External supportive moves in Yemeni Arabic as used by female speakers in the same gender and cross gender

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Abstract - This study investigates the types and frequency of supportive moves in Yemeni Arabic as used by female speakers in the same gender and cross gender. The respondents of the study were 336 undergraduate students from Sana'a University, aged 20-23. All of the participants are relatively homogeneous in terms of their cultural background. The data were collected by using Discourse Completion Test (DCT).The analysis of the data is based on Blum-Kulka et al's (1989) CCSARP (Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project) coding scheme. The results showed that Yemeni females showed greater use of external supportive moves when interacting with females more than to males. Regarding the use of external supportive moves according to direct head act of requests and indirect head of requests, in general, female respondents in F-F, F-M interactions have a great tendency to employ external supportive moves with direct and indirect head act of requests. In other words, it was observed that female respondents convey polite request by using external supportive moves regardless of directness or indirectness.

Keywords: same gender, cross gender, request, direct request, indirect request, supportive moves

1. Introduction

The emphasis on language as accomplishing certain communicative function led to concentrate on the notion of the speech acts, or the use of an utterance to achieve a specific goal. The application of the notion of speech acts is one of the important points that led researchers such as Austin (1962) to explain the notion of the speech acts. According to Austin (1962) speech is a unit of speaking, used to perform different functions in communication and certain actions can only be carried out using language.

According to Searle (1969: 21), "the speech act is the minimal unit of communication." This refers that Searle is aware of the significance of context. Searle (1969) takes Austin's felicity conditions a step further and systematizes the nature of the conditions as: the prepositional content condition, the preparatory condition, the sincerity condition, and the essential condition, which are necessary for a particular utterance to count as a given act; that is, for the successful performance of a particular speech act.

Furthermore, Searle (1976) argued that Austin's classification did not introduce a clear classification for illocutionary acts. Therefore, Searle (1979: 12-20) classified illocutionary acts into five categories, which reflect the different types of conditions underlying speech acts:
1-Representatives, which tell, people how things are, (e.g. suggest, insist, or swear)
2-Directives which try to get people to do things (e.g. order, request or invite)
3-Comissives, which make us commit ourselves to do things (e.g. intend or favour)
4-Expressive which make us express our feelings and attitudes (e.g. thank, congratulate, or apologize)
5-Declarations, which make us bring about changes through our utterances (e.g. resign, appoint somebody, or fire somebody)

It can be observed that Searle's classification of the illocutionary acts provide some useful insights for analyzing utterances. Searle's categories or classifications are more widely used today. However, Vanderveken and Kubo (2002) note that Searle's theory is not a theory of conversation and that the future of speech act theory should lie in the development of a theory of discourse. Reiter & Placencia (2005) point out that Searle's theory is insensitive to cultural variation in the conceptualization and use of indirectness.

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the use of supportive moves as mitigators for request. Felix-Brasdefer (2005) conducted a study to examine the notions of indirectness and politeness in speech act of requests, including head acts and external modifications, among Mexican University students in role-play situation. The findings of the study show that NSs of Mexican Spanish prefer to use conventional indirectness strategies by means of 'query preparatory' when making request in situations, which display + Power or + Distance, whereas they prefer to use directness strategies when the relationship between the interlocutors was closer (-Distance). Furthermore, the study proves that there is no relation between indirectness and politeness as observed by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983). The findings of the study show that direct requests are situation-dependent and seem to be the expected behaviour among Mexican subjects in a solidarity politeness system (-Power, – Distance). In addition, the findings indicate that NSs of Mexican Spanish use various supportive moves to soften and smooth conversational interaction. These supportive moves are considered as mitigators to soften the harshness of direct requests.

Economidou-Kogetsidis (2002) investigates the way Greek non-native speakers of English use lexical and phrasal down-graders and external supportive moves in order to soften the force of their English requests and the extent to which this mitigation deviates from that of British English native speakers. The findings indicate that the amount and type of modification

used by the Greek learners present some deviations from native speakers' use. These deviations can be seen as being due to native influence and therefore to pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic transfer, as well as to the different perception of politeness by the two language/cultural groups.

Therefore, the current study is an attempt in this direction to examine this important aspect of their communicative competence in Yemeni Arabic through request as an important type of speech acts. The current study differs from previous studies because it investigates the kind of supportive moves and their roles in making polite request in Yemeni Arabic in the same gender and cross gender.

2.Theoretical Framework

2.1 The Speech Act of Request in Arabic

According to Haron (2001) aṭalab (directive) falls under what is called alinʃaʔ 'initiating', as opposed to alχabar 'reporting'. alinʃaʔ cannot be described as true or false, while alχabar can be described as true or false depending on whether it agrees or disagrees with the reality of the world. aṭalab (directive) in Arabic has two types (1) al-amr that requires the addressee to do something. (2) al-nahiy that requires the addressee not to do something. aṭalab in Arabic is used to issue a command by someone of higher status to someone of lower status. For example,

    (1) ʔuktub darsak.   (al-amr)

      Write your lesson.

