



Requesting Strategies in English and Arabic A Contrastive study

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1.0 Introduction:

The speech act of requesting is one of the most common speech acts that are ever being used in many situations since it is used to fulfill the expression of a variety of requests. Accordingly, it acquires special importance among the set of all pragmatically-feasible speech acts. Several definitions have been proposed by scholars for *request*. For example, Green(1975:121, cited in Al-Hindawy,1999) defines request as “the method used in polite society for getting someone to do something”. For Trosborg (1995:187, cited in Al-Hindawy,1999:67) a “request is an illocutionary act whereby a speaker (requester) conveys to a hearer (requestee) that he/she wants the requestee to perform an act which is for the benefit of the speaker”. Bach and Harnish (1979:47) argue that requests are expressions which convey the speaker's desire that the hearer does an action. In fact, a more comprehensive and satisfactory definition is proposed by (AL-Hindawy,1999:86) :

Requests are expressions that can be uttered by anyone who has, or is acting as if he has , no authority or power over the hearer to convey the speaker’s desire that the hearer do some action for the benefit of the former and the speaker is committed to being grateful if the hearer complies.

A request may occur in the inferior – superior social case or the case of the social equals between each other or even in the superior – inferior case when the superior does not wish to use his/her power over the inferior.

The speech act of requesting (henceforth SAR) is classified as a directive act according to Searle(1975). Directives are acts which attempt to get the addressee to do (or not to do) something (for a thorough classification of speech acts, see Al-Sulaiman, 1997:34).

Like almost all other cross-cultural studies, the current study investigates the similarities and differences of a certain linguistic aspect (i.e., requesting strategy). The study believes that especially the acute differences may cause a problem of misunderstanding for the hearer who is not well acquainted with the used strategy especially when the hearer is a foreign learner of English or Arabic and the requesting strategy being used has no counterpart in his/her mother tongue or is used for some other purpose. Accordingly, a failure in communication may take place. Furthermore, little acquaintance with requesting strategies in both languages also causes a problem of misunderstanding for translators and consequently results in mistranslation. In addition, if the speaker especially when s/he is a foreign learner of either language, is not acquainted with all the available requesting strategies at his/her disposal, s/he will lose several opportunities for enriching his/her language by employing these strategies in appropriate situations. In fact, the study believes, following most of the similar cross-cultural studies, that the only solution for such problems lies in attracting the language users’ attention to the similarities and differences in question in order to be taken into consideration. This is because the researchers believe that every language has its own distinctive peculiarities which constitute the source of the foregoing problems. And no way is available to overcome these peculiarities by unifying or patterning them or otherwise in different languages.

The speech act of requesting has been the subject of investigation of several studies (e.g., Blum-Kulka,1989 ; Kogetsidis,2002 ; Wierzbicka, 1991). Such studies have demonstrated that there can be considerable cross-cultural discrepancies in the realization of request between two different speech communities. Blum-Kulka(1989) and her associates in the **Cross Cultural**



Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) propose a model embodying various classes of strategies for performing certain speech acts (the model is presented below). Experimentally , they apply their model for finding out the strategies of requesting and apologizing in different languages spoken in different speech communities.

The present study attempts to make use of Blum-Kulka's model of strategies and apply it contrastively to English and Arabic so as to find out the requesting strategies available in both languages, and the similarities and dissimilarities between these two languages regarding the strategies of requesting. The study also aims at evaluating the adopted model to discover whether the classes of strategies of the used model are comprehensive enough to include all the feasible strategies in both languages.

The study hypothesizes that in addition to the similarities in the sorts of requesting strategies in both English and Arabic , there are distinctive peculiar dissimilarities for each one which may cause real communicative problems for foreign learners of both languages and technical problems for translators. The study also hypothesizes that the similarities do not result in such problems.

Regarding data and procedure, the study investigates almost all the feasible requesting strategies in English and Arabic. It classifies them according to Blum-Kulka's model in order to find out the extent of parity and disparity between both languages as regards the classes of those strategies.

The study is expected to have a considerable value for foreign learners of English and Arabic since it enlightens them with most of the requesting strategies in both languages contrastively and enables them to catch sight of the available similarities and peculiar discrepancies in each language regarding this issue. The study is also expected to be of value for translators as it attracts their attention especially to the dissimilarities between English and Arabic in regard to requesting strategies which may result in real translation problems. Additionally, the study contributes as well to the literature of cross-cultural pragmatics in general and the literature of (CCSARP) in particular hoping that it adds more dimensions to the ongoing pragmatic researches.

Before dealing with the chosen model , however , the researchers would like preferably to shed some light on what it is believed to be the source of variety of requesting strategies . That is the issue of indirectness and politeness .

