use of forms of address
The functions of Arabic forms of address used in the requestive emails varied according to the level of formality, the level of social distance or the level of the power that the sender has compared to the receiver. As discussed previously, these factors also affected the varieties of written Arabic that were used in the requests; some emails included forms of address that are usually used in Najdi Arabic. Other emails characterized by a high level of formality included formal address forms i.e. occupation related and formality terms or formal greetings.
As can be seen in Table 8.5, the requestive emails in the current study showed that the requesters used various forms to address the requestees or to refer to other individuals in their emails. Nevertheless, the most frequent use of address forms was for occupation related and formality terms and Islamic greetings (38 and 35 per cent respectively).

Since emails in this study were exchanged in various requestive contexts i.e. requests to colleagues in close relationships and requests to colleagues/employees in distant relationships, the diglossic situation in Arabic also affected the use of forms of address and greeting in such texts. As in spoken requests, one of the requesters used her colleague’s nickname (see Table 8.5) as a means of showing intimacy and very close distance between the interactants. Other expressions of endearment that are mainly used in spoken Arabic such as *ya ‘asal* (oh honey) reflect that the sender has a close relationship with the requestee in an informal situation. The use of greeting expressions is also affected by the level of formality in the requestive emails. Although there were various formulaic expressions of greeting that are used in both spoken and written forms of Arabic, the data show that the most frequent use was the Islamic greeting included in its standard form in formal emails (see Table 8.5). Nevertheless, in emails

Table 8.5 Forms of Address in Arabic Requestive Emails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of address</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First name</td>
<td>Hadiah (Arabic female name)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship and family terms</td>
<td>‘ukhtii (Fem. Sing) (sister), ‘akhawatii (Fem.Plural) (sisters).</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicknames</td>
<td><em>Rushrush</em> (the nickname of the Arabic female name: Rasha)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endearment terms</td>
<td>‘Azeezatii (Fem. Sing) (my dear, my darling) Azeezatii (Fem. Plural) (my dears, my darlings), <em>ya ‘asal</em> (oh honey)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation related and formality terms</td>
<td>‘Azeezatii azzameelat (Fem. Plural) dear colleagues, Ra’eesat qism taqniat att’aleem wattadreeb (Fem. Sing) (the head of the teaching and training aids section)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeting</td>
<td>Good morning, good evening, good greeting، صبح الخير، مساء الخير، ناحية طيبة</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic greeting</td>
<td>Peace be upon you (Masc. Plural) and the mercy of Allah and his blessings</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>124</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
exchanged in contexts with less formality, the senders only employed the first part(s) of the Islamic
greeting such as salam (peace) or salam ‘aliakum (peace be upon you).

From what was discussed above, it can be understood that the two factors of mayanah and kulfah that
affect the use of politeness strategies in Arabic spoken requests, also affect making requests in the written
form of Arabic. As shown by the analysis, written requests in contexts of mayanah include various
expressions of politeness markers, forms of address and greetings that are mainly used in Najdi Arabic
while in contexts of kulfah the emails include very prestigious expressions that are used in MSA and
distinguished by relatively complex grammatical features.

This study supports the study of Abuamsha (2010) that shows that Palestinian Arabic includes various
forms of address that are related to the occupational status of individuals. As in Abuamsha (2010), the
emails included addressing recipients either by their job titles such as: doktoor (doctor) or by a
combination of the job title and the recipient’s name. The following table shows additional occupational
and formal terms of address employed in the data of this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational related terms</th>
<th>Highly prestigious terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zameelah (Fem. Sing) (colleague)</td>
<td>almukarramah (Fem. Sing) (the honourable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zameelaat (Fem. Plural) (colleagues)</td>
<td>almukarram (Masc. Sing) (the honourable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zameel (Masc. Sing) (colleague)</td>
<td>Sa’aadat 44 (the excellency of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zumalaa’ (Masc. Plural) (colleagues)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ustathah (Fem. Sing) (Mrs. Madam) أستاذة</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ustath (Masc. Sing ) (Mister) أستاذ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doktoorah (Fem. Sing) (doctor) دكتورة</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doktoor (Masc. Sing) (doctor) دكتور</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ustath musae’d (Assistant professor) أستاذ مساعد</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albahiathan (Masc. Dual) الباحثان</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mudeerah (Fem. Sing) (manager) مدير</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mudeer (Masc. Sing) (manager) مدير</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>munassiqah (Fem. Sing) (coordinator) منسقة</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>munassiq 46 (Masc. Sing) (coordinator) منسق</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

43 As discussed in Chapters Two, Four and Five, Mayanah is the Najdi Arabic definition for a close relationship and kulfah is the
definition for a distant relationship between the interactants.
44 This term is used to refer to feminine and masculine addressee(s).
45 This term is used for masculine singular person. However, it is also used in MSA for feminine singular addressee.
46 The masculine singular form of this job title did not appear in the data.
The data also show that the use of occupational related highly prestigious forms of address were subjected to a high level of formality. That means that including the job title to address the recipients or even adding highly prestigious terms to the job titles if the context is more formal. The following examples were taken from the data:

10-

*Sa’aadat azzumalaa’ wa azzameelat …*

سعادة الزملاء والزميلات..

The Excellency of colleagues (Masc. Plural) (Fem. Plural).

11-

*Azzameelat ’adaa’ hay’at attadreeb..

الزميلات أعضاء هيئة..

The colleague (Fem. Plural) members of the Training Department.

12-

*mudeer ’aam attakhteet wa attatweer*

مدير عام التخطيط والتطوير..

The general manager of planning and developing (department)

As can be seen from the data, the formality is shown in the use of addressing forms in various ways. For instance, by adding the prestigious term (the Excellency of) as in Example (10) or by including the department name after the occupational terms as in Examples (11) and (12).

8.1.3 The general structure of Arabic requestive emails

Although all emails were exchanged in an institutional context, they were not at the same level of formality. For instance, emails that were exchanged individually amongst colleagues tended to be less formal and some of them seemed to be more speech-like emails. However, other emails such as general emails to multi-recipients that include instructions or institutional information were very formal and written with a highly prestigious level of MSA. Therefore, as formal letters in several languages, that data showed that formal letters that were exchanged via emails in Arabic are mainly distinguished by the following structure that is usually written in MSA:

**To:** the receiver’s name/occupational position

**From:** the sender’s occupational position/name

**Regarding:** (subject)

**The opening section:** The Islamic expression, *al-basmalah* (In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful)/The Islamic formal greeting (Peace be upon you and his merciful and blessings)/**Opening greeting**
The closing section: Respectful closure/closing salutation

Electronic signature

It is also important to mention that the opening section may not include all expressions that are provided in the structure. The data showed that some letters, as in Example (7) only included the Islamic greeting in their opening section. It is also optional as shown by the data to include more than one expression in the closing section.

The following section focuses on some issues related to written requests in informal and formal situations i.e. written requests in a social context amongst relatives and friends and written requests that were exchanged in an institutional context.

8.2 Written Arabic requests in informal and formal contexts (instant messaging and emails)

From what have been discussed in Chapter Seven and in this chapter, it can be said that the impact of the diglossic situation in Arabic is more obvious in the written form than the spoken form. While requestive texts in a social context and some of the informal requestive emails at work/study contexts tended to be more speech-like texts, the very formal letters that were exchanged via emails were written purely in MSA.

The data of Arabic requestive texts also showed that the linguistic choices and the degree of formality were subject to the nature of the communication medium. According to Biesenbach-Lucas (2007), the use of synchronous communication mediums i.e. instant messaging in a request context that is usually exchanged among youth is usually distinguished by the preference of directness over indirectness and also shows that the interlocutors have the same power status. In the context of this study, exchanging text messages amongst young adults showed that there was a high degree of informality (mayanah) between the interactants as cousins and friends and this tendency as discussed reflects positive politeness through showing intimacy and close relationships within such contexts.

