

# REQUEST MODIFICATIONS IN WORKPLACE EMAILS IN EGYPTIAN SETTING

## Preparation

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## Abstract:

This paper presents the analysis of internal and external modifications with the CCSARP as the theory of analysis in order to determine what modifications are used to mitigate or to aggravate the e-mail requests made by Egyptian employees to one another. Internal modifications take the form of syntactic downgraders and lexical/phrasal expressions (downgraders and upgraders) that would help to soften the head act of the request. External modifications are defined as supportive or aggravating moves that are realized in front of or next to the head act, and they modify the illocutionary force indirectly. The findings in the study show Egyptian coworkers tended to use external modifications (supportive moves) in all data under study. However, lexical/phrasal modifications are not applied widely since 159 of requests are not modified by any lexical/phrasal or syntactic modifications. In addition to the main request strategy types, speakers have at their disposal other means of mitigating the

request, which can be internal, such as request perspective, syntactic and other downgraders and upgraders and external such as adjuncts to the head act (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984, p. 203-205).

Keywords: requests in e-mail, modifications in requests, internal modifications, external modifications.

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## **1. Introduction**

Business communication has long relied on a common language used to facilitate exchanges between personnel and streamline flow in the working process. In Egypt, national business operations are predominantly conducted in English which serves as a lingua Franca among both native and non-native speakers. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as BELF, which stands for Business English as a Lingua Franca (Firth, 1995) or more recently, English as Business Lingua Franca (Louhiala-Salminen, Charles & Kankaanranta, 2005). Companies often make English proficiency a prerequisite for job requirements, and existing employees are encouraged to improve their English skills to meet the demands of their positions.

In the modern work environment, employees are required to maintain constant connectivity. "Knowledge and information workers are expected to stay linked to their jobs regardless of their location, even during weekends or vacations" (Guffey & Loewy,

2012, p.106). Hence, it is essential to give further thought to the skill of communicating in a way that maintains relationships while also addressing business needs and objectives. However, achieving this balance is not as straightforward as it may appear. Business discourse involves more than just vocabulary and grammar; selecting an appropriate tone is equally crucial. The tone of a business letter can convey a deeper meaning beyond the literal words and has the power to either preserve or jeopardize a business relationship (Xinglian, 2006).

To effectively formulate an appropriate email request, Egyptian business personnel must enhance their pragmatic competence, which involves developing the necessary language skills to use language appropriately in different contexts. Requesting situations where there is an imbalance of power require sophisticated pragmatic abilities. If speech is delivered with inadequate linguistic structures and modifications, it can lead to pragmatic miscommunication between interlocutors, as seen in interactions among business personnel. This study specifically examines the politeness strategies, request strategies, and internal/external modifications utilized in the requests of Egyptian business personnel.

The focus of this study is on the email of request, which is considered a Face Threatening Act (FTA). An FTA is an action that jeopardizes the speaker's or hearer's face by going against

their desires or wants in an exchange (Brown & Levinson, 1978). An improperly formulated request can pose a significant threat and imposition of a receiver's face. Hence, there is typically a need for requesters to soften their message. To achieve successful mitigation, writers must utilize various types of politeness strategies (positive, negative, bald on record, and off record) to achieve their communicative objective. These strategies are also linked to the level of directness and the nature and degree of modifications (associated with the request head act), which collectively influence the pragmatic impact of an utterance.

## **2. Data**

The primary nature of this study is qualitative. It involved a descriptive analysis to identify and examine the items of interest which are internal and external modifications. Frequency counts were conducted for the internal and external modifications. In terms of data collection, the number of emails (383) were hardly gathered due to ethical considerations. The data was collected from an unspecified number of Egyptian business workers of diverse workplace settings.

The participants in this study were gathered using a combination of random sampling and snowball sampling techniques. Random sampling was employed to select the initial participants ensuring a diverse representation of individuals. These participants were then asked to refer other potential participants

through the snowball sampling method. Snowball sampling allows for the expansion of the participants pool through referrals, reaching individuals who may have been difficult to access through random sampling alone. This approach helped to enhance the diversity and breadth of the participant group, capturing a wide range of perspectives and experiences. The combination of random sampling and snowball sampling facilitated the formation of a robust and varied participant cohort, contributing to their richness and depth of the study's findings.

