

## Effects of Social Power and Distance on the Realization of Requests in Jordanian Bedouin Arabic

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**Abstract:** This study aims to determine the request strategies employed by Jordanian Bedouin Arabic (JBA) native speakers in their interactions in diverse social situations by examining how they realize requests in speech. The study also explores the effect of social power (high, equal, low) and social distance (familiar and unfamiliar) on the realization patterns of requests by highlighting young JBA male speakers' linguistic choices. Data from 25 young male speakers of JBA were gathered using an Oral Discourse Completion Test (ODCT). The collected data were analyzed based on Brown's and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory and following the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Research Project (CCSARP) request strategy coding scheme. The results showed that the participants employed various request strategies according to their occurrences in different contexts. Furthermore, it was found that there is a correlation between perceptions of (im)politeness and social power and distance controlled by the context. The results also showed that the participants employed different sequences of strategies and demonstrated different preferences for context-dependent strategies in their requests.

**Keywords:** speech acts, Jordanian Bedouin Arabic, Northeastern Badia.

Arabic is the official language in Jordan and is manifested in various dialects. The Bedouin dialect in Jordan is one of these dialects whose linguistic structures have rarely been studied according to the speech act theory. This dialect includes many linguistic constructions that differ from the other dialects of Jordanian Arabic (JA). This study expands our understanding of how societies handle requests differently and how the culture of Jordanian Bedouins (JB) influences the employment of request strategies. It is also essential for Bedouins themselves to understand how they perform their request strategies in accordance with other people politely. Indeed, cultural awareness is one of the most critical factors for successful communication. According to (Nureddeen, 2008), the settings in which a dialogue takes place, as well as the assumptions and expectations speakers have about their interlocutors, have an impact on how utterances are produced and understood. As a result, learning a language's sociopragmatic norms is just as crucial as learning its phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical systems (Almathkuri, 2021). The context plays a critical role in creating and perceiving communicative events, and the choice of any language expression to achieve efficient communication is based on the cultural norms and traditions of the dominant speech community (Nureddeen, 2008). Such a type of acquisition will assist the learners in communicating effectively with native speakers, mainly when using speech acts that are constrained by societal standards.

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Since the advent of Speech Act Theory, various speech acts have been recognized, including inviting, congratulating, criticizing, recommending, complaining, and refusing, etc. (e.g., Alghazo et al. 2021; Al-Asadi, 2015; Anjanillah, 2022; Alshakhanbeh & Alghazo, 2022; Alshmasen et al., 2023; Benbouya & Rabab'ah, 2022; Benyakoub et al., 2022; Mukminin & Angelita, 2023; Murphy & Neu, 2006). Pragmatics is defined by Crystal (2011) as:

*The study of language from the user's point of view, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on the other participants in the act of communication. (p. 379)*

Sociopragmatic researchers have examined how interlocutors use language during everyday interactions to express speech acts such as commands, responses, or requests in addition to the manners they employ to speak within social norms (Huang, 2008). This is because different societies have different expectations for politeness.

### **Theoretical Background**

Speech acts are classified into five categories of illocutionary acts by Searle (1975: 162-164): "Assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations." Searle (ibid) also presented two types of speech acts: direct speech acts and indirect speech acts. He distinguished between them as it is simple for the hearer to assess and react to direct speech acts, whether positively or negatively. The hearer, by a direct speech act, can infer the literal meaning which concerns the meaning of one word or sentence's grammatical structure. However, in contrast to indirect speech acts, they might have either a literal or a pragmatic meaning. The pragmatic meaning is the meaning that a speaker intended, independent from the meaning given by each of the individual words making up this statement (ibid).

