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An Analysis of the Request Strategies Used By EFL Students

Case Study: 3rd Year Students of English at Bejaia University

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics at the University of Bejaia

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Abstract

This study examines the request strategies used by Algerian students when speaking with people of the same or different gender. It also investigates the influence of the gender of the interlocutor on the participants" choice of strategy type. The study also aims to find out if there are any similarities and/or differences in the request strategies used by both male and female participants. The population of this study consists of third year EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners enrolled in the department of English at Bejaia University. The sample of the study consists of 15 males and 15 females from the same department. In the current study, it has been hypothesized that the male and female students will be rather different in their use of the request strategies and will be affected by the gender of the interlocutor in their choice of strategy type. To test this hypothesis, the researcher used a mixed method including both quantitative and qualitative methods through the use of aDiscourse Completion Task (DCT). Data were analyzed in terms of semantic formulas and were categorized based on the classification of request strategies established by Blum-kulka and Olshtain (1984). The results of the study revealed that both male and female participants preferred the use of direct strategies when requesting both their same-gender and cross-gender interlocutors. The findings also showed that the gender of the interlocutor did not have a significant effect on the participant's choice of strategy type. Further, it was found that the male and female students tended to be rather similar in their use of request strategies when addressing both same-gender and cross-gender interlocutors. Therefore, the hypothesis of the study is not confirmed.

Keywords: Gender, request strategies, semantic formulas, EFL learners.

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Dedication

This modest work is dedicated to:

My Parents and my brothers without whom this work would not have been possible.

all my friends and everyone who has helped me complete this dissertation.

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I owe particular thanks to Allah for providing me with the strength and capacity to perform this dissertation. My deepest respect and gratefulness go to my supervisor Dr. Benbouya-Beggah for her guidance, support and patience. I would also like to thank the board of examiners for accepting to evaluate my work. A special thanks to the participants for their help.

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List of Abbreviations and Symbols

DCT: Discourse Completion Task

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

FTA: Face Threatening Acts.

FL: Foreign Language

SAT: Speech Act Theory.

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

TL: Target Language.

% : Percent

Definition of Key Terms

EFL: Is the abbreviation for "English as a Foreign Language". It refers to teaching English to people whose native language is not English. (Cobuild Advanced English Dictionary, 2018)

Gender: The ways in which words are used can both reflect and reinforce social attitudes toward male and females (Lakoff, 1975).

Pragmatics: According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is generally more concerned with determining what people intend by their utterances than with determining what the words or phrases in those utterances may signify on their own.

Semantic formulas :A semantic formula refers to "a word, phrase, or sentence that meets a particular semantic criterion or strategy, any one or more of these can be used to perform the act in question" (Cohen, 1996, p. 265).

Speech act: A speech act is a piece of language that is used to perform an action. Austin (1962) argued that when we say something, we automatically perform a speech act by the use of words.

General Introduction

Introduction

The main thing that distinguishes humans from animals is basically how they communicate with each other using language. Language is a system that allows individuals to communicate and share information with others. It is a way of representing oneself both personally and socially. People use language in social interaction to express numerous things or actions that include other people, such as a request, compliment, criticism, and so on (Anam, 2016).

Language learners must understand not only grammar and text organization, but also the pragmatic characteristics of the target language (TL) in order to communicate effectively. Indeed, as outlined in pragmatics, interlocutors should ideally be able to use language in an effective and efficient manner (Anam, 2016). For effective communication, the speaker must select a language form appropriate for the situation he/she is in and the speaking act he/she wants to perform.

Blum-Kulka (1989) discussed the social stakes for both the hearer and the speaker as a result of the language form used when requesting since the speech act is a face- threatening act by definition (Brown & Levinson, 1978). Because requests often anticipate a response, the amount of directness of the request should aim for minimum imposition on the hearer in order to achieve good communication. In this regard, politeness should be addressed while adjusting speech acts and limiting imposition (Haddad, 2017).

According to Karlsson (2007), much research has been conducted over the years. Throughout the 1970s, extensive sociological investigations were carried out and research mainly focused on syntactic, phonetic, and morphological variations. Initially, gender was considered a sociological variable, along with social class, age, ethnicity and social status. It was until the mid-1970s when Lakoff's essay "*The Language and Place of Women"* was published that the science of gender and language was established. Since the publication of

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Lakoff's Classical Working Language (1975)and *The Status of Women* (1975), linguists have approached language and gender from a variety of perspectives. This is why gender issues became so closely intertwined with language issues. (Karlsson,2007).This was also argued by Lakoff (1975) who reported that gender variation in language has become a common phenomenon in our daily lives.

The relationship between gender and language has been the subject of studies that focuses mainly on the differences between males" and females" language. In the field of language and gender. Lakoff's (1973) paper is identified as the first publication to provide interrelationship investigations between men, women and language. After that, there was a veritable explosion of research on language and gender, with pragmatic issues receiving a great deal of attention.

In the early decades, researchers looked at the characteristics that could be interpreted as dominance strategies or interaction strength, such as speech distribution, number of interruptions, response volume, women and men in different contexts, as well as features of politeness, such as language barriers and intensity (Coates, 2004). Therefore, different studies looked at gender differences in the use of, speech acts such as requests, compliments and apologies, importantly, because people frequently have to communicate with others from different cultures and speech groups, and English is the language of international communication, there is a rising need to evaluate students" pragmatic competence in different situations (Haddad, 2017). Consequently, language learners must be able to perform their speech properly in target language (TL).

According to Lihong (2013) the term "language and gender" refers to the link between males" and females" language. Gender differences are reflected not only in the statements of men and women, but also in their distinct lifestyles and attitudes. Gender differences are a

prominent topic of study in several domains, including psychology and sociolinguistics. In these domains, the distinctions between males and females in many aspects have been investigated from various perspectives using various approaches. Despite the fact that research shows certain similarities between males and females with regards to language use, it emphasizes distinct aspects of differences between them. Males, for example, are more concerned with power and aspire to be leaders, whilst females are content with their subservient status. Males communicate directly and prioritize information delivery, whereas ladies speak indirectly, implicitly, and gently. It is critical for them to express their emotions (Lihong, 2013). According to Deda (2013), the choices that individuals make to ask for requests from their interlocutors are part of their pragmatic competence and can influence their communication with others.

Therefore, the present research aims at examining the strategies used by both Bejaia university EFL male and female students when realizing the speech act of request; it also attempts to find out whether or not the participant‟s choice of strategy type is influenced by the gender of the interlocutor. Moreover, the study aims to find out if there are any similarities and/or differences in the use of request strategies by both male and female participants.

1. Statement of the Problem

Politeness is seen as behaving in respectful and good manners with others. It is a mark of discipline. In fact, many language situations and forms are made to enhance politeness and rudiment. Since Lakoff‟s (1975) work, *Language and Woman's Place*, linguists have approached language and gender from a variety of perspectives. As the literature shows, males and females behave linguistically in different ways, as argued by Coates‟s (1993), men and women use different strategies in conversational interaction. Accordingly, the present research sheds light on the use of request strategies by both EFL male and female students at the University of Bejaia. We are also interested in finding out whether or not the gender of the

interlocutor affects the participant"s choice of strategy type. Furthermore, the study also attempts to find out if there are any similarities and/or differences between male and female participants in the realization of the speech act of request.

2. Questions of the Study

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1) What are the strategies used by both male and female students to ask for a request?

2) Does the gender of the interlocutor affect the participant"s choice of strategy type?

3) Are there any similarities and/or differences in the request strategies used by both male and female participants.

3. Aims of the Study

The present study aims at investigating the speech act of request as realized by both male and female students as well as finding out whether or not the gender of the interlocutor affects the participant"s choice of strategy type. Finally, this research attempts to identify if there are any similarities and/or differences in the use of request strategies by both male and female participants?