On the other hand, the data showed that the use of asynchronous mediums i.e. institutional emails was subject to more politeness strategies that were shown in employing formal and prestigious expressions that show that there was a high degree of kulfah i.e. formal and distant relationship between the senders and the receivers. Within what has been termed by Biesenbach-Lucas (2007) as e-polite medium, messages might be characterized by reflecting greater formality and there is more focus on what is known as email etiquette that mainly includes prestigious and respectful forms of languages. Unlike instant messages, the asynchronous nature of emails provides the sender with greater opportunity to revise and check the whole content before sending the letter. In the context of requestive emails the
requester is able to focus on and to employ the most convenient lexical terms, politeness strategies and the prestigious forms to mitigate the force of the given speech act (Biesenbach-Lucas, 2007).

8.3 Summary
This chapter has discussed the most distinctive features of Arabic requestive emails in an institutional context. This first section has analysed the level of directness in Arabic requestive emails. As shown by the data of both spoken and written requests, Arabic has a tendency towards directness (Alfattah & Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani & Sazalie, 2010a, 2010b; Al-Qahtani, 2009; Mohammadi & Tamimi, 2013). However, the data also showed that the most preferable use was for hedged performatives that sound more polite than other direct strategies.

As has been discussed, politeness behaviour in Arabic also includes the use of both external and internal strategies that function to make the requestive expressions sound more polite. The data in this chapter revealed that the use of appreciation is the most preferred amongst other external modifications as the most convenient expressions that are used to conclude emails. Preparators were the second preferred strategy in Arabic requestive emails.

Internal modifications in Arabic requestive emails were employed either as religious expressions such as Islamic greetings and other types of invocation as the most frequent amongst other linguistic strategies. Additionally, various politeness markers were employed by the senders to soften the requestive force. As a result of the diglossic phenomenon in Arabic, the formality of written requests was reflected by the use of MSA as the prestigious form that has various distinctive linguistic features to reflect politeness such as the use of the plural form verbs and pronouns to address a singular receiver. Nevertheless, some expressions of the spoken form of Najdi Arabic were used in emails with less formality such as individual emails to colleagues.

Forms of address have also been discussed and the data showed that the most frequent use was for occupational related and formality terms and this is because of the nature of the emails since they were exchanged in an institutional context. The degrees of mayanh and kulfah were also shown by employing terms that reflect intimacy and close relationships such as nicknames or by employing prestigious forms to address a receiver in a formal context such as the use of honorable forms.

The discussion has also focused on the general structure of formal letters exchanged via emails and included the most significant parts i.e. the receiver’s details, the sender’s details, the subject, the opening section (Islamic greeting/opening greeting), the content, the closing section (respectful/closing salutation) and the signature.
Finally, the data included a discussion of the most significant features that distinguish written requests that are exchanged via emails in institutional contexts. The data also showed how formal written requests differ from informal written requests that are exchanged via instant messaging. While instant messaging is more characterized by fashionable styles of writing that are commonly used by young people and reflect more informality, emails on the other hand stand for other types of communicative styles that reflect a greater level of formality and prestige in the use of written language. Interestingly, while the analysis of both the data of mobile texting and the questionnaire in Chapter Seven showed that there was a significant impact of English on the use of Arabic written requests in informal contexts and a concern that the beauty of Arabic and its distinctive features would be affected by the use of Arabizi, the data of the current chapter showed that the use of MSA in a systematic form was dominant in formal contexts. Hence, it can be said that from this inconsistent tendency there arises an important issue i.e. whether the Arabic language is really being threatening by the use of English and modern technology or not.
CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

This research was designed to investigate requesting behaviour in both oral and written forms across two generations of Saudi females, especially in regard to politeness in the main study. From a socio-pragmatic and sociolinguistic perspective the study also focused on the most significant individual variables i.e. age, power status, social distance, gender and the degree of imposition that might have an impact on politeness behaviour and request practices in Saudi society. The study examined the applicability of the theory of linguistic politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) to selected Saudi oral and written contexts. The data were analysed using the coding scheme of Blum-Kulka et al (1989). The study also focused on other issues related to requests in contemporary Arabic by investigating the phenomenon of Saudi Pidgin Arabic (SPA) used by Saudi Arabic native speakers to address non-native Arabic speakers from Asian countries. The study also focused on the phenomenon known as Arabizi i.e. the use of Latin letters and Arabic numbers to represent a speech-like written form of Arabic.

This investigation focused on Arabic requests amongst two groups of Saudi females in the age ranges of 20-39 and 40-60 from various perspectives. To provide a wider scope for the cultural and linguistic dimensions of requests in contemporary Arabic the study was divided into four studies; the main study examined the impact of the social factors on spoken requests. While Chapter Four discussed spoken requests in a social context, the focus in Chapter Five was on requests in work/study contexts. Role play scenarios were used to collect the data for the main study to control the impact of the social variables of power status, social distance and the degree of imposition on the requests.

The first sub-study (Chapter Six) in this investigation focused on SPA and its most significant linguistic features in requests to female Asian foreign workers in Saudi Arabia. For this sub-study authentic data were collected by recording natural conversations in SPA between the participants and female Asian workers from various linguistic backgrounds. Written requests were examined in the second sub-study (Chapter Seven) as well as Arabizi. The most distinctive features of this phenomenon were examined in requests exchanged by younger Saudi females in SMS text messages in an informal context. Written requests in a formal context were also investigated (Chapter Eight) by focusing on emails exchanged in a Saudi governmental institution. Authentic data were collected for these two sub-studies on written requests.

The following section summarises the most notable findings from the main study and the three sub-studies.
9.2 Requests in a social context

The main study presented a close examination of spoken requests in a social context by two generations of Saudi females. The first part of Chapter Four provided a detailed analysis of requests and politeness strategies and one of the key findings was the greater tendency to employ most direct strategies by the informants. This supports other studies which have found that Arabic speakers use most direct strategies as a means of addressing positive face and showing intimacy (Alfattah and Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010a, b; Al-Momani, 2009; Atawneh, 1991).

The data also showed the substantial and significant impact of the social variables on the request: power status, social distance, the degree of imposition and the gender of the hearer. The impact of power status, for instance, was apparent in the use of most direct strategies. While the informants tended to use imperatives in their requests to younger age requestees, they avoided such strategies in their requests to older or higher status requestees, and instead preferred to use want strategies that sound more polite in such contexts. Additionally, the dominant role of males in Saudi society was evident in the preference for using indirect strategies in requests to males, even in close relationships. In requests to females in close relationships, however, the participants used direct strategies and expressions that showed intimacy and informality.

The impact of social distance was significant: the participants showed a greater tendency to use most direct strategies and to address positive face in their requests to hearers in close relationships. On the other hand, the informants showed a greater tendency to use negative strategies (i.e. conventional indirect strategies) when they made requests to unfamiliar individuals. The data also showed the impact of gender segregation: the subjects preferred to either opt out or employ very formal and indirect strategies when they made requests to male strangers. The socio-pragmatic analysis revealed that most of the subjects used indirect strategies and addressed the negative face when they made requests with a high degree of imposition, while they tended to use direct strategies without fear of losing face when they made requests with a low degree of imposition.

Statistical analysis was conducted on the data in Chapter Four to support the socio-pragmatic analysis and to determine whether there were differences and similarities in the behaviour of the two age groups. This analysis showed that both age groups showed a greater preference to employ most direct strategies (a general tendency in Arabic). The impact of power status was shown in the use of most direct sub-strategies. This analysis also focused on inter- and intra-group differences and similarities and revealed that the two age groups showed different behaviour in their requests with a high degree of imposition to unfamiliar elderly persons and children. The analysis also supported the significant impact of gender segregation in Saudi Arabia.
The following section focuses on the second part of the main study in this investigation i.e. spoken requests in work/study contexts.