Requests are directives, and they are one of the most frequently used speech acts. According to Searle (1969), communications between interlocutors normally begin with a request. Requests are referred to as pre-event acts by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) since they cause and participate in the event. Requests are a part of everyday communication; Usó-Juan (2010) highlighted them as a critical problem in politeness studies and labeled them as such. They are known as face-threatening acts (FTAs) because they imperil the faces of the interlocutors (ibid). Additionally, Searle (1975) split requests into two main categories: direct and indirect. Austin (1962 as cited in Almathkuri, 2021) states that direct requests are those in which the speaker does not require any inference because they may be understood without a high level of pragmatic ability, "locutionary acts." As opposed to that, indirect requests are "illocutionary acts" because the hearer needs to be pragmatically competent to understand them (ibid). According to Eslami and McLoed (2010 as cited in Almathkuri, 2021), such illocutionary acts are easily understood if the interlocutors come from similar cultural and social backgrounds; otherwise, communication will be challenging and could result in misunderstandings. For instance, if the listener based his or her response on the phrase' structure and the meanings of the words used, they may respond, "Yes, it is" or "No, it is not." or may say nothing at all to the statement "It is cold inside the room." Instead, they might say, "I'll close the window" or "I'll turn the air conditioner off," depending on the pragmatic meaning.

## Literature Review

Researchers have studied speech acts of request to better understand how second or foreign language learners acquire sociopragmatic proficiency in another language. For instance, several scholars studied the pragmatic growth of English language learners (e.g., Ahar & Eslami, 2011; Al-Khaza'aleh & Zainal Ariff, 2015; Cheng, 2005; Chiravate, 2011; Farnia & Suleiman, 2009). For example, Megaiab et al. (2019) investigated the politeness strategies of requests employed in the classroom by Libyan students and their lecturers, and the variables affecting these strategies. Other research compared specific speech acts in two or more cultures and looked at cross-cultural and interlingual studies of speech acts (e.g., Abushihab, 2015; Al-Adaileh, 2007; Al-Jabali, 2018; Alsalem, 2015; Alzebaree & Mehmet, 2017; Aubed, 2012; Kwon, 2004; Lin, 2009; Massud, 2016; Ninomiya & Shadayeva, 2020; Zhao & Throssell, 2011; Mohammadi & Tabari, 2013; Qari, 2017; Su & Chang, 2019; Tarawneh, 2018; ). Cui (2012) examined the speech act of thanking used by advanced English learners who were Chinese, Korean, Indonesian, and Japanese to determine how their native tongues affected this speech act. In relation to the current study, there have only been a few intralingual Arabic research in this domain that have been concerned with one Arabic-speaking community (e.g., Al-Amro, 2013; Alsulayyi, 2016; Altayari, 2017; Alzahrani & Alerwi, 2022; Farghal & Haggan, 2006; Hodeib, 2021; Nureddeen, 2008). Several intralingual studies have examined request strategies in languages other than Arabic (e.g., Félix-Brasdefer, 2010; Nezami & Shirkhani, 2020; Salazar & Orts, 2018; Wibowo & Cempaka, 2020). Nezami and Shirkhani (2020) investigated how Persian spouses employed request strategies in private and public contexts. 30 Persian couples were observed interacting in both settings as it was being videotaped. The study's findings revealed that Persian couples favor direct strategies when they are alone together, but they use conventionally indirect strategies when other people are around. It was proposed that the presence of other people significantly influences the couple's decision to use a particular request strategy. The characters' conversational speech acts' request strategies used in the "Tall Girl" movie were categorized by Wibowo and Cempaka (2020). Regarding the request strategies suggested by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), an examination of the dialogues showed that practically all these request strategies are present, including mood derivable, explicit performative, hedged performative, locution derivable, want statements, suggestion formulas, and question preparatory. The mood derivable strategy, however, was the one that the authors discovered was most frequently applied. The current study qualifies as intralingual because it concentrates on the speech acts of requests in only one language, JBA. Here is an overview of intralingual research that concentrates on requests made in one Arabic dialect.

Alqurashi (2022) conducted a study examining the effects of social power and social distance on the speech act of request strategies used by Saudi EFL students and teachers. The participants were 25 students and nine faculty members at the University of Jeddah. The participants were all Saudi females. A DCT collected the data. The findings of his study demonstrated that participants most frequently utilized direct strategies and conventionally indirect strategies. On the other hand, the findings also indicated that the selection of these strategies was affected by the relationships between the participants because social power and social distance characteristics influenced most requests employed by the participants. Almathkuri (2021) investigated the social power and social distance effects on the request strategies used by native Saudi Arabic speakers to make requests in their conversations. His study involved 26 male and eight female undergraduate students from Taif University in Saudi Arabia enrolled in various fields. A DCT was used to collect the study's data. The findings showed that among native Saudi Arabic speakers, the direct strategy was more frequently used, whereas the indirect strategy was rarely used.