    (2) la tuχa:lif wa:lidayka   (al-nahiy)

      Don't disobey your parents

In the example (1), it is clear that the speaker used al-amr (command) and it can be observed that al-amr (command) in Arabic used by someone of higher status to someone of lower status. In the example (2) it can be noted that the speaker use al-nahiy to make a command by asking someone not to do something. To make al-nahiy in Arabic, the speakers have to add the particle la (no) before the verb to change the verb to jussive.

However, meaning of directive in Arabic may change when the context change as will be seen in the following most common cases:

  A. Praying: a speaker of lower status addressing a person of higher status implies such a meaning.

       (3) ja:rab sa:miħni

         Oh Allah, forgive me.

  B. Requesting: the directive is used here between equals. A friend is asking his   friend to wait for him.

       (4) la:taχrudʒ min albait ħata ʔaʕu:d

         Don't leave home until I come back.

  C. Expressing a wish: here, the speaker expresses a wish for something hard to get, someone who has got tired of his life.

       (5) ja:mautu: ʔqdim ʔinna l-hayata ðami:matun

         Oh death, come, life is unbearable.

  D. Advising: here, the addressee is not under any obligation to follow the directive. A father is giving advice to his son.

       (6) sa: ħib min ʔnnas χiya: ra: hum.

         Choose your friends from the best people.

It can be observed from the examples above that Arabic makes use of the context to derive the meaning of the directive. In other words, in Arabic the kind of the topic and the status of the relationship between the speaker and the addressee determine the meaning of the directive.

2.2 Gender

Gender and speech behaviour are seen as interrelated variables. As a result, sociolinguistic research has been conducted on gender differences in speech act and politeness. However, empirical findings seem to suggest that gender differences do exist in politeness; women are considered more polite, less critical, and prone to using more softening devices than men (Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1990; Boxer, 1993; Holmes, 1995). Scollon and Scollon (1995) state that women use indirect strategies to communication, and men use direct style to communication. This observation is confirmed by Holmes (1995:2) who says that women generally more polite than men. She points out that "Most women enjoy talk and regard talking as an important means of keeping in touch, especially with friends and intimates. They use language to establish, nurture and develop the personal relationships. Men tend to see language more as a tool for obtaining and conveying information." Many researchers have reported that women are using politeness strategies in their speech more than men and women are more likely to apologize soften criticism or express thanks more than men (Holmes, 1998; Herbert, 1990; Pilkington, 1998; Tannen, 1994). According to the above discussion, it can be concluded that men and women use language differently and these differences can be observed in politeness.

3. Method

3.1 Respondents
The respondents of the study consisted of 336 undergraduate students (male and female respondents) from Sana'a University. All of the respondents were native speakers of Yemeni Arabic, aged 20-23. They were relatively homogeneous in terms of their cultural background.

3.2 Procedures
The respondents were asked to fill out a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). The DCT was written in Arabic language in order to obtain responses in Arabic. The DCT involves twelve written conversations that denote twelve different situations. In each situation, there is a brief description. The DCT was distributed to the respondents to complete each dialogue by writing a suitable request in Yemeni Arabic in Female-Female and Female-Male Interaction across twelve situations.

3.3 Data Analysis
The coding scheme applied in the current study was mainly based on the coding manual developed by Blum-Kulka et al., (1989) in the Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP). They were coded depending on the following types of supportive moves:

Table 1 External Supportive Moves according to Blum-Kulka et al. (1989)

1-Grounder
2-Preparator
3-Apology
4-Gratitude

5-Disarmer
6-Getting a pre   commitment
7-Imposition minimizer

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 External Request Modifications used with Direct and Indirect Head Act of Requests by Female - Female and Female - Male Interactions

This section presents the distribution of external supportive moves across the twelve situations in female-female and female-male- interactions. The results are presented according to direct and indirect head ac of the requests as shown in the Tables 2, 3 and 4.

As shown in Table 2, the findings indicate that the female respondents employed external supportive moves with direct and indirect strategies in order to mitigate their requests with different frequencies and percentages. Furthermore, the Chi-square test was conducted to investigate the differences or similarities in the use of external supportive moves in F-F and F-M interactions with regard to direct head act of requests and indirect head acts of requests. The results of the Chi-square test indicates that there is no significant difference in the use of external supportive moves in F-F and F-M interactions in situations 1, 2, 3 and 4. The p value in situations 1, 2, 3 and 4 in F-F interactions is 0.932, 0.953, 0.999 and 0.990, p<0.05, respectively. Furthermore, the p value in situation 1, 2, 3 and 4 in F-M interactions is 0.988, 0.838, 0.997 and 0.992, p <0.05, respectively.

Referring to the use of external supportive moves, it can be observed that the female respondents have a great preference to employ various external supportive moves in F-F and F-M interactions. The female respondents consider the external supportive moves important parts in making requests and polite markers that help to mitigate and soften their requests.

Regarding direct head act of requests and indirect head of requests, the female respondents in F-F and F-M interactions have a great tendency to employ external supportive moves with direct and indirect head act of requests. It can be noted from Table 3 that the use of external supportive moves in Yemeni Arabic with direct and indirect head act of requests is obligatory to mitigate and soften the request and to make it polite and tactful request.