9.3 Requests in work/study contexts

The analysis of requests to females in work/study contexts revealed a number of important points. In addition to the general preference for employing most direct strategies, the findings showed that the impact of the degree of imposition of the request was quite evident and led the participants to show a greater tendency towards employing conventionally indirect strategies to save face and to show more politeness, even in close relationships. In distant relationships the informants showed more preference for opting out strategies as a result of the high degree of imposition. In fact, the impact of degree of imposition in requests’ context was also shown in various contexts. According to Gu (2011), because of the intrusive and the demanding nature of requests, the requester needs to minimize the imposition by employing indirect strategies.

The findings revealed that the two generations displayed relatively different behaviour in their requests in work/study contexts. While the younger participants preferred to address negative face by using conventionally indirect strategies, the older participants tended more to use direct strategies.

The data were also analysed statistically to support the socio-pragmatic analysis in Chapter Five. The differences between the two age groups were significant in close relationships only when the participants made requests to hearers of a lower status i.e. students/employees. There were more significant differences in the request behaviour of the two age groups in distant relationships. The statistical analysis also supported the impact of social distance in most situations. The impact of power status in the requestive behaviour of the two age groups was more obvious in distant relationships. Another statistical task was performed to examine the differences in request behaviour to female requestees within two different contexts i.e. social and work/study contexts and the findings revealed significant differences in the politeness behaviour of the participants across these contexts.

9.4 Other key findings related to Arabic spoken requests

The socio-pragmatic analysis of the main study included the sub-categories of conventionally indirect strategies, since they address the negative face and are subject to the specific underlying cultural values of each speech community (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989) (see section 3.7.2 in Chapter Three). The first sub-category is request perspective and the data revealed that the participants showed a preference for the hearer-perspective in both social and work/study contexts. Although conventional indirect strategies were employed to address the negative face, the use of the hearer-perspective in the Arabic context highlights that the speaker showed a greater tendency towards positive politeness and creating solidarity than showing formality or higher degree of politeness (Abuarrah et, al. 2013). The second sub-category
is conventions of means; the results showed that the most frequent strategy was employing request expressions as possibility strategies.

The requests in this investigation also included various linguistic strategies in Arabic, known as external and internal modifications. These strategies are usually used to create solidarity and show intimacy, to show a higher degree of politeness, or to soften the force of the requestive expression. The results showed that the grounders (i.e. giving a reason for the requests and imposition minimizers) were the most frequent external modifications used in social and work/study contexts. The results showed that the use of politeness markers and interrogatives was more frequent than other internal modifications. The impact of the age gap between the two generations was clear: the older group employed fewer external modifications in their requests than the younger ones who preferred to use various other strategies to show more respect and politeness.

The results of the main study also revealed that the participants used various forms to address hearers in social and work/study contexts. The use of Arabic address forms was also subject to power status and social distance. When addressing hearers of higher status for example, the informants used forms that reflect deference and formality. However, when they addressed hearers of equal or lower status, they used either first names or other forms that reflect less formality. As can be expected, the use of forms of address was also affected by the social distance between the interlocutors: when addressing hearers of higher status in distant relationships the participants used forms that reflected formality and a higher level of politeness than when addressing hearers of higher status in close relationships. Gender segregation also had an impact on females addressing male strangers in a social context; the participants avoided using terms of endearment or other kinship terms in their requests.

The data analysis also pinpointed some issues related to two social values in Saudi cultures i.e. kulfah and mayanah. Kulfah is indicated by the use of negative and indirect strategies, or the use of formal and deference forms of address, such as when addressing hearers of higher status or a distant relationship. On the other hand, mayanah is shown through the use of positive and most direct strategies, and informal and solidarity terms of address, such as when addressing hearers of equal or lower status or hearers in close relationships.

One of the issues here is the relationship between Hofstede’s dimensions on cultures and Saudi Arabic requests. For the first dimension Saudi Arabia is classified as having a hierarchical structure, as supported by Al Ageel (2010) and Bjerke & Al-Meer (1993) in addition to the dominant role of males in Saudi culture. The findings of the current study showed that the differences in the levels of power status on the requests made in social and work/study contexts impacted on politeness behaviour. Hofstede’s model classifies Saudi Arabia as a collectivist culture. This was supported in the data by the frequent use of various brotherhood and kinship terms to address hearers in both close and distant
relationships. The collectivist nature of Saudi society was also supported by the findings of Al Ageel (2010), Bjerke & Al-Meer (1993) and Noer et al. (2007). Although Saudi Arabia is classified by Hofstede as a culture tending towards masculinity, in addition to the current one, there are studies (Al Ageel, 2010; Bjerke & Al-Meer, 1993; Noer et al. 2007) which reveal that Saudi culture has a tendency towards femininity, seen by the use of expressions that aim to build emotional connection and relationship-based behaviour amongst Saudi individuals such as the common use of kinship and endearment forms to address hearers even in distant relationships. The participants of the current study also used a number of religious expressions, reflecting the profound connection between Saudis and their religious values. This also has led Saudi Arabia to be classified by Hofstede as a culture with a high tendency towards uncertainty avoidance (Bjerke & Al-Meer, 1993; Farghal, 1995; Obeidat et al. 2012).

Chapter Five included a discussion on the role of social distance, age, power status and gender on politeness behaviour and communicative patterns in Saudi and other western and non-western cultures. While, for instance, this study uses the model of Brown and Levinson and the CCSARP regarding the politeness levels of requests (i.e. most direct, conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect), it is not consistent with the universal classification of Brown and Levinson as conventionally indirect strategies as the most polite. In addition, Chapter Five included a discussion about the role of gender in the choice of politeness and request strategies within speech communities as one of the most contested issues in the area of pragmatics. On one hand, a number of scholars tend to generalize the concept that it is the different psychological nature of men and women which governs politeness behaviour and the choice of the linguistic expressions by each gender (Holmes, 2013; Zimmerman and West 1975; Fishman 1978, 1980; Tannen 1984, 1990). Other researchers, however, see gender as a factor that should not be analysed in isolation from the other values and beliefs that form the culture of each speech community (Lorenzo and Bou, 2003; Mills, 2002; Okamoto, 2002).

The following section focuses on the general findings of requests made by Saudi females by using SPA to address female Asian workers.

9.5 Requests in Saudi Pidgin Arabic

Chapter Six dealt with the analysis of the first sub-study where the focus was on the main linguistic features that distinguish this variety. The first section of the analysis was on the limited use of the verbal system in SPA which is restricted to the simplest forms of verbs in Arabic and subject to the rules of Najdi Arabic47. Additionally, the elements of tense, aspect/mood and modality do not reflect the exact features and meanings usually understood from the communicative situation (Al-Azraqi, 2010; Wiswall, 2002). The use of noun phrases in SPA, on the other hand, is usually characterized by specific markers whose functions differ from their main functions in Najdi Arabic and this tendency has resulted from

47 The spoken variety in the middle region of Saudi Arabia.
the limitation in the vocabulary in SPA. The sub-study showed that the wide use of the copula *fii* and its negation *mafii* is one of the significant features that also distinguish the use of SPA (as supported by Al-Moaily, 2008; Smart, 1990; Salem, 2013; Wiswall, 2002). Moreover, the findings revealed that the participants tended to employ various expressions from English as a result of the lack of the lexical system in this variety. However, the younger participants showed more preference for using English in SPA, demonstrating the impact of English as the language of modern technology on younger generations.

### 9.6 Written requests in an informal context

Chapter Seven discussed the linguistic features of *Arabizi*: the phenomenon of using Latin letters and Arabic numerals to represent spoken Najdi Arabic in a written form in an informal context. The findings showed that various Arabic numerals were used to represent Arabic consonants because not all Arabic consonants can be represented by English letters. Nevertheless, there is more flexibility in representing vowels in *Arabizi*. This flexibility is a result of the writing system in Modern Standard Arabic which focuses more on long vowels that affect the spelling and the grammatical rules in written texts. The representation of both long and short vowels in *Arabizi* usually depends on the interactants’ shared linguistic background. The participants used various linguistic strategies that showed close relationships and solidarity. This reflects the fact that the data were collected in requests to same age relatives or close friends.