2.0.The Face-Saving View of Politeness :

Brown and Levinson (1978 and revised in 1987) propose their theory of politeness which is based on the notion of *face* , (Thomas : 168) .“ It is considered to be the most influential and best known of the recent approaches to an account of politeness ”, (Kogetsidis , 2002 : 17) . The concept of *face* is crucial to the theory and is adapted from Goffman (1967) who defines *face* as “ the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself ”, (ibid : 18) . Similarly , Yule (2000 : 60) states that *face* “refers to that emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize ”. This image can be maintained , enhanced , threatened or damaged through interaction with others , (Kogetsidis , 2002 : 18) .

The notion of *face* has two aspects : **positive** and **negative** . A person's positive face is realized by the desire to have his/her public-self image accepted , appreciated , liked and approved of by others . On the other hand , a person's negative face is reflected in the desire to be independent , have freedom of action , and not to be impeded or imposed upon by others , (ibid ; Thomas , 1995 :169 ; Yule , 2000: 61) .

Brown and Levinson (1987) also introduce the concept of *face-threatening acts* which are actions (or strategies of actions) that can damage or threaten another person's positive or negative face . According to the authors , if the speaker decides to perform the face-threatening



act , then there will be four possibilities available at his/her disposal . They are briefly presented as follows,(Kogetsidis , 2002 : 18):

1. To perform the face-threatening act *on-record* without redress ; the speaker expresses his/her utterance baldly , with little or no concern for face.
2. To perform the face-threatening act using *positive politeness* strategy such a performance embodies redress directed to the hearer's positive face which appeals to the his/her desire to be liked and approved of . This strategy is termed *positive face-saving act*.
3. To perform the face-threatening act using *negative politeness* strategy with redress towards the hearer's *negative face* which appeals to his/her desire to be left free to act and not to be imposed upon . This strategy is termed *negative face-saving act*.
4. To perform the face-threatening act using *off record* strategy. Here , the speaker expresses his/her utterance ambiguously (formulated as a hint , for instance) , and its interpretation is left to the hearer . Such a strategy is used when the risk of loss or damage of face is too great.

As it is mentioned above , the speech act of requesting is a directive one (i.e. , it intends the hearer to do (or not to do) something). This means that it constitutes a real threat against the hearer's negative face (i.e. , freedom of behaviour). Thus, the speaker is to decide either to perform the act of requesting baldly and directly with little or no concern for the hearer's face (i.e. , perform a face threatening act), or, alternatively , to perform the act of requesting indirectly and politely with much respect and awareness for the hearer's face (i.e., perform a face-saving act). And the greater the threat , the more indirect the face-saving act should be so as to cope with the extent of the threat. Thomas (1995:169) argues that face-saving acts are considered polite strategies for dealing with face. Moreover, Leech (1996:67) implies that the more grammatical complexity results in more indirectness. Accordingly, various sorts of requesting strategies can rise which are used dependently upon the speaker's high or low concern for the hearer's face and the extent of face-threat against the hearer.

3.0. Blum-Kulka's Model of Requesting Strategies:

Blum-Kulka (1989) and her associates, within their (CCSARP), introduce a model for analyzing and classifying requesting strategies cross-culturally. They claim that the model can be universally applied to many languages. Kogetsidis (2002:21) argues that this model has been empirically tested and successfully used by a number of researchers. The model is considered as a direct-indirect scale of strategies which arranges them from the most direct to the most indirect. The model consists of three major categories to each of which a number of strategies belongs. The major categories are as follows (adapted from Kogetsidis, 2002:21):

3.1. The Most Direct Strategies (Bald-on record strategies):

This category comprises the most direct ways for performing requests. They are mainly imperatives, e.g., *Call me at 9 o'clock, please* and explicit performatives which name the act of requesting explicitly in the utterance, e.g., *I request you to call me at 9 o'clock*.

3.2. Conventionally Indirect Strategies:

This category covers those indirect strategies which have become conventional in a certain speech community to convey requests. They are not used inherently to convey requests (that is why they are pragmatically indirect), but the speech community has conventionalized them to convey requests for one reason or another. For instance, the English community has convention-alized the ability question *Could you----?* and willingness question *Would you----?* to convey requests in English for the purpose of a higher level of politeness, e.g., *Could you pass the salt, please?*, *Would you raise your voice, please?*



3.3.Non-Conventionally Indirect Strategies(Hints):

This category includes strategies which are not conventionalized in that given language and hence require more inferring activity by the hearer to derive the speaker's requestive intent. In such strategies, grasping the indirect illocutionary force of requesting is extremely context-dependent, e.g., You left the door open (i.e., a request to shut the door.)

