Linguistic Politeness in Yemeni Arabic: The Use of Request Perspective

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This article attempts to investigate the use of request perspectives in Yemeni Arabic. The sample of the current study consists of 336 undergraduate students, namely 168 male respondents and 168 female respondents. They were asked to respond in Yemeni Arabic to twelve different situations in which they carried out the speech act of request. The data were collected using a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). They were analyzed according to the models proposed by Blum-Kulka, et al. (1989), whose analytical framework classified request perspective into four types: hearer-oriented request, speaker-oriented request, inclusive, and impersonal. The results of the study revealed that native speakers of Yemeni Arabic that used the direct head acts of requests were mostly from the hearer-oriented perspective. The respondents employed a hearer-oriented perspective either in the direct strategies or conventionally indirect strategies in order to show solidarity and paying attention to others. However, the indirect head act of request used various perspectives such as hearer-oriented, speaker-oriented, inclusive, or impersonal. The respondents employed speaker-oriented perspective, inclusive or impersonal in order to be free from the imposition of others and to show that they respected the rights of others to their own autonomy and freedom of movement or choice. Furthermore, the results revealed that in general, the respondents in M-M and F-F interactions and M-F and F-M interactions employed hearer-oriented and speaker-oriented perspective more than other perspectives. In particular, the results revealed that the respondents in M-M and F-F interactions and M-F and F-M interactions had a great tendency to use hearer-oriented perspective only in direct requests.

Keywords: politeness, request, hearer-oriented perspective, speaker-oriented perspective, inclusive, impersonal

Brown and Levinson (1978) state that requests are face-threatening acts in which both the speaker's and hearer's faces are at risk, since, "By making a request, the speaker impinges on the hearer's claim to freedom of action and freedom from imposition" (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984, p. 201). Furthermore, Felix-Brasdefer (2005) indicates that a request is a directive act and a pre-event that initiates with the negotiation of face during a conversational interaction. The request is a type of speech act where the speaker demands from the hearer to perform an act which is for their benefit at the cost of the hearer. Khalib and Tayeh (2014) also state that indirectness is a very important means of communication especially in exchanges between persons to show respect and to save face. Ellis (1994) states that requests are directive acts, where a speaker attempts to make the hearer perform or stop performing a particular action. Speciously, the hearer is the one who always feels imposed by the speaker's request. Factors such as social distance and power relations between speakers and hearers greatly influence the strategies used in making requests (Wolfson, 1989). House (1989) shows that even "please" could be shown to be impolite because it increases the directness of requests by making their force more obvious. Searle (1975) mentions that indirectness as being when one illocutionary act is performed indirectly via the performance of another. The base motive of being indirect is to express politeness as well as to save face for the hearer (Goffman, 1967). That is why instead of expressing unpleasant thoughts, many people articulate them courteously. The reason behind this is to avoid conflict, clashes, and issues, especially between parties whose relationship is very close. It is important for everyone to possess this communication skill in order to maintain harmony in the community. Searle (1969) states that all linguistic communication involves the production of speech acts and speech acts are acts performed by utterances, e.g., giving orders, making promises, complaining, and requesting. Utterances of language are not simply information: they are equivalent to actions (Austin, 1962). Kasper (1990) states what is called "top-down processing" manner, where it is necessary for

learners to first recognize the extra-linguistic, cultural constraints that operate in a native speaker's choice of a particular speech act appropriate to the context. After recognizing these features, they must be able to realize this speech act at the linguistic level according to the L2 sociocultural norms.

Al-Marrani (2010) states that: "The terms politeness plays an important role to protect face during the realization of speech acts such as requests" (p. 168). Furthermore, Lakoff (1973) defines politeness as forms of behavior that have been developed in societies in order to reduce friction in personal interaction. Moreover, Watts (2003) says that linguistic politeness should always be perceived in this double perspective, from the speaker and the hearer, because the speakers are also the hearers and vice versa. In addition, Seniarika (2017) mentions that, in a request, the speaker to a greater or lesser extent imposes on the addressee: hence, there is a need to put politeness strategies into action in order to mitigate the imposition, in other words, to soften what the addressee might regard as an impingement on his/her freedom of action.

In fact, this widely held stereotype is backed up by most of the studies on requests strategies, which maintain that request is an important speech act in communication due to different social norms and cultural contexts. What is probably worth mentioning here is that there is a shortage of studies examining the possible effects of gender on the speech act of request perspective among native speakers of Yemeni Arabic. In fact, most studies, to the best of the present researcher's knowledge, seem to be more concerned with the overall nature of request as a linguistic/pragmatic phenomenon than with exploring social factors such as, particularly, gender and the possible contribution these may make to unraveling untouched linguistic and pragmatic facts that may contribute to the overall understanding of language. Therefore, this study attempts to identify the type of request perspectives as used in male-male and male-female interactions and female-female and female-male interactions and the most frequent type. Furthermore, identify if there is significant difference between male-male and male-female interactions and female-female and female-male interactions in the use of request perspectives.

Request Perspectives

The head act of a request can be realized from different points of view in making a request. A speaker will have different choices to realize a request and this choice depends on the situation. According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), requests are realized by means of four perspectives. These are: hearer oriented perspective, speaker-oriented, inclusive, and impersonal. Request perspective is considered as a very important source of variation in requests. The head act of a request may include reference to the requestee (the hearer) and this type of request construction is called hearer-oriented request. The role of the hearer is stressed using hearer-oriented perspective as, for example, with *can*:

 (1) Can you drink a cup of tea?

In this perspective, the speaker would choose to stress the role of the addressee.

On the other hand, the speaker may choose to stress his/her own role in a request. This type of request construction is called speaker oriented request: for example,

(2) Can I drink a cup of tea?

As can be seen in the example above, the speaker-oriented perspectives sound as if asking for permission from the hearer for an act to be carried out. Thus, marking the form for politeness because, "True permission requests imply that the addressee has control over the speaker and that the speaker's wishes are subject to the hearer's approval" (Gordan & Ervin-Tripp, 1984 as cited in Blum-Kulka, 1989, p. 60).