The emails collected are genuine, real and actual emails sent between Egyptian colleagues in their workplace setting. The researcher first had a problem reaching out to people who regularly used emails in their workplace setting, not to mention the difficulty of reaching out to individuals who used the English language when communication via emails. The researcher believes this is due to the aspect of the geographical location of the researcher's residence, as the researcher is based in an Upper Egyptian governorate. Upon reaching out to near and distant relatives and friends, the researcher came to the conclusion that most offices and workplaces in the Upper Egyptian region do not communicate using emails. The reason for this goes back to the fact that governorate institutions haven't yet indoctrinated the use of laptops, computers and are still using pen and paper in their daily communication when they need to sign off a leave or a

request. Therefore, the amount of e-mails gathered from near and distant relatives started off as scarce, till the researcher reached out to distant acquaintances on the internet.

The researcher contacted friends online who lived in different governorates in Egypt and asked them to forward and reach out to people who they think could benefit the research. The researcher made sure people understood that they should not correct or rewrite their emails, and that they should choose several emails that they have sent to business colleagues and forward them to the researcher. This was done over a large time span, and was repeated several times as many people were hesitant to share out company emails and information and opted out against the idea frightened that this might cause them problems at their workplace, till they were reassured to crop and delete any personal information such as names, emails, phone numbers, and company info. It was only then and through several trials and errors and Allah's guidance, that the researcher succeeded in collecting a large amount of data base that grew bigger over the years to help the researcher's analysis.

### **3. Analytical Framework**

The current study utilized the CCSARP framework developed by Blum-Kulka et al. in 1989 and further expanded by Economidou-Kogetsidis in 2011. The request strategies within the specific head act are evaluated along a directness scale, using the

CCSARP framework (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011). Request strategies refer to the necessary selection of the level of directness employed in expressing the request (Blum-Kulka et al, p.278).

The head act, which refers to the main request, can be performed independently or accompanied by supportive moves and elements aimed at mitigating its impact. These mitigating elements are known as modifications. Modifications encompass various linguistic elements, including syntactic, lexical, and phrasal devices, which serve to soften either the head act itself or the context in which it is embedded (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984). These modifications consist of both internal and external elements. Internal modifications refer to optional additions to the request head act that are not essential for its realization (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984). They are components employed before or after the head act to lessen or intensify the impact of the request (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). The data analysis was conducted concurrently using these two frameworks because they overlap and are interconnected.

#### **4. Analytical Procedure**

The coding protocol of the Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Pattern (CCSARP) developed by Economidou-Kogetsidis in 2011 was employed to code the request strategies and modifications. The researchers first identified the exact sentences in each email that contained the request head act. These

head acts were then classified based on the purpose of the request, such as a request for action, request for information, query email, thank you emails, confirmation emails, announcement emails, follow up email, as well as feedback and apology emails, and so on. Subsequently, the identified head acts were further classified into request sub-strategies based on the level of directness, specifically categorizing them as the most direct, conventionally indirect, or non-conventionally indirect strategies. This coding process allowed for a systematic analysis of the request strategies and their varying levels of directness within the context of the study.

During the third phase of the study, the focus shifted to analyzing modifications that influence the illocutionary force of the requests. Two types of modifications were examined: internal modifications and external modifications. The analysis of internal modifications involved identifying lexical/phrasal downgraders, upgraders, and syntactic downgraders within each request head act. These internal modifications serve to modify the impact of the request on the receiver of the email by employing specific lexical choices, phrasal devices, and syntactic structures. On the other hand, external modifications were identified and located within the email, as they indirectly modify the head act at various points throughout the email. These external modifications contribute to shaping the overall context and tone of the email, potentially



affecting the reception and interpretation of the request. By examining both internal and external modifications, the study aimed to gain insights into how linguistic devices are utilized to soften or intensify the impact of the requests in Egyptian business emails.