Table 2 shows that the female respondents seem to be aware of that the degree of politeness does not affected by directness or indirectness. They are aware that the degree of politeness is affected by the external supportive moves. They consider the head act of requests that proceeds or follows by external supportive moves as polite request. Therefore, they consider as obligatory element in making polite requests in Yemeni Arabic.

Table 2 External Supportive Moves Used in Direct and Indirect Head Act of Requests in F-F & F-M Interactions in Situations 1, 2, 3 & 4

Supportive moves	S1				S2				S3				S4			
	F-F		F-M		F-F		F-M		F-F		F-M		F-F		F-M	
	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I
Preparatory (formulaic)	39	35	34	28	13	10	9	7	45	38	44	36	27	23	32	28
	52.7%	47.3%	54.8%	45.2%	56.5%	43.5%	56.3%	43.8%	54.2%	45.8%	55.0%	45.0%	54.0%	46.0%	53.3%	46.7%
grounder (formulaic)	27	25	28	22	0	0	0	0	6	5	4	2	5	2	2	2
	51.9%	48.1%	56.0%	44.0%					54.5%	45.5%	66.7%	33.3%	71,4%	28.6%	50.0%	50.0%

	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I
Getting a pre-commitment (semi-formulaic)	0	0	0	0	3 75.0%	1 25.0%	6 75.0%	2 25.0%	12 60.0%	8 40.0%	6 54.5%	5 45.5%	4 57.1%	3 42.9%	4 66.7%	2 33.3%
Apology (formulaic)	12 60.0%	8 40.0%	15 55.6%	12 44.4%	6 60.0%	4 40.0%	7 70.0%	3 30.0%	8 53.3%	7 46.7%	9 60.0%	6 40.0%	14 58.3%	10 41.7%	6 60.0%	4 40.0%
Disarmer (semi-formulaic)	4 66.7%	2 33.3%	6 60.0%	4 40.0%	36 55.4%	29 44.6%	18 54.5%	15 45.5%	7 53.8%	6 46.2%	11 52.4%	10 47.6%	23 57.5%	17 42.5%	26 56.5%	20 43.5%
Imposition minimizer (semi-formulaic)	0	0	0	0	32 53.3%	28 46.7%	52 56.5%	40 43.5%	11 57.9%	8 42.1%	7 58.3%	5 41.7%	18 54.5%	15 45.5%	20 58.8%	14 41.2%
Gratitude (formulaic)	9 56.2%	7 43.8%	11 57.9%	8 42.1%	4 66.7%	2 33.3%	6 66.7%	3 33.3%	4 57.1%	3 42.9%	8 53.3%	7 46.7%	4 57.1%	3 42.9%	5 62.5%	3 37.5%
Total Chi-square test	168 0.932		168 0.988		168 0.953		168 0.838		168 0.999		160 0.997		168 0.990		168 0.992	

D = Direct Head Act   I = Indirect Head A

Furthermore, the Chi-square test was conducted to examine whether F-F and F-M interactions differ in their use of external supportive moves according to directness and indirectness in situations 5, 6, 7 and 8. As shown in Table 3, the results indicate that there is no significant difference in the use of external supportive moves in F-F and F-M interactions according to the degree of directness or indirectness. The p value in situations 5, 6, 7 and 8 in F-F interactions is 0.785, 0.984, 0.974 and 0.979, p<0.05, respectively. Furthermore, the p value in situation 5, 6, 7 and 8 in F-M interactions is 0.940, 0.991, 0.995 and 0.703, p <0.05, respectively.

With regard to the use of external supportive moves, the findings show that the female respondents in Yemeni Arabic used various external supportive moves to mitigate and soften the harshness of requests and make it polite. The external supportive moves are employed by the female respondents to show their requests as polite request. It seems that the external supportive moves are very important in Yemeni Arabic and it is consider as the source of politeness in request in Yemeni culture. It seems that the use of supportive moves in Yemeni Arabic with direct and indirect head act of requests is compulsory.

Table 3 External Supportive Moves Used in Direct and Indirect Head Act of Requests in F-F & F-M Interactions in Situations 5, 6, 7 & 8

Supportive moves	S5				S6				S7				S8			
	F-F		F-M		F-F		F-M		F-F		F-M		F-F		F-M	
	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I
Preparatory (formulaic)	34 56.7%	26 43.3%	30 54.5%	25 45.5%	38 54.3%	32 45.7%	34 56.7%	26 43.3%	29 53.7%	25 46.3%	30 55.6%	24 44.4%	13 54.2%	11 45.8%	19 52.8%	17 47.2%
grounder (formulaic)	11 52.4%	10 47.6%	15 62.5%	9 37.5%	12 57.1%	9 42.9%	16 61.5%	10 38.5%	34 56.7%	26 43.3%	31 52.5%	28 47.5%	48 53.3%	42 46.7%	38 50.7%	37 49.3%
Getting a pre-commitment (semi-formulaic)	34 54.8%	28 45.2%	27 51.9%	25 48.1%	28 59.6%	19 40.4%	28 56.0%	22 44.0%	9 52.9%	8 47.1%	9 56.3%	7 43.8%	19 55.9%	15 44.1%	21 60.0%	14 40.0%