Some researchers examined the realization of several speech acts in JA and other languages, including Turkish and English. For example, Farghal and Al-Khatib (2001) investigated Jordanian college students' responses to compliments; they demonstrated that the compliment response plays an important role in the management of face in Jordanian communication. Al-Adaileh (2007) studied the speech act of apology used in the British and Jordanian cultures; he found that apologies could be viewed as relational and interactional phenomena. Al-Momani (2009) studied the realization of requests by Jordanian EFL learners to show the fulfillment of requests made by Jordanian EFL students; the results showed that even while JEFL participants showed a pattern of growth toward using American English speech norms, their L1 continued to have a substantial influence on them. Banikalef et al. (2015) studied apology strategies in JA; the results of this study showed that acknowledging responsibility and swearing by God's name form the most frequent combination of apology strategies in JA.

Although not many studies are carried out in this field, the following is a review of those that are relevant to the current study. Al-Qura'an (2009) studied request expressions that Jordanians use in daily interactions among a sample of 100 subjects who live in the rural Jordanian area of al-Taybih. The data was collected by tape recording and note-taking to identify the most frequent request strategies uttered spontaneously by the interlocutors. The study looked into the most frequent request expressions and shed light on the effect of certain demographic factors, such as age, gender, and level of education, on the choice of certain request expressions rather than others. She categorized 10 types of request expressions into two groups according to the level of directness. She used Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's (1984) model to investigate the relationship between the speakers of a certain language, their individual variables, and the speech act pattern they use. The findings also showed that the relationships between the participants depended on their selection for request strategies because most of the request strategies were impacted by the characteristics of social power and social distance.

Al-Hamad (2003) examined the speech act of request and its use among Yarmouk University students in Jordan. The study shed light on the most frequent request utterances used among the participants. It also sought to find out what social factors affect the speakers' choice of certain request utterances. Using a questionnaire, the researcher collected data from 300 students who were asked to fill in the demographic information and to put a number (1, 2, or 3) in front of the 42 request utterances to indicate how frequently the student used these utterances (always, sometimes, or rarely). Using Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's (1984) request and apology strategies scheme, the researcher concluded that the student's gender, age, and place of residence affect their use of certain request expressions, while other factors such as the college and level of education of the speakers do not have a great impact on their employment of request utterances.

## **Research Questions**

The objective of this paper is to show how social power and social distance affect request strategies in Jordanian Bedouin Arabic (JBA). The relationship between requests, on the one hand, and social variables of power and distance, on the other hand, is also addressed with regard to the performance of young male native speakers of JBA. Likewise, it also looks at the politeness strategies used by the young male native speakers of JBA when making requests. Intralingual studies look at aspects of different dialects of the same language. In addition, it looks into how JBA speakers make requests to determine how direct they are and the effect social power and social distance have on that performance. It might also serve as a solid starting point for future academic investigation into this or any other Arabic dialects,

whether or not it is subsequently employed as a first or second language. The study seeks to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. How do young native speakers of JBA use request strategies with regard to directness level?
2. What impact do social power and social distance have on request strategies used by the young male native speakers of JBA?

## Method and Procedures

In order to investigate how young male native speakers of JBA realize requests in speech, this study used a descriptive qualitative methodology. This strategy examines a social or human phenomenon through an understanding-based inquiry based on many methodological traditions (Creswell, 1998).

## Participants

The participants of the current study consist of 25 Jordanian Bedouin speakers (JBSs). Their ages range between 20 to 30 years. All of them are males. Their level of education is divided into two stages: (a) school education, that is, those with either primary school only, or up to the level of Secondary Certificate (Tawjihi), and; (b) first university degree. Because the respondents in this study belong to a similar age group, age was not considered a variable. All participants live in a village in the Northeastern Badia District in Jordan (the village of Al-Saidia 'السعيدية'). All of them are native speakers of JBA, and they do not master any foreign languages. All of whom were born and grew up in that village. All participants are employees in government departments and/or the private sectors in organizations or companies close to their place of residence. I visited them at their workplace to record their responses to the situations of this study. Since this region has never been researched previously, this community was chosen as the subject of the study, and another reason is that the researcher lives in that village, so it was easy for him to conduct this study on that specific site.