4. Hypothesis of the Study

We hypothesize that the male and female students will be rather different in their use of the request strategies and will be affected by the gender of the interlocutor in their choice of strategy type.

5. Population and Study Sample

The population of this study consists of third year EFL students enrolled in the department of English at the University of Bejaia, during the academic year (2021/2022). Therefore, the sample of the present research consists of 30 EFL students, including 15 males and 15 females.

6. Significance of the Study

The study's findings are likely to have both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the research findings are likely to improve other linguistics researchers' perception and understanding of pragmatics, particularly with regards to the speech act of request. Practically, the present study's result will be beneficial for Algerian EFL teachers to anticipate and minimize situations in which Algerian EFL learners may ignore the appropriate use of the TL in specific contexts, thus avoiding communication misunderstandings.

7. Organization of the Study

The study's organization is critical since it helps readers in understanding the dissertation various parts, and it also helps them in following and comprehending the whole research. As a result, this research consists of two chapters addressing both the theoretical and practical parts. It begins first with a general introduction regarding the topic of our study which comprises the statement of the problem, the research questions, the aims of the study, the hypothesis, the population and sample, the significance of the study, and the organization of the study. Regarding the theoretical chapter, we designed three sections to introduce the speech act of request and the theoretical framework related to this speech act. Thus, the first section consists of pragmatics. The second one is about politeness and the last one is about gender and language. However, the second chapter presents the research methods used in this study, the

analysis and interpretation of the results, discussion of the findings, limitations andsuggestions

for further research, and finally, the study ends with a general conclusion.

Chapter One:

Theoretical Background

Chapter One : Theoretical Background

Introduction

The current chapter consists of different theoretical aspects related to the request speech act as well as language and gender. It is split into four parts. The first section is about pragmatics. The second section provides an explanation of politeness. The third sectionconsists of language and gender. The last section presents certain previous studies related to the request speech act which is the focus of this study.

1.1. Section one: Pragmatics

Pragmatics was introduced by the American philosopher Morris (1901- 1979) as one of the semiotics' three components which are semantics, syntax and pragmatics. According to Morris(1938), pragmatics is the study of the interaction between signs and interpreters. In modern linguistics, pragmatics is a broad term that refers to the study of language use in context.

According to Stalnaker (1972), pragmatics is the study of deixis, implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and aspects of discourse structure. Moreover, Yule (1996) reported that pragmatics is concerned with the four dimensions of meaning; the study of speaker meaning, the study of contextual meaning, the study of the expression of relative distance and the study of how more gets communicated than is said.

Importantly, Morris (1938) stated that language usage is influenced not just by linguistic (grammatical and lexical) knowledge, but also by cultural, contextual, and interpersonal context and convention. One of the pragmatics" main goals is to investigate how context and convention, in their widest sense, contribute to meaning and comprehension. Pragmatics analyzes language from the perspective of language users entrenched in situational, behavioral, cultural, sociological and political settings, employing a wide range of techniques and multidisciplinary approaches based on specific research concerns.

Morris (1938, p.77-138) summarized pragmatics in the following way:

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1. Languages are used by their speakers in social interactions; they are first and foremost instruments for creating social bonds and accountability relations. The means with which languages create these bonds and relations vary across languages and cultures. Pragmatics studies these language-and culture-specific forms of language use.

2. Speech is part of the context of the situation in which it is produced; language has an essentially pragmatic character, and meaning is constituted by the pragmatic function of an utterance. Which means that, Speakers of a language follow conventions, rules and regulations in their use of language in social interactions. The meaning of words, phrases, and sentences is conveyed in certain kinds of situative contexts. Also the speakers'uses of language fulfill specific functions in and for these speakers' communicative behavior.

3. Pragmatics understands and describes language as social action.

4. Core domains of pragmatics reveal that it is a "transdiscipline" within the humanities.

According to Huang (2007), there are two viewpoints with regards to pragmatics: cognitive-philosophical and sociocultural-interactional. The former which is referred to as the component view' investigates the systematic study of meaning by virtue of, or depending on, the use of language. It focuses on essential concepts like implicature, presumption, speech acts, deixis, and reference. However, the latter is a functional view that connects. sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, discourse analysis, pragmatic variation, and other social science fields.

1.1.1. Speech Act Theory

Speech Act Theory (henceforth SAT) is one of the most influential theories in pragmatics that is concerned with the ways by which words perform actions in addition to conveying meaning. The SAT was first introduced by Austin (1962) in his book *How to Do Things with Word*s and later developed by Searle (1969, 1975). In his theory, Austin (1962)

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stated that, in language, "to say something is to do something" (p. 108).According to Austin (1962), a speaker produces three types of acts: locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. The locutionary act is "equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference which again is roughly equivalent to „meaning" in the traditional sense" (Austin, 1962, p. 108). An illocutionary act refers to what is performed "such as informing, ordering, warning, undertaking, etc, i.e. utterances which have a certain (conventional) force" (Austin, 1962, p. 108). A perlocutionary act is "what we bring about or achieve by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring, and even, say, surprising or misleading" (Austin, 1962, p. 108).

After Austin (1962), speech act theorists concentrated on understanding illocutionary acts in a restricted sense. Major proponent of the speech act theory, John Searle (1969), based on Austin"s (1962) ideas, he expanded on some of them and developed the theory. The essence of it was to do an illocutionary act is to declare an illocutionary purpose (Searle 1979). Along these lines, Searle's (1979) idea of speech act theory is refined. Searle (1983) and Searle and Vanderveken (1985) sought to explain illocutionary force in a formal model consistent with the formal analysis of propositional contents. Schiffer (1972) defined illocutionary acts in terms of the speaker's intention to elicit a certain reaction from a specific audience.

Although Austin (1962) attempted to avoid the truth-conditional dogma of analytic philosophy, Searle (1969) attempted to analyze speech actions phenomena in accordance with this orthodoxy. He turns ordinary language analysis into a logical examination of speech acts as semantic entities (Searle & Vanderveken, 1985). A speech act, according to him, is made up of an illocutionary force and a propositional substance, which may be described in an extensional manner.

Speech act analysis begun to diverge from Austin's (1962) classification of speech acts with Searle (1976). Because of two significant principles: Searle"s (1976) classification

of speech acts is based on the rigorous difference he drew between content and force something that Austin's (1962) analysis lacked. The second is that his analysis is based on an intentional or mentalist viewpoint, which argues that the speaker's intentions and their acknowledgment are required for the speech act to be realized. Whereas for Austin (1962), one cannot perform an act by making an appeal to intention. Finally, according to Searle (1965), one can conduct a speech act only if one expresses one's desire to do so by using such a phrase and if one expresses one's intention to carry through all of the commitments of the speech act one wishes to execute. Thus, Searle's (1975) taxonomy of speech acts combines conventional and intentional components to provide a novel semantic account of speech, in the sense that what must be manifested to produce a speech act is no longer a specific process but rather a specific cognitive content (the intention).

Searle, categorized speech acts into the followingfive types (as cited in Trosborg,1995, p . 66)

a) Declarations

Declarations are types of speech act that, when spoken, change the world. Declarative acts include approving, betting, blessing, christening, confirming, cursing, declaring, disapproving, dismissing, naming, resigning, and so on Searle (as cited in Trosborg,1995, p . 66).

b) Representatives

Representatives are types of speech acts that state whether the speaker believes something to be true or false. Examples of representatives are : arguing, asserting, boasting, claiming, complaining, criticizing, denying, describing, informing, insisting, reporting, suggesting, swearing, etc Searle (as cited in Trosborg,1995, p . 66).

c) Expressives

Expressives are types of speech acts that express how the speaker feels. These types of acts include apologizing, complementing, condoling, congratulating, deploring, praising,

regretting, thanking, and so on Searle (as cited in Trosborg,1995, p . 66).

d) Directives

Directives are types of speech acts used by speakers to direct others to do something such as ordering, commanding, requesting, and suggesting, etc Searle (as cited in Trosborg,1995, p . 66).

e) Commissives

Commissives are speech acts that speakers use to commit themselves to a future action. Committing, guaranteeing, offering, promising, refusing, threatening, volunteering, vowing are examples of commissives Searle (as cited in Trosborg,1995, p . 66).