## **5. Development of the Cross Cultural Speech Act Project (CCSARP)**

Faerch and Kasper (1989) extensively studied the phenomena of communication strategies in second language acquisition. Their work focused on the distinction between internal and external modifications in learner language. According to CCSARP, individuals possess a range of devices that they can utilize to either amplify or alleviate the impact of the speech act they engage in. Internal modifiers encompass elements that are not crucial to the request utterance and their omission would not impact the illocutionary force of the request. Internal modifications refer to the linguistic adjustments made within the learner's speech to enhance comprehensibility, such as simplifying vocabulary or grammar. External modifications, on the other hand, involve utilizing resources beyond the learner's linguistic competence for limitations in language proficiency, Faerch and Kasper's research shed light on the adaptive strategies employed by language learners to bridge communication gaps and highlighted the significance of both internal and external

modifications in facilitating successful communication in a second language context.

Modifiers can function as indicators to convey the pragmatic force of an utterance and as socio-pragmatic devices to influence the social implications of the speech act. They can also act as downgraders, toning down the impact of the act, or as upgraders highlighting the level of coercion involved. (Blum-Kulka, et al, 1989:19). Internal modifications are categorized into two types: syntactic downgraders and other downgraders, as well as upgraders. Syntactic downgraders include interrogative structures, negation, the past tense, and embedded "if" clauses. Other downgraders consist of consultative devices, understaters, hedges, and downtoners. In contrast, upgraders encompass intensifiers and expletives. On the other hand, external modifications are represented by adjuncts to the head act, which involve various strategies such as checking on availability, seeking procommitment, using grounders, employing sweeteners, disarming potential resistance and minimizing costs.

The modifications made internally can be classified into three groups: syntactic downgraders, lexical/phrasal downgraders, and upgraders. In subsequent research, three additional types of syntactic modifiers were introduced: conditional, aspect, and a combination of all syntactic modifications. The previous category known as the "embedded if clause" was renamed as the

"conditional clause." Additionally, five new lexical/phrasal modifications were incorporated, including politeness markers, subjectivizers, cajolers, appealers, and a combination of lexical and phrasal downgraders. Several new modifiers were introduced as upgraders, such as commitment indicators, emphatic additions, time-related elements, intensifiers, lexical uptoners, determination markers, repetitions of requests, pejorative determiners, and orthographic/suprasegmental emphasis. These modifications aimed to enhance or strengthen the linguistic expression (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) referred to the external modifications originally known as 'Adjuncts to the head act' (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 198, p.204) as 'supportive moves'. The first modifier, previously called 'checking on availability', was renamed as 'preparator', and a new modifier called 'promise of reward' was identified. Additionally, Blum-Kulka et al. (1989, p.288) introduced a new category of external modifications known as aggravating moves. These moves, including 'threat, moralizing, and insult', typically escalate the level of imposition on the hearer.

## **6. Modifications and Politeness**

The concept of politeness is frequently linked to indirectness (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In English politeness, alongside the selection of directness levels in making requests, internal modifications (such as the use of lexical and/or syntactic downgraders) are commonly employed to lessen the burden of the

request (Blum-Kulka, 1987; Cenoz, 1996; Eslamirasekh, 1993; Faerch & Kasper, 1989). The internal modifications, which include both syntactic and lexical downgraders, were adjusted within each request head act based on the characteristics discovered in the present study.

Modification plays a crucial role in expressing politeness in communication. Through modification, speakers can soften their language and mitigate the potential imposition or threat caused by their words. This can be achieved through various means, such as using lexical downgraders (e.g., "could" instead of "can") or syntactic downgraders (e.g. using conditional forms or adding hedging phrases). By employing these modifications, speakers demonstrate their consideration for the face and social harmony of the interlocutors. Modification allows for the preservation of positive social relations and contributes to the overall politeness of the interaction.

The supportive moves dimension, also known as external modification dimension, is commonly described as the third dimension. These modifications can be either negatively-oriented, indicating deference and granting freedom to the receiver, or positively-oriented, emphasizing a sense of shared group identity with the receiver.

The present study constructed the framework of politeness strategies by Brown and Levinson (1987) and CCSARP (2011) to

enable the analysis of politeness strategies in the head acts of e-mail requests between Egyptian business e-mails. The study focused on identifying strategies based on a scale of directness levels. Furthermore, the research examined and discussed the modifications employed to alter and soften the impact of requests, considering their connection to strategies of politeness.