The questionnaire data showed that the subjects believe that the use of *Arabizi* is a type of sharing a fashionable trend of modern technology. In addition, the data showed that the participants believe that this type of writing system has become widespread during the last ten years since the emergence of the internet and other types of software. Although the findings showed that some of the participants use *Arabizi* in their classroom chatting, all participants believe that the use of this style of writing has a negative impact on the beauty of the Arabic language.

### 9.7 Written requests in a formal context

The analysis in the third sub-study focused on written Arabic requests in a formal context. The first section in Chapter Eight discussed the level of directness in requestive emails. As in spoken requests, written Arabic also has a tendency towards directness. However, the most preferred strategies in the requests were hedged performatives, since they sounded more polite than other direct strategies. The subjects employed various external and internal modifications for the purpose of mitigating the force of the requests and to make the written text sound formal and more polite. While expressions of appreciation and preparators were the most preferred strategies amongst the external modifications, the participants tended to employ various types of religious expressions and politeness markers as the most preferred strategies amongst internal modifications. In the data, the social factor of *kulfah* was shown by the use of expressions with high formality.
In addition, the emails were written in MSA and were mainly characterized by a general structure that included: an opening section (Islamic greeting/opening greeting), the content, a closing section (respectful/closing salutation), and finally the signature of the sender. However, some of the emails exchanged amongst colleagues showed that some senders used expressions that reflected informality i.e. *mayanah* by employing speech like phrases in their requests.

### 9.8 Sociolinguistic implications

According to Nwoye (1992), linguistic politeness has been studied by various scholars, such as interactional sociolinguists, social psychologists, ethno-methodologists, and anthropologists. Nwoye (1992), who defines linguistic politeness as “the manifestation of correct and proper socially sanctioned and expected behaviour through the verbal channel”, believes that linguistic politeness that differs according to its cultural context is important because it involves verbal strategies for keeping the social interaction harmonious and acceptable. The validity of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theoretical framework has been demonstrated across various cultures and different speech communities.

The present study addressed a number of points in this framework in the context of Arabic requests. It confirms the validity of the concepts of positive and negative face and how Arabic interlocutors vary in employing negative and positive strategies according to the communicative situation. This study is one of the first that has focused on the importance of the factors of *kelifah and mayanah* in the use of the linguistic strategies in Arabic requests. *Kelifah* has more to do with the choice of showing respect and using expressions of formality, negative politeness strategies and the use of deference forms of address. *Mayanah*, on the other hand, is related to showing intimacy and close relationships i.e. the use of positive politeness strategies.

It is hoped that this study has provided an insight into the politeness behaviour of Saudi females when making requests and also how their cultural values and religious beliefs affect their communicative patterns when making requests. This study contributes to the literature by providing an insight into the social role of Saudi females and a reflection about their politeness behaviour in various contexts i.e. social and work/study contexts. The relationship between the language use and the impact of the gender (of the hearer) on the communicative patterns has been also reflected in the findings of this study, when the majority of the participants opted out of requests in an interaction with an unfamiliar male. This behaviour is obviously due to the fact that Saudi Arabia is a segregated society that has different roles for both genders in accordance with the instructions of Islam. The study also examines Saudi female choices of forms of address when interacting with hearers of both genders and with different status and social distance. Furthermore, this study is significant because it is amongst the first studies to investigate the practices of the speech act of requests in Arabic by the same participants in two different environments, i.e. a social context and study and work contexts.
While most studies on politeness and requests on Arabic are cross-cultural, this study is culture-specific and provides a detailed investigation into the contemporary practices of Arabic requests within various contexts. By focusing on spoken and written forms of Arabic, this study provides an insight into the diglossic situation i.e. the use of dialects in the spoken forms and the Classical and Modern Standard Arabic in the written form. The study examined the linguistic characteristics of one of the spoken varieties (i.e. SPA), which has resulted from recent changes to economic and social status in Saudi society. The study discussed changes in the use of written forms of languages which result from, and are reflected by, the use of modern technology and new forms of written communications (i.e Arabizi). Changes in language use often result from large-scale shifts such as the use of modern technology and/or the increasingly widespread use of English that prompt younger generations to alter their way of speaking or writing. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that this situation has more complexity in Arabic as a result of its diglossic situation. In formal written Arabic, the findings show that the use of MSA\textsuperscript{48} is more stable than spoken forms or informal written Arabic.

Additionally, change in language use across generations was one of the main issues identified in this study. In fact, the linguistic differences between the two generations emerged in two situations. In terms of politeness behaviour, the younger generation showed a preference for the use of indirect strategies and the use of more deferent linguistic expressions than the older generation. This may be due to the age gap that might give the older generation more confidence to be direct in their requests. Examples of generational change identified, not only in Saudi Arabia but around the Arab world, are Arabizi and a greater tendency to employ English expressions in SPA.

\textbf{9.9 Implications in other fields}

According to Akbari (2014), politeness is of great importance in translation as one of the main principles in cross-cultural communication. This means that knowing the grammatical structure is not sufficient to transfer the appropriate message to the target language, and hence it is important for the translator/interpreter to deal with pragmatic features such as politeness strategies (Akbari, 2014). Akbari and Sharifian (2014) claim that interpreters do not render a written text from one language to another, rather they translate a script written for individuals who belong to a specific culture for other individuals who belong to a different culture. Therefore, this study provides scholars concerned with translating and interpreting from and into Arabic with some understanding of the linguistic strategies used in politeness behaviour, in particular in requests, in spoken and written Arabic.

Since pragmatic competence is one of the most important components of teaching and learning a second language, this study provides a detailed investigation into some of the socio-pragmatic features that

\textsuperscript{48} The data only included Modern Standard Arabic since Classical Arabic is the only form of Arabic that has been kept from change since it is the language of the Qur’an and the Islamic instructions.
distinguish Saudi Arabic. It also contributes to the literature on pedagogical and methodological approaches in teaching Arabic as a second language. In addition this study provides socio-pragmatic knowledge to teachers who teach second languages to students from an Arabic speaking background.

9.10 Implications for further research

Since the area of pragmatics and sociolinguistics is in its early stages in the Arabic context, areas of this study could be extended further. First, future researchers could focus on a wider range of participants who speak different Saudi varieties of Arabic, such as Hijazi, Eastern, or other varieties in the rural regions of Saudi Arabia or varieties used by Saudis from varying social or educational backgrounds. To find out more about the impact of gender on Saudi politeness behaviour, future studies might include males from various age ranges speaking to females of different levels of power and social distance, and compare the findings with this study. In addition, other studies could focus on Saudi females who work in mixed environments, such as female medical doctors and nurses, to determine whether they differ in their politeness behaviour from Saudi housewives or other Saudi females who work in gender segregated environments. As the findings showed that the younger generation showed a greater tendency towards indirect strategies, further research might be conducted to find out whether this behaviour is a result of general changes that are occurring in spoken Saudi or not.

This study might be one of the few studies to include Hofstede’s model of cultural dimensions in the investigation of the speech act of requests in Arabic. Hence, further research could also include these dimensions and investigate other speech acts to provide more insight into the cultural values of Saudi speech communities.

Further work also remains to be undertaken on other dimensions of Saudi Pidgin Arabic, i.e. the variety used by female Asian workers in Saudi Arabia. Their different linguistic and cultural backgrounds will almost certainly result in additional features to the SPA used by native speakers of Saudi variety.

Future research is required into politeness behaviour in written forms of Arabic. While this study focused on the use of Arabizi amongst younger females, other studies could include a wider range of participants and investigate the use of Arabizi by males and compare the findings with this study. Future research might also include other sources for the data such as internet web sites and other social media. Finally, additional studies into linguistic politeness in Modern Standard Arabic might also include data from various sources such as newspapers and textbooks.