Consequently, Austin further emphasized the significance of expressing the total speech act in the total speech situation in which language users use the language. The speaker utters a phrase and performs a speech act to the hearer (Austin"s Speech Act Theory and the Speech Situation, 2006).

According to Griffith (2006), a speech act refers to the entire communicative situation, including context of the utterance such as the scenario in which the discourse occurs, the participants, and any preceding verbal or physical interaction and paralinguistic features that may contribute to the meaning of the interaction. Likewise, Yule (1996, p. 47) defines speech acts as actions that are carried out through utterances. For example: when a teacher says to you, "get out of the classroom !" his /her words refer to the act of being dismissed. It means that words have the ability to alter someone's status. When a speaker utters something, he/she may not just utter the utterance, but the speaker may also mean something behind it.

Interestingly, According to Austin (as cited in Cutting, 2002. p. 18), specific situations should always be met in order for a speech act to be well formed. These are referred to as felicity or appropriacy conditions. Felicity conditions are the context and roles of participants,which must be acknowledged by all parties. Moreover, the action must be carried out completely and

the person must have the right intentions; for example I sentence you to five months in prison. In this sentence, the performance will be inappropriate if the speaker is nota specific person in a special context (in this case, a judge in a courtroom).

1.1.2. Request Speech Act

According to Bach and Harnish (as cited in Trosborg, 1995), a request is a speech actused to indicate the speaker's want, so that the listener reacts to what the speaker asks for.According to Trosborg (1995), a request is an illocutionary act in which a requester indicatesto the requestee that he/she (requester) wants him/her (requestee) to execute a certain act that is advantageous to the speaker. The act might be a request for nonverbal goods and services,such as an item, an action, or certain types of services, or it could be a request for verbalgoods and services, such as a request for information.

Searle (1979) argued that the speaker believes that by making a request, the listener is capable of performing an action. In Searle"s (1975) classification of speech acts, the request speech act which is the focus of the present study belongs to the category of directives, which are attempts by the speaker to direct the hearer to do something.

1.1.3. Request Strategies

People tend to use specific strategies when requesting something from others because requesting something is considered to be a face-threatening act (Brown and Levinson, 1987). According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), there are three levels of requests, and they contended that these three levels may be seen everywhere. Importantly, the classification of the request speech act levels is based on the degree of directness of the request beingperformed. The following is Blum-Kulka"s and Olshtain"s (1984) taxonomy of request strategies:

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a. The most direct or explicit level : This level includes imperatives.

1. Mood derivable: utterances in which the illocutionary force is signaled by the grammatical mood of the verb. For example: leave me alone.

2. Performatives: the illocutionary force is explicitly named by the speaker. For example: I'm asking you not to park the car here.

3. Hedged performatives: the naming of the illocutionary force is modified by a hedging expression. For example: I would like to ask you to leave me alone.

4. Obligation statements: Utterances which state the obligation for the hearer to carry out the act. For example: Sir, you'll have to move your car.

5. Want statements: utterances that state the speaker's desire. For example: I want you to move your car.

b. The Conventionally indirect level: Which includes *could* and *would* in the request.

6. Suggestory formulae: the utterance contains the suggestion for the hearer to do x. For example: how about cleaning up?

7. Query preparatory: utterance contains the preparatory conditions (willingness, ability, or possibility of the act being performed) as conventionalized in any specific language. For example: Would you mind moving your car?

c. Non-conventional indirect: At this level, the request will be made in the form of hints.

8. Strong hints: Utterances containing the partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act. For example: The game is boring.

9. Mild hints: Utterances that make no reference to the request proper (or any of its elements) but are interpretable as requests by context. For example, I'm a nun. (in response to the persistent boy.

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1.2. Section Two : Politeness

Human beings as social creature need to communicate or interact to each other. In doing communication or interaction, they use language as a means of communication. The interaction may happen in intra-group or intergroup. In intergroup interaction misunderstanding is likely to happen if people do not pay attention to the communication rules in each other language. One of the ways to avoid misunderstanding is by knowing how to behave politely according to the norm of each other language.

Indirect requests, apologizing, using suitable titles or names to address people in conversations, and using the appropriate language, all seem to be examples of polite behavior. Explaining what politeness means is extremely difficult, and still, no universal definition is attributed to politeness as it varies from one culture to another. Moreover, there is a great deal of confusion between its universality and linguistic particularity. Despite several attempts and frameworks, there is still no uniform direction in the area, as Meier (1995) argued, there is a "surprising degree of variation reported that politeness is a "definitionally fuzzy and empirically difficult area". (p. 31). Furthermore, there is a lack of consensus among scholars due to the complicated nature of politeness and the various ways in which the term has been regarded as (formality, respect, indirectness, appropriateness, etiquette, tact, and so on).

In spite of this, several recommendations have been presented, connecting the global view of politeness to acceptable language usage and other linguistic frameworks that relate it to the concept of "face" (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Lakoff (1990) defined politeness "as a system to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange" (as cited in Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 287). In other words, politeness is a mechanism to enablecommunication by reducing the tension and confrontation inherent in all human communications. The function of politeness is to maintain the persons involved in the encounter in a respectful relationship.

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Lakoff (as cited in Brown and Levinson, 1987) proposed three politeness guidelines to do this: do not enact, provide ideas, and make a suggestion and a good impression.

In accordance with Leech (1983), politeness is a behavior that creates and sustains comity, the ability to participate in a social interaction and the ability to communicate in a comparatively peaceful environment. Politeness, as reported by Watt (2003), is the capacity to delight others by exterior acts. Furthermore, Foley (1997) defined politeness as "a set of social skills whose objective is to guarantee that everyone feels validated in a social engagement." (p.145). In other words, politeness makes the participants taking part in an interaction feel well considered.

Thomas (1995) posited that the aim of politeness is to build community and stability in interactions. He identified politeness as "a genuine desire to be pleasurable to people " (p. 150). Moreover, he connects politeness to sociolinguistics, contending that it has social implications on the interaction, such as promoting and sustaining social relationships.

1.2.1. Brown and Levinson's Theory of Politeness

Brown and Levinson's model of politeness is one of the most prominent and influential models of politeness which is based on the concept of face which was introduced by Goffman (1967). According to Goffman (as cited in Mills, 2003), face is described as the "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (p. 213). Based on Goffman"s (1967) notion of face, the theory focuses on how and why we are courteous to others. Politeness theory holds that we all have two types of face: positive face and negative face. When we appeal to a person's positive face,we hope to make them feel good about themselves. However, when we appeal to a person"s negative face, we want them to feel as they are not compelled to do anything.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), positive face is "the positive and consistent

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image people have of themselves and their desires for approval" (p. 66). It refers to the positive impression that people have of themselves and their wishes for acceptance. Moreover, it is described as an individual's wish for himself/herself to be recognized byothers. This also includes how a person wishes to be interpreted by his/her social group. To

illustrate, appreciation of individual accomplishments is an example of a positive face. However, a negative face is considered as "the basic claim to territories, personal pressure and rights to non-distraction" (Brown and Levinson 1987, p. 66). In other words, a negative face refers to the individual"s need of freedom.

