INTERNAL MODIFICATION OF REQUESTS STRATEGIES IN THE MOVIE OF THE BIG BANG THEORY: A PRAGMATIC STUDY

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Abstract
The objectives of the research are to describe requests strategies applied by the characters and to describe the categories of internal modification used by the characters in the movies. The research is implemented in three main parts which are collecting the data, classifying, and analyzing them. To obtain the theoretical references, the writer formulates and conceptualizes the existing theoretical overviews related with the topic of the research. The theories are mainly adapted from Anna Trosborg, (1995). The data are taken from the movie entitled "The Big Bang Theory" produced by Chuck Lorre Peter Chakos. The main topic of this research is requests, which describes how the characters modify utterances when they convey their requests. The result show the following there are four main categories of requests strategies applied by the requester namely Direct Strategies (marked explicitly as requests, such as imperatives), Conventionally indirect strategies (referring to contextual preconditions necessary for its performance as conventionalized in the language), Non-conventionally indirect strategies (hints, refer to the object depending on contextual clues). The internal modifications they used are upgraders and downgrader. The category of upgraders are adverbial intensifier, do-construction, commitment upgraders, and lexical intensification and the internal modifications which are found in the category of downgraders are politeness marker, consultative device, downtoner, understatement, hedge and hesitator.

Key words : request, strategy of request, internal modification.

INTRODUCTION
Communication is the basic phenomenon that encompasses all human interactions. People create communication every day in their life. They give and share information how their idea, thought and feeling are. As what stated by Davis (1962: 344) that communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another. It means that communication is the way how people communicate one to another. Communication takes place between a speaker and a hearer who are referred to as participants.

People communicate with others by creating utterance, the utterance they use might show their personality, manner, social class or educational background. For example:
(1) Clean up the kitchen.
(2) I’d like to ask you to clean the kitchen.

The utterance above shows the imposition from the speaker to the hearer. It can be clearly interpreted in expression (1) the speaker gives more burden to the recipient bears in interpreting the request while in expression (2) the speaker puts less of a burden the recipient bears in interpreting the request.

By making a request, the speaker infringes on the recipient’s freedom from imposition. The recipient may feel that the request is an intrusion on his/her freedom of action or even a power play. As for the requester, she/he may hesitate to make requests for fear of exposing a need or out of fear of possibly making the recipient lose face (Blum-Kulka, et al., 1989:11).

Fraser’s description of the attributes of requests provides number of reasons that explain
why this particular speech act has attracted a large amount of interest:

Requests are very frequent in language use (far more frequent, for example, than apologizing or promising; requests are very important to the second language learner; they have been researched in more detailed than any other type of speech act; they permit a wide variety of strategies for their performance; and finally they carry with them a good range of subtle implications involving politeness, deference, and mitigation. Fraser. (1978:6)

As Fraser notes, request is frequently performed in everyday life. Since the desire aim of the request utterance can involve a very diverse number of actions or things, the illocutionary force of requests can also vary greatly. The fact that requests can involve the high number of different desired actions and also varying degrees of illocutionary force certainly contributed to the interest in speech act.

There are many different types of linguistic variations used to express and reflect social factors. It means that the way of how a request is conveyed may also show the social relationship between participants depending on the power, solidarity, closeness, or age, employer and employee, husband and wife, or student and teacher, might have different ways in expressing their requests.

The main topic of this research is request. The people’s utterance in expressing their requests have something to do with politeness. According to Mills (2003:142) in the English society the direct utterance is regarded as impolite and the indirect utterance is more polite. When the speaker and hearer communicate, they usually use polite principles of speech to minimize the imposition involved in the request. One way for the speaker to minimize the imposition is by employing indirect strategies rather than direct ones.

The opinions about politeness can be different due to the cultural aspects. A person may think he or she is already polite while he/she could be considered impolite by others depending on their culture, for example in Indonesia is not common to say 'Shall I open the window?' instead of 'the room is very hot'.