9.11 Summary

Studying requesting behaviour provides a greater understanding of culture. Knowledge of socio-pragmatic rules can serve to facilitate social communication and minimize confrontation between individuals from different speech communities (Farahat, 2009; Ting-Toomy, 1988). In the Arabic
context, knowing the rules of the communicative patterns of the Saudi speech community also assists to reduce generalisation of Arabs and Arabian culture. For example, it has been argued in this study that Brown and Levinson’s framework of linguistic politeness has proved its effectiveness in various aspects of the Arabic context. First, this study shows that the variables of social distance, degree of imposition and relative power have a great impact on the use of politeness strategies when making requests amongst Saudi females. Similarly to several other studies on Arabic politeness behaviour (Al Ageel, 2009; Alfattah & Ravindranath, 2009; Al-Marrani & Sazalie, 2010a, b; Al-Momani, 2009; Atawneh, 1991; Farahat, 2009), this study also shows that acts that cause the speaker or addressee to save or lose face in Arabic are culturally specific.

The focus on females in this study also provides a reflection on the impact of social variables on the communicative patterns between Saudi females and unfamiliar males. The study also shows the impact of gender and age through the dominant roles of males in Saudi Society.

Classifying Saudi culture in accordance with Hofstede’s framework of cultural dimensions shows that Saudi culture is characterized as a culture that has a hierarchical structure and a collectivist nature. However, the present study has shown that the communicative patterns of the Saudi speech community show a greater tendency towards femininity: the classification of Saudi culture is either on or closer to midpoint between masculinity and femininity in most other studies (Bjerke & Al-Meer, 1993; Noer et al. 2007). Hence, this project justifies the need for future research that focus on Saudi cultural dimensions in general and on of masculinity/femininity dimension.

This investigation also provides a reflection on the impact of globalisation on Saudi society by focusing on requests made in Saudi Pidgin Arabic and how both native and non-native speakers of Saudi Arabic from various Asian backgrounds have created this spoken variety that serves various communicative purposes despite its limited/restricted vocabulary and grammatical systems. The impact of modern technology and the use of English in Arabic though Arabizi was also investigated in this research project i.e. the use of Latin letters and the Arabic numeral system in producing speech-like written Arabic by the younger generations as means of showing identity through the use of this contemporary phenomenon. Other written requests in Arabic were examined, i.e. formal written requests in institutional emails, showing that the use of Modern Standard Arabic is still the prestigious form used in formal Arabic texts.

In sum, this research project is significant because it contributes in bridging the gap in the literature in various fields of study. It also provides an insight into Saudi cultural values in both formal and informal situations in addition to the most linguistic features that distinguish contemporary Arabic within various contexts.
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Appendix (1)-Role plays scenarios (Arabic version)

(1) السياق العائلي والاجتماعي

- الموقف (1)
إحدى صديقاتك سوف تقيم حفلة وقد دعتك إليها. إحدى قريباتك لديها ساعة تحبينها جدا وأنت ترغبين استعراها منها لأنها تناسب الفستان الذي سوف ترتديه. ماذا ستقولين لهذه السيدة إذا كانت:
1. والدتك
2. اختك القريبة من سنك

- الملاحظة: الساعة ليست غالية الثمن.

- الموقف (2)
أنت تعانين من بعض المشاكل المالية وتحتاجين حوالي 5000 ريال لحل هذه المشكلات. أنت تعلمين أن أحد أفراد عائلتك يدخر ما يدخر مالاً. ماذا سوف تقولين لهذا الشخص من أجل استعارة هذا المبلغ إذا كان:
1. والدك
2. والدتك
3. أختك القريبة من سنك أو زوجك
4. أختك القريبة من سنك

- الموقف (3)
حضرت للتو من الرجوع بعد أن قمت بالتسوق. أنتي تحملين الكثير من الأغراض وترغبين من أحد الأطفال أن يساعدك في حمل هذه الأغراض. ماذا ستقولين لهذا الطفل إذا كان:
1. أختيك الصغرى أو ابنتك
2. أختك الصغرى أو ابنتك

- الموقف (4)
تحتاجين لشراء بعض المواد المكتبية. في هذا الوقت ليس لديك ما تكفي، وأنت تحتاجين حوالي 200 ريال وأنت تعلمين أن أحد الأطفال في عائلتك يدخر مالاً. ماذا ستقولين له من أجل أن يرضيك هذا المبلغ إذا كان هذا الطفل:
1. أختيك الأصغر أو ابنك
2. أختك الصغرى أو ابنتك

- الموقف (5)
أنت في الطائرة وعندما أردت الجلوس في مكانك وجدت شخص جلب في مكانك بالخطأ. ماذا ستقولين لهذا الشخص إذا كان:
1. سيدة كبيرة في السن تقتربا بعمر 70 سنة
2. سيد أو رجل كبير في السن تقتربا بعمر 70 سنة

- الموقف (6)
تذهبين في رحلة بالطائرة أنتي وزوجك. وعندما ركبت الطائرة اكتشفت أن المقاعد المخصصة لكك أنتي وزوجك غير متاحة ووجدت سيدة كبيرة في السن تجلس على المقعد الذي يفصل بينك وبين زوجك وتريدان أن تطلبي منها أن تجلس في مكانك. ماذا ستقولين لها؟

أنتي في مجمع تجاري وتردين شراء حقيبة بد من محل معين ولكنك لا تستطيعين أن تجدي هذا المحل. هناك سيدة قريبة منك ماذا ستقولين من أجل أن تستلبنها عن مكان المحل؟

الموقف (8)
إنتهي للتو من التسوق وترينين الذهب إلى المنزل لذلك ترينين الاتصال بشخص ما من أجل أن يحضر ويتنك إلى المنزل واكتشفت أنك نسيت جهازك النقال ولكنك وجدت سيدة بالقرب منك تستخدم جهازها النقال. ماذا ستقولين لها لكي تعبرك جهازها؟

الموقف (9)
أنتي مدعمة ببيت إحدى صديقاتك وأول مرة تذهبين إلى المنطقة التي تسكن فيها. أنتمي أمام المنزل ولكنك تستمكة أنه أسفل صديقاتك ووجدت طفل لا تعرفينه يلعب أمام المنزل وتردين أن تستلبنين حتى تتاخيدي أن المنزل لصديقاتك. ماذا ستقولين لهذا الطفل إذا كان:
1- طفل
2- طفلة

الموقف (10)
أنتي في حالة انتظار المستشفى مع والدتك المريضة ولا يوجد أماكن. ويوجد طفل فق في سن ثمان سنوات تقريبا يجلس على أحد الكراسي، ترينين أن تطلبي منه أن يفرك المكان لأنك في حالة لاحتياجات. ماذا ستقولين لهذا الطفل إذا كان:
1- طفل
2- طفلة

الموقف (11)
أنتي في صالة انتظار المستشفى مع والدتك المريضة ولا يوجد أماكن. ويوجد طفل في سن ثماني سنوات تتفقرا بجلس على أحد الكراسي، ترينين أن تطلبي منه أن يفرك المكان لأنك في حالة لاحتياجات. ماذا ستقولين لهذا الطفل إذا كان:
1- الطفل
2- الطفلة

الموقف (12)
أتيت في رحلة الطائرة وأنتي وزوجك. وعندما ركبت الطائرة اكتشفت أن المقاعد المخصصة لك أنتي وزوجك غير متاحة ووجدت رجل كبير في السن يجلس على المقعد الذي يفصل بينك وبين زوجك وتردين أن تطلبي منه أن يجلس في مكانك. هل ستنين منه أن يجلس في مكانك؟
إذا كان جوابك نعم ماذا ستقولين له؟
إذا كان جوابك للا يمكنك إيضاح السبب؟

الموقف (13)
انتهكي للفت من النقال وترينين الذهب إلى المنزل لذلك ترينين الاتصال بشخص ما من أجل أن يحضر ويتنك إلى المنزل واكتشفت أنك نسيت جهازك النقال ولكنك وجدت رجل بالقرب منك يستخدم جهازه النقال. هل ستنين من الرجل أن يعبرك جهازه النقال؟ إذا كان جوابك نعم ماذا ستقولين له لكي تعبرك جهازه؟
إذا كان جوابك للا يمكنك إيضاح السبب؟

الموقف (14)
أتيت في مجمع تجاري وتردين شراء حقيبة بد من محل معين ولكنك لا تستطيعين أن تجدي هذا المحل. هناك رجل قريب منك. هل ستنين منه عن مكان المحل؟
إذا كان جوابك نعم، ماذا ستقولين من أجل أن تستلبنين عن مكان المحل؟
إذا كان جوابك للا يمكنك إيضاح السبب؟
الموقف (15)

حصل تغيير في جدول المحاضرات وأنتم غير متأكدين من وقت المحاضرة لإحدى المواد لذلك قررت أن تذهب إلى أستاذة المادة تتسألي عنها وقت المحاضرة. ماذا ستقولون لها إذا كنت:

1. تعرفينها جيداً لأنها كدرستك منذ فترة طويلة.
2. تدرست المادة للمرة الأولى ولم تريها من قبل.