The face is often highly susceptible, and it may be lost, preserved, or enhanced throughout discussion. In daily communication, people can sometimes engage in actions that adversely impact others. These are referred to as face threatening acts (FTAs). (Brown and Levinson , 1987).

According to Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 74) there are four FTAs:

1. Acts that endanger the public's negative face: ordering, making threats, alerting;

2. Acts that endanger the public's positive face: ordering, making threats, criticizing.

3. Acts that kept the speaker's positive face: apologizing, accepting, congratulating, and admitting.

4. Acts that kept the speaker's negative face: accepting an option, and showing promise unwillingly.

Brown and Levinson (1987) maintained that speakers will use certain strategies to reduce the threat of FTAs in conversations. They are referred to as linguistic politeness. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), while the notion of politeness is universal, some aspects of it are culturally distinctive. This idea specifies the norms and standards of civility that must be followed in every study.

1.3.   Section Three : Language and Gender

The relationship between language and gender appears to have piqued the interest of many sociolinguists since the second part of the past century and is currently ongoing with fresh methods and research. Wardlaugh (2006) defined the major theme as "the connection, if any, between the structures, vocabularies, and ways of using particular languages and the social roles of the men and women who speak these languages" (p.315).

Lakoff's (1975) work *Language and Woman's Place* is immensely significant in relation to gender and the use of language. Her approach to gender and language is based on socioeconomic injustice, implying that language is sexist.

According to Tannen (as cited in Wardlaugh, 2006,p. 328), males use language in relation to status and independence while females focus on connection and tenderness, their communication is cross-culturally comparable and hence difficult. She thinks that the proper method to get along with other gender members is to comprehend their activities, attitudes, and linguistic behavior. Furthermore, Lakoff (1973) observed that females, as opposed to males, use more specific color vocabulary, including color names such as mauve, aquamarine, magenta, and lavender, in addition to empty adjectives such as sweet, darling, charming.

Importantly, Sociolinguists also investigated the distinctions between same-gender and cross-gender speech. Females focus on self, partnerships, emotion, family, and home in same-gender conversations, but men are more inclined to discuss games and practical interests frequently, aggressively and competitively. In a cross-gender discourse, both genders tend to limit the subjects that would ordinarily be discussed with the same-gender (Wardlaugh 2006, p. 324-325).

1.3.1. Gender Politeness

Many sociolinguists are interested in the relationship between gender and politeness.

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According to Eckert and Mc Connell- Ginet (2003), gender is not a component of one‟s nature, but an accomplishment what one accomplishes. Gender is a collection of behaviors through which individuals create and declare identities. It is more than just a system for classifying people or building identities, it is also a system for regulating social relations (Eckert, 2003, p. 305).

The relationship between politeness, gender, and language is more than simply the words used to describe men and women; it is also about how words are employed and for what purposes. When it comes to language use, the difference between the sexes is barely debatable. Do men and women who speak a specific language use it differently?

Gender refers to a specific cultural set of norms, rules and attitudes that a specific society gives to one biological sex. Holmes (1995) viewed gender roles as "the projection of personality that mirrors gender identification" (p. 318). In other words, the external expressions of personality reflect gender identification.

The disparity in men's and women's language performance is attributed to differences in their passions, roles, and dialogues. Moreover, Wardlaugh (1986, p. 310) expands on this by stating that men and women communicate differently because they are raised differently and have different roles in society. Females are frequently noted for using polite constructions and more praise than males, based on gender identification and linguistic disparities. Females do this in order to promote unity and to maintain social bonds. As cited by Wardlaugh (2006, p. 324-325), males and females behave in opposite directions, hence, in terms of politeness cues in conversations, ladies are more likely to employ expressions suchas "please" and "thank you" in comparison to males. Again, the purpose is to minimize conflict and disagreement while yet sounding respectful and polite.

According to Trudgill (1974, p. 86-101), men and women speak the same language but in distinct dialects. He claimed that males are the inventors, while women are in the

vanguard. Men are more polite than women. He goes on to say that women's language is more prestigious than men's in order to attract attention when speaking. This might be linked to various social opinions regarding men's and gender relations in a society. Males and females believe that a certain performance will be suitable for their gender.

Dimova (2010, p. 2) investigated gender and socio-cultural uniqueness in emotional linguistic communications, it was found that females are more emotionally expressive, more indirect, and more detailed than males.

In a nutshell, we deduce that gender relates to the duties and obligations that males and females are attributed in their families, societies, and civilizations. Gender also refers to the assumptions that people have about men and women's qualities, abilities, and likely actions. Importantly, one of the elements influencing the speaker's language performance is gender, which influences the speaker‟s linguistic style in any discussion in a particular society.

1.4.   Section Four : Literature Review

Stodůlková (2013) compared males and females usage of expressing linguistic politeness in discourse. American and British males and females were chosen as a sample for the study. The researcher used a qualitative method consisting of an observation to collect data where he can observe the verbal expressions that convey politeness. The findings of thestudy showed that British are far more courteous than Americans. Then, both UK genders aremore courteous than US ones. While American males are half as courteous as their Britishcounterparts; the disparity in female comparison was smaller.

Moreover, examined the use of request strategies by English languagelearners at an intermediate proficiency level in the Republic of Macedonia. 20 students were chosen as a sample for their study. Role-playing and DCTs were the testing tools used to gather data. The replies of the participants were analyzed using Blum- Kulka‟s (1989) classification

of request strategies. The study revealed that the most commonly employed types of strategies in both formal and informal situations were query preparatory strategies, which fall into the category of conventional indirect strategies. The participants preferred conventional indirect strategies for making requests. Moreover, they employed various modifications to sound polite, yet there is often little difference between the expressions they use in formal and casual situations. This suggests that they require more exposure to different TL settings as well as more exposure to TL request strategies in order to understand how to apply them effectively to the context and the individuals with whom they are speaking (Daskalovska et al, 2016).

Additionally, Dwi Putra (2019) investigated the different request strategies used by Sundanese males and females while communicating with people of the same or different genders. The participants of the study were ten students, aged from 19 to 23 years old, from a public university in northern Bandung. To collect data, the researcher used a qualitative method, consisting of a questionnaire. The research results revealed that females employ more indirect strategies when requesting strangers, both to men and females, and use more direct strategies when requesting male and female friends. According to the data, Sundanese males employed a direct technique to make a request to friends, both males and females. Since the majority of indirect strategies are employed to make a request to male and female strangers. It may be inferred that the gender of the interlocutors is not considered while selecting the request strategy, but the speaker is more concerned with the interlocutors" familiarity. According to the overall findings, both male and female students used the direct strategy more than the other strategies when requesting from friends, while they generally employed the conventional indirect strategy when requesting from strangers.

Besides Pradikta (2020) investigated the request and politeness strategy that appeared in classroom situations. The population of the study consisted of four classes of second-year students. One class was chosen randomly from four available classes as the observation subject.

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The researcher took numerous steps to acquire the data: 1) determining the setting for the students" assignments, 2) preparing the students" role cards, 3) handout the role cards and instruct the students to act out the scene, 4) recording and reporting students" performance, 5) transcribing all talks, 6) coding the transcription, 7) analyzing the data using Trosborg" request approach and the Brown and Levinson" politeness strategy, and 8) writing the study paper. The findings of the study indicated that significant L2 proficiency affected the overall appropriateness of the request speech act production. The researcher deduced that students with low proficiency in L2 could generate the act of request, but they tended to reproduce the pattern in executing the act of request.

Moreover, it appears that the situation will have an impact on the speech act generated. The context in the study is a classroom environment in which the teacher has a higher status than the students. As a result, the researcher concluded this study reporting that the tendency of the request strategy is to question the listener"s competence or desire. Second, when a conversation comprises two or more individuals with varying levels of civility, the politeness strategy takes the shape of a blatant on-record method (Pradikta, 2020).

