

**THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE
PROFICIENCIES ON PRAGMATIC REALIZATION AND
STRATEGIES OF MAKING REQUESTS BY SAUDI
ARABIA'S EFL LEARNERS**

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UNIVERSITI SAINS ISLAM MALAYSIA

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MAKING REQUESTS BY SAUDI ARABIA'S EFL LEARNERS**

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UNIVERSITI SAINS ISLAM MALAYSIA

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AUTHOR DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this thesis is my own except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

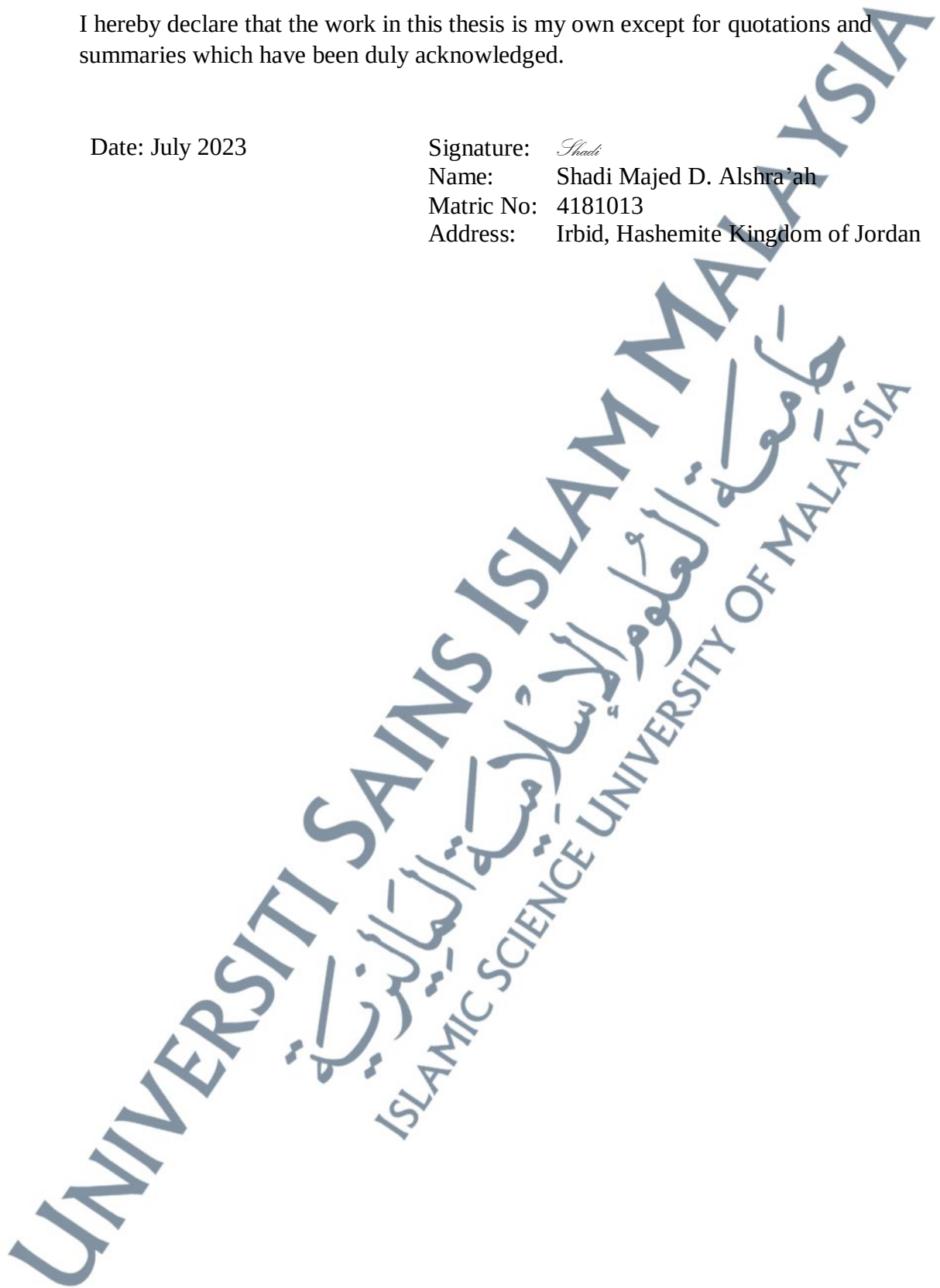
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ABSTRAK