In what follows, the study deals with the above major categories with all their subcategories (strategies) and applies them to the chosen languages (i.e., English and Arabic). This is done for two purposes: firstly, to find out the common similarities and peculiar dissimilarities of requesting strategies in both languages, secondly, to verify the validity and comprehensiveness of the chosen model.

4.0 English Requesting Strategies:

Several scholars have proposed some manifestations for strategy and what it means. According to Brown(1980:83, cited in Al-Hindawi,1999:84) a strategy is "a particular method of approaching a problem or task, a mode of operation of achieving a particular end, a planned design for controlling and manipulating certain information". Similarly, Zammuner (1987:258, cited in Al-Hindawi. 1999:84) argue that a strategy, at the general level, can be defined as "the cognitive representation of the optimal manner to reach a certain goal". The researchers simply define strategy as a certain linguistic structure or expression used by language users for performing a certain speech act. The next subsection deals with the possible strategies used for performing the speech act of requesting in English according to Blum-Kulka's model,(adapted from Al-Hindawi,1999:86-93; Kogetsidis,2002:27-29):

4.1. The Most Direct Strategies:

The Strategies belonging to this category are:

1. Imperative:

Imperative strategies are implicit performative utterances whose verbs do not name the act of requesting explicitly, e.g.,

1. Call me tonight.
2. Come early.

To sound more polite, requests are conveyed with level or slightly falling intonation and are supplemented (or sometimes introduced) with the pragmatic performative 'please' (Al-Hindawi,1999:23),e.g.,

3. Shut the door, please.
4. Please, look after the kids.

Enhancing the level of politeness is very important for a smooth communication for this would strengthen the face-saving act and reduce the face-threat against the hearer.

Negative imperatives are also crucially used for requesting the hearer not to do something, e.g.,

5. Don't be late, please.

Requests can also be expressed by elliptical (moodless) sentences, e.g.,

6. The salt. (said gently as a request to pass the salt)
7. The door, please. (as a request to shut the door)
8. Help. (as a request for help)
9. Mercy. (as a request to show mercy)

2. Direct Questions:

Blum-Kulka's model considers direct questions as direct strategies since it believes that direct questions are requests for information. In fact, the researchers do agree with this view, yet they believe that, pragmatically speaking, direct questions are strategies for the speech act of asking a question not requesting.



3. Explicit Performatives:

Explicit performatives are utterances in which the illocutionary force of requesting is explicitly named, e.g.,

10. I request you to come early.
11. You are requested to come early.
12. My request is that you come early.

4. Hedged Performatives:

Hedged performatives are utterances in which the signaling of the illocutionary force is modified by modal verbs or forms functioning like modal verbs. They are soft ways for performing the intended speech act. They sound more polite since they are less direct than the above strategies and grammatically more complex. They are employed when the face-threat in requesting something is greater, e.g.,

13. I may request some orange juice.
14. I would like to request you to leave.

Steinberg (1999:125) argues that the high level of politeness requires a high degree of indirectness and grammatical complexity.

Another way of hedging the illocutionary force of requesting is by using If clause and tag question, e.g.,

15. Get me some coffee if you can/will.
16. Answer the phone, will you?

Furthermore, a third strategy for hedging requests is by using what is called quality hedges such as I believe, I guess, I suppose to mitigate the force of the request (Brown and Levinson,1979:169, cited in Al-Hindawi,1999:88), e.g.,

17. You will help me, I suppose.

Requesters also tag their declaratives with modalised question, (Fraser,1987:188) e.g.:

18. You won't help me, will you?

Thomson and Martinet (1986:248) say that such an utterance does not convey a hopeful request. The speaker does not expect a favorable answer.

5. Obligation Statements:

These are utterances which state the obligation of the hearer to carry out the act, e.g.,

19. You will have to tell me the truth.

6. Want Statements:

These strategies comprise utterance which state the speaker's desire that the hearer carries out the act. Utterances which state the speaker's desire that the act is done also falls into this subcategory, e.g.,

20. I want you to leave.
21. I would like you to leave.
22. I would like the car fixed.

7. Need Statements:

Utterances which state the speaker's need that the hearer carries out the act fall into this subcategory. It also includes utterances stating the speaker's need of something, e.g.,

23. I need you to fetch some water.
24. I need some water.

8. Pre-decided Statements:

These are utterances in which the speaker chooses to skip the requesting utterances altogether and state his/her decision about the course of action he/she will take. They are normally employed in situations where the speaker feels it would be more appropriate to help himself/herself rather than employ any kind of requesting construction, e.g., *I'm helping myself to*



your cigarette, ok?. However, since this subcategory does not contain any kind of request, the researchers do disagree with including it within the model of requesting strategies.