	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I
Apology (formulaic)	13 56.5%	10 43.5%	16 53.3%	14 46.7%	11 52.4%	10 47.6%	9 60.0%	6 40.0%	13 56.5%	10 43.5%	12 60.0%	8 40.0%	5 55.6%	4 44.4%	8 57.1%	6 42.9%
Disarmer (semi-formulaic)	2 100%	0	4 57.1%	3 42.9%	3 50.0%	3 50.0%	6 54.5%	5 45.5%	0	0	0	0	3 75.0%	1 25.0%	4 66.7%	2 33.3%
Imposition minimizer (semi-formulaic)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6 60.0%	4 40.0%	4 57.1%	3 42.9%	0	0	0	0
Gratitude (formulaic)	0	0	0	0	2 66.7%	1 33.3%	4 66.7%	2 33.3%	3 75.0%	1 25.0%	7 58.3%	5 41.7%	4 57.1%	3 42.9%	2 100%	0
Total	168		168		168		168		168		168		168		168	
Chi-square test	0.785		0.940		0.984		0.991		0.974		0.995		0.979		0.703	

D = Direct Head Act   I = Indirect Head Act

The analysis was also carried for situations 9, 10, 11 and 12 to examine if the F-F and F-M interactions differ in the use of external supportive moves according to direct head act of requests or indirect head act of requests. As shown in Table 4, the findings of the Chi-square tests indicate that there is no significant difference in the use of external supportive moves in F-F and F-M interactions according to directness or indirectness. The p value in situations 9, 10, 11 and 12 in F-F interactions is 0.948, 1.000, 0.932 and 0.986, $p<0.05$, respectively. Furthermore, the p value in situation 9, 10, 11 and 12 in F-M interactions is 0.981, 0.982, 0.826 and 0.926, $p <0.05$, respectively.

From the Table 4 it should be noted that the female respondents in F-F and F-M interactions tend to use the external supportive moves to mitigate and soften their requests. It seems that the degree of politeness is reflected in the use of the external supportive moves instead of direct strategies or indirect strategies. It is interesting to observe that the male respondents in F-F and F-M interactions convey the polite request by using the external supportive moves regardless of directness or indirectness. It seems that the use of external supportive moves in Yemeni Arabic with direct and indirect head act of requests is very important to convey polite request.

Table 4 External Supportive Moves Used in Direct and Indirect Head Act of Requests in F-F & F-M Interactions in Situations 9, 10, 11 & 12

Supportive moves	S9				S10				S11				S12			
	F-F		F-M		F-F		F-M		F-F		F-M		F-F		F-M	
	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I
Preparatory (formulaic)	43 53.1%	38 46.9%	37 55.2%	30 44.8%	23 57.5%	17 42.5%	24 61.5%	15 38.5%	26 57.8%	19 42.2%	22 53.7%	19 46.3%	35 54.7%	29 45.3%	29 53.7%	25 46.3%
grounder (formulaic)	18 58.1%	13 41.9%	24 55.8%	19 44.2%	34 56.7%	26 43.3%	36 56.3%	28 43.8%	41 52.6%	37 47.4%	44 53.0%	39 47.0%	21 53.8%	18 46.2%	26 57.8%	19 42.2%
Getting a pre-commitment (semi-formulaic)	12 60.0%	8 40.0%	9 52.9%	8 47.1%	22 55.0%	18 45.0%	15 51.7%	14 48.3%	15 60.0%	10 40.0%	13 52.0%	12 48.0%	9 56.3%	7 43.8%	8 50.0%	8 50.0%
Apology (formulaic)	6 60.0%	4 40.0%	10 52.6%	9 47.4%	5 62.5%	3 37.5%	8 57.1%	6 42.9%	6 60.0%	4 40.0%	6 54.5%	5 45.5%	12 54.5%	10 45.5%	13 61.9%	8 38.1%

Disarmer (semi-formulaic)	7	3	4	2	3	2	4	2	0	0	0	0	10	6	9	8
	70.0%	30.0%	66.7%	33.3%	60.0%	40.0%	66.7%	33.3%					62.5%	37.5%	52.9%	47.1%
Imposition minimizer (semi-formulaic)	6	3	5	4	6	5	7	4	3	3	2	0	4	3	6	2
	66.7%	33.3%	55.6%	44.4%	54.5%	45.5%	63.6%	36.4%	50.0%	50.0%	100%		57.1%	42.9%	75.0%	25.0%
Gratitude (formulaic)	4	3	5	2	2	2	3	2	3	1	4	2	3	1	4	3
	57.1%	42.9%	71.4%	28.6%	50.0%	50.0%	60.0%	40.0%	75.0%	25.0%	66.7%	33.3%	75.0%	25.0%	57.1%	42.9%
Total Chi-square test	168 0.948		168 0.981		168 1.000		168 0.982		168 0.932		168 0.826		168 0.986		168 0.926	

D = Direct Head Act   **I = Indirect Head Act**

4.2 Types of External Supportive Moves Used in F-F and F-M Interactions

The external supportive moves were used in F-F and F-M interactions as mitigators for requests in Yemeni Arabic. The most frequent external supportive moves found in the data in F-F and F-M interactions are as follows: (refer to Table 5).