The speaker may also choose to make his/her request inclusive:

(3) Can we drink tea?

In addition, the speaker may avoid and soften the impact of the threatening act by not referring to a particular person and, thus, make the request impersonal:

(4) Is there any chance of drinking tea now?

These four perspectives are available to speakers within a single situation.

Yemeni Arabic

Yemeni Arabic is spoken as a mother tongue in Yemen, except in the eastern province of Mahra and on the island of Soqotra, where the inhabitants speak both Yemeni Arabic and Mahari in the former and Yemeni Arabic and Soqotri in the province of Soqotra. The independent languages of Mahari and Soqotri are not Arabic dialects at all, but developed from Old South Arabian via the ancient Sabaean language. Yemeni Arabic is characterised by a great diversity and by a number of features that are not found across most of the Arabic speaking world. Yemeni Arabic is not referring to one single variety spoken throughout the country. Rather, the term is used to refer to a number of local dialects that, though mutually intelligible, include some linguistic features that make them distinguishable.

Arabic and Yemeni Culture

Yemen is a Middle Eastern country located on the Arabian Peninsula in the Southwest Asia, with a population more than 22 million people, bordered by Saudi Arabia to the North, the Red Sea to the West, the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden to the South, and Oman to the East. It is one of the oldest countries, with a distinct cultural tradition of its own. Yemen society and culture reflect everyday life of Yemen people and their traditional aspects, mainly guided by Islamic principles and laws. Yemen society and culture are slightly different from other Arab countries. Furthermore, there are many differences between Yemeni culture and western culture from religion and clothing to behaviour and customs.

In Yemen, the family is considered the basis of society and the concept of family has a much broader scope. It does not mean father, mother and children but also includes kin group or clan. The members of family usually live in close proximity to each other, meet frequently, celebrate together and coordinate their activities. Gender roles and relations have changed over the last two decades. Women now work with men in different fields. Educated women have been active role at all various fields of society and the nature of interaction between men and women is developed in different situations such as, the workplace, public places such as restaurants, universities, schools, public transport, markets and professional situations. Social interaction is very carefully controlled between men and women in Yemen. Women interact freely with other women and close male relatives. The woman in Yemeni society has great status. She is a mother, a wife, a sister and a daughter. Therefore, the members of family and all society members stand with a woman by protecting and respecting her. The honour and protection afforded to women are related to Islamic aspects and values and to Yemeni customs.

Yemeni people are very generous and polite. They offer to help friends and strangers. For example, if a stranger asks for directions, Yemeni people would help him directly and some of them may insist to accompany him to his destination. Yemeni people use different expressions that distinguish them as polite and social people. For example, they use polite expressions to welcome a guest on arrival with expressions such as 'marħaba or ʔahlanwasahlan' (welcome). Yemeni people are social and love to strengthen sound relationships. If their friends or even strangers have a problem, Yemeni people offer their help directly using polite expressions such as "tiʃtimusaʕdah" (do you need a help?) or "mʊmkinʔasaʕdak" (can I help you?). Arab culture in general and Yemeni culture in particular is different from westerners' culture, for example, Yemenis prefer to stand and to be closer when they are talking and touch other people of the same sex more than westerners do. Furthermore, it is common in Yemeni society to see two men or two women holding hands when they walk down a street, which represents a sign of friendship and solidarity. Yemeni society is a collective society or a group orientation society. When a Yemeni person boards a bus or selects a seat on a bench, he often sits beside someone rather than going to an empty seat or leaving a space between himself and others. In addition, when a Yemeni person asks someone to do something for him, he employs high levels of directness without the fear of losing face because that is the expected behaviour in such situations. The preference for the direct request in Yemeni society seems to be an instance of solidarity of politeness strategies and shows that being direct in making a request expresses camaraderie, and is consistent with the norms of Yemeni culture.

Furthermore, the Islamic religion affects Yemeni society on a daily basis. Therefore, Yemeni Arabic is full of religious or Islamic expressions, which help to mitigate and soften their speech such as 'ʔallahjaħfðʕak (Allah preserve you) for males, 'ʔallahjaħfðʕik (Allah preserve you) for females, 'ʔallahjʊbʔarikfiːk' (Allah bless you) for males and 'ʔallahjʊbʔarikfiːki' (Allah bless you) for females,'ʔallahjardˤaʕalaik' (Allah be pleased with you) for males, 'ʔallahjardˤaʕalaiki' (Allah be pleased with you) for females and Islamic greeting 'asslamʕalaijkum' (Peace be with you) for males or females. In short, Yemeni society is collectivist society and more related to membership in a group such as family, friends or a working group even with strangers.

Literature Review

Requests have long attracted the attention of many researchers and several types of research have been conducted in the area of the speech act of request, making it one of the most widely studied speech acts compared to other speech acts. Pinto & Raschio (2007) state,

> This wealth of research is largely due to the fact that requests entail the speaker (S) imposing on the hearer (H) by requesting that a certain action is carried out for S's benefit. Given this element of imposition, a successful request requires some degree of linguistic tact that often varies across languages, thus the transfer of strategies from one language to another may result in inappropriate or nonconventional speech (p. 135).

Ellis (2012) claims that requests are, "Attempts on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to perform or to stop performing some kind of action in the interests of the speaker" (p. 172). Blum-Kulka (1982, 1983) conducted a study on the request behavior in Hebrew

and compared it with the Canadian and American speakers of English. The results of the study show that the degree of social distance and power relationship between interlocutors are very important factors in making the request. They confirm that value given to politeness is not determined by the language form, but by the context of the speech act because what may be viewed as polite in some cultures may not be viewed with the same degree in another. Therefore, misunderstanding and using inappropriate forms in cross-cultural communication should be expected.