9.. Expectation Statements/Questions: This subcategory of strategies contains utterances which express the speaker's expectation that the hearer complies with what is requested, e.g.,

25. I am sure you will tell me what happened yesterday.

26. Aren't you going to tell me what happened yesterday?

However, the researchers also disagree with considering this category as belonging to direct strategies and believe that it belongs to the second major category (i.e., Conventionally Indirect Strategies). That is because the requestive force is not stated explicitly in the utterance and the hearer exerts more inferential effort to grasp it.

10. Reminder Requests:

The utterances belonging to this subcategory serve to remind the hearer about an expected action, e.g.,

27. Sir, you haven't paid for the doll. (as a request from the cashier to the customer for paying)

However, the researchers also object to considering this as a direct strategy of requesting and believe that it is a strong hint pertaining to the third major category (i.e., Non-Conventionally Indirect Strategies).

4.2. Conventionally Indirect Strategies:

The strategies which belong to this category are (adapted from Kogetsidis,2002:28; Al-Hindawi,1999: 88-91; Aoyama,2002:3-4)

1.Suggestory Formulae:

Any strategy in this subcategory incorporates an utterance containing a suggestory request for the hearer to do something, e.g.,

28. How about cleaning up? (as a request for the hearer to clean up)

29. Why don't you have a seat? (as a request for the hearer to have a seat)

2. Query Preparatory:

This is a wider subcategory of strategies in which the utterances contain reference to preparatory conditions as conventionalized in any given language. They are interrogative in form and they contain reference to:

a. Hearer's ability, e.g.,

30.Can/Could you lend me your pen?

In such examples, could is rendered more polite than can.

31. May I leave, sir? (as a request for permission)

b. Hearer's willingness, e.g.,

32. Would you raise your voice?

33. Would you mind raising your voice?

c. Hearer's knowledge, e.g.,

34. Do you know where the Town Hall is?

d. Possibility, e.g.,

35. Would it be possible to lend me your pen?

All the above queries have been conventionalized by English native speaker's as indirect strategies for requesting something politely (Kogetsides,2002:21; Aoyama, 2002:3). However the strategy *Will you...?* is considered more authoritative and less polite, (Thomson and Martinet,1986:248). Utterances querying the hearer's ability can be hedged by embedding them within disclaimers such as *I wonder if/whether...* which indicate hesitancy or tentativeness of the speaker (Al-Hindawi, 1999:89), e.g.,

36. I wonder if/whether you can lend me your pen.



The grammatical complexity makes the utterance sound more polite. This high level of politeness is used when face threat is too great.

Speakers may also hedge their queries about hearer's willingness by means of embedding them within expressions of appreciation, hope, etc., (ibid), e.g.,

37. I'd be very grateful if you post these letters.

38. I'd appreciate it if you lend me your pen.

39. I hope you won't mind giving me a lift.

Such utterances carry a high level of politeness towards the hearer.

3. Expectation Statements/ Questions:

The researchers do believe that this subcategory of strategies is conventionally indirect and belongs to the second major category, not the first. Hence, the following utterances express conventionally indirect requests:

40. I'm sure you will tell me the truth.

41. Aren't you going to tell me the truth?

4. Related Strategies:

This subcategory comprises heterogeneous strategies which are all considered conventionally indirect ones. Such strategies are as:

a. Vocative:

The vocative is used intrinsically for attracting the attention of the person called, but when used alone it can be a request for coming, e.g.,

42. John. (as a request for coming)

b. Subjunctive:

The subjunctive can sometimes be used as a strategy of requesting, e.g.,

43. God bless you/ God save the queen.

c. Negative Interrogatives:

Some negative utterances have been conventionalized in English as requesting strategies, e.g.,

44. Isn't it time we left? (as a request for leaving)

d. Repetition Strategies :

These are strategies which have been conventionalized for requesting repetition, e.g.,

44. (I beg your) pardon.

45. Excuse me.

46. What (is that)?

4.3. Non-Conventionally Indirect Strategies(Hints):

Al-Hindawi(1999:91) says "Speakers are said to be using this strategy [i.e.,hint] when they hide their impositive intent behind the words". Speakers resort to hints when the face-threat towards the hearer is extremely great and need a high level of politeness. Hints depend completely on the context in which they occur for deriving their meanings. "Hearers appeal to the mutually shared knowledge of the world and to their power of rationality and inference to work out the communicative intention of their interlocutors," (ibid).

The strategies classified under this major category are:

1. Non-Explicit Questions:

These are interrogative utterances which are not intended to solicit verbal acts. Instead, they are intended to gain some desirable physical acts. They can be used as requesting strategies in certain context, e.g.,

47. Where is your coat? (as a request from a person to his friend who is going out into the cold weather)

In support, Allan (1986:207) argues that interrogatives are requests when they are used to solicit a nonverbal response.