Preparator

Preparator is a kind of external supportive move that is used to introduce the request to prepare the hearer for an upcoming request and draw the hearer's attention. The data of the current study identifies different external supportive moves of preparators, which often occur at the beginning of request. An external supportive move of preparators is the first preferred utterance among the respondents in female-female interactions and female-male interactions. It occurs across the twelve situations with different frequencies. The overall use of external supportive moves of preparatory across twelve situations in F-F interactions is (33% [n= 668]), whereas, the overall use of them across twelve situations in F-M interactions is (31% [n= 624]). It can be observed that there is a slight preference in F-F interactions to use external supportive moves of preparators more than in the F-M interactions. External supportive moves of preparators can be observed in some of the examples below: preparator
Request

(11)   ***Law samaħti***   ja:mʊdirah   mʊmkin   ʔrwiħ   badri
*   ***If you allowed me***   hey manager   can   go   early
           Excuse me   manager,   can I   leave work   early?

           ʔljaʊm   maʕ-i   mawʕid   mʕa   tabib alasnan
           today   have-I   appointment   with   dentist
           today,   I have   an appointment   with   dentist.

              Preparator   Request
(12)   ***ʔiða takarramt***   ja:ʔaχ-i   ʕiran-i   daftara-k
*   ***If you be generous enough***   brother-my   lend-me   notebook-your
           Please   my brother,   lend me   your notebook

           ʔswir   almuħaðarah

copy   lecture
to copy   the lecture.

	Preparator		Request	
(13)	*ʔiða takarramti*	ja:ʔʊsta:ðah	tʊktibi-li	
*	*If you be generous enough*	hey teacher	write-me	
	Please	my teacher,	write for me	

risalat   tawsjah
letter recommendation
a recommendation letter.

	Preparator		Request	
(14)	*ʔiða ma:fi: ʔizʕʤ*	ja:mʊdirah	baʔimmkaniki	taʕirini
*	*If no bother*	hey manager	can you	lend-me
	If there is no bother	my manager,	can you	lend me

sja:ra:t-ik   ʔwasil   ʔaχ-i   min   almaħtah
car-your   lift   brother-my   from   station
your car?   to lift   my brother   from   station?

	Religious plea (preparator)		Request		
(15)	*allah jʊba:rik fi:k*	ja:mʊdir	ʔana	mʊħtaʤ	sja:ra:t-ak
*	*Allah bless you*	hey manager	I	need	car- your
	Allah blesses you	manager,	I	need	your car

ʔwasil   ʔaχ-i   min   ʔlmaħtah
lift   brother-my   from   station
to lift   my brother   from   station?

	Religious plea (preparator)		Request		
(16)	*allah jaħfðak*	ja:ʔʊsta:ð	ʔʊkʊb-li	risalat tawsjah
*	*Allah preserve you*	hey teacher	write-me	letter recommendation
	Allah preserves you	my teacher,	write for me	recommendation letter.

From the examples above, respondents use external supportive moves in order to prepare the hearer for the ensuing request. The speaker usually announces that he/she will make a request either by means of checking the hearer availability for carrying out the request or by asking the hearer permission to make the request. It also can be found that the head acts are modified by external supportive moves. For example, '*Law samahti*' (excuse me) for male in (11), '*ʔiða takarramt*' (please) for male in (12), '*ʔiða takaramti*' (please) for female in (13) and '*ʔiða ma:fi: ʔizʕʤ*' (If there is no bother) for male or female in (14). External supportive moves, which mentioned above are in excess of the politic behaviour that can be expected during the interaction, and can thus be open to a polite interpretation. The respondents also used religious plea as external supportive moves to mitigate and soften the upcoming requests such as '*aallah jʊba:rik fi:k*' (Allah blesses you) for male in (15) and '*allah jaħfðak*' (Allah preserves you) in (16).

Grounders

Grounder is another example of external supportive moves. It can be observed from Table 4.44 that external supportive move of grounder (reasons or justification) is the second preferred utterance among the respondents in F-F interactions and F-M interactions. The function of external supportive move is to mitigate the illocutionary force of request and to smooth the conversational interaction. The overall use of external supportive moves across eleven situations in F-F interactions is (23% [n= 471]), whereas, the overall use of external supportive moves across eleven situations in F-M interactions is (24% [n= 479]). It can be observed that there is no difference in the choice of external supportive moves. In F-F interactions and F-M interactions, it is preferred strategy by respondents to mitigate their requests. External supportive moves of grounders can be observed in some of the examples below:

		Request			
(17)	Law samaħti	ja:ʔʊχt-i	ʕiran-i	maħmul-ik	ʔtbʕ
*	If you allowed me	sister-my	lend-me	laptop-your	type
	Excuse me	my sister,	lend me	your laptop	to type

Grounder (reason/justification)

waʤibi	***maħmu:l-i***	***mʊʕtal***
assignment -my	***laptop-my***	***broken***
my assignment	***my laptop***	***is broken.***

Grounder (reason/justification) Request

(18)	min faðlik	***ʔana***	***kʊnt***	***ʁaijb***	***ʔmss***	waʃti
*	out of your bounty	***I***	***was***	***absent***	***yesterday***	want
	Please,	***I***	***was***	***absent***	***yesterday***	and I want

ʔstaʕi:r	daftari-k	ʔnqʊl	almuħaðarat
borrow	notebook-your	copy	lectures
to borrow	your notebook	to copy	the lectures.