Felix-Brasdefer (2005) examined the notions of indirectness and politeness in speech act of requests, including head acts and external modifications, among Mexican university students in role-play situations. The subjects of the study were ten NSs of Mexican Spanish included four males and six females. The data of the study were collected through an open-ended role-play. The results of the study show that NSs of Mexican Spanish prefer to use conventional indirectness strategies by means of 'query preparatory' when making the request in situations which display + Power or + Distance, whereas they prefer to use directness strategies when the relationship between the interlocutors was closer (-Distance). Also, 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 behavior among Mexican subjects in a solidarity politeness system (-Power, – Distance). Also, the findings of the study are consistent with other studies which found that directness in German and Polish cultures should not be considered impolite, but rather should be seen as a way of expressing closeness and affiliation.

Lin (2009) compared the use of query preparatory modals in conventionally indirect requests made by native speakers of English (NS-Es), native speakers of Chinese (NS-Cs), and Chinese learners of English-as-a-Foreign Language (EFLs). A total of 3600 expressions of the request were elicited from 180 college students (60 in each group - NS-E, NS-C, and EFL) using the Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The results of the study provide support for Blum-Kulak's (1989) generalizations on the conventionality of indirect request. First, although the same range and types of models are used in Chinese and English, the preference orders and distributions of the sub-strategies vary cross-culturally, which results in inter-language deviations from what is observed in DCT-elicited NS English data. Second, the sub-strategies also vary in terms of form, function, and distribution.

Martínez-Flor (2009) carried out a study of the role that "please" played as a mitigating device to soften a request. This study indicated that the participants of the study, Spanish EFL learners, employed "please"

only at the end of the request move. Martínez-Flor posited that this pattern of use can be changed by presenting rich sources of pragmatic input such as film scenes to the learners.

Hatam and Mohammad (2014) examined request perspective use among Iranian EFL learners. This study investigates the request perspectives of a sample of 61 request utterances elicited through a discourse completion task (DCT) from 30 Iranian MA EFL learners. The DCT included 6 situations, 2 situations for each social status or relative power (P) level (i.e., +P, -P or =P). The results showed that overall, Iranian EFL learners favored the hearer-oriented perspective mostly and the speaker-hearer oriented perspective the least. The results also indicated that while in +P situations, the most frequent perspective was the impersonal perspective, the dominant perspective in both -P and =P situations was hearer oriented. In brief, the study highlighted the fact that Iranian EFL learners are not fully aware of the power dynamics in interactions and that they are therefore in need of instructional intervention in pragmatics in language learning.

Methods

Participants

Before the selection of respondents was conducted, the researcher held a meeting with the dean of each faculty and the head of each department in order to get permission to conduct the study and to collect the list of the students' names. after that all respondents who were involved in this study, were accepted cheerfully to be a part of the study. The study was comprised of 336 undergraduate students, namely 168 male respondents and 168 female respondents, all were university students at Sana'a University, Faculty of Education Sana'a, Faculty of Education Arhab, and Faculty of Education Al-Mahweet. The respondents were relatively homogeneous in terms of their cultural background because all students in Sana'a University are Yemenis and share the same language and culture.

Materials

A Discourse Completion Test (DCT) originally designed by Blum-Kulka (1982) widely used since then in collecting data on speech acts realization both within and cross-language groups. Discourse Completion Test (DCT) used in this investigation involves twelve written situations. The DCT applied in the current study for collecting written data consisted of twelve written dialogues that denote twelve

different situations, which were adapted from Reiter (2000) and Umar (2004). The respondents were then asked to complete each dialogue by writing a suitable request in Yemeni Arabic, with the description of situations clearly specified between the interlocutors. The description is then followed by two incomplete dialogues for each situation where the respondents need to complete the turn of the speaker, one time in the same gender (Male-Male and Female-Female) and the other time cross gender (Male-Female and Female-Male) by writing the suitable request. The DCT was written in Yemeni Arabic and translated to English, for example:

الحاله الاولى : لديك وجبة لذيذه لذيذه في المطعم والآن حان الوقت لتطلب من المباشر/ المباشرة إعداد فاتورة الحساب،ما الذي سوف تقوله؟
للمباشر : ....
للمباشرة:...

Situation 1: You have a delicious meal in a restaurant and now it is time to ask the waiter/waitress to prepare your bill. What would you say?

For waiter: ....
For waitress: ....

Validity of the Instrument of the Study

In order to ensure the validity of the study instrument, the DCT was distributed to three university professors who have teaching experience in linguistics from Sana'a University. They were requested to determine the face and the content validity of the DCT. They generously provided feedback on the suitability of the instruments for the study sample and the reliability of the language used in the DCT. Based on their feedback and notes, the DCT was subsequently modified by changing some situations in the DCT to be clearer and easier for respondents.

Procedure

The researcher held a meeting with the respondents of the study in the three faculties: Faculty of Education Sana'a, Faculty of Education Arhab, and Faculty of Education of Al-Mahweet at Sana'a University, respectively. The data collection was conducted at the lectures halls provided by each faculty. At the beginning, the researcher gave the respondents a brief introduction to his study and introduced to them how to use the DCT to make sure that the respondents understood. Then, each respondent was requested to put himself/herself in a real situation and wrote out what they would say to the hearer when making requests. Next, the written DCT was distributed to

them to complete in Yemeni Arabic in forty minutes in order to ensure spontaneous responses.

Data Analysis

Data collected for this study were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively, the respondents' responses were statistically analyzed to determine frequencies, percentages for cross-classification purposes, e.g., to determine which request perspective had the highest statistical frequency in the respondents' choices or alternatively to determine which request perspectives had the lowest statistical frequency in the respondents' choices. Qualitatively, the participants' responses to the DCT questionnaire were coded, categorized and descriptively analyzed for discussion purposes.

The primary theoretical framework of this study is based on Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project) coding scheme used to study the realization of speech acts in a number of languages such as American English, French, Hebrew, Argentinian Spanish, Russian and German. The main idea of Blum-Kulka et al.'s CCSARP is that request perspective can be divided into four types as follows:

1. When uttering a request, a speaker may choose to emphasize the role of the addressee by uttering a hearer-oriented request: can you lend me your pen?
2. When uttering a request, a speaker may focus on his/her role and utter a speaker-oriented request: can I borrow your pen?
3. The speaker can choose his/her request inclusively: can we travel now?
4. The speaker can avoid the issue completely by using impersonal request: is there any chance of traveling now?