Kajian ini menyumbang kepada kajian pragmatik antara bahasa dengan mendedahkan hubungkait antara tahap kemahiran Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa asing pelajar Saudi (SEFL) dan tahap kesedaran dan strategi pragmatik mereka untuk membuat tindakan permintaan. Objektif kajian ini ialah mengkaji pembolehubah linguistik, iaitu hubungan antara pelajar berprestasi tinggi berbanding yang berprestasi rendah, terutamanya dalam membuat permintaan, selain mengenalpasti kebolehubahan situasi berkaitan perbezaan dalam merelisasi pragmatik untuk membuat permintaan. Kerangka teori yang menyokong kajian ini ialah *Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Pattern* (CCSARP) dan teori kesantunan Brown dan Levinson. Berdasarkan keputusan yang diperolehi daripada Ujian Penempatan TouchStone (TPT), 98 pelajar sarjana muda Bahasa Inggeris (EFL) Saudi dibahagikan kepada 2 kumpulan utama, iaitu pelajar berprestasi tinggi (N=50) dan berprestasi rendah (N=48). Untuk mencapai matlamat kajian, instrumen kajian yang digunakan termasuk Soal Selidik Demografi (DQ), Tugas Penyelesaian Wacana (DCT) dan Soal Selidik Skala Respons (SRQ). Data merangkumi strategi-strategi permintaan mengikut situasi berbeza yang dikenal pasti dalam kedua-dua DCT dan SQR. Data yang diperolehi dari DCT dianalisis secara kualitatif untuk mengenal pasti pengetahuan pragmatik seperti tahap keterusterangan, dan pengubahsuaian dalaman dan luaran permintaan. Selain analisis kuantitatif skor SRQ, ujian statistik inferensi untuk menilai pengetahuan penutur berkaitan kesedaran pragmatik (pengetahuan sosiopragmatik) juga digunakan dalam membuat tindakan permintaan. Dapatan menunjukkan wujud impak ketara diantara tahap kecekapan bahasa yang berbeza dalam merealisasikan tindakan permintaan. Pada tahap pragmatik, kebanyakan pelajar berprestasi tinggi (HA) menggunakan strategi perbualan lindung nilai dan persediaan pertanyaan, manakala pelajar berprestasi rendah (LA) lebih menggunakan mood terbitan. Dapatan berkaitan pembolehubah sosial menggunakan strategi permintaan menunjukkan bahawa kumpulan HA mempunyai tahap kesedaran yang tinggi berkaitan kesan pengaruh dan jarak kuasa sosial walaupun wujudnya persamaan kecil berkaitan kecekapan sosiopragmatik dan pragmatik. Hasil dapatan menunjukkan tahap penguasaan Bahasa Inggeris mempunyai pengaruh signifikan terhadap penuturan dan kefahaman strategi permintaan dikalangan pelajar-pelajar EFL Saudi. Oleh itu, adalah penting memanfaatkan hasil dapatan kajian ini untuk menumpukan kaedah meningkatkan kebolehan menggunakan pelbagai strategi permintaan pelajar berprestasi rendah berbanding yang berprestasi tinggi. Tesis ini diakhiri dengan memberikan cadangan dan implikasi pedagogi kepada pengajar dan pembuat dasar merangkumi non-konvensional dan modifikasi secara tidak langsung, dalaman dan luaran sebagai alat perantaraan dalam bilik darjah dan aktiviti kurikulum.

ABSTRACT

The present study contributes to inter language pragmatic studies by revealing the relationship between English language proficiency level of Saudi English Foreign Language learners (SEFL) and their pragmatic realization and strategies of making request act. The aims were to investigate the linguistic variability i.e., the relationship between the high achievers in comparison to the low achievers, particularly in making requests besides revealing the situational variability regarding the differences in pragmatic realization of making requests. The theoretical framework underpinning this study is Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Pattern (CCSARP) and Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. Based on the results obtained from the Touchstone Placement Test (TPT), 98 Saudi EFL undergraduate students were divided into 2 main groups – i.e., the high achievers (N=50) and low achievers (N=48). To achieve the aims, research instruments including Discourse Completion Task (DCT), and Scale Response Questionnaire (SRQ) were employed. Data encompasses request strategies on different situations identified in both DCT and SRQ. Data gained from DCT were qualitatively analyzed to identify the pragmalinguistic knowledge such as level of directness, and internal and external modifications. Additionally, quantitative analysis on the scores of the SRQ also included inferential statistical tests to assess the speaker's knowledge of pragmatic realization (sociopragmatic knowledge) in using request act. Findings indicate there exists a significant impact of different language proficiency levels in realizing request acts. At pragmalinguistic level, High Achievers (HA) employ mostly the hedge performative and query preparatory strategy, while low achievers (LA) mostly employ mood derivable. Additionally, findings on the social variable on using request strategies revealed that HAs were more conscious of the effect of social power and distance in changing their strategy depending on the contextual variables. However, LAs showed less sensitivity to influence social distance and power though there exists a small similarity shown pertaining to their sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic competence. The results reflect that English language proficiency has a significant influence on the production and comprehension of request strategies among Saudi EFL learners. Hence, it is necessary to benefit from these results to focus on low archivers to strengthen their ability to employ range of request strategies compared to high achievers. Thesis concludes with recommendations and pedagogical implications for instructors and policy makers to include nonconventional indirect, internal, and external modification as mitigated device in their classrooms and curriculum activities.