		Request	
(19)	allah jaħfðak	ja:ʕam saliħ	wasln-i	la-su:q
*	Allah preserve you	Hey uncle Saleh	take-me	to-market
	Allah preserves you,	my uncle Saleh	give me a ride	to the market

Grounder (reason/justification)

ʔʃtari	***fawakh***	***ʕndi***	***ðʊju:f***
to buy	***fruit***	***have-I***	***guests***
to buy	***fruit***	***I have***	***guests.***

From the examples above, it can be seen external supportive moves as a co-operative mitigator that mitigates the conversational interaction by giving reasons or justifications. External supportive moves make the hearer to be more understanding and willing to co-operate such as '***maħmu:l-i mʊʕtal***' (my laptop is broken), in (17), '***ʔana kʊnt ʁaijbʔmss***' (I was absent yesterday' in (18) and '***ʔʃtari fawakh ʕndi ðʊju:ʃ***' (to buy fruit. I have guests) in (19). The external supportive moves, which used in examples 17, 18 and 19 form part of the expected politic behaviour in this type of interaction. However, these external supportive moves can be interpreted as polite justification that mitigates the request.

Getting a Pre-Commitments

Getting a pre-commitment is an external supportive move and is considered as one of the important external supportive moves. It is the third preferred utterance among the respondents in F-F interactions and F-M interactions. The overall use of external supportive moves across eleven situations in F-F interactions is (15% [n= 292]), whereas, the overall use of external supportive moves across eleven situations in F-M interactions is (13% [n= 265]). It can be observed that there is a great preference in F-F interactions to use getting pre-commitments more than in the F-M interactions. Getting pre-commitments can be observed in some of the examples below:

	Getting a pre-commitment			Request	
(20)	***mʊmkin ʔtlʊb***	***mennik χidmah***	ja:ʔʊstaðah	ʔʃt-i	
*	***possible I-request***	***from you help***	hey teacher	want-I	
	Can I ask your help		my teacher,	I want	

astaʕi:r   kitab-ik
borrow   book-your
to borrow   your book.

	Getting a pre-commitment			Request	
(21)	***ʔiða ma:fi: ʔizʕdʒ***	***mʊmkin χidmah***	ja:mʊdirah	ʔaʃti	
*	***If no bother***	***possible help***	hey manager	want	
	If there is no bother can you help me		my manager,	I want	

sja:ra:t-ik   ʔwasil   ʔaχ-i   min   almaħtah
car-your   lift   brother-my   from   station
your car   to lift   my brother   from   station.

	Getting a pre-commitment		Request			
(22)	***baammkanak tsaʕdni***	ja: ʔħmad	ʔʃt-i	tsalfini	fʊlu:s	
*	***able-you help-me***	hey ahmed	want-I	lend- me	money	
	Can you able to help me?	Ahmed,	I want	to lend me	money?	

nisi:t   fʊlu:si   fi   albeit
forgot   money-my   at   home
I forgot   my money   at   home.

As shown in the examples above, external supportive moves used by the respondents with head acts to prepare the hearer for request and prepare the addressee for what could be as a favour. They are devices used at the beginning of the head act to help the speaker feel that he/she has a safer ground for uttering his/her request. For example, all requests, which mentioned in the examples above, can be interpreted as face threatening acts (FTA). Therefore, the speakers use the external supportive moves in excess of the required politic behaviour of the interaction and are open to an interpretation as polite utterances that help to protect the speakers' faces and hearers' faces, such as '***mʊmkin ʔtlʊb manic χidmah***' (can I ask your help) for female in (20), '***ʔiða ma:fi: ʔizʕdʒ mʊmkin χidmah***' (If there is no bother can you help me) for male or female in (21) '***baammkanak tsaʕdni***' (can you able to help me) in (22).

Apology

Apology is another type of external supportive moves. External supportive move of apology is the fourth preferred utterance among the respondents in F-F interactions and F-M interactions. It occurs across the twelve situations with different frequencies. The overall use of external supportive move of apology across twelve situations in F-F interactions is (9% [n= 195]), whereas, the overall use of external supportive move of apology across twelve situations in F-M interactions is (10% [n= 206]). The function of apology is to minimize and mitigate the impact of request and to attract the hearer's attention. It also helps the requester to save his face and the addressee's face. Apology can be observed in some of the examples below:

	Apology		Request		
(23)	*ʕafwan*	ja:ʔʊstʔað	mʊmkin	tʕirin-i	kitab-ik
*	*sorry*	hey teacher	can	lend-me	book-your
	I am sorry	teacher,	can you	lend me	your book?