Request perspective can be summarized as follows:

1. Hearer oriented request
2. Speaker oriented request
3. Inclusive
4. Impersonal

Depending on the above request perspective, certain speech acts are intrinsically threatening to face and thus require softening by means of request perspective strategies. The framework focuses on the effects of linguistic choices on the face wants of the hearer, whether they feel approved of, liked, or respect. The framework emphasizes softening of the request as the main purpose for using politeness strategies.

Results

Request Perspective Used by Male Respondents in situation 1, 2, 3 and 4

The analysis of the respondents' request perspective in the four situations showed that there were differences in their choice of requests perspective. As shown in Table 1 below, there were significant differences in frequencies and percentages of the distribution of direct head act request strategies by perspective in the M-M interactions and M-F interactions. The male respondents in both M-M interactions and M-F interactions employed mostly hearer-orientated perspective across the four situations with high frequency and percentage. In particular, as shown in Table 1, the male respondents in M-M interactions and M-F interactions employed hearer oriented perspective only in making direct request strategies in situations 1, 2, 3 and 4 with high frequency (M-M 90.47%, 95.25%, 56.54%, 79.76% versus M-F 75.59%, 83.33%, 47.61%, 65,49%, respectively), whereas, the male respondents in M-M interactions and M-F interactions employed various perspectives in making conventionally indirect request strategies. It can be observed that the distribution of conventionally indirect strategies by perspective indicated that most conventionally indirect requests by perspective were hearer oriented (M-M 5.35%, 2.97%, 26.20%, 10.17% versus M-F 14.88%, 10.11%, 29.76%, 22.62%), followed by speaker oriented (M-M 2.38%, 1.78%, 14.88%, 7.75% versus M-F 5.94%, 5.35%, 19.66%, 10.11%). Furthermore, inclusive and impersonal wzre found with low frequency (see Table 1 below).

Table 1
Request Perspective: The Case of Males

Situation	Perspective	M-M		M-F	
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect
S1	Hearer-oriented	152 90.47%	9 5.35%	127 75.59%	25 14.88%
	Speaker-oriented	0	4 2.38%	0	10 5.94%
	Inclusive	0	2 1.21%	0	4 2.38%
	Impersonal	0	1 0.59%	0	2 1.21%
S2	Hearer-oriented	160 95.25%	5 2.97%	140 83.33%	17 10.11%
	Speaker-oriented	0	3 1.78%	0	9 5.35%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	2 1.21%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S3	Hearer-oriented	95 56.54%	44 26.20%	80 47.61%	50 29.76%
	Speaker-oriented	0	25 14.88%	0	33 19.66%
	Inclusive	0	4 2.38%	0	5 2.97%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S4	Hearer-oriented	134 79.76%	18 10.71%	110 65.49%	38 22.62%
	Speaker-oriented	0	13 7.75%	0	17 10.11%
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	3 1.78%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
Total		541	131	457	215

These are examples according to the respondent's production:

It can be concluded that the distribution of direct strategies and conventionally indirect by perspective

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(1)	ja:-mʊbaʃer	ʔdi-li		alfaturah
*	hey waiter	give-to me		bill
	Waiter,	give me		the bill.

(2)	ja:ħa:ʤ	naðif-li		maktab-i
*	hey hajji	clean-for me		office-my
	Hajji,	clean		my office.

(3)	Law samaħt	mʊmkin	tidi-li	alfaturah
*	If you allowed	can	give-to me	bill
	Excuse me,	can you	give me	the bill.

Speaker oriented perspectives

(4)	min faðlak	ʔqdar	ʔaʕrifkam	alfaturah
*	out of your bounty	able I	know how much	bill
	Please,	can I	know how much	the bill?

(5)	ʔʊχt-i	min faðlik	ʔqdar	ʔarslik	tiʃtari
*	sister-my	out of your bounty	able I	send-you	buy
	My sister,	please,	can I	send you	to buy

χðrawa:t min		albaqa:lah
vegetable from		grocery
vegetable from		Grocery?

(6)	Law samaħt	mʊmkin	ʔastaʕi:r	maħmulak	lmʊdat
*	If you allowed	can	borrow	laptop-your	for
	Excuse me,	can I	borrow	your laptop	for

sa:ʕah
an hour
an hour.

Impersonal perspectives

(7)	li:ʃ ma:	nistaʕmil	maħmulik	lmʊdat	sa:ʕah
*	Why not	use	laptop-your	for	an hour
	Why don't we	use	your laptop	for	an hour?

(8)	ʔi:ʃraʔjik-i	nistaχdim	al-maħmu:l	lmʊdat	sa:ʕah
*	How about	use	laptop	for	an hour
	How about using the laptopforan hour?				

indicated that there were differences in the choice. The male respondents in both groups M-M and M-F used mostly hearer-orientated perspective in making direct requests across the four situations. However, the findings indicated that the male respondents in M-M interactions and M-F interactions tended to use various perspectives in making indirect requests with different frequency and percentage across the four situations. The male respondents mostly employed hearer-oriented perspectives if compared to the other perspectives in M-M and M-F interactions.

Request Perspective Used by Female Respondents in situation 1, 2, 3 and 4

As can be seen in Table 2 below, the distribution of direct strategies by perspective indicated differences in frequency and percentage in F-F interactions and F-M interactions. Generally, the female respondents in both F-F interactions and F-M interactions employed hearer-oriented across the four situations with high frequency and percentage in making direct requests strategies (F-F 88.9%, 88.10%, 61.92%, 87.5% versus F-M 74.43%, 73.23%, 39.30%, 72.7%).