2. Strong Hints:

A strong hint occurs when the speaker's intention or desired act is partially mentioned in the utterance, e.g.,

48. The windows need to be cleaned. (as a request for the hearer to clean the windows)

In this example, there is a reference to the act of cleaning (the desired act). Strong hints depend on context of situation for their interpretation as request. In fact , the strategies of Reminder Requests are believed to belong to this subcategory, e.g.,

48. You haven't paid for the can , Sir. (*as a request from a salesman to a customer to pay for the can*)

3. Mild Hints:

The utterances used to convey mild hints have no reference to the desired act, thus they are fully context-dependent and require a greater inferential activity on the part of the hearer, e.g.,

49. The windows are covered with dust. (as a request to clean the windows)

Exclamatory sentences could be sometimes used as mild hints for requesting something. For instance, in the following situation the exclamatory sentence is used to perform SAR and nothing else:

A husband and his wife come across a fashion store. The wife stops all of a sudden and stares at one of the displayed dresses surprisingly saying:

50. Oh, What a wonderful dress it is! (as a request to the husband to buy it)

Furthermore, wishing expressions may also be used in such situations to convey SAR, e.g.,

51. I wish I had this dress. (as a request to the husband to buy it)

Mild hints are opaque by nature and they are only grasped as requests by virtue of certain contexts. Furthermore, mild hints affords the utmost degree of optionality for the hearer to comply with the directive.

Requesting strategies in English are summed up in table (1) below.

Table (1)

Requesting Strategies in English

(Blum-Kulka's model with some modifications)

Speech Act	Major Category	Subcategory
Requesting	The Most Direct Strategies	1. Imperative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a . Positive Imperative b . Negative Imperative c . Elliptical Sentence 2. Explicit Performatives 3. Hedged Performatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Modal verbs / Forms functioning like modals. b. If clause c. Tag question d. Quality hedges 4. Obligation Statements 5. Want Statements 6. Need Statements
Speech Act	Major Category	Subcategory



Requesting	Conventionally Indirect Strategies	1. Suggestory Formulae 2. Query Preparatory: a. Hearer's ability b. Hearer's willingness c. Hearer's knowledge d. Possibility 3. Expectation Statements / Questions 4. Related Strategies: a. Vocative b. Subjunctive c. Negative interrogative d. Repetition Strategies
Requesting	Non-Conventionally Indirect Strategies	1. Non-Explicit Questions 2. Strong Hints 3. Mild Hints

N.B. The darkly highlighted areas refer to the researchers' additions to the original model.

N. B. The lightly highlighted areas refer to the researchers' changes in the original model.

5.0. Arabic Requesting Strategies:

Arabic, being a highly complicated language, has many strategies for conveying SAR. In what follows, these strategies are dealt with according to Blum-Kulka's model (adapted from Al-Hindawi,1999:86-93; Kogetsidis,2002:27-29 ; Aoyama, 2002: 3-4)

5.1. The Most Direct Strategies:

The subcategories belonging to this major category in Arabic are as follows:

1.Imperative Strategies:

a. Arabic imperative sentences can be introduced by imperative verbs,(Al-Ghalayeen,2004:87) e.g.,

52. "اهدنا الصراط المستقيم" (Guide us to the straight path)

53. "فهب لي من لذنك وليا" (Oh, Lord. Grant me a son)

Morphologically speaking, in English, bare infinitive is used to introduce imperative sentences, whereas in Arabic the imperative verb is derived according to the typical form افعل (=If'al).

b. Unlike English, Arabic imperative sentences can be introduced by the following imperative nouns,(Al-Shara'a,2000:64-68):

1. صه (= Stop talking.)
2. مه (= Avoid.)
3. رويدا (=Hold on.)
4. تعال، هلم، حيهل، حي (=Come.)
5. حذار (=Beware.)
6. آمين (=Amen)
7. هات (=Give.)

Some examples for illustration can be:

54. مه عن الكذب. (Avoid lying.)



55. حي على الصلاة. (come to the prayer.)
 56. حذار من سلوك هذا الطريق. (Beware of going in this way.)
 c. Elliptical sentences may be used as requesting strategies in Arabic, e.g.,
 57. الرحمة (=Mercy.) [as a request for showing mercy]
 58. النجدة (=Help.) [as a request for help]
 59. العفو. (=Pardon.) [as a request for forgiveness]

d. Negative imperatives in Arabic are introduced by the particle لا 'laa' which is equivalent to Don't in English, e.g.,

60. "رب لا تذرني فردا وأنت خير الوارثين." (Oh, Lord, don't let me alone and you are the best of heirs.)