As a means of communication, language is very important for the author in order to present his/her idea, thought, feeling and desire. According to Searle (1969:24), that language is a part of a theory of actions, and speech acts are those verbal acts, or more precisely illocutionary acts, such as promising, threatening and requesting, that one performs in speaking. Request, as one verb of directive acts, is the realization of the speaker's desire in order to make the hearer do what the speaker wants.

Trosborg (1995:187) states that a request is an illocutionary act whereby a speaker (requester) conveys to a hearer (requestee) that he/she wants the requestee to perform an act which is for the benefit of the speaker and, sometimes, for the hearer. Request may be expressed in two ways; they are verbal and non-verbal goods and services. The verbal goods and services is a request for information, whereas the non-verbal is a request for object, an action or some kind of service, etc. The purpose of a request is to involve the hearer in some future action which has positive consequences for the speaker and may imply costs to the hearer.

There are many factors that influence the effect of speaker's utterance to the hearer. Politeness is a phenomenon about something that is considered polite in one culture can often be quite rude or simply strange in another. Meanwhile the goal of politeness is to make all of the participants relaxed and comfortable with one another. An utterance delivered to the hearer must use certain strategies of politeness depends on the situational and social contexts. Context also affects the request successfully delivered if the hearer has the same cultural
background knowledge because it is needed to reveal context of situation.

There are various ways in which a requester can vary the politeness of a request. Indirect request is more likely to be polite than a straightforward order. In addition to the selection of directness level, it is possible to soften, or increase, the impact a request strategy is likely to have on the requestee by modifying the request.

There are various devices used for this purpose referred to as "modality markers" (cf. House and Kasper 1981). These are markers which either tone down the impact an utterance is likely to have on the hearer, downgraders, or which have the opposite effect of increasing the impact, upgraders. In connection with requests it is clearly the former which are particularly relevant.

Modification is another strategy according to the directness level by emphasizing the proposition, so the hearer will notice how the speaker feels toward him or her. The modification can be less or higher face threatening, so that the form of the modification can be indirect or direct. The internal modification is the utterance that states directly or indirectly. From its name, internal modification can be marked by the proposition which is within the sentence or utterance and usually there is a special phrase or a word that belongs to internal modification.

Modification is divided into two major categories namely internal and external modifications. However, the research will be limited in the internal modification category because the writer focuses the research only on the internal modification.

In the movie of The Big Bang Theory, the writer found some interesting phenomena dealing with the use of request in the conversations. Furthermore there are some reasons why the writer chooses this movie as the data source. The movie describes the real-life phenomenon, the stories in the movie represent the different background of the characters, some are originally from different region in America and India and some have different religion.

A SHORT INTRODUCTION OF THE BIG BANG THEORY

The Big Bang Theory, one of the most popular sitcoms, set in Pasadena, California, the show is centered on five characters: two roommate geniuses who work at the California Institute of Technology, experimental physicist Leonard Hofstadter and theoretical physicist Sheldon Cooper; their neighbor across the hall Penny, an attractive blonde waitress and aspiring actress; and Leonard and Sheldon’s equally geeky and socially awkward co-workers and friends Howard Wolowitz, an aerospace engineer and a non-phD from JPL, and Rajesh Koothrappali, a particle astrophysicist postdoc also working at Caltech. Leonard and Sheldon are brilliant physicists, the kind of “beautiful minds” that understand how the universe works. But none of the genius helps them interact with people, especially women. All this begins to change when a free-spirited beauty named Penny moves in the next door. The geekiness and intellect of the four guys is contrasted for comic effect with Penny’s social skills and common sense.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the previous studies investigated the realization of requesting speech act in second language or in cross culture communities, the example is Tim Hassal (1999) who investigated how native speakers of bahasa Indonesia perform requests in everyday situations.

Another study was conducted by Kennet Fordyce and Seizi Fukazawa (2003) who examined the use of syntactic and lexical downgraders by Japanese EFL learners in order to mitigate requests in high imposition situations to listeners of higher status. Next, Naoko Taguchi (2006) who evaluated the ability of fifty-nine Japanese
college students of English at two different proficiency levels to produce a speech act of request in a spoken role play task.