However, as shown in Table 2, the distribution of conventionally indirect head act strategies by perspective in F-F interactions and F-M interactions showed differences in their choice. The findings revealed that in general, the female respondents in F-F interactions and F-M interactions across the four situations employed hearer-oriented more frequently than other perspectives (F-F 5.95%, 5.95%, 25.59%, 7.15% versus F-M 15.47%, 16.7%, 42.85%, 17.26%). Furthermore, they employed speaker-oriented perspectives in all four situations (F-F 4.16%, 3.57%, 10.71%, 5.35% versus F-M 7.73%, 7.73%, 14.88%, 10.76%). In addition, inclusive was observed in situation one, two and three with low frequencies and percentage (F-F 1.21%, 2.38%, 1.78% versus F-M 1.78%, 2.97%, and 2.97%). Impersonal was employed in situation one only (F-F 0.59% versus F-M 0.59%).

Request Perspective Used by Male Respondents in situation 5, 6, 7 and 8

The analysis of the request perspective in M-M interactions and M-F interactions across the four situations, five, six, seven and eight showed that there were differences in frequency and percentage in the choice of perspective. As shown in the Table 3 below, the findings indicated that in general, the respondents in M-M interactions and M-F interactions across the four situations employed hearer oriented only in all four situations in making direct requests (M-M 61.32%, 80.95%, 79.16%, 71.42% versus M-F 41.8%, 65.47%, 65.47%, 55.95%). Speaker-orientated perspectives, inclusive and impersonal were not employed in any of

Table 2

Request Perspective: the Case of Females

Situation	Perspective	F-F		F-M	
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect
S1	Hearer-oriented	148 88.09%	10 5.95%	125 74.43%	26 15.47%
	Speaker-oriented	0	7 4.16%	0	13 7.73%
	Inclusive	0	2 1.21%	0	3 1.78%
	Impersonal	0	1 0.59%	0	1 0.59%
S2	Hearer-oriented	148 88.10%	10 5.95%	123 73.23%	27 16.07%
	Speaker-oriented	0	6 3.57%	0	13 7.73%
	Inclusive	0	4 2.38%	0	5 2.97%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S3	Hearer-oriented	104 61.92%	43 25.59%	66 39.30%	72 42.85%
	Speaker-oriented	0	18 10.71%	0	25 14.88%
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	5 2.97%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S4	Hearer-oriented	147 87.5%	12 7.15%	121 72.02%	29 17.26%
	Speaker-oriented	0	9 5.35%	0	18 10.76%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
Total		547	125	435	237

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(9) Law samaħti   ja:ʔʊχt-i   **ʔdi-li**   alfaturah
*   If   you allowed   sister-my   **give- me**   bill
   Excuse me   my sister,   **give me**   the bill.

(10) min faðlik   **mʊmkin**   tidi-li   alfaturah
*   out of your bounty   **can**   give- me   bill
   Please,   **can you**   give me   the bill.

Speaker oriented perspectives

(11) Law samaħt   ja:ʔaχ-i   **ʔqdar**   ʔaχð   alfaturah

*   If you allowed   brother-my   **able-I**   get   bill
   Excuse me   my brother,   **can I**   get   the bill.

(12) Law samaħt   **mʊmkin**   **ʔrssila-k**   tiʃtari   χðrawa:t
*   If you allowed   **can-I**   **send-you**   buy   vegetable
   Excuse me,   **can I**   **send you**   to buy   vegetable

   min   albaqa:lah
   from   grocery
   from   grocery.

(13) ʕafwan   ʔqdar   ʔstaχdim   maħmulak   lmʊdat   sa:ʕah
*   sorry   able I   use   laptop-your   for   an hour
   I am sorry   can I   use   your laptop   for   an hour?

these situations in making the direct request.

However, as shown in Table 3, the distribution of conventionally indirect head act strategies by perspective in M-M and M-F interactions showed differences in the choice of perspectives. Generally, the findings revealed that the respondents in M-M and M-F interactions preferred to use hearer-oriented perspective more frequently than other perspectives across the four situations (M-M 24.40%, 11.30%, 12.25%, 19.4% versus M-F 39.88%, 23.23%, 22.3%, 27.97%). In addition, speaker-oriented perspective was used in all four situations (M-M 11.90%, 7.75%, 8.34%, 8.33% versus M-F 16.07%, 11.30%, 12.5%, 13.70%). Inclusive was used in situation five and eight with low frequencies and percentages (M-M 2.38%, 1.21% versus M-F 2.97%, 2.38%). Impersonal was not employed in any of these situations.

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(14) ʔiðasamaːħt   jaːʔʊstað   **ʔadi-li**   kitab-ak   ʔktʊb
*   If you allowed   hey teacher   **give-me**   book-your   write

Excuse me   teacher,   **give me**   your book   to do

waʤib-i
homework-my
my homework.

(15) ʔiðamaːfiː maniʕ   jaːmʊdir   **tiqdir**   tissmaħ-li
*   If no objection   hey manager   **can you**   allow-me

If there is no objection   my manager,   **can you**   allow me

ʔrwiħbadri aljaʊm
leave   early   today
to leave   early   today?

Speaker oriented perspectives

(16) min faðlik   jaːʔʊstaðah   **mʊmkin**   ʔastaʕiːr   kitab-ik

Table 3

Request Perspective: the Case of Males

Situation	Perspective	M-M		M-F	
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect
S5	Hearer-oriented	103 61.32%	41 24.40%	69 41.08%	67 39.88%
	Speaker-oriented	0	20 11.90%	0	27 16.07%
	Inclusive	0	4 2.38%	0	5 2.97%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S6	Hearer-oriented	136 80.95%	19 11.30%	110 65.47%	39 23.23%
	Speaker-oriented	0	13 7.75%	0	19 11.30%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S7	Hearer-oriented	133 79.16%	21 12.5%	110 65.47%	37 22.03%
	Speaker-oriented	0	14 8.34%	0	21 12.5%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S8	Hearer-oriented	120 71.42%	32 19.04%	94 55.95%	47 27.97%
	Speaker-oriented	0	14 8.33%	0	23 13.70%
	Inclusive	0	2 1.21%	0	4 2.38%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
Total		492	180	383	289

	out of your bounty	hey teacher	*can*	borrow	book-your
*	Please	teacher,	*can I*	borrow	your book?