Negative imperative can be conveyed in Arabic with a declarative sentence, e.g.,

61. "لا تعبدون إلا الله." (You don't worship but Allah.)

e. Gerund (i.e., verbal noun) can be used to introduce imperative sentences in Arabic. Consequently, it can be used as a requesting strategy, e.g.,

62. "فإذا لقيتم اللذين كفروا فضرب الرقاب." (If you confront atheists, hit their necks.)

63. لحوقاً بزید. (Catch Zaid.)

f. Requests in Arabic can also be performed by means of a verb in the present form prefixed by ل, e.g.,

64. لتذهب الى عملك. (You, go to your work.)

2. Explicit Performatives:

In Arabic, this subcategory includes all utterances which name the act of requesting explicitly, e.g.,

65. انا أطلب منك المغادرة. (I request you to leave.)
 66. مطلوب منك المغادرة. (You are requested to leave.)
 67. طلبي هو أن تغادر. (My request is that you leave.)

3. Hedged Performatives:

Performative strategies in Arabic may be hedged by replacing the verb طلب (= request) and its derivatives with some other verbs such as (أحب = like ; أرغب = desire) which all mitigate the directive force of requesting , e.g. :

68. أنا أرغب ببعض الماء ، رجاءً . (I desire some water , please.)
 69. أنا أود شيئاً من القهوة، لطفاً . (I desire some coffee , please.)

Another way of hedging is by using If clause , e.g. :

70. أمهلني بعض الوقت ، إذا أمكنك ذلك . (Give me a moment if you can.)
 71. أنا أرغب بشئ من القهوة إن أمكن . (I desire some coffee if possible.)

The only structure used in Arabic as a tag question is أليس كذلك؟ . This structure can be used to hedge the requestive force of utterances, e.g. :

72. ستبحث لي عن عمل ، أليس كذلك؟ (You will look for a job to me, won't you?)

d. Obligation Statements:

This subcategory of strategies is characterized in Arabic by using such verbs as يجب (=must) ; ينبغي، يجدر ; (= have to). These verbs are used to perform SAR when the request is for the benefit of the hearer , e.g.,

73. يجب أن ترتاح قليلاً . (You must have little rest)
 74. ينبغي أن تغادر قبل فوات الأوان. (You have to leave before it is too late.)

e. Want Statements:

Want subcategory which states the speaker's desire that the hearer carries out the action is characterized in Arabic by using verbs like (أريد = want ; أفضل ، أحبذ، etc.), e.g.,

75. أنا أريدك أن تساعدني . (I want you to help me.)
 76. أنا أحبذ أن تتركني وحدي. (I desire that you leave me alone.)



77. (I 'd prefer you to go now.) أنا أفضل أن تذهب الآن.

f. Need Statements:

Need statements are requesting strategies which reveal the speaker's need that the hearer carries out the act. In Arabic, this subcategory is characterized by using the verb (need=يحتاج), e.g.,

78. (I need you to fix the car.) أنا أحتاجك لإصلاح السيارة.

g. Urge Strategies:

These are utterances introduced by special particles used for conveying SAR strongly,(Alawsi,1988:493). The particles have no counterparts in English. They are as follows with examples:

1. لو (roughly, Go with your brother.) لو ذهبت مع أخيك.
2. لولا (roughly, Go with your brother.) لولا ذهبت مع أخيك.
3. لوما (roughly, Fetch the angels to us.) لوما تأتينا بالملائكة.
4. هلاً (roughly, Get out .) هلاً خرجت.
5. ألا (roughly, I request food.) ألا طعام.
6. أما (roughly, I request you to be kind to me.) أما تعطف علي.

5.2. Conventionally Indirect Strategies:

In Arabic, this major category of requesting strategies comprises utterances which are not used originally for requesting, but have been conventionalized to convey SAR. They are subclassified as follows:

1.Suggestory Formulae:

This subcategory of strategies incorporates all utterances that convey SAR by means of suggestory forms, e.g.,

79. (Why don't you sit down? as a request to sit down) لم لا تجلس؟
80. (What about your homework? as a request to do the homework) ماذا عن واجبك البيتي؟

2. Query Preparatory:

As it is the case in English , this wide subcategory of interrogative requesting strategies has reference in Arabic to :

1. Hearer's ability, e.g.,

81. (Could you open the door, please?) هل تستطيع أن تفتح الباب ، رجاء؟

2. Hearer's willingness, e.g.,

82. (Would you mind closing the window , please?) هل تمانع أن تغلق النافذة ، رجاء؟

3. Hearer's knowledge, e.g.,

83. (Do you know where the post office is ?) أتعلم أين هي دائرة البريد ؟

4. Possibility, e.g.,

84. (Would it be possible to lend me your book?) أمن الممكن أن تعيرني كتابك ؟

All the above interrogative strategies have been conventionalized in Arabic as polite strategies of SAR. As in English, Arabic query utterances about the hearer's ability can be hedged by embedding them within disclaimers such as ... أنا أتساءل... (=I wonder...) which increases the level of indirectness and politeness of the utterance, e.g.,

85. (I wonder whether you can lend me your book.) أنا أتساءل إن كان يمكنك أن تعيرني كتابك..