## Data Collection

An Oral DCT and an mp3 recorder were used in the data collection process. The speech act of requests was represented in eight different situations in the DCT. These served as the basis for the data gathering and were translated into Arabic (including JBA, one of its dialects). Three JBA native speakers tested the instrument to guarantee its validity. The DCT participants were asked to respond to the questions, mark any items whose wording they did not like, comment on any items whose meanings were unclear, and mark any items they felt were unnecessary. Their suggestions were taken into account when the survey's final draft was revised. The subjects were requested to listen to each situation and were asked to respond with the expected speech act, a request.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), three crucial factors—power, distance, and ranking of imposition—determine the severity of a face-threatening act (FTA). The study's scenarios are designed to collect data on how requests perform in connection with social power and social distance. The requester's social status with respect to the requestee is measured by their power (P). In this method, the power variable is +P when the speaker's status exceeds that of the hearer, -P when the statuses are lower, and =P when they are equal. On the other hand, distance (D) reflects the level of familiarity between the speaker and the listener. It is indicated by the symbols +D for unfamiliar and -D for familiar.

## Data Analysis

The data were assessed using Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) taxonomy devised to classify the speech acts of request strategies. This scheme has three main categories: "(1) "direct strategies." (2) "Conventionally indirect strategies." (3) "Nonconventional indirect strategies". These strategies are used to group the nine request strategies. Table 1 below lists these strategies, along with their definitions and some instances.

**Table 1**  
*Request Strategies Types Through Directness Scale*

Strategy	Definition	Example
<b>Direct Strategies</b>		
1- Mood derivable	The grammatical mood of the verb indicates the request.	Clean up the room.
2- Explicit performative	The request is explicitly named.	I am asking you to arrange your books.
3- Hedged performative	The request is modified by hedging.	I would like to ask you to send me the report as quickly as possible.
4- Obligation statement	The hearer's obligation to carry out the task is explicitly stated.	You have to come on Friday.
5- Want statement	Indicates the speaker's desire that the hearer perform the task.	I really wish you couldn't come here again.
<b>Conventional Indirect Strategies</b>		
1- Suggestory formulae	The speaker makes a suggestion for the hearer to perform the task.	How about calling the customer?
2- Query preparatory	The speaker inquires about the possibility of carrying out the request by the hearer.	Can you close the door?
<b>Nonconventional Indirect Strategies</b>		
1- Strong hints	Explicit reference to an object necessary for completing the task is made.	You left the window open.
2- Mild hints	No reference is made to any needed object, but it can be interpreted as a request according to the context.	I'm late. My father will kill me.

(Almathkuri, 2021, pp. 101-102)

## Results

After classifying all request strategies uttered by the young male native speakers of JBA according to Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) directness level, the researcher noticed that the participants used various strategies in their daily conversations. These strategies belong to different levels in the model the authors proposed. This section discusses the results of data analysis for this study. The analysis reveals that the subjects used a variety of request strategies from different social status interlocutors (equal, higher, and lower). Almathkuri (2021) created

four distinct groups based on the participants' relationships with regard to social power and social distance. This study adopted these categories developed in accordance with the power and distance relationships, taking into account the eight scenarios of this study. Almathkuri's (2021) categories are as follows:

(1) Power variable is present on the part of the requestee, and distance variable is present (-P and +D). (2) Neither power nor distance is present (=P and -D). (3) Both variables are present, but the power variable is present on the speaker's part (+P and +D). (4) Participants have the same power, and the distance variable is present (=P and +D). (p. 205)

### **(-P and +D): Low Power and Social Distance**

This section explores the politeness strategies employed between the participants in Situations 1 and 2. In Situation 1, each participant is asked to imagine that he has an interview for a new job after an hour and performs a request to postpone it because he is not fully prepared for it. In Situation 2, the participants are required to take someone in the neighborhood for a ride home. The relationships between the requester and the requestee in both situations show that the distance variable exists, and in a way, the requestee has influence over the requester. In these situations, the head act of requests is categorized into the conventionally indirect strategies according to the level of directness as illustrated and exemplified in Table 1 in Section 2, strategy 2, Query Preparatory, that defined by CCSARP "is an utterance that contains references to such preconditions as the ability, willingness, and permission on the part of the hearer and the feasibility or possibility of the act being done" (Lin, 2009: 1640). The conventionalized linguistic structures that emerge from our data in Situations 1 and 2 can be further categorized according to the function of the models used in the formula as follows:

**Ability Questions 1.** Conventional indirectness was mainly realized by ability questions that requesters performed, e.g., "Could you postpone the interview for me? I'm exhausted today." (تقدر تأجلي المقابلة اليوم، لاني تعبان كثير اليوم) (في مجال تأجلي المقابلة)، and "There aren't any buses in the bus station, Can you ride me with you to our neighborhood, I live in the same area in which you live." ما (في باصات بالمجمع، تقدر تركبني معك للمنطقه الي انا وانت ساكنين فيها).

**Permission Asking 2.** This strategy checks whether the speaker is allowed to ask the requestee to get a specific act done. This type of strategy was marked by the use of 'is it ok' or 'is it possible?' (في مجال تأجلي المقابلة)، e.g., "Is it ok you postpone the interview for me?" (في مجال تأجلي المقابلة)، or 'May' (ممکن)، e.g., "Excuse me, I have an emergency. May I ride home with you?" (لو سمحت، عندي ظرف طارئ، ممكن تأجلي المقابلة).

Moreover, two sub-strategies of directness, *imperative and hedged performative*, were employed in both situations. The usage of the verb "postpone" (أجلي) indicates the first one., e.g., "Postpone the interview for me, if you please" (أجلي المقابلة اذا سمحت)، and 'take me' (خذني) and 'ride me' (ركبني معك)، e.g., "take me with you to your neighborhood because I live there and no buses in the station" (خذني معك لنفس الحي الي انت ساكن فيه، انا ساكن هناك وما في باصات بالمجمع)، but the *hedged performative* sub-strategy is employed explicitly by the verb 'ask' (اطلب)، e.g., "If you are generous, I'm asking you to postpone the interview," (لو تكرمت اطلب منك تأجلي المقابلة). See Table 2 below, which lists the strategies employed in these situations.

Concerning Situations 1 and 2, it was found that JBSs who participated in the current study used different strategies (see Table 2 above). They used these strategies when addressing an interlocutor with higher status and they are unfamiliar with. The most distinctive finding is that one of the "conventionally indirect strategies" (query preparatory) was the most employed

by JBSs in their requests (39 occurrences) to someone higher in status. They also used “direct strategies” (occurrences 11).

**Table 2**  
*Strategies Used in Situation 1 and 2*

Strategy	Frequency	
	Situation 1	Situation 2
Conventionally indirect strategies	Query preparatory 19 (76%)	20 (80%)
direct strategies	Mood derivable 4 (16%)	3 (12%)
	Hedged performative 2 (8%)	2 (8%)
Total	25 (100%)	25 (100%)

### (=P and -D): Equal power and distance are present

Each participant in this category was asked in situation 3 to ask his roommate to tidy up the room and in situation 4 to request a close friend to lend the requester his camera because he wants to go out for a picnic with some friends. The requester and the requestee are socially equal and have the same power over one another since the social power and social distance are equal. In this category, most of the direct strategies were employed, e.g., *mood derivable sub-strategy*, *performative sub-strategy*, *hedged performative sub-strategy*, and finally, *want statement sub-strategy*. Second, the two conventionally indirect strategies were used, e.g., *suggestory formulae* and *query preparatory*. In addition, one of the “nonconventional indirect strategies” was used, namely, *mild hints*.

Here are some examples of these strategies: In the *mood derivable strategy*, the participants used the imperative form of the verbs ‘clean’ (نظف), ‘lend me’ (عيرن), and ‘give me’ (اعطن). In *performative strategy*, the participants explicitly make their requests, e.g., “You are advised to clean the room.” (انصحك انك تنظف الغرفة) and “I am asking you to lend me your camera” (اطلب منك تعيرن كمرتك). In *hedged performative*, utterances embedding the naming of the illocutionary force, e.g., “I’d like to ask you to clean the room” (حاب اطلب منك انك تنظف الغرفة) and “I’d like you to lend me your camera” (حاب اطلب منك تعيرن كمرتك). In the *want statement*, the speaker expresses his desire to happen, e.g., “I wish you could clean the room” (اتمنى انك تنظف الغرفة) and “If you allow, I want your camera” (اذا سمحت، ودي كمرتك).