Conclusion

The present chapter "theoretical background" is divided into four sections. The first section deals with pragmatics which is, the study of the use of language in interpersonal communication. It is concerned with the decisions made by speakers as well as the possibilities and restrictions that exist in social interaction. It investigates the impact of language usage on participants in communication activities. The second section consists of politeness. In general, politeness is an aspect of a speaker's social behavior that demonstrates regard to the addressee's preferences and concerns. Because of the nature of the request, a politeness strategy must be used while conveying a request.

Chapter One : Theoretical Background

The third one is about language and gender. Gender is a concept used to distinguish socio-cultural distinctions between men and women. it is described as a mental and cultural understanding of male and female gender differences. Gender is typically used to demonstrate the right allocation of labor for men and women.

There are many phonological, morphological, and diction distinctions between men and women. In terms of phonology, men and women differ slightly, since women in America utilize palatal velar rather than aspirate, as in the words kjatsa (pronounced by women) and djatsa (spoken by men) (spoken by men). The last one provides certain previous studies related to our subject of investigation.

Chapter two:

Research Methods, Analysis and Interpretation, and Discussion of the Findings

Chapter two: Research Methods, Analysis and Interpretation, and Discussion of the Findings

Introduction:

As seen in the previous chapter, we have provided a theoretical background related to the request speech act. The accessible literature aided us in gaining some clear and straightforward understandings of the subject under consideration. In this chapter, we intended to realistically test our research hypothesis and answer our research questions, all of which will help us to achieve our initial research objectives. For this reason, we decided to divide the chapter into three sections. The first section describes the research design, population and sample, the data collection instrument and data analysis procedures. The second is devoted to analyzing and interpreting the findings. The third section presents the discussion of the major results of the study which provides answers to the research questions. Limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research are provided.

2.1. Section One: Methods and Study Design

2.1.1. Methods and Study Design

Nunan (1992, p. 2) defined research as "examination, questioning, inquiry, analysis, verifying hypotheses, overview, data collection and analysis in a given field using specified procedures". The present study is mainly descriptive; it describes how EFL learners at Bejaia University perform the request speech act when addressing same-gender and cross-gender interlocutors, hence providing a detailed understanding of this language phenomenon According to Yin (2003), this descriptive design is used to explain an intervention or phenomena as well as the real-world context in which it took place. Thus, in order to reach our goal, we opted for a quantitative analyses of data through the use of DCT as a research tool. the use of a quantitative method will provide a consistent analysis about our subject under investigation. According to Creswell (2012), the quantitative method provides us with statistics that allow us to measure specific aspects related to our field of investigation. "Quantitative

researchers seek explanations and predictions that will be generated to other persons and places. The intent is to establish, confirm, or validate relationships and to develop generalizations that contribute to theory" (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001, p. 102).

2.1.2. Population and Sample

The current study's population is third-year EFL students from the department of English at Bejaia University. The study's sample is made up of 30 third-year students. including 15 males and 15 females whose age ranges from 19-24 years. In the sample chosen, the number of males equals the number of females since the gender variable is taken into consideration in the study. We selected this sample because we believe that third year students at this level have a considerable FL background which allows them to perform the request speech act in different situations compare to other levels.

2.1.3. Instrument of the Study

The current study examines the use of request strategies by male and female students when addressing both same-gender and cross-gender interlocutors. To collect data, a DCT (seeking quantitative data) was used and was handled to 30 third year students including 15 males and 15 females.

2.1.3.1. Students DCT

A DCT was used as the study instrument. In pragmatics, a DCT is a tool used for eliciting specific speech acts. DCT, according to Blum-Kulka (1982), is a data gathering tool that was first devised to compare the speech act realization of native speakers and learners. However, in this study, it is used to examine the realization of the speech act of request by EFL

learners. In the present study, the DCT contained three scenarios eliciting the request speech act. The scenarios varied by the gender of the interlocutor, that is, in the same scenarios, the participants had to address same-gender interlocutors (male-male, female-female), and cross-gender interlocutors (male-female, female-male). The scenarios also variedby the social status of the interlocutor. In other words, the participants had to address someone higher in status, someone equal in status, and someone lower in status. Nevertheless,the social status was not taken into consideration in this study. Furthermore, the designed DCT is divided into two parts. The first one is related to personal information including age, gender, and level of education. The second part consists of the scenarios to which theparticipants had to react to (performing the request speech act).

2.1.4. Data Analysis Procedures

The data gathered through the DCT were analyzed and treated quantitatively, relying on tables including frequencies and percentages in addition to providingexamples of the participants" actual use of the speech act in question.

2.2.   Section two : Analysis and Interpretation of the Findings

This section is considered as the most important part of this thesis. According to Woods, Fletcher, and Hughes (1986), when conducting a linguistic research, the investigator will be faced with the possibility of comprehending the data and then communicating to others the meaning of the data that have been collected. Therefore, the DCT results were analyzed quantitatively. Regarding the quantitative analysis, this was done using the Statistical Package for Social Science software (SPSS) in order to generate numerical data including frequencies as well as percentages.

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2.2.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the DCT

The present part provides quantitative analyses of the data collected through the DCT. Overall, data were analyzed in terms of semantic formulas, and were categorized based on the classification of request strategies established by Blum-kulka and Olshtain(1984).

Part One: Personal information

Item 01:Participants"Gender

Table 01: Participants' Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	15	50%
Female	15	50%
Total	30	100%

Table 01 Participants' Gender shows the gender of the participants (third year) from the department of English at Bejaia University. It shows that the total number of the participants is 30 students representing 100% of the whole sample. The sample includes two groups (15 males and 15 females), each constituting 50 % of the whole sample. The number of females is clearly equal to the number of males since this variable of gender is taken into consideration in the present study. Furthermore, gender disparities are an important component in any study investigation, because they aid in determining the request strategies used by males and females.

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Item 02: Participants' Age

Table 02: Participants' Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
From 19-21	18	60%
From 22-24	12	40%
Total	30	100%

Table 02 Participants' Age shows that the students" age ranged from 19 to 24 years old, and hence divided into two groups. The first group ranges from 19 to 21 years old, representing 60% ofthe total number of the participants. However, the second group ranges from 22 to 24 years old, representing 40% of the whole sample.

We chose younger participants to describe how they interact with people and what different request strategies they employ since they like developing social relationships.

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Part two: The Request Strategies Used by the Participants

Table 03: Request Strategies Used by Males to Males

Level of Directness	Request Strategies	F	%
The Most Direct	Mood Derivable	1	2.2%
	Performative	5	11.1%
	Hedged Performative	26	57.8%
	Obligation Statement	4	8.9%
	Want Statement	3	6.7%
Total		39	86.7%
Conventionally Indirect	Query Preparatory	6	13.3%
Total		6	13.3%
Total of Request Strategies		45	100%

Table 03 Request Strategies Used by Males to Males. The most distinctive finding in table 03 is that the direct strategies recorded the highest frequency (39 occurrences), accounting for 86.7 % of all strategies used as compared to conventionally indirect strategies which registered only six cases, representing 13.3% of all strategies employed. This reveals that the male participants preferred the use of direct strategies when requesting their male interlocutors. Regarding the male participants" use of sub-strategies, *hedged performative* (could you lend me your computer ?) registered the highest frequency (26 cases), accounting for 57.8% of all sub-strategies used, followed by *query preparatory* (can you rise my salary ?), accounting for 13.3% of all sub-strategies used, then *performative (*I order you to respect