	Apology		Request	
(24)	*ʕafwan*	ja:ʔʊχt-i	ʔdi-li	alfaturah
*	*sorry*	sister-my	give- me	bill
	I am sorry	my sister,	give me	the bill.

	Apology		Request		
(25)	*ʕafwan*	ja: ʕli	wasln-i	la-su:q	niʃtari
*	*sorry*	hey ali	take-me	to-market	to buy
	I am sorry	Ali,	take me	to the market	to buy

fawakih	la-lbait
fruit	for-family
fruit	for my family.

	Apology		Request		
(26)	*ʕafwan*	ʔaχ-i	ʕiran-i	daftara-k	ʔʃti
*	*sorry*	brother-my	lend-me	notebook-your	want
	I am sorry	my brother	lend me	your notebook	I want

ʔswir	almuħaðarat	ʔli	kʊnt	ʁaijbha
copy	lectures	which	was	absent
to copy	the lectures	which	I was	absent.

As shown in the examples above, external supportive moves of apology were used by the respondents to minimize and mitigate the negative effects of request with direct and indirect head act request strategies such as 'ʕafwan' (I am sorry) for male or female in 23, 24, 25 and 26 . External supportive moves of apology used at the beginning of the head act as introduction for the request and to be guaranteed ground for requesting. Thus, 'ʕafwan' (I am sorry) is open to polite interpretation. It is considered as a part of politic behaviour in this type of verbal interaction and considers as a mitigator for request. It also helps the requester to save his face and the addressee's face.

Disarmers

Disarmer is considered as external supportive move. External supportive move of disarmer is the fifth preferred utterance among the respondents in F-F interactions and F-M interactions. It occurs across eleven situations with different frequencies. The overall use of external supportive move of disarmer across eleven situations in female-female interactions is (8% [n= 167]), whereas, the overall use of external supportive move of disarmer across eleven situations in female-male interactions is (8% [n= 163]). It can be observed that there is no difference in the choice of external supportive move of disarmer in F-F interactions and F-M interactions. This type of external supportive moves of disarmers can be seen in some of the examples below:

	Disarmer			Request		
(27) *	**ʔiða ma:fi: ʔizʕʤ**		ja:bint-i	ʕiran-i	maħmulak	
	If no bother		hey-daughter	lend-me	laptop-your	
	If there is no bother		my daughter,	lend me	your laptop	

lmʊdat	sa:ʕah
for	an hour
for	an hour.

	Disarmer			Request		
(28) *	***ʔana***	***dari***	***ʔnish***	***maʃʁu:lah***	ja:ʔʊsta:ðah	ʔaʃt-i
	I	***know***	***you***	***busy***	hey teacher	want-I
	I know you are			***busy.***	my teacher,	I want you

tʊktʊbi-li
write-me
to write for me

	Disarmer		Request		
(29) *	***ʔiða ma:fi: ʔhraʤ***		ja:saħab-i	ʔʃti	tsalifni
	If no embarrassed		hey friend-my	I want	lend-me
	If there is no embarrassed		My friend,	I want you lend me	

fʊlu:s
money
money.

As can be seen from the examples above, the respondents use external supportive moves devices, which disarm hearers from the possibility of refusal. In other words, the respondents try to remove any potential objections the hearer might raise upon being confronted with the request. External supportive moves of disarmers may include clauses that express speaker's awareness that the request deemed as an imposition on the hearer. They are considered as part of politic behaviour, which classify as polite and appropriate utterances that save the speakers' faces and hearers' faces. The respondents use these disarmers as mitigators and tactful strategy to remove potential objection of refusing the request, such as '**ʔiða ma:fi: ʔizʕʤ**' (If there is

no bother) for male or female in (27), '*ʔana dari ʔnish maʃʁu:lah*' (I know you are very busy),for female in (28) and '*ʔiða ma:fi: ʔħradʒ*' (If there is no embarrassed) in (29).

Imposition minimizers
Imposition minimizer is a external supportive move. It is the sixth preferred utterance among the respondents in F-F interactions and F-M interactions. It occurs across nine situations with different frequencies. The overall use of external supportive move of imposition minimizer across nine situations in F-F interactions is (8% [n= 155]), whereas, the overall use of external supportive move of imposition minimizer across nine situations in F-M interactions is (9% [n= 175]). It can be observed that there is a great preference in F-M interactions to use external supportive move of imposition minimizer more than in the F-F interactions. They employed it to reduce imposition, mitigate their request, make request smooth and to protect the speaker's face and hearer's face. External supportive moves of imposition minimizer can be observed in some of the examples below:

		Request				
(30)	ja:saliħ	si:r	ʔila	albaqa:lah	w-ʃtari	χðrawa:t
*	hey saleh	go	to	grocery	and-buy	vegetable
	Saleh,	go	to	grocery	and buys	vegetable.

Imposition minimizer
almakan   *qarib*
place   *near*
The place *is not far.*

		Requeat			
(31)	allah jaħfðik	ja:ħa:dʒah	ʔaʃtiki	tnaðifi	maktab-i
*	Allah bless you	hey hajji	want you	clean	office-my
	Allah blesses you	hajji,	I want you	to clean	my office.