On the other hand, the two strategies of conventionally indirect strategies were found in this category, e.g., *query preparatory* where the utterance encompasses references to the conditions of preparatory sub-strategy, e.g., “Can you clean the room” (تقدر تنظف الغرفة) and “my love, could you lend me your camera?” (حبيبي، تقدر تعيرن كمرتك). In *suggestory formulae*, where suggestions are presented as in the following examples, e.g., “Why don’t you clean up the room?” (وش رايك تعيرن كمرتك) and “How about lending me your camera?” (ليش ما تنظف الغرفة), and “would you allow me to take your camera” (تسمحلي اخذ كمرتك). The second strategy of “nonconventional indirect strategies” used by the subjects of this study is *mild hints* as illustrated in the following examples: “The place is very clean” (المكان يوج وج) and “I’m going out for a picnic tomorrow, and there are many beautiful landscapes if I get a camera to photograph them” (انا رايج رحله بكره وفي مناظر جميله كثير لو الواحد يصلحوا كاميرا يصورهن). Table 3 below provides a summary of these strategies.

According to the results of this study in situations three and four, the data collected show that the native speakers of JBA used a variety of request strategies when asking for something from interlocutors with whom they have the same social status and are familiar with one another. These strategies are the types of direct strategies, conventionally indirect strategies, and nonconventionally indirect strategies, respectively. These findings are displayed in Table



(3) above, which represents the major request strategies. The findings exhibited directive and explicit strategies with interlocutors in performing requests in the third and fourth situations of the speech act of request. The participants were more direct and tended to use the *mood derivable strategy* the most often (20 occurrences), and *performatives* were the second more often (6 occurrences) than the other strategies. *Want statement* occurred (5 occurrences) in the third level. *Hedged performative strategy* occurred (4 occurrences); it was the least. The total of “direct strategies” is 35 occurrences. Similarly, the participants favoured the strategy of *query preparatory*; this strategy came first (8 occurrences) under conventionally indirect strategies, and it was followed by *suggestory formulae* sub-strategy (4 occurrences). The finding also displayed in the table above that the *mild hints* sub-strategy yielded the least low number of occurrences (3 occurrences) in the equal-equal status.

**Table 3**  
*Strategies Used in Situations 3 and 4*

Strategy	Frequency		
	Situation 3	Situation 4	
direct strategies	Mood derivable	9 (36%)	11 (44%)
	Performatives	3 (12%)	3 (12%)
	Hedged performatives	2 (8%)	2 (8%)
	Want statement	2 (8%)	3 (12%)
Conventionally indirect strategies	Query preparatory	5 (20%)	3 (12%)
Nonconventionally indirect strategies	Suggestory formulae	2 (8%)	2 (8%)
	Mild hints	2 (8%)	1 (4%)
Total		25 (100%)	25 (100%)

**(+P and +D): higher power and social distance**

This category explores the speech act of negotiations between someone helping a police officer, He is asking a driver to move his car in situation five, and a boss is asking one of the customers to close the door in situation six. The strategies employed by the subjects to perform both situations of the speech act of requests are conventionally indirect strategies, e.g., *Query preparatory sub-strategy*, and direct strategies, e.g., *mood derivable strategy*, and *want statement sub-strategies*. These strategies are employed by the participants as shown in the following examples for each strategy:

**Query preparatory strategy 1.** “May you move your car from here?” (ممكن تحرك سيارتك (من هان معليش، تسكر الباب وراك) “If is it possible to close the door?”

**Mood derivable 2.** “Move your car from here, Uncle!” (حرك سيارتك من هان يا خال), “Close the door please!” (سكر الباب وراك لو سمحت).

**Want statement 3.** “I wish you’d move your car from here.” (ياليت تحرك سيارتك من هان). “I wish you’d close the door behind you.” (ياليت تسكر الباب وراك).

Table 4 below summarizes request strategies employed in situations 5 and 6.