(17) *Ɂallahjaħfðik*   *ja:Ɂʊsta:ðah*   *Ɂqdar*Ɂħsʊlʕala

* Allah preserve you   hey teacher   *able*   obtain   on

Allah preserves you   my teacher,   *can I*   obtain

risalattawsjah
letter recommendation
a recommendation letter?

(18) Law samaħti   ja:mʊdirah   *baɁimmkani*   Ɂrwiħ

* If you allowed me   hey manager   *Can-I*   go

Excuse me   manager,   *can I*   leave work

badri
early
early?

Request Perspective Used by Female Respondents in situation 5, 6, 7 and 8

As shown in Table 4 below, generally, the female respondents in both F-F and F-M interactions mostly employed hearer-oriented across the four situations with high frequency and percentage in direct head act request strategies (F-F 49.42%, 65.49%, 66.07%, 63.9% versus F-M 31.56%, 51.79%, 52.97%, 49.42%). However, speaker-oriented perspectives, inclusive and impersonal were not employed in any of these situations with direct head act request strategies. The female respondents considered hearer-oriented as solidarity politeness strategies, expressing camaraderie between interlocutors. They also considered hearer-oriented as an expected behaviour in such situations in Yemeni culture.

However, as shown in Table 4, the findings

Table 4

Request Perspective: The Case of Females

Situation	Perspective	F-F		F-M	
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect
S5	Hearer-oriented	83 49.42%	58 34.52%	53 31.56%	77 45.84%
	Speaker-oriented	0	23 13.69%	0	36 21.42%
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	1 0.59%
	Impersonal	0	1 0.59%	0	1 0.59%
S6	Hearer-oriented	110 65.49%	34 20.23%	87 51.79%	54 32.14
	Speaker-oriented	0	24 14.28%	0	27 16.07%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S7	Hearer-oriented	111 66.07%	34 20.23%	89 52.97%	44 26.19%
	Speaker-oriented	0	23 13.70%	0	35 20.84%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S8	Hearer-oriented	106 63.09%	40 23.83%	83 49.42%	59 35.11%
	Speaker-oriented	0	17 10.11%	0	20 11.90%
	Inclusive	0	5 2.97%	0	6 3.57
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
Total		410	262	312	360

revealed that in both F-F and F-M interactions most conventionally indirect strategies by perspective were hearer-oriented perspectives across the four situations with high frequency more than other perspectives (F-F 34.52%, 20.23%, 20.23%, 23.83% versus F-M 45.84%, 32.14%, 26.19%, 35.11%). Furthermore, it can be noticed that the speaker-oriented perspective was used in all four situations as second preferred strategies (F-F 13.69%, 14.28%, 13.70%, 10.11% versus F-M 21.42%, 16.07%, 20.84%, 11.90%). Inclusive was also employed but only in situation five and eight with low frequencies and percentages (F-F 1.78%, 2.97% versus F-M 0.59%, 3.57%). Impersonal was employed in situation one only (F-F 0.59%, F-M 0.59%). The findings indicated that in both F-F and F-M interactions, the female respondents showed a greater preference to employ hearer-oriented and speaker-oriented with conventionally indirect requests more than other perspectives.

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(19)	ʕafwan	ja:ʔʊstaðah	**tʕirin-i**	kitab-ik
*	sorry	hey teacher	**lend-me**	book-your
	I am sorry	teacher,	**lend me**	your book?
(20)	ʔallahjaħfðik	ja:mʊdirah	**mʊmkin**	tissmaħi-li
*	Allah preserve you	hey manager	**can**	allow-me
	Allah preserves you	my manager,	**can you**	allow me
	ʔrwiħbadri	aljaʊm		
	leave early	today		
	to leave early	today?		

Speaker oriented perspectives

(21)	ʕafwan	ja:ʔʊstʔaðah	**ʔqdar**	ʔstaʕi:r	kitab-ik
*	sorry	hey teacher	**able I**	borrow	book-your
	I am sorry	teacher,	**can I**	borrow	your book?
(22)	Law samaħti	ja:ʔʊsta:ðahfatima	**ʔqdar**	ʔrwiħ	
*	If you allowed me	teacher Fatima	**can**	go	
	Excuse me	teacher Fatima,	**can I**	leave work	

badrialjaʊm	maʕ-i	mawʕid		mʕa	tabibalasnan
early today	have-I	appointment		with	dentist
early today,	I have	an appointment		with	dentist.

(23)	ʕafwan	ja: mʊdirah	**mʊmkin**	ʔʃil	sja:ra:t-ak	ʔwasil
*	sorry	hey manager	**can**	use	car-your	lift
	I am sorry	my manager,	**can I**	use	your car	to lift

ʔax-i	min	almaħtah
brother-my	from	station
my brother	from	station?

Request Perspective Used by Male Respondents in situation 9, 10, 11 and 12

Based on the results in Table 5 below, it showed that there were significant differences in the choice of request perspectives in M-M interactions and M-F interactions across the four situations (nine, ten, eleven and twelve). As shown in Table 5, the findings indicated that in general, the male respondents in M-M and M-F interactions across the four situations employed hearer-oriented perspective more frequently in making direct requests (M-M 76.78%, 67.85%, 79.86%, and 68.46% versus M-F 60.11%, 54.16%, 62%, and 47.64%). However, the findings indicated that most conventionally indirect head act requests were hearer-oriented perspective across the four situations with high frequency in both M-M interactions and M-F interactions (M-M 13.09%, 15.47%, 7.83%, 15.47% versus M-F 25%, 25.59%, 17.19%, 30.35%). The male respondents reported that they felt closeness to each other and felt that they are familiar with each other, so they used hearer-oriented with conventionally indirect head act requests strategies to show solidarity and strong relationship between them. Hearer-oriented in M-M interactions and M-F interactions act as a marker of solidarity and camaraderie between interlocutors when the speaker and hearer in equal social position.

Furthermore, the male respondents employed the speaker-oriented perspectives as a second preferred strategy in (M-M8.35%, 9.53%, 4.65%, and 10.13% versus M-F 11.32%, 11.90%, 11.30%, 13.69%). Inclusive was employed in all four situations with low frequency with conventionally indirect strategies (M-M 1.78%, 2.97%, 1.80%, 1.78% versus M-F 3.57%, 3.57%, 2.38%, 2.97%). Impersonal was not employed in any of these situations.