3. Expectation Statements / Questions :

Expectation statements and questions are also possible in Arabic as conventionalized strategies of SAR, e.g.,

86. (I am sure you will tell me the truth.) أنا واثق من أنك ستخبرني الحقيقة.

87. (Aren't you going to tell me what happened?) أ لن تخبرني بما جرى؟



4. Related Strategies:

A group of miscellaneous strategies have been conventionalized in Arabic to convey SAR. Some of these strategies are as follows:

a. vocative:

It is also used in Arabic intrinsically for attracting the attention of the hearer, but vocative can also be used for requesting the hearer to come.

Unlike English, Arabic has a number of particles used with vocative (i.e., أيها، أي، يا، أيا، أ، أيها، أي، e.g.,

، وا

88. يا علي.

89. أيا علي.

90. أ علي .

91. أي علي .

(= roughly Hey, Ali. as a request for the hearer to come)

Al-Hashimi (2001:88) supports this view saying that the vocative is a request for the hearer to come by using special particles.

Sometimes the vocative particle is dropped , e.g.,

93. علي (as a request for the hearer to come)

The particles (يا) and (وا) are sometimes used with vocative for requesting urgent rescue.

Usually, the hearer's name is suffixed with (آه) to enhance the force of requesting, e.g.,

94. يا محمداه (roughly Oh , Mohammed.)

95. واعيلاه (roughly Oh , Ali.)

b. Subjunctive:

Subjunctive is used in Arabic as a requesting strategy , e.g.,

96. بارك الله فيك (God bless you)

97. يحفظك الله (God preserve you)

c. Prepositional Phrase :

Some prepositional phrases have been conventionalized in Arabic to perform SAR,e.g

98. عليك بطلب العلم (roughly you are requested to hanker for knowledge.)

98. إليّ بولدي (roughly I request you to fetch my son)

99. إليك عني (roughly I request you to get away from me.)

Additionally, the form (bare infinitive + أن + إياك) and (noun + و + إياك) are used conventionally in Arabic to request the hearer to do (or not to do) something, e.g.,

100. إياك أن تخرج. (roughly I request you not to go out.)

101. إياك والنار. (roughly I request you to get away from fire.)

d. Affirmative Interrogatives:

Interrogative utterances consisting of (هل + من + noun) or(هل + ل + noun or pronoun)

can be conventionally used in Arabic to perform indirect SAR , e.g.,

102. هل من مبارز ؟ (roughly Anybody for fencing?)

103. هل لك الى أن تزكى ؟ (roughly Would you purge yourself?)

Some other interrogatives introduced by (أين = where) can also be used to issue requests for rescue or help indirectly, e.g.,

104. أين فرسان الهيجاء ؟ (roughly Where are the knights of the battle? as a request to courageous people for rescue or help)

e. Negative Interrogatives :

Some negative interrogatives in Arabic that are introduced by (ألم) might be used as conventionally indirect strategies of requesting , e.g.,

105. ألم يحن وقت الذهاب ؟ (roughly Isn't it time to go ?)

f. Praise Expression:

The praise expression in Arabic introduced by (حبذا) or (يا حبذا) is sometimes used to issue mild and polite requests indirectly , e.g.,



106. (roughly It is good for you to get out.) حينذا أن تخرج.

107. (roughly I 'd like a glass of water.) يا حينذا كأساً من الماء.

g. Repetition Strategies:

Some utterances have been conventionalized in Arabic to ask for repeating something already said , e.g.,

108. (= Excuse me) معذرة ؟

109. (= Pardon ?) عفواً ؟

110. (= What ?) ماذا ؟

111. (= Yes ?) نعم؟

Less Polite

5.3. Non- Conventionally Indirect Strategies:

This is the third major category of requesting strategies. In Arabic , it includes the following:

1. Non-Explicit Questions:

As it is mentioned before, these are questions which are not intended to get information from the hearer. Rather, they are intended directly in certain situations to request the hearer to do something. Like English , this case is also available in Arabic. Consider the following situation and example :

A husband and his wife are watching a play in the theater. The wife finds the play extremely boring and uninteresting. She feels a strong desire to leave , therefore she addresses her husband saying:

112. متى نغادر يا أحمد ؟ (When shall we leave , Ahmed ? as a request for leaving)

2. Strong Hints :

In Arabic , strong hints in which the speaker's desired act is partially mentioned in the utterance are also available. The following situation may be illustrative :

A mother has just seen the kitchen in an utter mess. She addresses her daughters saying:

113. المطبخ بحاجة إلى أن يُرتَّب. (The kitchen needs to be arranged. as a request for her daughters to arrange the kitchen)

In this example, there is a reference to the act of arrangement (the desired act). Since strong hints are not conventionalized requesting strategies, they need a higher level of inference than the conventionalized ones and depend on the context of situation for interpreting them as requests.