Later study by Ferit Kilikaya (2010) who investigated the pragmatic knowledge of Turkish EFL students in using certain request strategies, Saeideh Ahangari (2011) who examined the request strategies used by Iranian learners of English as foreign language and Canadian native speaker of English.

The previous researches are different to this research that explains internal modification of request strategies.

**Theoretical Background**

**Pragmatics**

To understand the utterances used by the speakers, we need to study the pragmatics. Pragmatics deals with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). It has, consequently, more to do with the analysis of what people mean by their utterances than what the words or phrases in those utterances might mean by themselves. There are several approaches with regard to the pragmatic study by Yule (2000:3-8) as follows:

a. Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning, the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said. It requires a consideration of how speakers organize what they want to say in accordance with whom they're talking to, where, when, and under what circumstances.

b. Pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning, the exploration on how listeners make inferences about what is said in order to arrive at an interpretation of the speaker's intended meaning.

c. Pragmatics is the study of how more gets communicated than is said, the exploration on how a great deal of what is unsaid is recognized as part of what is communicated. We might say that it is the investigation of invisible meaning. This perspective then raises the question of what determines the choice between the said and the unsaid. The basic answer is tied to the notion of distance, closeness, whether it is physical, social, or conceptual, implies shared experience. On the assumption of bow close or distant the listener is, speakers determine how much needs to be said.

d. Pragmatics is the study of the expression of relative distance, the understanding how the way we review its relationship with other areas of linguistics.

So, it can be concluded that pragmatics has a lot of things to do with the study of people's utterances which can be viewed from many aspects. The first is the interpretation and the influence of the utterances. The second is the exploration of the speakers' intention behind the utterances. The third is the study of the invisible meaning in the utterances. The last is the study of the utterances that can be connected with the other areas of linguistics.

**Speech Act**

In showing their feeling, people should express it by uttering words and perform actions via utterance. That is why the message can be delivered to the hearer. Action that are performed via utterances are generally speech act.

Searle (1969:16) shares, "Speech acts are the basic unit of linguistic communication." The minimal unit of linguistic communication is not linguistic expression but rather the performance of certain kinds of acts. When people utter a sentence, it is not just to say things but rather actively to do things. There are sorts of things that can be done with words, such as make requests, ask questions, give orders, and make promises.

According to Searle (1969:24), language is a part of theory of actions, and speech act are those verbal act, or more precisely illocutionary acts, such as promising, threatening, and requesting, that one performs in speaking.
There are some kinds of speech acts in relation to the utterances such as locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. According to Leech (1983: 199) there are three basic units of acts beyond the utterances that occur simultaneously:

1. **Locutionary** is the utterance of a sentence with determined sense or statement that is said by the speaker. For example: "Close the door!"

2. **Illocutionary** is the meaning of a statement from the utterance given by the speaker. For example: "Close the door!" means an instruction to open the door.

3. **Perlocutionary** is the bringing about of the effect on the audience by means of uttering the sentence, the speaker accepts something that is done after the utterance is stated. Then *the hearer will or will not open the door*.

In addition, Yule (2000: 48) explains that **locutionary act** is the basic act of utterance, or producing a meaningful linguistics expression and **illocutionary act** is the intention of the speakers performed via communicative force of utterance. Whereas, **perlocutionary act** is the hearer’s comprehension on the locutionary act. The effect of the utterance on the hearer is also known as **perlocutionary effect**.

In speaking, a directive act is an illocutionary act whereby a speaker conveys to a hearer that he/she want the hearer to perform an act which can be benefit for the speaker and sometimes for the hearer. For example request is for the benefit of the speaker whereas a suggestion is defined as being beneficial to both speaker and hearer.

In conclusion, speech act is the connection between the utterances and the action, thought, feelings, or ideas of the speakers.