## **7. Analysis of Request Modifications in Egyptian Business E-mails**

The present section in the article presents the analysis of internal and external modifications with the CCSARP as the theory of analysis in order to determine what modifications are used to mitigate or to aggravate the e-mail request made by Egyptian employees to one another. Internal modifications take the form of syntactic downgraders and lexical/phrasal expressions (downgraders and upgraders) that would help to soften the head act of the request. External modifications are defined as supportive or aggravating moves that are realized in front of or next to the head act, and they modify the illocutionary force indirectly.

The findings in the study show Egyptian coworkers tended to use external modifications (supportive moves) in all data under study. However, lexical/phrasal modifications are not applied widely since 159 of requests are not modified by any lexical/phrasal or syntactic modifications. In addition to the main request strategy types, speakers have at their disposal other means

of mitigating the request, which can be internal, such as request perspective, syntactic and other downgraders and upgraders and external such as adjuncts to the head act (Blum-Kulka and Olhstain, 1984, p. 203-205).

**Table 1: Modified Requests Internally vs. Not Modified Requests**

<b>Modification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
<b>Modified request</b>	287	64.34%
<b>Not modified request</b>	159	35.65
<b>Total</b>	446	100

The findings are demonstrated in Table 1, and the analysis of external modification is illustrated in 1. The discussion of the modification utilized was combined with instances where politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson (1987) and the modifications included in the CCSARP by Economidou-Koetsidis (2011). Some of the examples in the following subsections evidence the use of politeness strategies to prove the context of how modifications were used to mitigate the FTAs of requests.

The result showed that while Egyptian employees use the internal modifications to soften the imposition of their written requests, they also tend to rely more on the use of external

modifications using supporting moves. This strategy can indirectly modify the illocutionary force of the request as the Egyptian professionals ensure that they provide their addressees with enough background information and justify the reason behind their request through grounder moves. This present study also shows a shift in employees communication style where brevity is highly preferable.

### **7.1 Internal Modifications**

Internal modification of English e-mail requests was analyzed through lexical/phrasal downgraders and upgraders. Internal modifications are described as "components within the head act (the central component of a request sequence that fulfils a request), the presence of which is theoretically sufficient to understand the utterance as a request even without their presence." (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 60). The internal modifiers can be in the form of syntactic downgraders such as conditional, interrogative , past tense, negation, or in the form of lexical/phrasal downgraders. Lexical/phrasal downgraders "serve as optional additions to soften the imposition force of the request by modifying the head act internally through specific lexical and phrasal choices" (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 283).

**Table 2: Frequency of Internal Modification (Lexical/Phrasal Upgraders)**

Modification	Frequency
Time intensifier	13
Intensifier	3
Overstater	1

### 7.1.1 Lexical/Phrasal Downgraders

As for the analysis of internal modification (lexical/phrasal downgraders) which is presented in Table 3 below. Five kinds of lexical/phrasal downgraders were used by the participants. These five kinds found in Egyptian e-mails are (politeness marker 'please', consultative devices, downtoners, appealers and subjectivisers).

**Table 3: Frequency of Lexical/Phrasal Downgraders:**

Modification	Frequency
Politeness marker 'please'	70
Consultative devices	19
Downtoners	13
Appealers	6
Subjectivisers	2
Total	110



### 7.1.2 Lexical/Phrasal Upgraders

While downgraders are meant to soften the request, upgraders are meant to intensify the coerciveness of a request. (Economidou-Kogetsidis 2011). Table 4 below presents the percentage occurrence of the internal modification (lexical/phrasal upgraders) used.

**Table 4: Frequency of Internal Modification (Lexical/Phrasal Upgraders)**

Modification	Frequency
Time intensifier	13
Intensifier	3
Overstater	1

### 7.1.3 Syntactic Downgraders

Along with lexical/phrasal downgraders and upgraders, by employing purely syntactic means the speech act of request are also mitigated. Syntactic downgraders are realized by means of specific categories of language such as the modal verbs in the English language. Some type of modifiers suggested by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989:281-286) in the CCSARP are interrogative, conditional structures, negation, tense and aspect marking. The present study shows the usage of syntactic downgraders as shown in table 5 below.