الموقف (16)

لنزي وجد وعده هو آخر موعد لتسليمه ولكن لنزي أيضاً العديد من الواجبات الأخرى لذا أنت لا تستطيعين الانتهاء في الوقت المحدد.

لذا قررت أن تست desea من أستاذتك أن تصمد لك بمدة إضافية. ماذا ستقولون؟

1. إذا كنت كدرستك منذ فترة طويلة وتروينها جيداً.
2. لا تروينها ولم تريها من قبل.

الموقف (17)

أنتي في قاعة المحاضرات ولديك محاضرة وتروين كتابة بعض الملاحظات ولكنك اكتشفت أنك لم تحضري أقلامك وتروين استعارة قلم من إحدى زميلاتك. ماذا ستقولون لها إذا كانت:

1. صديقتكم المقرية.
2. طالبة جديده تنثرها لأول مرة.

الموقف (18)

أنت حالياً تدرس مادة قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية. في الأسبوع الماضي أصيبت بنوبة برد وفانت العديد من الدروس المهمة. تروين من زميلتك أن تساعدك في شرح ما فاتك من دروس. ماذا ستقولون لها إذا كانت:

1. صديقتكم المقرية.
2. زميلة جديده لم يسبق وأن تحدثت معها من قبل.

الموقف (19)

أنت مدرسة في الجامعة ولديك اجتماع للقسم ويميل أن تقومي بالرغبة إلى إحدى المحاضرات. رأت إحدى الطالبات تقف عند مكتبك من أجل أن تسأل عن شيء. أنت تروين منها أن تذهب وتضع إعلان عن إلغاء المحاضرة اليوم على باب القاعة. ماذا ستقولون لها إذا كانت هذه الطالبة:

1. تروينها جيداً لأنك كدرستها منذ فترة طويلة.
2. طالبة جديده تنثرها لأول مرة.

الموقف (20)

أنت مدرسة في الجامعة ولديك الانتهاء من درس إحدى المواد في وقت محدد ولكن عدد المحاضرات لا يكفي وتروين أن تطلبي من طالباتك الحضور في وقت إضافي من أجل إكمال المقرر. ماذا ستقولون لهم إذا كنت:

1. تروينهم جيداً وتروينهم منذ فترة طويلة.
2. لم يسبق لك تدرسيهم وهذه هي المحاضرة الأولى التي تروينهم فيها.
الموقف (15)

سمعتي بأنه حصل تغيير في موعد الاجتماع المقرر مع رئيستك في القسم. تريدين أن تسألينها عن الوقت المحدد للاجتماع لأنك غير متأكد. بماذا ستقولين لها إذا كنت:
1 - تعريفينها جيدا لأنها تراسك منذ فترة طويلة.
2 - لا تعريفينها لأنها سلمت رئاسة القسم للتو واليوم ترينها لأول مرة.

الموقف (16)

ديك مهمة أو تكرير وغدا هو آخر موعد لتسلمه ولكن لديك أيضا العديد من المهام الأخرى إذا كنت لا تستطيعين الانتهاء في الوقت المحدد. لذلك قررت أن تطلبين من رئيستك أن تسمح لك بمدة إضافية. بماذا ستقولين لها إذا كنت:
1 - تعريفينها جيدا لأنها تراسك منذ فترة طويلة.
2 - لا تعريفينها لأنها سلمت رئاسة القسم للتو واليوم ترينها لأول مرة.

الموقف (17)

أنت في مكتبك وترتدين كتابة بعض الملاحظات ولم تجدي قلم وترتدين استعارة قلم من إحدى زميلاتك. بماذا ستقولين لها إذا كنت:
1 - صديقتك المقربة.
2 - زميلة جيدة لم بسبق أن تحدثت إليها من قبل.

الموقف (18)

غدا هو آخر موعد لتسليم تقرير مهم لرئيستك ولكن لا يزال لديك الكثير من المهام الأخرى. رأيت إحدى زميلاتك وقررت أن تطلبين منك المساعدة. بماذا ستقولين لها إذا كنت:
1 - صديقتك المقربة.
2 - زميلة جيدة لم بسبق أن تحدثت إليها من قبل.

الموقف (19)

أنت رئيسة قسم ولديك اجتماع في إدارة القسم ولكنت تذكرت أن لديك اجتماع آخر في نفس الوقت مع موظفات إدارتك. رأيت إحداهن صديقتك المقربة في المكتب وترتدين منها أن تخبر زميلاتك بأنك قد ألغيت الاجتماع. بماذا ستقولين لهذه الموظفة إذا كنت:
1 - تعريفينها جيدا لأنك تراسك منذ فترة طويلة.
2 - لا تعريفينها لأنك سلمت رئاسة القسم للتو واليوم ترينها لأول مرة.

الموقف (20)

أنت رئيسة قسم ولديك اجتماع تقرير للإدارة في وقت محدد. لديك الكثير من العمل والوقت لا يكفي وترتدين أن تطلبين من الموظفات لديك في القسم العمل لعدة ساعات إضافية بدون مقابل. بماذا ستقولين للموظفات إذا كنت:
1 - تعريفينهم جيدا لأنك تراسك منذ فترة طويلة.
2 - لم بسبق أن تواصلت معهن لأن اليوم هو أول يوم لك في إدارة القسم.
Appendix (2)-Role plays scenarios (English version)

A) Family and social contexts

Situation (1)
One of your friends is having a party and she has invited you. One of your female relatives has a watch and you would really like to borrow it to wear it to the party because it matches your dress. What would you say if this lady is:
1- your mother?
2- your sister who is your age?

Situation (2)
You have some financial problems and you need about 5000 SR to solve these problems. You know that one of your relatives has been saving money. What would you say to borrow this amount of money if this person is:
1- your father?
2- your mother?
3- your brother (who is your age) or your husband?
4- your sister (who is your age)?

Situation (3)
You have just come in from outside after doing your shopping and you are carrying a lot of things. You need the children to help you. What would you say if this child is:
1- your younger brother or your son?
2- your sister or daughter?

Situation (4)
You need to buy some stationery and you don’t have money at the moment. You need about 200 SR. You know that one of the children in your family has been saving money. What would you say to borrow this amount of money if this child is:
1- your younger brother or your son?
2- your younger sister or your daughter?

Situation (5)
You are on the plane and you found a person sitting in your place by mistake. What would you say if this person is:
1- an old lady of the age of 70?
2- an old man of the age of 70?

Situation (6)
You are on the plane with your husband and this time you found your places are separate. You found an old lady sitting between you and your husband. What would you say to ask her to swap places with one of you?
Situation (7)
You are in a shopping mall and you want to buy a purse from a specific shop, but you can't find this shop. You see a lady close to you. What would you say to ask her for directions to the shop?

Situation (8)
You have just finished shopping and you want to go home, so you need to ring someone to collect you. You realised that you have forgotten your mobile but you found that there is a lady nearby using her mobile. What would you say to borrow her mobile?

Situation (9)
You are invited to your friend’s house. This the first time you have gone to her neighbourhood and you are in front of the house but you are not sure if it is your friend’s house or not. Meanwhile, there is a child playing and you want to ask her/him if this is your friend’s house. What would you say if this child is:
1- a little boy?
2- a little girl?