Imposition minimizer
χams   *daqa'aq*   *bass*
five   *minutes*   *only*
just   *five*   *minutes.*

From the examples above, the respondents use the external supportive moves as an attempt to reduce the negative effects of imposition. It also make request smooth and acceptable, and to convince the hearer to accept the requests by making it very smooth request such as '*almakan qarib*' (the place is not far) in (30), and '*χams daqa'aq bass*' (just five minutes) in (31). Thus, '*almakan qarib*' (the place is not far) in (30), and '*χams daqa'aq bass*' (just five minutes) in (31) are aimed to support the hearers' faces. They are considered as a part of politic behaviour and they are a form of politeness payment for the negative impact of the request.

Gratitude
Gratitude is another type of external supportive moves. It is the least preferred utterances among the respondents in F-F interactions and F-M interactions. It occurs across eleven situations with low frequencies. The overall use of external supportive move of gratitude across eleven situations in F-F interactions is (4% [n= 68]), whereas, the overall use of external supportive move of gratitude across eleven situations in F-M interactions is (5% [n= 96]). It

can be observed that there is a great preference in F-M interactions to use external supportive moves of gratitude more than in the F-F interactions. The function of external supportive moves of gratitude is to minimize and mitigate the impact of request and show the appreciation to the hearers as closing. The external supportive moves of gratitude can be observed in some of the examples below:

		Request			
(32)	ja:-mʊbaʃer	ʔuri:d	mennak	tegi:b-li	alfaturah
*	hey waiter	want	From you	give- to me	bill
	Waiter,	1 want	you	To give me	the bill.

Gratitude
w-maʃku:rin   ʕala   χadamatakʊm
and-thank-you   for   service-your
And thank you   for   your service.

			Request		
(33)	Law samaħti	ja:mʊdirah	mumkin	tidi-li	sja:ra:t-ik
*	If you allowed me	hey manager	can	give-me	car-you
	Excuse me	my manager,	can you	give me	your car

				Gratitude		
ʔwasil	ʔaχ-i	min	almaħtah	*maʕa*	*ħtrami*	*lakʊm*
lift	brother-my	from	station	*with*	*respect-my for you*	
to lift	my brother	from	station.	*with my respect.*		

From the examples above, it can be observed that external supportive move of gratitude is used as a part of the required politic behaviour to mitigate and soften the request by weakens the negative effect of the requests head act. Gratitude were used with head acts such as '***w-maʃku:ri:n ʕala χadamatakʊm***' (and thank you for your service) in (32) and '***maʕa ħtrami lakʊm***' (with my respect) in (33). The use of external supportive moves of gratitude show solidarity between the interlocutors and decrease the negative effects of requests.

5. Conclusion

As illustrated in Table 5 that female respondents generally showed greater use of external supportive moves to mitigate their requests. Seven external supportive moves were identified in the data of the present study in F-F, F-M interactions. However, in the F-F interactions, the number of external supportive moves that identified in the data was 2016. However, in F-M interactions the number of external supportive moves was 2008. The findings showed that Yemeni females showed greater use of external supportive moves when interacting with females more than to males. Regarding the use of external supportive moves according to direct head act of requests and indirect head of requests, in general, female respondents in F-F, F-M interactions have a great tendency to employ external supportive moves with direct and indirect head act of requests. It seems that the use of external supportive moves in Yemeni Arabic with indirect head act of requests is obligatory to mitigate and soften requests and make it polite

request. In other words, it is interesting to observe that female respondents convey polite request by using external supportive moves regardless of directness or indirectness.

Table 5 Distribution External Supportive Moves Utterances in Yemeni Arabic in Female-Female Interaction and Female Male Interaction across twelve situations

Supportive move	S1		S2		S3		S4		S5		S6		S7		S8		S9		S10		S11		S12		Total	
	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M	F-F	F-M
Grounder	52	50	0	0	11	6	8	4	21	24	21	26	60	59	90	75	31	43	60	64	78	83	39	45	471 23%	479 24%
Disarmer	6	10	65	33	13	21	40	46	2	7	6	11	0	0	4	6	10	6	5	6	0	0	16	17	167 8%	163 8%
Imposition minimizer	0	0	60	92	19	12	33	34	0	0	0	0	10	7	0	0	9	9	11	11	6	2	7	8	155 8%	175 9%
Preparator	74	62	23	16	83	80	50	60	60	55	70	60	54	54	24	36	81	67	40	39	45	41	64	54	668 33%	624 31%
Getting a Pre-commitment	0	0	4	8	20	11	7	6	62	52	47	50	17	16	34	35	20	17	40	29	25	25	16	16	292 15%	265 13%
Apology	20	27	10	10	15	15	24	10	23	30	21	15	23	20	9	14	10	19	8	14	10	11	22	21	195 9%	206 10%
Gratitude	16	19	6	9	7	15	6	8	0	0	3	6	4	12	7	2	7	7	4	5	4	6	4	7	68 4%	96 5%
Ch-square	.494		.001		.176		.185		.288		.433		.444		.154		.293		.713		.732		.899			
Total																									2016	2008

D = Direct Head Act   I = Indirect Head Act

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