As the researchers believe, reminder utterances which serve to remind the hearer about an action also belongs to this subcategory of requesting strategies. Consider the example below:

In a supermarket, the cashier addresses a customer saying:

114. لقد نسيت أن تدفع ثمن العلبه، يا سيد. (You have forgotten to pay for the can, Sir. as a request for the customer to pay for the can.)

3. Mild Hints:

As it is the case in English, mild hints in Arabic are conveyed by means of utterances that have no reference to the speaker's desired act. Thus, they depend fully on the context of situation for interpreting them and require a great effort of inference on the hearer's part than strong hints. Mild hints are ideal when the face-threat is too great against the hearer or the size of the requested act is great as well. Consider the following example:

A wife is addressing her husband when coming across a fashion store saying:

115. يا له من ثوب جميل! (what a nice dress it is ! as a request for buying it .)

Wishing expressions are also used in the same sense in Arabic in such as the above situation to perform SAR, e.g.,

116. ليت لي مثل هذا الثوب. (I wish I had like this address. as a request for buying it.)

Table (2) below affords a summary of requesting strategies in Arabic.



Table (2)
Requesting Strategies in Arabic
(Blum – Kulka ’s model with some modifications)

Speech Act	Major Category	Subcategory
Requesting	The Most Direct Strategies	1. Imperative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a . Imperative verbs b . Imperative nouns c . Elliptical Sentence d. Negative imperative e. Gerund f. Present verb + ل 2. Explicit Performatives 3. Hedged Performative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mitigating verbs b. If clause c. Tag question 4. Obligation Statements 5. Want Statements 6. Need Statements 7. Urge Strategies
Requesting	Conventionally Indirect Strategies	1. Suggestory Formulae 2. Query Preparatory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hearer’s ability b. Hearer’s willingness c. Hearer’s knowledge d. Possibility 3. Expectation Statements / Questions 4. Related Strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Vocative b. Subjunctive c. Prepositional Phrases d. Affirmative Interrogative e. Negative Interrogative f. Praise Expression g. Repetition Strategies
Requesting	Non-Conventionally Indirect Strategies	1. Non-Explicit Questions 2. Strong Hints 3. Mild Hints

N.B. The darkly highlighted areas refer to the researchers’ additions to the original model.

N. B. The lightly highlighted areas refer to the researchers’ changes in the original model.



Conclusions:

The researchers have arrived at the following findings:

1. As far as requesting strategies are concerned, there are similarities and considerable dissimilarities between English and Arabic which are detailed below.
2. Blum-Kulka's model is generally valid and comprehensive regarding the major categories of requesting strategies.
3. In English, the model is comprehensive enough regarding the requesting subcategories of the first major category (i.e., the most direct strategies).
4. In Arabic, the model used is not comprehensive enough as regards the most direct strategies. The strategies of Imperative nouns , Gerund, and Present verb + ل have been found to belong to the imperative subcategory and are added to the original model. These strategies have no counterparts in English. In addition , a further sub- category (i.e., Urge Strategies) has also been found out belonging to the first major category. No equivalent strategies are available in English for this subcategory.
5. Regarding the second major category (i.e., Conventionally Indirect Strategies) , all its subcategories are commonly used in both languages except the following : within **Related Strategies** the strategies of Vocative , Subjunctive , Negative Interrogative and Repetition Strategies are common between English and Arabic , whereas the strategies of Prepositional Phrase, Affirmative Interrogative and Praise Expression are peculiar to Arabic and have no equivalents in English.
6. A group of **Related Strategies** have been found out to belong to the **Conventionally Indirect Strategies** in both languages. Hence , it is added to the original model.
7. The subcategory of **Expectation Statements / Questions** pertains to the second major category, not the first. Thus , it is shifted from its original slot in the model.
8. The strategy of **Reminder Requests** is not a separate subcategory of the first major category. In fact , it is only one strategy of **Strong Hints** belonging to the third major category.
9. All the subcategories of the **Non-Conventionally Indirect Strategies** are common between English and Arabic and used in both of them.
10. **Direct questions** and **Predecided Statements** have not been found to be requesting strategies , therefore they are dropped from the original model.
11. All the sentence-types (i.e., declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory) cover the requesting strategies in English and Arabic.

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