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time), representing 11.1 % of the whole substrategies used, then *obligation statement* (you must give me your computer), accounting for 8.9% of all sub-strategies employed, then *want statement(* I want an increase in my salary),accounting for 6.7% of all sub-strategies used, and finally *mood derivable* (give me your computer) was the least used, accounting for 2.2% of all the request strategies used. Thisimplies that the male participants preferred to use the direct sub-strategy *hedged performative* when asking for requests from their male interlocutors, indicating that they tended to use a direct request but they chose to soften it so as not to seem so offensive and rude. Regarding the second preferred sub- strategy *query preparatory*, the participants opted for this sub- strategy to inquire whether the listeners are willing to accomplish the request or not, and moreimportantly to appear polite and show respect to the interlocutor since they tended to ask the interlocutor to do something by giving him the choice to accept or refuse and without forcing him. Concerning the *performative* sub-strategy which came in third place, the respondents used this strategy by employing verbs such as *ask, request, order, demand, or command*. It can be said that the male participants used this strategy to express their needs, and maybe because they are in a hurry and nervous because of their need. Concerning the sub-strategy the least used, *mood derivable,*which was used only by one subject, this signifies that the utterance is an order and was used when asking for a request from the same-gender interlocutor to express power, authority and lack of patience which makes the requester appear impolite and disrespectful.

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Table 04: Request Strategies Used by Males to Females

Level of Directness	Request Strategies	F	%
The most Direct	Mood Derivable	5	11.1%
	Performative	3	6.7%
	Hedged Performative	24	53.3%
	Obligation Statement	2	4.4%
	Want Statement	7	15.6%
Total		41	91.1%
Conventionally Indirect	Query Preparatory	4	8.9%
Total		4	8.9%
Total of Request Strategies		45	100%

Table 04 Request Strategies Used by Males to Females. An interesting result in table 04 is that the direct strategies recorded the highest frequency (41 occurrences), representing 91.1 % of all strategies used. However, conventionally indirect strategies recorded only four cases, accounting for 8.9% of all strategies used. This implies that the male participants were more likely to use direct style when asking for requests from their female interlocutors. With regards to the male participants" use of sub-strategies, *hedgedperformative* (could you lend me your computer for today ?) registered the highest frequency (24 occurrences), accounting for 53.3% of all sub-strategies used, followed by *want statement (I* want you to give me your computer for a while), accounting for 15.6% of all sub-strategies used, then *mood derivable (*it is time for you to rise my salary), representing 11.1% of the all sub-strategies employed, then *query*

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*preparatory (*would you mind if I take your computer to work with it ?), accounting for 8.9% of all sub-strategies employed, then *performative* (I am asking you to rise my wage), accounting for 6.7% of all sub-strategies used, and finally *obligation statement* (you must stop being late) was the sub-strategy the least used, accounting for 4.4% of all of the request strategies used. Therefore, in the light of these results, we deduce that the male participants preferred to use the direct sub-strategy *hedged performative* when asking for requests from their female interlocutors, indicating that they tried to soften their direct request in order not to seem rude and impolite. Regarding the second preferred sub-strategy *want statement*, the participants opted for this sub-strategy to express their actual want which makes the request seem less direct. Concerning the *mood derivable* sub-strategy which came in third place, the respondents used this strategy to force their interlocutors to respond to their request, and thus seem harsh and offensive. The *query preparatory* sub-strategy was mainly used by the participants to show respect as it shows that the requester takes into consideration the feeling of his requestee by asking for her opinion, whether to accept or refuse to perform the request without forcing her. The least used sub- strategy is *obligation statement*, this was used by the males to remind the hearer about her obligation to comply with the request, which makes the requester seem too direct towards her interlocutor.

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Table 05: Request Strategies Used by Females to Females

Level of Directness	Request Strategies	F	%
The most Direct	Mood Derivable	5	11.1%
	Performative	3	6.7%
	Hedged Performative	21	46.6%
	Obligation Statement	4	8.9%
	Want Statement	9	20%
Total		42	93.3%
Conventionally Indirect	Query Preparatory	3	6.7%
Total		3	6.7%
Total of Request Strategies		45	100%

Table 05 Request Strategies Used by Females to Females. The most salient finding in table 05is that the direct strategies registered the highest frequency (42 cases), accounting for 93.3% of all strategies employed, as compared with conventionally indirect strategies which recorded only three cases, representing 6.7% of all strategies used. This implies that the female participants were more likely to be direct when asking for requests from their female interlocutors. Regarding the females" use of sub-strategies, *hedged performative* (could you rise my salary because I have a lot of expenses to cover) recorded the highest frequency (21 occurrences), accounting for 46.6% off all sub- strategies used, followed by *want statement* (I want you to respect time), representing 20% ofall sub-strategies used, then, *mood derivable* (give me your computer to work with it), accounting for 11.1 % of the whole sub-strategies

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employed, then *obligation statement* (You must justify the delay), representing 8.9% of all sub-strategies used, then followed by *performative* (I order you to come on time), and *query preparatory* (can you give me your computer ?) which both came in the last position, accounting for 6.7% of all strategies used. This shows that the female participants preferred to use the direct sub-strategy *hedged performative* to ask for requests from their female interlocutors, where they tried to lessen the degree of directness of their request by softening it. Regarding the second preferred sub- strategy *want statement*, the female participantsopted for this sub-strategy to express their wish behind their request which then makes the request appear less direct. The third sub-strategy is *mood derivable*, where the requester expresses his/her feelings, ideas, and wants by asking and forcing the interlocutor to do something, hence, making the request so offensive. Finally, the least used sub- strategies were the *performative* and the *query preparatory.* In the former*,* the requester imposes her request which then sounds disrespectful and rude. However,in the latter, the requester gives her interlocutor freedom to accept or refuse the request, whichshows that the requester cares about her interlocutor‟s choices and feelings, thus making the requester seem polite.

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Table 06: Request Strategies Used by Female to Males

Level of Directness	Request Strategies	F	%
The most Direct	Mood Derivable	4	8.9%
	Performative	3	6.7%
	Hedged Performative	25	55.2%
	Obligation Statement	3	6.7%
	Want Statement	6	13.6%
Total		41	91.1%
Conventionally Indirect	Query Preparatory	4	8.9%
Total		4	8.9%
Total of Request Strategies		45	100%

Table 06 Request Strategies Used by Female to Males. The most distinctive result in table 06 is that the direct strategies registered the highestfrequency (41 occurrences) accounting for 91.1% of all strategies used. Nevertheless, conventionally indirect strategies recorded only four cases accounting for 8.9 % of all strategies employed. This indicates that the female participants preferred the use of direct strategies when asking for requests from their male interlocutors. Concerning the use of sub- strategies, *hedged performative* (I would like to ask for an increase in my salary) recorded thehighest frequency (25 occurrences), representing 55.2% off all sub-strategies used, followed by *want statement* (I want you to give me your computer), accounting for 13.6% of all sub-strategies used, then *mood derivable* (lend me your computer immediately), representing 8.9% of the whole sub-strategies used, then followed by *Query preparatory* (can you come on time next time ?), accounting for 8.9% of all sub-

strategies employed, then followed by *performative*, (I am asking you to bring me your computer), and *obligation statement* (I have been working for so long, you have to rise my salary now), which both were the least used, accounting for 6.7% of the whole sub-strategies used. This reveals that the female participants were more likely to use the direct sub-strategy *hedged performative* when asking for requests from their male interlocutors, showing that they wanted to minimize the level of directness of their performed request in order to avoid appearing ill-mannered or rude. Regarding the second preferred sub- strategy *want statement*, the females opted for this sub- strategy to express their need and desire which then results in a negative behavior. The sub- strategies the least used were both *performative* and *obligation statement* which both are too direct in that the requester performs the request by being explicitly direct which makes the request harsh and offensive.