**Table: 5 Frequency of Internal Modification (Syntactic Downgraders)**

<b>Modification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Conditional Clause</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Conditional</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Interrogative</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Tense</b>	<b>2</b>

#### **7.1.4 Summary**

Findings of the study show that using internal modification is underused as the percentages of internal modification requests found were only (64.34%). While in some cases, there were no lexical/phrasal modifications found to be downgrading the impact of the requests made by Egyptians in their e-mails. The underuse of internal modification whether syntactic or lexical/phrasal downgraders or upgraders could possibly be because the language of communication and lingua franca in business is English and their level of language proficiency might be the reason for such results. Schauer's (2009) findings, indicated that the usage of modifications might be acquired at a later stage of learning the language.

These findings are in line with similar findings by Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011), Hallajian (2014), Biesenbach-Lucas (2007), Weasenforth (2001), and Zarei and Mohammadi

(2012), their findings all agreed on that non-native speakers in their samples underused internal modifications. Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011) explains that the underuse of internal modification could lead to pragmatic failure as the writers of the e-mails might be perceived as rude. While the study conducted by Biesenbach-Lucas and Weasenforth (2010) showed that the NNS tended to use fewer internal modifications and were more likely to make errors when using internal modifications. The following sub-section presents the important role of external modification in mitigating requests contextually.

## **7.2 External Modifications (Supportive Moves)**

As Internal modifications are achieved through devices within the same 'Head act', while the external modifications are localized through not the 'head act but within its immediate context. Faerch and Kasper (1989). The external modification framework developed by Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011) guides the analysis of the data in this sub-section. The study uses three new categories that were presented in a previous study that analyzes e-mails of Libyan postgraduate students by Ergaya Ali Gerair (2018) which are (salutation, appreciation statements, and attention getters). The present study found that the most prevalent external modification is the Email closing which appeared 64 times of the total number of external modifications. The second most prevalent external modification is the Salutation which

appeared 57 times. Found below in Table 6 the findings of these external modifications in Egyptian workplace emails.

**Table 6: Frequency of External Modifications (Supportive Moves)**

<b>Modifications</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Email closing	64
Salutation	57
Greeting / Opening	44
Preclosing thanks	24
Grounder	21
Compliment sweetener	14
Appreciation statement	7
Attention getter	3
Self-introduction	1
Apology	1
Total	196

### **7.2.1 Summary**

According to the current results, it was observed that Egyptian business e-mails had a tendency to use insufficient external changes in their e-mails when requesting to other employees, as out of the 383 e-mails analyzed by Egyptian business correspondences within the workplace only 196 external modifications were found. This discovery aligns with the results

of prior research studies. In a study by Lim and Bowers (2011), non-native English speakers were found to use fewer internal modifications, such as modal verbs and polite forms, in their email requests compared to native English speakers. This was attributed to the non-native speakers' limited knowledge of English pragmatics and sociolinguistic norms. Similarly, a study by Lee and Lefever (2016) found that non-native speakers of English used fewer external modifications, such as providing reasons or justifications for their requests, compared to native speakers. This was attributed to the non-native speakers' limited knowledge of English discourse patterns and rhetorical strategies.

In their respective studies, Faerch (1989) and Aidinlou (2012) discovered a comparable positive link between learner competence and internal/external modification, i.e., the greater the learner proficiency level, the more appropriate internal/external in terms of both quantity and kind. As a result, the findings of this study are consistent with earlier research. However, Trosborg (1995) asserts that syntactic techniques are employed to demonstrate that the requester lowers his or her expectation of the requestee's fulfilment and that external alterations are utilized as persuasive tools to persuade the hearer to perform the action that is desired by the speaker, and this is why external modifications amount up to 196 external modifications used by Egyptians in the workplace. There is no denying the importance of using internal

and external modifications in E-mails that employ a request, in a 1995 study by Hartford and Bardovi-Harling, the authors looked at the impact of e-mail requests made by native and non-native speakers. The findings of the study suggest that email requests with internal and external adjustments were more likely to be complied with.