الملخص

تساهم الدراسة الحالية في الدراسات البراغمية بين اللغات من خلال الكشف عن العلاقة بين مستوى إتقان اللغة الإنجليزية للطلاب السعوديين كمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية واستراتيجيات أسلوب بالطلب ومدى ادراكه. الإطار النظري الذي تقوم عليه الدراسة هو نمط إدراك أسلوب الكلام باستخدام أسلوب الطلب المباشر وغير المباشر وايضا اعتمدت على نظرية التهذيب لBrown و Levinson. كان المشاركون في الدراسة 98 طالبا سعوديا تم تقسيمهم بناءا على امتحان تحديد المستوى (Touchstone, TPT) كالآتي: 50 طالبا متفوقا و 48 طالبا من ضعيفي المستوى. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى فحص التباين اللغوي، أي العلاقة بين المتفوقين في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بالمقارنة مع ذوي التحصيل المنخفض، لا سيما في أسلوب تقديم الطلب. كما يسعى إلى مناقشة التباين البراغمي الاجتماعي فيما يتعلق بالاختلافات في الإدراك البراغمي. لتحقيق الأهداف المتوقعة، تم استخدام الاستبانة الديموغرافية (DQ)، ومهمة إكمال الخطاب (DCT)، واستبيان الاستجابة (SRQ) الذي يتضمن 12 موقف. تم تحليل البيانات كميا ونوعيا من خلال برنامج (T-test and chi-square) لمعرفة القدرة اللغوية عند الطلاب السعوديين من مجموعتين مختلفتين في استخدام أسلوب الطلب المباشر وغير المباشر والاستراتيجيات المستخدمة أيضا مدى الإدراك البراغمي في استعمال الطلب من حيث وجود فوارق اجتماعية بين المتكلم والمخاطب. وجدت هذه الدراسة أثرا كبيرا لإتقان اللغة الإنجليزية في استخدام استراتيجيات وإدراك أسلوب الطلب. فيما يتعلق في استخدام استراتيجيات الطلب لوحظ أن المجموعتين يفضلون الأسلوب المباشر، ولكن مجموعة الطلاب من ذوي التحصيل المنخفض يستخدمونه أكثر حيث لوحظ ضعف في الناحية اللغوية والبراغمية. ولكن أظهرت الدراسة أن الطلاب المتفوقين استخدموا استراتيجيات كثيره للطلب والتي تهدف الى التلطف والتهذيب. ومن ناحية التأثير الاجتماعي على استخدام الطلب لوحظ أن الطلاب المتفوقون أكثر ادراكا ووعيا للعامل الاجتماعي في تغيير نمط الطلب حسب مكانة المخاطب وان الطلاب ضعيفي المستوى غير مدركين للتأثير الاجتماعي في استخدام الطلب. ختمت الدراسة ببعض التوصيات التعليمية لصانعي القرار التعليمي بادراج المناهج التربويه بأنشطه صفيه تساعد الطلاب على استخدام أسلوب الطلب بشكل مهذب ولبق.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a foreign language
CCSARP	Cross Cultural Speech Act Research Project
L1	Mother tongue/first language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
L2	Second language/target language
B and L	Brown and Levinson
P	Power
D	Distance
R	Ranking of imposition
ESL	English as a second language
SL	Second language
CP	Co-operative Principle
PP	Politeness Principle
H	Hearer
S	Speaker
FTA	Face-threatening act
DCT	discourse completion test questionnaire
SRQ	Scale Response Questionnaire
IFID	Illocutionary Force Indicating Device
ILP	Interlanguage pragmatics
IL	Interlanguage
NSs	Native speakers
NNSs	Nonnative speakers
PSAU	Prince Satam bin Abdulaziz University
PYP	Preparatory Year Program
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences (statistical analysis program)
Q-prep	Query preparatory
EP	Explicit performative
HP	Hedged performative
HA	High Achievers
LA	Low Achievers
TPT	Touchstone Placement Test
ELT	English Language teaching
SEFL	Saudi English Foreign Language learners
NCI	Non-Conventionally Indirect
CI	Conventionally Indirect
D	Directness