Situation (10)
You are in the waiting area of where? accompanying your sick mother. All places are occupied, but there is an eight year old child sitting. You want to ask her/him to give the chair to your mother. What would you say if this child is:
3- a little boy?
4- a little girl?

Situation (11)
You are invited to a party at one of your friends’ house and you need one of your family members to give you a ride. What would you say is this person is:
1- your father?
2- your brother who is your age or your husband?

Situation (14)
You are on the plane with your husband and you found your places are separate. You found an old man sitting between you and your husband. Would you ask him to swap his place with one of you? If your answer is yes, what would you say? And if your answer is no, can you explain why?

Situation (12)
You have just finished shopping and you want to go home, so you need to ring someone to collect you. You realised that you have forgotten your mobile but you found that there is a man nearby using his mobile. Would you ask him to lend you his mobile? If your answer is yes, what would you say? And if your answer is no, can you explain why?

Situation (13)
You are in a shopping mall and you want to buy a purse from a specific shop, but you can't find this shop. You see a man close to you. Would you ask him about the place of the shop? If your answer is yes, what would you say? And if your answer is no, can you explain why?
(B) Study context

Situation (14)
There have been some changes to your timetable and you are not sure about the time of one of your classes. So you decided to go to the subject teacher to ask her about the class time. What would you say if:
1- you know her very well because she has been teaching you for a long time?
2- She is teaching you for the first time and you have not seen her before?

Situation (15)
Tomorrow is the deadline for one of your assignments. You have many other assignments and cannot finish the paper on time. You decide to talk to the teacher about an extension. What would you say if:
1- you know her very well because she has been teaching you since a long time?
2- she teaches you for the first time and did not see her before?

Situation (16)
You are in the classroom and you want to write some notes. You found that you did not bring your pens. You want to borrow one of your classmates’ pens. What would you say if:
1- she is your close friend?
2- she is a new student and you are seeing her for the first time?

Situation (17)
You are taking a grammar subject. Last week you had a bad cold and missed some very important classes. You need your classmate to help you by explaining the missing classes. What would you say if:
1- she is your close friend?
2- she is a new student and you are seeing her for the first time?

Situation (18)
You are a university professor. You have a department meeting and you have to cancel one of today’s classes. One of the course students stops by your office to inquire about something. You want the student to post an announcement about cancelling today’s class on the classroom door. What would you say if:
1- you know her very well because you have been teaching her for a long time?
2- you have never met her before?

Situation (19)
You are a university professor. You need to finish one of your subjects by a specific date, but the number of the remaining classes is not enough to cover all the material. You want to ask your students to attend some extra classes to finish at the required date. What would you say if:
1- you know them very well because you have teaching them for a long time?
2- you have never taught them and this the first class you give them?
(B) Work context

Situation (15)
You have heard that the time of the scheduled meeting with your boss has been changed. You want to ask her about the exact time because you are not sure. What would you say if:
1- you know her very well because she has been your boss for a long time?
2- you do not know her because she just started heading the department and you are seeing her for the first time?

Situation (16)
Tomorrow is the deadline to submit an important task or a report to your boss and you still have a lot of work to do. You want to ask your boss to extend the deadline. What would you say if:
1- you know her very well because she has been your boss for a long time?
2- you do not know her because she just started heading the department and you are seeing her for the first time?

Situation (17)
You are at your office and you want to write some notes. You want to borrow a pen form your colleague. What would you say if:
1- she is your close friend?
2- you have never met her before?

Situation (18)
Tomorrow is the deadline to submit an important report to your boss and you still have a lot of work to do. You see one of your colleagues and you decide to ask her for help. What would you say if:
1- she is your close friend?
2- you have never met her before?

Situation (19)
You are a boss. You have a department meeting and you realise that you have another meeting at the same time with the employees of your department. You happen to see one of them. You want the employee to inform her colleagues that you have cancelled the meeting. What would you say if:
1- you know her very well because you have been heading her for a long time?
2- you do not know her because you just started heading the department and you see her for the first time?

Situation (20)
You are a boss. You have a deadline to submit a report, but you have a lot of work to do. You want to ask the employees in your department to work extra hours for no payment. What would you say if:
1- you know them very well because you have been their boss for a long time?
3- you have not had any prior contact with them because this is your first day heading the department.
Appendix (3)-The questionnaire (Arabic)

1- لماذا برأيك تستخدم طريقة العربيزي في الكتابة؟

- لأنها أسهل وأسرع من الكتابة باللغة العربية
- الكثير يعتبرها موضة وطريقة تجعل من يستخدمها يشعر بالتميز
- لأن جهازي النقال أو الحاسوب لا يدعمان اللغة العربية
- لأن الكتابة باللغة العربية فقط غير مريحة
- لأن العربيزي طريقة شائعة بين جيل الشباب
- بسبب صعوبة التحويل بين اللغة العربية والإنجليزية أثناء المحادثة

2- هل تتذكرين متى وكيف تعلمت الكتابة بهذه الطريقة؟

- نعم
- لا

إذا كان جوابك نعم الرجاء أن تكتبي عن هذه التجربة وإذا كان جوابك لا أرجو الانتقال إلى السؤال التالي:

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

3- هل تعلمين كيف ومتي بدأت وانتشارت الكتابة بالعربيزي؟

- لا أعلم
- بدأت الكتابة بالعربيزي:

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

4- هل استخدمت أو رأيت أحد يستخدم هذه الطريقة في الكتابة في مواضع أخرى غير الجهاز النقال أو الحاسوب (كالكتابة بخط اليد مثلًا)؟
5- هل الكتابة بالعربي تشكل خطر على اللغة العربية؟
- نعم
- لا
هل يمكنك ذكر السبب سواء كانت إجابتك نعم أو لا؟

6- هل يوجد في رأيك أنواع إيجابية للكتابة العبارات الدينية بالعربي؟
- نعم
- لا
هل يمكنك ذكر السبب سواء كانت إجابتك نعم أو لا؟
Appendix (4)-The questionnaire (English)

1-Why do you sometimes write with Arabizi?
- Because it is a common way of writing amongst youth
- Many people think that it is a cool style (of writing) and writing in this way makes its users feel cool.
- Because of the lack of support for Arabic script in my (computer/mobile)
- I have to write with Arabizi because all my friends use it

2- Do you remember when and how you learned to write in this way? If yes please write about your experience?
- yes
- no
If your answer is yes, please write about this experience and if your answer is no, please move to the following question:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

3-Do you know how and when writing with Arabizi started?
- I do not know
- Writing Arabizi started when
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

4- Do you ever see or write Arabic like this in any other situations (e.g. hand writing)? If yes, please give an example
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
5- Do you think that Arabizi can negatively affect the Arabic language?
   o yes
   o no

Please explain your answer.

1- Do you think that there is a negative impact on writing religious expressions using Arabizi?
   o yes
   o no

Please explain your answer.
نموذج موافقة على المشاركة في بحث

موافقة لجنة الأخلاقيات تحت الرقم: 12/03-20000665-03/12

عنوان البحث:

الطلب باللغة العربية المعاصرة: دراسة عن نساء المملكة العربية السعودية

أنا أقر:

1. بأني قد تم توضيح البحث لي وأنني قد قرأت بيان المعلومات.

أنا أوافق على المشاركة في هذا البحث كما هو موضح.

2. أنا أوافق على اجراء مقابلة وبيان مسجل صوتي، كما أنا أوافق على تزويد الباحث ببعض الرسائل الإلكترونية والنصوص باللغة العربية أو العربيزي (اللغة العربية المكتوبة بالحروف الإنجليزية).

3. أنا أدرك بأن مشكلتي في هذا البحث تطوعية وأنني لدي الحرية لنسحب من هذا المشروع في أي وقت كما أستطيع أن أسحب أي بيانات كنت قد قدمتها من قبل ولم تتم معالجتها بعد (ما لم يكن هناك حاجة للمتابعة من أجل السلامة).