The analysis of situations 5 and 6 reveals that native speakers of JBA used conventionally indirect levels with a higher frequency than the direct strategies when they maintained high social status and unfamiliar relationships with one another. To elaborate, as presented in Table 4 above, the most frequent request strategy was *query preparatory* (40 occurrences). In contrast, *mood derivable* sub-strategy (6 occurrences) and *want statement* sub-strategy (4 occurrences).

**Table 4**  
*Strategies Used in Situations 5 and 6*

	Strategy	Frequency	
		Situation 5	Situation 6
direct strategies	Mood derivable	4 (16%)	2 (8%)
	Want statement	2 (8%)	2 (8%)
Conventionally indirect strategies	Query preparatory	19 (76%)	21 (84%)
Total		25 (100%)	25 (100%)

**(=P and +D): Equal power but no social distance**

In our daily lives, people encounter one another even though they are unfamiliar with each other in the workplace or the street. As a result, they communicate, such as asking for something from one another for various reasons. The request is one of the reasons they communicate to perform different functions. In such a case, the relationships between the interlocutors will be based on equal social relationships, but the social distance is not present. This category explores how the relationships work under two situations: First is situation 7, in which the requester, who is a driver, asks a passenger sitting next to him to ask a pedestrian for directions. Second is situation 8, where the requester's phone battery died, and he should ask someone else to lend his phone to make an important phone call. Based on the data collected in response to these situations, participants employed three sub-strategies to perform their requests: *Query preparatory* sub-strategy and two "direct strategies"; *performative and mood derivable* sub-strategies. For instance:

**Query preparatory sub-strategy 1.** "If it is possible to ask that man the direction to Macca Mall." (اذا ممكن تسأل الزلمه الي ماشي بالشارع وين مكه مول) and "Excuse me, my phone battery dies. Could you give me your phone, I have to make an important phone call." (لو سمحت، تلفوني (خلص من الشحن، ممكن تعطيني تلفونك بدي احكي مكالمه مهمه).

**Mood derivable sub-strategy 2.** "Ask that man the directions to Macca Mall, please." (اسالي الزلمه الي هناك عن مكه مول) and "Give me your phone please, I have an important phone call, my phone died." (اعطن تلفونك اذا سمحت بدي احكي مكالمه مهمه، تلفوني خالص من الشحن).

**Want statement sub-strategy 3.** "My brother, my phone is out of charge; I want your phone to make an important phone call." (يا اخوي تلفوني خالص من الشحن، ودي تلفونك احكي مكالمه) and "I need your phone to make an important phone call if you, please, my phone is out of charge." (محتاج تلفونك احكي مكالمه مهمه اذا تكرمت، تلفوني خالص من الشحن).

Table 5 below outlines the request strategies used in these situations:

**Table 5**  
*Strategies Used in Situations 7 and 8*

	Strategy	Frequency	
		Situation 7	Situation 8
direct strategies	Mood derivable	2 (8%)	3 (12%)
	Want statement	2 (8%)	2 (8%)
Conventionally indirect strategies	Query preparatory	21 (84%)	20 (80%)
Total		25 (100%)	25 (100%)

The most interesting finding in Table 5 above is that the conventionally indirect strategy of query preparatory recorded the highest frequency (41 occurrences), revealing that the native speakers of JBA preferred this strategy the most when they had equal power status even though

social distance was absent. The table also shows that the second strategy used was the *mood derivable* sub-strategy. It registered a lower frequency (5 occurrences). *The want statement* sub-strategy was the least one (4 occurrences).

## Discussion

As a result of the influence of social power and social distance, the study's findings highlighted that the participants chose various degrees of directness strategies as a consequence of that influence. That divergence and difference in the results can be shown as follows:

In situations 1 and 2, when the social power of the participants is low and the social distance is absent, the participants used more conventionally indirect strategies (39 occurrences) than direct strategies (11 occurrences). However, they did not use nonconventionally indirect strategies at all. This implies that the JBSs were more likely to avoid the direct strategies and nonconventionally indirect strategies when asked by a higher-status interlocutor. The results of these situations accord with the findings of Alqurashi (2022) that Saudi learners use significantly more conventionally indirect strategies. However, it contrasts with the findings of Almathkuri (2021), who believed that Saudi interlocutors use direct requests more than indirect ones.