Request Perspective Used by Female Respondents in situation 9, 10, 11 and 12

According to the analysis of request perspectives of the four situations, the female respondents in F-F and F-M interactions showed that there were significant differences in the choice of perspectives. Generally, Table 6 below showed that the female respondents in F-F and F-M interactions across the four situations employed hearer-oriented perspective only in making direct requests (F-F 67.28%, 59.54%, 69.04%, 63.70% versus F-M 52.97%, 42.90%, 54.16%, 48.81%). However, the findings indicated that the distribution of conventionally indirect head act strategies by perspective showed that the female respondents employed hearer-orientated perspective with high frequency across the four situations in both F-F interactions and F-M interactions (F-F 18.45%, 25.59%, 16.07%, 22.02% versus F-M 30.35%, 32.70%,

Table 5

Request Perspective: the Case of Males

Situation	Perspective	M-M			M-F		
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Non-conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect	Non-conventionally indirect
S9	Hearer-oriented	129 76.78%	22 13.09%	0	101 60.11%	42 25%	0
	Speaker-oriented	0	14 8.35%	0	0	19 11.32%	0
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	0	6 3.57%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
S10	Hearer-oriented	114 67.85%	26 15.47%	2 1.21%	91 54.16%	43 25.59%	2 1.21%
	Speaker-oriented	0	16 9.53%	5 2.97%	0	20 11.90%	6 3.57%
	Inclusive	0	5 2.97%	0	0	6 3.57%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
S11	Hearer-oriented	134 79.86%	13 7.83%	4 2.38%	105 62%	29 17.19%	3 1.78%
	Speaker-oriented	0	8 4.56%	6 3.57%	0	19 11.30%	9 5.35%
	Inclusive	0	3 1.80%	0	0	4 2.38%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
S12	Hearer-oriented	115 68.46%	26 15.47	3 1.78%	80 47.64%	51 30.35%	3 1.78%
	Speaker-oriented	0	17 10.13%	4 2.38%	0	23 13.69%	6 3.57%
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	0	5 2.97%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		492	156	24	377	267	29

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(24) Law samaħt ja:saħab-i *ʃtitsalifni* fʊlu:s daftari-k La:ni kʊnt ʁaijb ʔmss
* If you allowed me hey friend-my *want-I lend me* money notebook-your because was absent yesterday
Excuse me My friend, *I want you lend me* money. your notebook? because I was absent yesterday

(25) ʔiðama:fi: ʔizʕʤ ja:abdʊlah *tiqdar* tsalfni fʊlu:s
* If no bother hey Abdullah *you able* lend-me money
If there is no bother Abdullah, *Can you* lend me money?

(27) Law samaħti ja:fatima *mʊmkin* ʔstalif fʊlu:s
* If you allowed me hey fatima *can I* borrow money
Excuse me Fatima, *can I* borrow money?

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

Speaker oriented perspectives

(26) ʔiðatakarramti ja:ʔʊχt-i *ʔqdar* ʔstaʕi:r
* If you be generous enough sister-my *able I* borrow
Please my sister, *can I* borrow

(28) ʕafwan ja:ʔʊχt-i *mʊmkin* ʔastaχdim maħmul-ak
* sorry sister-my *can* use-I laptop-your
I am sorry my sister, *can I* use your laptop?

maħmu:l-i	moʕtal
laptop-my	broken
my laptop	is broken.

Impersonal perspective

(29)	li:ʃ ma:	nsi:r	la-ʔsu:q	ʔʃtari	fawakih
*	Why not	go	to-market	to buy	fruit
	Why don't we	go	to the market	to buy	fruit?

31.52%, 23.74%). The Speaker-oriented employed as second preferred strategy (F-F 13.09%, 11.30%, 7.73%,

12.5% versus F-M 13.69%, 19.64%, 10.16%, 16.07%). Inclusive was also employed in all four situations with low frequency (F-F 0.59%, 3.57%, 1.21%, 1.78% versus F-M 1.78%, 4.76%, 2.38%). Impersonal was not employed in any of these situations.

Non-conventionally indirect head act requests strategies were employed in situation eleven only. Most of the non-conventionally indirect requests in both F-F interactions and F-M interactions were speaker-oriented perspective because the weight of imposition was very high in such a situation, so the respondents preferred to stress their roles to mitigate and soften the request.

Table 6
Request Perspective: The Case of Females

Situation	Perspective	F-F			F-M		
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Non-conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect	Non-conventionally indirect
S9	Hearer-oriented	113 67.28%	31 18.45%	0	89 52.97%	51 30.35%	0
	Speaker-oriented	0	22 13.09%	0	0	23 13.69%	0
	Inclusive	0	1 0.59%	0	0	3 1.78%	0
	Impersonal	0	1 0.59%	0	0	2 1.21%	0
S10	Hearer-oriented	100 59.54%	43 25.59%	0	72 42.90%	55 32.70%	0
	Speaker-oriented	0	19 11.30%	0	0	33 19.64%	0
	Inclusive	0	6 3.57%	0	0	8 4.76%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
S11	Hearer-oriented	116 69.04%	27 16.07%	6 3.57%	91 54.16%	53 31.52%	1 0.59%
	Speaker-oriented	0	13 7.73%	4 2.38%	0	17 10.16%	6 3.57%
	Inclusive	0	2 1.21%	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
S12	Hearer-oriented	107 63.70%	37 22.02%	0	82 48.81%	55 32.74%	0
	Speaker-oriented	0	21 12.5%	0	0	27 16.07%	0
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	0	4 2.38%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		436	226	10	334	331	7

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(30)	ja:ʔʊχt-i	**tiqdar-i**	tʕirin-i	daftari-k
*	sister-my	**can-you**	lend-me	notebook-your
	My sister,	**can you**	lend me	your notebook?