أنا أدرك بأن هذا المشروع هو لغرض البحث العلمي وأنني قد لا أستفيد منه بشكل مباشر.

4. أنا أدرك بأن هذا المشروع هو لغرض البحث العلمي وأنني قد لا أستفيد منه بشكل مباشر.

أنا أدرك بأن سوف يتم إحترام خصوصية كافة معلوماتي الشخصية المقدمة وأنه سيتم الكشف عنها فقط إذا وافقت على ذلك أو حسبما يقضيه القانون.

أنا أدرك بأن الباحث سوف يتم حماية البيانات البحثية أثناء الدراسة وبعد الانتهاء منها. قد يتم نشر البيانات التي تم جمعها خلال الدراسة وسيتم تقديم تقرير عن النتائج المشروع إلى حصة العيل. لن يتم استخدام أي معلومات تعود إلى هويتي.

موافقة المشاركات.
يجب أن يتم تزويد المشاركين نسخةً من نموذج الموافقة هذا الخاص بالمشاركة في البحث بعد أن يتم التوقيع عليه.
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

ETHICS APPROVAL NO: _____________
Research title:
Politeness and Requests in Contemporary Arabic: A Case Study of Saudi Arabian Women

I acknowledge that:
1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet.
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described.
3. I agree to be interviewed; my voice will be audio recorded and to submit some emails and texts in Arabic or Arabizi.
4. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
5. The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
6. The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
7. The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to Hessah Al-Ageel. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

Participant’s Consent

Participant: ____________________________ Date: ________________
(Signature)

Participants should be given a photocopy of this PICF after it has been signed.
**Appendix (7)-Requests in a Social Context to Females with Close Social Distance (in percentages)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests to mothers</th>
<th>-DI</th>
<th>YAG</th>
<th>MDD</th>
<th>DQ</th>
<th>PD</th>
<th>LD</th>
<th>WS</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Opt</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+DI</td>
<td>YAG</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>76</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests to sisters</th>
<th>-DI</th>
<th>YAG</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>76</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>22</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Requests to daughters/ child sisters</th>
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<th>8</th>
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<td>80</td>
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</table>

MD=Most Direct, CI=Conventionally Indirect, NCI=Non-Conventionally Indirect, Opt=Opting Out,
YAG=Younger Age Group, OAG=Older Age Group, -DI=Low Degree of Imposition, +DI=High Degree of Imposition, MDD=Mood Derivable, DQ=Direct Question, PD=Pre-Decided Statement, LD=Locution Derivable, WS=Want Statement, T=Total, SF=Suggestory Formula, QP=Query Preparatory, SH=Strong Hints, MH=Mild Hints

* The total number of request strategies used by each age group= 25
## Appendix (8)-Requests by the Two Age Groups to Males with Close Social Distance (in percentages)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests to mothers</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>CI</th>
<th>NCI</th>
<th>Opt</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>DQ</td>
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<td>LD</td>
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</tr>
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<td>YAG</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>76</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>60</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Requests to sisters</th>
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<th>CI</th>
<th>NCI</th>
<th>Opt</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>DQ</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>LD</td>
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<th>NCI</th>
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<th>%</th>
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MD=Most Direct, CI=Conventionally Indirect, NCI=Non-Conventionally Indirect, Opt=Opting Out, YAG=Younger Age Group, OAG=Older Age Group, -DI=Low Degree of Imposition, +DI=High Degree of Imposition, MDD=Mood Derivable, DQ=Direct Question, PD=Pre-Decided Statement, LD=Locution Derivable, WS=Want Statement, T=Total, SF=Suggestory Formula, QP=Query Preparatory, SH=Strong Hints, MH=Mild Hints

* The total number of request strategies used by each age group= 25
### Requests by the Two Age Groups to Female Strangers (in Percentages)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests to mothers</th>
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<td>YAG - - - - - 12 12</td>
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<td>16 100</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>- - -</td>
<td>52 100</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>+DI YAG - - - - -</td>
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<td>8 20</td>
<td>68 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAG - - - - - -</td>
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<td>8 20</td>
<td>76 100</td>
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<table>
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<th>Opt</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>56 56</td>
<td>12 12</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAG - - - 4 4</td>
<td>72 72</td>
<td>- - -</td>
<td>20 100</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests to daughters' child sisters</th>
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<th>Opt</th>
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<td>- - -</td>
<td>4 100</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<tr>
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<td>80 80</td>
<td>- - -</td>
<td>8 100</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAG 8 - - - 4</td>
<td>12 80</td>
<td>- - 8</td>
<td>12 100</td>
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</table>

MD=Most Direct, CI=Conventionally Indirect, NCI=Non-Conventionally Indirect, Opt=Opting Out, YAG=Younger Age Group, OAG=Older Age Group, -DI=Low Degree of Imposition, +DI=High Degree of Imposition, MDD=Mood Derivable, DQ=Direct Question, PD=Pre-Decided Statement, LD=Locution Derivable, WS=Want Statement, T=Total, SF=Suggestory Formula, QP=Query Preparatory, SH=Strong Hints, MH=Mild Hints

* The total number of request strategies used by each age group= 25
# Appendix (10)-Requests by the Two Age Groups to Male Strangers (in percentages)*

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>MDD</td>
<td>DQ</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>LD</td>
<td>WS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD=Most Direct, CI=Conventionally Indirect, NCI=Non-Conventionally Indirect, Opt=Opting Out, YAG=Younger Age Group, OAG=Older Age Group, -DI=Low Degree of Imposition, +DI=High Degree of Imposition, MDD=Mood Derivable, DQ=Direct Question, PD=Pre-Decided Statement, LD=Locution Derivable, WS=Want Statement, T=Total, SF=Suggestory Formula, QP=Query Preparatory, SH=Strong Hints, MH=Mild Hints</td>
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### Requests to mothers

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<th>-</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>76</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OAG</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>92</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Requests to mothers | +DI | YAG | - | - | - | - | 4 | 4 | 16 | 4 | 20 | 76 |
|---------------------|-----|-----|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|
|                     |     | OAG | - | - | - | - | 12 | 12 | - | - | 88 |

### Requests to sisters

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Requests to sisters</th>
<th>-DI</th>
<th>YAG</th>
<th>28</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>28</th>
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<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Requests to sisters | +DI | YAG | - | - | - | 12 | 12 | 36 | 36 | 52 | 100 |
|---------------------|-----|-----|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|
|                     |     | OAG | - | - | - | 8 | 8 | 32 | 32 | 60 | 100 |

### Requests to daughters/child sisters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>-DI</th>
<th>YAG</th>
<th>84</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>-</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Requests to daughters/child sisters | +DI | YAG | 12 | - | - | 12 | 80 | 80 | 8 | 100 |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|----|---|---|----|----|----|----|
|                                     |     | OAG | 4 | - | - | 4 | 64 | 72 | 8 | 16 |

* The total number of request strategies used by each age group= 25
## Appendix (11)-Requests in Study/Work Contexts in Close Relationships (in percentages)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests to mothers</th>
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<th>NCI</th>
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<th>%</th>
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<td>YAG + DI</td>
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<table>
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<th>Opt</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>PD</td>
<td>LD</td>
<td>WS</td>
</tr>
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<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>YAG + DI</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAG + DI</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>36</td>
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<table>
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<th>Requests to daughters/child sisters</th>
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<th>CI</th>
<th>NCI</th>
<th>Opt</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>DQ</td>
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<td>LD</td>
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</tr>
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<td>YAG - DI</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAG - DI</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>36</td>
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<td>-</td>
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* The total number of request strategies used by each age group= 25
### Appendix (12)-Requests in Study/Work Contexts in Distant Relationships (in percentages)*

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<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
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<td>32</td>
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<th>NCI</th>
<th>Opt</th>
<th>%</th>
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<th>NCI</th>
<th>Opt</th>
<th>%</th>
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* The total number of request strategies used by each age group= 25