Hacking (2008) came to the conclusion from his study of Russian learners that raters would view non-native speakers' requests as less socially acceptable if they lacked certain speech act components that are necessary to perform a certain speech act in a native-like manner. Hendricks (2010) discovered that the recipient would view a message poorly if it lacked complex exterior adjustments in his research of e-mail requests written by Dutch English learners, additionally it was observed in Egyptian business emails that such elements can help to mitigate any negative effects of the requests or message conveyed in the email.

There have been some previous research studies examining the use of supportive moves, such as internal and external modifications, in email requests, which have yielded mixed findings. Some studies have found that the use of these supportive moves can be effective in mitigating the potential imposition of the request and increasing compliance from the recipient. For example, a study by Choi and Bazarova (2015) found that the inclusion of polite language and positive emotional expressions in

email requests led to higher levels of compliance from the recipient. However, other studies have suggested that the effects of these supportive moves may be more limited. For instance, a study by Guéguen and Martin (2009) found that the use of politeness strategies, such as internal modifications, did not significantly increase compliance rates in email requests.

The analysis of supportive moves in the present study shows that the most common type of supportive move used in Egyptian business emails were closings and salutations. These two types of supportive move were reported by Faerch and Kasper (1989) as the means for supportive moves in electronic communication. In other words, in e-mail interaction the presence of such two elements contributed to the establishment of a positive, social relationship between the sender and the recipient, particularly in the absence of face-to-face interaction. By including a polite closing and salutation, the sender can signal to the recipient that they value the ongoing relationship and wish to maintain a positive tone. Overall, Faerch and Kasper (1989) emphasize the importance of email closings and salutations as a means of establishing and maintaining positive social relationships in electronic communication. The number of internal modifications used in Egyptian business e-mails in each email request indicates that the participants are conscious of the need to mitigate the request imposition externally.

The present study is based on Economidou-Kogetsidis' (2011) framework, which has been updated with three new categories. The first category concerns the use of a greeting or opening salutation, another new category adapted from Ergaya (2017) is appreciation statements, which were not included in the original framework. Additionally, attention getters, which were present in Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) framework but not in Economidou-Kogetsidis's (2011) framework, were found in e-mail requests made by Libyan postgraduate students.

This preceding section has shared the discoveries regarding the alterations made in the email requests of Egyptian business emails in their workplace, both internal and external. The results showed that the majority of these requests were not softened by using lexical or phrasal modifications to reduce their impact. The examination demonstrated that 72.06% of the head acts in the requests were unaltered. The conditional clause was found to be the most commonly used type of internal modification among lexical/phrasal downgraders. With respect to external modifications, the study's analysis uncovered that the writers of emails tended to favor this type of modification, particularly email closings/salutations and greetings/opening. Lazarescu (2013) argues that this inclination towards external modification instead of internal ones suggest a preference for indirectness.



## **8. Conclusion**

The present study highlights the importance of raising awareness among non-native speakers (NNS) with different levels of English proficiency regarding the use of internal and external modifications when crafting business email requests. Additionally, English teachers need to be consistently aware of this aspect to effectively assist their students in composing polite emails based on the pragmatics inherent in the target language (Krulatz, 2012).

The purpose of this research was to examine the ways in which Egyptians utilize politeness strategies in their workplace emails, specifically in their requests to other employees. The analysis revealed that positive politeness strategies were commonly employed by the Egyptians in their email requests. Based on the data, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the degree of directness and explicitness present in these emails. Firstly, direct strategies were the most frequently used (30.2%), with the use of "imperatives/Mood derivable" "direct questions," and "Elliptical requests" being particularly prevalent. Both conventional and non-conventional indirect request strategies were also utilized with similar frequency. However, the data suggests that there is a notable lack of knowledge or choice in the use of indirectness strategies, resulting in ineffective modifications. As a result, there is a higher change of pragmatic failure since many

Egyptians did not effectively minimize the level of imposition on their requests to other employees.