Part Three: The Effect of the Gender of the Interlocutor on the Participant's Choice of Strategy Type

According to tables 01 and 02, there are more similarities than differences in the strategies used by males to ask for a request from both their male and female interlocutors. The male participants tend to use the most direct style when requesting their male interlocutors. As shown in table 01, the most direct strategies recorded the highest frequency, accounting for 86.7 % of all strategies used. Similarly, they were more likely to use the directstyle when asking for a request from their female interlocutors. As it is indicated in table 02, the most direct strategies recorded the highest frequency, accounting for 91.1% of all strategies employed. Moreover, in terms of the sub-strategies chosen, we notice that the male participants preferred to use the same direct sub-strategy *hedged performative* to ask for a request from both male and female interlocutors. This implies that the male participants were more likely to use the direct strategies when asking for a request from both same-gender interlocutor and cross-gender interlocutor.

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Therefore, in the light of these results, we deduce that the gender of the interlocutor did not have an effect on the male participants" choice of strategy type.

According to tables 03 and 04, when requesting female interlocutors, female participants tend to prefer the direct strategies. According to table 03, the most direct strategies were the most frequently used, accounting for 93.3 % of all strategies employed. Likewise, when asking their male interlocutors for a request, they were more likely to use the direct style. As shown in table 04, the most direct strategies were the most preferred strategies, accounting for 91.1 % of all strategies used. Furthermore, with regards to the females" use of the sub-strategies, we notice that the female participants preferred to use the same direct sub-strategy *hedged performative* to ask for a request from both their male and female interlocutors. This suggests that the female participants were more likely to adopt the direct style when requesting something from both same-gender and cross-gender interlocutor. As a result of these findings, we conclude that the gender of the interlocutor had no effect on the female participants' choice of strategy type.

Part four: The Similarities and/or Differences in the Request Strategies Used by both Male and Female Participants

Regarding the request strategies used by the male and female participants with same-gender interlocutors, the results revealed that the male and female participants share similarities regarding their most preferred strategy type, That is, the male participants tended to prefer the most direct strategies with their male interlocutors accounting for 86.7% of all strategies used. Similarly, the same result was noticed in the request strategies used by the female participants with their same-gender interlocutor. That is, the female participants were more likely to use the most direct strategies with their female interlocutors in performing theirrequests, accounting for 93.3% of all strategies used. Moreover, with regards to the use of the request sub-strategies

with same-gender interlocutor, the study also indicated that the maleand female participants tend to be similar concerning their preference of the sub-strategy type.This is shown in their use of the *hedged performative* sub-strategy as the most used one, accounting for 57.8% and 46.6% of all strategies employed by males and females respectively. With the light of these results, we notice that both male and female participants were more likely to opt for the direct style when performing the request speech act with their same-gender interlocutor. However, they tried to soften their request. This could be best explained by the fact that both males and females wished to avoid being so offensive in order to show respect and politeness to their interlocutor.

Likewise, with regards to the request strategies used by the male and female participants with cross-gender interlocutors, the findings indicated that the male and female

participants also share similarities regarding their most preferred strategy type. The male participants tended to prefer the most direct strategies with their female interlocutors accounting for 91.1 % of all strategies used. Similarly, the same result was obtained regarding the strategies used by the female participants to ask for a request from their male interlocutors since they were more likely to use the most direct strategies, accounting for 91.1% of all strategies employed. Furthermore, concerning the use of request sub-strategies with cross-gender interlocutors, the study also indicated that the male and female participants tend to be similar as far as the preference of the sub-strategy type is concerned. This can be clearly seen in their preference of the *hedged performative* sub- strategy, accounting for 53.3% and 55.2% of all strategies used by males and females respectively. Thus, in the light of these results, we can say that both male and femaleparticipants were more likely to opt for the direct style when performing the request speechact with their cross-gender interlocutors. Nevertheless, they tried to minimize the effect of directness of their request, implying that both males and females wanted to avoid being rudeor impolite with their cross-gender interlocutors. Moreover, another

similarity between males and females is in relation to how they realize the request speech act with regards to the gender of the interlocutor. That is, both males and females were not influenced by the gender of their interlocutor when performing their requests, implying that both males and females tend to perceive their same-gender and cross-gender interlocutors in a similar way when performing the request speech act.

Accordingly, the study deduce that the male and female participants were more likely to be similar regarding their use of the request strategies with both their same-gender and cross-gender interlocutors.

2.3. Section Three: Discussion of the Major Results, Limitations of the Study, and Suggestions for Further Research

2.3.1. Discussion of the Major Results

The present subsection summarizes the results of the present study. The results are analyzed and compared in order to attain the objectives of this study and answer the research questions and hypothesis.

Concerning the first research question which is about finding the request strategies used by both males and female students, the results of the study showed that when addressing same-gender interlocutors, the male participants were more likely to use the direct strategies which recorded the highest frequency (39 occurrences), accounting for 86.7 % of all strategies used, as compared with conventionally indirect strategies which registered the lowest frequency (six occurrences) accounting for 13.3% of all strategies employed. Similarly, when requesting their cross-gender interlocutors, the direct strategies registered the highest frequency (41 occurrences), representing 91.1 % of all strategies used, as compared with conventionally indirect strategies which recorded the lowest frequency (four cases), accounting for 8.9 % of all strategies used, indicating that the male participants, preferred the use of direct strategies

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when asking for requests from both their male and female interlocutors.

Regarding, the female participants, the findings indicated that when addressing same-gender interlocutors, they tended to prefer the use of direct strategies which registered the highest frequency (42 cases), accounting for 93.3% of all strategies employed, as compared with conventionally indirect strategies which recorded the lowest frequency (three cases), accounting for 6.7 % of all strategies used. Likewise, when requesting their cross-gender interlocutors, they tended to use more the most direct strategies which registered the highest frequency (41 occurrences) accounting for 91.1% of all strategies used, as compared with conventionally indirect strategies which recorded the lowest frequency (four cases), accounting for 8.9 % of all strategies used, implying that the female participants were more likely to use direct strategies when requesting both their male and female interlocutors.

Accordingly, the findings show that like males, females tend to use the direct strategies with both their same-gender and cross-gender interlocutors. This contradicts what has been reported about males and females in Dimova‟s (2010) study who reported that females are more emotionally expressive, more indirect, and more detailed than males.

With regards to the second question which seeks to find out whether or not the gender of the interlocutor affects the participant‟s choice of strategy type, the findings of the study revealed that the gender of the interlocutor did not have an effect on the participant‟s choice of strategy type. Brown (1980) in her analysis of politeness in the Mayan culture argued that women are typically more courteous. She claims that in most societies, females amongst girls use more complicated politeness skills than men do with men. Brown (1980) reported that in the highly gendered Mayan culture, women employ a lot of complements while speaking to other women and less weak ones when speaking to men, meaning that they were influenced by the gender of the interlocutor. We conclude that Brown's (1980) analysis is inconsistent with the result of this study that the gender of the interlocutor did not have an effect on the

participants" choice of strategy type.

Concerning the third research question which attempts to explore if there are any similarities and/or differences in the request strategies used by both male and female participants, the results of the study showed that both male and female participants tend to be more similar than different in their realization of the speech act of request, Perhaps because they are learning English as a foreign language, and possibly because they have learnt the same polite formula. this is mainly seen in the fact that both male and female students tend to opt for the direct style as their most preferred style when requesting either their same-gender or cross-gender interlocutors. When comparing the styles of cross and same gender individuals, the study discovers that both male and female participants perform the speech act of request with their both same-gender and cross-gender interlocutors where both male and female students were not influenced by the gender of their interlocutors when performingtheir requests. Perhaps because they are unconcerned with the gender of their interlocutor, the most essential thing for them is to respond to their request using a direct style.