(31)	law takarramti	ja:dʒarati	**mʊmkin**	tiwasilin-imaʕak-i
*	If you be generous enough	hey neighbour	**can**	take-me with-you
	Please	my neighbour,	**can you**	give me a ride

la-asu:q	ʔʃtari	fawakih
to-market	to buy	fruit
to the market	to buy	fruit?

(32)	Law samaħti	ja: fatima	**mʊmkin**	tsalfini	fʊlu:s	nisi:t
*	If you allowed me	hey fatima	**can**	lend-me	money	forgot
	Excuse me	Fatima,	**can you**	lend me	money?	I forgot

fʊlu:si	fi	albeit
money-my	at	home
my money	at	home.

Speaker oriented perspectives

(33)	ja:ʔaχ-i	**mʊmkin**	ʔstaʕi:r	daftara-k
*	brother-my	**can**	borrow	notebook-your
	My brother,	**can I**	borrow	your notebook?

(34)	law takarramt	ja:dʒari	**ʔqdar**	ʔru:ħmaʕ-ak
*	If you be generous enough	hey neighbour	**able I**	go with-you
	Please	my neighbour,	**can I**	go

la-asu:q	ʔʃtari	fawakih
to-market	to buy	fruit
to the market with you	to buy	fruit?

(35)	law takarramt	ja:ʔaχ-i	**bʔammkan-i**	ʔstalif
*	If you be generous enough	brother-my	**able-I**	borrow
	Please	my brother,	**can I**	borrow

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

(36)	Law samaħt	ja:abdʊllah	**ʔasttiʕ**	ʔastaχdim	maħmul-ak
*	If you allowed	hey Abdullah	**able-I**	use-I	laptop-your
	Excuse me	Abdullah,	**can I**	use	your laptop?

Discussion

It was found that the respondents of the study used various perspectives such as hearer-oriented perspective, speaker-oriented perspective, inclusive or impersonal either in the direct strategies, conventionally indirect strategies or non-conventionally indirect strategies. According to the type of request perspectives, the results showed that the hearer oriented perspective was the most frequently used by respondents in M-M and F-F interactions and M-F and F-M interactions. In particular, the results revealed that the respondents in M-M and F-F interactions and M-F and F-M interactions had a great tendency to use hearer-oriented perspective only in direct requests. The interpretation for using hearer-oriented perspective in the direct request was that native speakers of Yemeni Arabic in M-M and F-F interactions and M-F and F-M interactions seemed to be less bothered by consideration of perspective, and they seem to feel free to directly impose on the hearer because it was the expected behavior in Yemeni culture as reported by the respondents. This result is in agreement with Hatam and Mohammad (2014) as they stated that Iranian EFL learners favored the hearer-oriented perspective more than others perspective. A further explanation for the frequent use of hearer oriented perspective is that it is the dominant way of realizing a request in Yemeni Arabic. This result is also consistent with Kim's (2007) findings which revealed that the most frequent perspective selected by Korean ESL learners was hearer-oriented perspective.

Furthermore, the results, according to the significant difference between male-male and male-female interactions and female-female and female-male interactions in the use of request perspectives, showed that there are no significant differences in the use of request perspectives between male-male and male-female interactions and female-female and female-male interactions. Male and female respondents used hearer-oriented perspective as the first preferred perspective strategy and speaker-oriented as a second preferred strategy in Yemeni Arabic. Other perspectives were used but less than hearer-oriented and speaker-oriented perspectives but not in all situations. The respondents used hearer-oriented because it was the expected behavior in Yemeni culture in order to show solidarity and friendship. The respondents used speaker-oriented perspective when they felt that the weight of imposition was so high on the hearer, so they preferred to stress their own roles to avoid a level of coerciveness and to make their request as permission from the hearer for an act to be done. It can be observed that the findings of the study correspond with what Blum-Kulka (1982,

1983) claimed, that politeness value is not determined by the language form, it is determined by the context of speech act because what may be viewed as polite in some culture may not be viewed with the same degree of politeness in another.

Unexpectedly, the female respondents in F-F and F-M interactions used the same request perspectives as male respondents in M-M and M-F. It was expected from the results of the current study that female respondents would use different strategies, such as speaker-oriented perspective, and that they would be politer than male respondents. Therefore, this result is not consistent with Holmes' (1995) result that women are more polite than men. The interpretation for using the same request perspectives by male and female respondents was to show solidarity and paying attention to others without considering gender differences and to show that they respected the rights of others to their own autonomy and freedom of movement or choice.

The results of the current study are limited only for the respondents of the study because they are homogeneous and they are from one of the Arab countries, with the study concentrated on Yemeni Arabic only and on small size sample. Furthermore, the researcher used only written (DCT) for collecting data. Therefore, the results of the current study cannot be generalized to all Arab countries. In addition, the result of the current study cannot fill the knowledge gap in this area because it is the first study in Yemeni Arabic, so the researcher suggests that further research can be done in the area of speech acts in Yemeni Arabic in order explore other types of speech acts in Yemeni Arabic that might cause misunderstandings such as apology, invitation and refusal.

Conclusion

This paper reports findings of the use request perspectives in Yemeni Arabic. It focuses on the most frequent type used by the respondents and if there is any significant difference in the use of request perspectives. It can be concluded that the respondents use different types of request perspectives with different frequencies and percentages.

The findings revealed that the respondents in general preferred to use hearer-oriented perspective more frequently than other perspectives across as the first preferred strategy. Speaker-oriented was employed as a second preferred strategy. Inclusive and impersonal were employed sometimes with low frequency. In addition, the findings revealed that there is no significant difference in the use of request perspectives in males and females' interactions and they use the same request perspectives.

The findings can be a guideline for English and Arabic language learning and teaching in Yemen. It helps teachers to highlight the similarities and differences to their students to facilitate the teaching of polite/impolite expressions in the target language as compared to the first language. It helps the language instructors who endeavor to reveal pragmatic competence by Arabic speakers in preparing their teaching materials. Furthermore, the current study helps non-native speakers of Arabic to get a clear idea about what are acceptable or not acceptable expressions in Arabic language in general and Yemeni Arabic in particular.

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