There have been a few studies examining the use of internal and external modifications in emails by Arabs who use English as a second language. Al-Saidat, and Bataineh (2017) examined the use of internal modifications, such as modal verbs and hedging devices in email requests Arab EFL learners. The study found that the Arab learners used fewer internal modifications compared to native speakers, which was attributed to their limited knowledge of English pragmatics and sociolinguistic norms. Al-Shehri (2016) examined the use of external modifications, such as providing reasons and justifications for requests, in emails by Arab EFL learners. In addition, the study found that the Arab learners used fewer external modifications compared to native speakers, which was attributed to their limited knowledge of English discourse patterns and rhetorical strategies. Al-Haidari and Al-Khawaldeh (2019) examined the use of politeness strategies including internal and external modifications in emails by Arab EFL learners. The study found that the Arab learners used politeness strategies less frequently compared to native speakers, which was attributed to their limited knowledge of English pragmatic and cultural norms. Overall, these studies suggest that Arab EFL learners may face challenges in using internal and external modifications in their email communication due to their limited knowledge of English

pragmatic and cultural norms.

Internal modifications were not heavily used and the range of lexical/phrasal downgrader modifications was limited to simple expressions. Egyptians employed more positive politeness strategies than negative ones in both internal and external modifications. The use of greetings, preclosing thanks, and small talk in salutations demonstrates the spread of positive politeness strategies. The findings suggest that Egyptian employees may face challenges in utilizing pragmatic-linguistic and socio-pragmatic skills, which are reflected in their limited and repetitive use of internal modifications. Felix-Brasdefer's (2012) research supports this conclusion, indicating that students who combine both lexical/phrasal and syntactic modifications have a higher level of sociolinguistic knowledge, leading to more advanced levels of politeness. The problem with lexical/phrasal combinations may be due to a lack of authentic learning input, direct exposure to the English language, and insufficient knowledge of netiquette culture. It is likely that employees received only limited instruction on pragmatic knowledge and appropriate utilization of the English language. Chen (2006) suggests that exposure to the target culture can improve writers' ability to make appropriate requests.

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## تعديلات في رسائل البريد الإلكتروني المتضمنة طلبا في بيئة العمل بين المصريين مستخلص:

تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية ظاهرة تحليل التعديلات الداخلية والخارجية مع CCSARP كنظرية تحليل من أجل تحديد التعديلات المستخدمة لتخفيف أو زيادة رسائل البريد الإلكتروني المتضمنه طلبا, المرسله من الموظفين المصريين لبعضهم البعض فقد تنحو التعديلات الداخلية لتلك الرسائل مسار التخفيضات النحوية و اللغوية (التخفيضات والترقية) التي من شأنها أن تساعد في تخفيف الفعل الرئيسي للطلب. تُعرف التعديلات الخارجية على أنها حركات داعمة أو مشددة تتحقق قبل الفعل الرئيسي للطلب أو بجواره, وتقوم بتعديل القوة الإلقائية بشكل غير مباشر.

تركز هذه الدراسة على الرسائل الإلكترونية الخاصة بالطلب، والذي تعتبر بمثابة قانون تهديد الوجه (FTA). عمل تهديدي للوجه و هو إجراء يعرض وجه المتحدث أو المستمع للوقوع في الحرج من خلال مخالفتيهما لرغبات المتلقيين. يمكن أن يشكل الطلب الذي تمت صياغته بشكل غير صحيح تهديداً كبيراً وفرضاً لوجه المتلقي. ومن ثم، عادة ما تكون هناك حاجة لمقدمي الطلبات لتخفيف رسائلهم بشكل ناجح. و يجب على الكتاب استخدام أنماط متعددة من استراتيجيات المداراة لتحقيق اهدافهم التواصلية. وأظهرت النتائج التي توصلت إليها الدراسة أن زملاء العمل المصريين يميلون إلى استخدام التعديلات الخارجية (التحركات الداعمة) في جميع البيانات قيد الدراسة. ومع ذلك، لا يتم تطبيق التعديلات اللغوية على نطاق واسع حيث إن ( 159) من الطلبات لم يتم تعديلها بواسطة أي تعديلات لغوية أو نحوية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك أنواع استراتيجيات الطلب الرئيسية، حيث يتوفر لدى المتحدثين وسائل أخرى لتخفيف الطلب، والتي يمكن أن تكون داخلية، مثل فحوي الطلب، والنحوية وغيرها من أدوات خفض المستوى والترقية، وخارجية مثل ملاحق لرئيس الفعل اللغوي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** نظرية تعديل الطلب في اللغة, لغة الطلب في البريد الإلكتروني, نظرية قانون الكلام.