In situations 3 and 4, when the social power of the participants is equal and the social distance is present, the participants employed direct strategies (35 occurrences) more than conventionally indirect strategies (12 occurrences), and nonconventional indirect strategies were the least (3 occurrences). These findings in these situations contrast with Alqurashi (2022), in which Saudi learners used conventionally indirect requests more frequently when both social power and social distance were equal. The results also agree with Almathkuri (2021) that Saudi learners tend to use direct strategies when social power and social distance are equal among the interlocutors. Yazanfar and Bonyadi (2016) claim that there are several explanations for the discrepancies in the results, as happened with Almathkuri (2021) and Alqurashi (2022), including the fact that the majority of our requests are made to family members or friends with whom we do not feel the need to mitigate the impact of requests as much as when we speak to guests or foreigners. Moreover, most of our daily requests are for modest, low-imposition chores, so the requester is not compelled to try to make them less onerous. Second, the dependability of DCT, whose use in most previous studies was used to collect data, has frequently been questioned by various researchers (ibid). According to Nurani (2009), what people think they would say in a hypothetical situation is not always what they say in real-life circumstances.

In situations 5 and 6, when the requesters have higher social power and the social distance of the participants is absent, they employed conventionally indirect strategies (40 occurrences) more than direct strategies (10 occurrences), but nonconventionally indirect strategies were never used in this category. This divergence in the results might be because the relationships between the strangers of higher status are limited because the participants might not interact with each other quite frequently, meaning they do not feel 'close' to each other. Formality could be another reason to justify what happened. That the requester thinks that he has a power status and is obliged to maintain a formal relationship with others could also mean that the requesters did not want to intrude in their requests by clearly employing this strategy. The findings in these situations go in line with the findings of a previous study conducted by Alqurashi (2022) in which the Saudi learners used the sub-strategy of *query preparatory* in the "conventionally indirect strategy" as the most strategy used when the requesters have more power over the requestee. They also used the *mood derivable* sub-strategy which was indicated by the imperative form of the verbs.

In situations 7 and 8, when the social power of the participants is equal, but the social distance is absent, the subjects preferred to use conventionally indirect strategies (41 occurrences) more than the direct strategies (9 occurrences), but nonconventionally indirect strategies were not used at all. These results imply that the participants avoided the direct strategies when asking for an equal-status interlocutor. The analysis also reveals that the findings of situations seven and eight in this study accord with the findings of Alqurashi (2022) that the Saudi participants in his study utilized the *query preparatory* sub-strategy of conventionally indirect strategy the most. They also employed two direct sub-strategies, e.g., *want statement* and *performative*. However, the findings in these situations contrast with Almathkuri (2021), who indicated that three direct strategies were the most frequently used by the participants. The participant also utilized the sub-strategy of *query preparatory* in conventionally indirect strategy the least.

## Conclusion

This study examined how social power and distance impacted young Jordanians' speech act of request performance. The results of this study showed that the query preparatory sub-strategy in conventionally indirect strategies is used by the native speakers of JBA in all situations but with different degrees. The outcomes also supported the broad generalizations made by Blum-Kulka (1989) regarding the conventionality of indirect requests. Sub-strategies differ across situations in terms of structure, function, and distribution, as well as in terms of preference ordering and distributions. The selection of the request strategies, on the other hand, was controlled by the relationships among the interlocutors because the sociability of power and distance aspects influenced all of the strategies chosen by the study participants. To convey civility and avoid imposing requests, the subjects demonstrated their preferences for using Query Preparatory, which is classified as a conventionally indirect request.

All request strategies employed in the current study were significantly influenced by the level of power and distance among the requesters who participated in the study. The effects of power can be observed in various contexts; they were evident in the requesters' utterances but varied in their application. It was discovered that the politeness strategy depends on the nature of the relationship. Where there are inequalities in power and proximity between the requester and requestee, the requesters use a variety of strategies. Furthermore, it was discovered that indirectness may cause politeness to increase. Using direct request strategies could imply close ties between the two speakers rather than the imposition of the face and could be perceived as politeness. The participants' employment of these strategies is significantly influenced by their social power and social distance.

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