To conclude, the results of the study helped us achieve our study objectives and provide answers to our research questions. The findings of the present study disapproved our hypothesis.

2.3.2. Limitations of the Study

Following the discussion of the acquired data, it is assumed that the current study has answered the research questions and disapproved its hypothesis. As a result, this sub-section seeks to provide some limitations. In research, obstacles constantly arise that limit the researchers from accomplishing the desired aims that they set out to achieve in the beginning of their research. As a result, the first limitation of our study is a lack of sources (particularly books) in our library at the University of Bejaia. Second, the study is limited to third year EFL

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students at the University of Bejaia. Consequently, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to learners of other levels or other Arabic varieties or nationalities. Third, another limitation is the use of the DCT in its written version which may prevent the participants from making specific sorts of requests that they may use in their real-life settings. Thus, asking students to generate written representations of what they would ordinarily express orally in various real-life situations may influence the veracity of the results.

2.3.3. Suggestions for Further Research (for learners and teachers)

Based on the findings of this study and previous related investigations, further study is required to address and examine other issues related to the speech act under investigation. The current suggestions are designed for those who want to undertake research about the same issue for future studies. Therefore, we suggest replicating the current study in different regions in Algeria in order to obtain more generalized findings on the realization of the speech act of request by Algerian males and females. Furthermore, this study needs to be taking into consideration certain social variables such as the interlocutor's statusand age, as we did not take these aspects into consideration in our study.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The current study examined the request strategies employed by male and female students. The case study was third-year EFL students from Bejaia University's Department of English Algiria. Furthermore, the study is based on the following hypothesis: the male and female students will be rather different in their use of the request strategies and will be affected by the gender of the interlocutor in their choice of strategy type.

The study's main goal has been to shed light on the different request strategies employed by EFL students. The dissertation is divided into two chapters. The first chapter is a theoretical background in which we attempted to provide a comprehensive overview and explanation of the different aspects related to our subject of investigation, namely the request speech act. It includes four sections dealing with: pragmatics, politeness, language and gender, and, finally, a review of literature. The second chapter presents the research methods, analysis and interpretation, and discussion of the findings, which are presented in three sections. The first section consists of the methods and study design, and includes an explanation and full description of the participants, as well as data collection tools and procedures. The second section is devoted to analyzing and interpreting the findings. Finally, the third section presents and discusses the study's main results, provides limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

The current study is based on a quantitative method through the use of a DCT which was handled to 30 students including 15 males and 15 females. The DCT provides both quantitative data about the realization of the speech act of request by the learners. Interestingly, the analysis of data and the results obtained through the DCT answer the research questions and consequently disapprove the hypothesis. That is, EFL male and female students are rather similar in their use of request strategies and are not affected by the gender of the interlocutor when choosingthe strategy type. Regarding the first research question, which attempts to find

General Conclusion

out the request strategies used by both males and female students the results of the study revealed that when addressing same-gender interlocutors, the male participants were more likely to use the direct strategies as compared with conventionally indirect strategies which registered the lowest frequency. Similarly, when requesting their cross-gender interlocutors, the direct strategies registered the highest frequency as compared with conventionally indirect strategies which recorded the lowest frequency, indicating that the male participants, preferred the use of direct strategies when asking for requests from both their male and female interlocutors.

Regarding, the female participants, the findings indicated that when addressing same-gender interlocutors, they tended to prefer the use of direct strategies which registered, as compared with conventionally indirect strategies which recorded the lowest frequency. Likewise, when requesting their cross-gender interlocutors, they tended to use more the most direct strategies which registered the highest frequency, as compared with conventionally indirect strategies which recorded the lowest frequency, implying that the female participants were more likely to use direct strategies when requesting both their male and female interlocutors.

Accordingly, the findings show that like males, females tend to use the direct strategies with both their same-gender and cross-gender interlocutors.

Concerning the second question which seeks to find out whether or not the gender of the interlocutor affects the participant's choice of strategy type, the findings of the study revealed that the gender of the interlocutor did not have an effect on the participant's choice of strategy type.

With regards to the third research question which attempts to explore if there are any similarities and/or differences in the request strategies used by both male and female participants, the results of the study showed that both male and female participants tend to be more similar than different in their realization of the speech act of request.

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Appendix

Appendix

Appendix 01

Students" DCT

Dear students,

The present study aims at analyzing the request strategies used by Algerian EFL learners. You are kindly asked to react to each scenario addressed to you. Write whatever you would naturally say in that situation. Please write as much or as little as you feel appropriate for each situation. The data will be used for research purposes only. Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

The researcher

Part One: General Information

Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

Age ………………………

Part Two: Scenarios

1) You are an employee in a company. You have been working for years, it has been a while that your salary does not cover your expenses. You want an increase in your salary.

-If your boss is a man (Mr. Anders Willson):

Mention whatever you say to ask him for an increase in salary:

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

- If your boss is a woman (Mme. Falone Bailey):

Mention whatever you say to ask her for an increase in salary:

……

……..

2) You were working in your office with your computer. Suddenly, it has stopped working while you were saving data on it, and you need to finish the work. So, you want to ask your colleague to lend you his.

-If your colleague is a man (Albert Scott):

Mention whatever you say to ask him to lend you his computer:

……

………………………………………………………………………………………….....

-   If your colleague is a woman (Crystal Smith):

Mention whatever you say to ask her to lend you her computer:

……

………………………………………………………………………………………….....

3) You are the boss of a known company, one of your employees is always late. You want to ask him to avoid being late.

-   If your employee is a man (Justin Long):

Mention whatever you say to ask him to avoid being late:

……

……………………………………………………………………………………

-   If your employee is a woman (Liza Weil):

Mention whatever you say to ask her to avoid being late:

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….……

………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for your cooperation

Résumé

Cette étude examine les stratégies de demande utilisées par les étudiants algériens lorsqu'ils parlent avec des personnes du même sexe ou de sexe différent. Elle étudie également l'influence du sexe de l'interlocuteur sur le choix du type de stratégie par les participants. L'étude vise également à déterminer s'il existe des similitudes et/ou des différences dans les stratégies de demande utilisées par les participants masculins et féminins. La population de cette étude est constituée d'apprenants de troisième année d'Anglais comme langue étrangère inscrits au département d'Anglais de l'Université de Béjaïa. L'échantillon de l'étude est composé de 15 hommes et 15 femmes du même département. Dans la présente étude, il a été émis comme hypothèse que les participants masculins et féminins seront plutôt différents dans leur utilisation des stratégies de demande et seront affectés par le sexe de l'interlocuteur dans leurs choix de type de stratégie. Pour tester cette hypothèse, le chercheur a utilisé une méthode mixte, incluant la mesure quantitative à travers l'utilisation d'une tâche d'achèvement de discours. Les données ont été analysé en termes de formules sémantiqueset ont été catégorisé en fonction de la classification des stratégies de demande établie par Blum-kulka et Olshtain (1984). Les résultats de l'étude révèlent que les participants masculinset féminins ont préféré l'utilisation de stratégies directes lorsqu'ils s'addressent aux interlocuteurs du même sexe et de l'autre sexe. Les résultats ont également montré que le sexe de l'interlocuteur n'avait pas d'effet significatif sur le choix du type de stratégie par le participant. En outre, il a été constaté que les étudiants masculins et féminins ont tendance à être assez similaires dans leur utilisation des stratégies de demande lorsqu'ils s'adressent aux interlocuteurs du même sexe et de l'autre sexe. Par conséquent, l'hypothèse de l'étude n'est pasconfirmée.

Mots-clés : Apprenants d'Anglais langue étrangère, formules sémantiques, sexe, stratégies de demande,