**Politeness**

The speech act is much related to the conversational behavior of participants. People express their feelings, ideas or thought (illocutionary act) in various ways that might take effect on the hearers’ comprehension toward the utterances (perlocutionary effect). It means that each utterance may invite either positive or negative responses depending on the understanding of the hearers. A request is an illocutionary act, the act may be a request for non-verbal goods and service, for example a request for an object, an action or some kind of service, or it can be a request for verbal goods and service, for example a request for information.

In this case, the utterances that the speakers use have something to do with politeness. Leech (1983: 107) relates the illocutionary acts more precisely to the kinds of politeness with which they are associated. He says that politeness is essential asymmetrical; what is polite with respect to hearer or to some third party will be impolite with respect to speaker, and vice versa. So, politeness is a condition of what is considered being appropriate or inappropriate use of the utterance or choice of words.

Wydet as quoted by Trosborg (1995:24) states that **politeness is a mechanism of pragmatics in which the variety of structure works together to achieve the smooth communication. Politeness is established and maintained by society to decrease friction in personal interaction. In short, politeness principles have been considered to have wide descriptive power of the language use.**

The utterances in relation to politeness might also indicate the power, solidarity and the relationship of the participants. It can be illustrated that when talking to a superior, the speaker will choose the formal way while the utterances will be more casual to a friend. Brown (1960:166) explains that power is asymmetrical relationship between people, at least two persons, where one is superior or dominant to the other, which can be characterized by physical, strength, age, sex, institutionalized role in the church, army, state,
and within the family. Meanwhile, solidarity is an asymmetrical general relationship in which the speaker and hearer have more of the same behavior disposition such as political membership family religion, profession, sex, and birth place. Mostly speakers and hearers have emotional intimacy relationships. In this case, Brown (1960:166) describes the power and solidarity as follows:

1. +P+S : there is power and solidarity between the speaker and hearer
2. +P-S : there is power but no solidarity between the speaker and hearer
3. -P+S : there is no power but there is solidarity between the speaker and hearer
4. -P-S : there is no power and no solidarity between the speaker and hearer

In conclusion politeness, power and solidarity might determine the utterances used by the communicants.

Request

According to Trosborg (1995:187), “A request is an illocutionary act whereby a speaker (requester) conveys to a hearer (requestee) that he/she wants to perform an act which is for the benefit of the speaker.” To achieve this aim, the speaker may have different options available to him in his language or culture. The form he chooses among the sources available to him decides whether or not he obtains the desired results. This means the requests have to be modified based on the context, including who is talking to whom and for what purpose.


Category I - Indirect Request

Strategy 1 - Hints

A speaker who does not want to state his/her Impositive intent explicitly has resort to hinting strategies. By making a statement, for example describing an undesired state of affairs, or by asking a question the requester can imply to his/her listener what he/she wants done. The requester can leave out the desire action altogether (mild-hint) or the speaker can mention his/her wish partially (strong-hint). The examples can be illustrated as follows:

1. I’m to be at the airport in half an hour (and my car has just broken down).
2. The kitchen is a total mess
3. Has the car been cleaned (already)?

When interpreting a hint, it is often necessary to possess intimate knowledge of the other person, to have specific background knowledge, to be aware of specific situational features, etc. the utterance (1) can hardly be interpreted as a request to borrow the hearer’s car without the information given in brackets, unless the hearer possesses specific background information; in (2), the hearer must figure out for him/herself whether the speaker wants the table to be cleared, the dishes to be done, the floor to be washed, etc., while in (3), the desired act is specified in the proposition, and the speaker only omits explicit mention of the hearer as the agent.

Hints strategy involves the condition, as follows:

a. Reasonableness

Stating some general condition which indicates the speaker’s reason for making his/her request is a useful way of indirectly conveying an impositive intent (of the ‘reasonableness precondition’ referred to by Haverkate, 1984).

(4) Would you do the dishes? The kitchen is a total mess

b. Availability

Questioning some condition that would present an obstacle to compliance (if not fulfilled) is another way of giving a hint.

(5) Is there any coffee left?

c. Obviousness

Speaker conveys his/her desire obviously.

(6) Has the letter already been typed?
Category II - Hearer-oriented conditions
(Conventionally Indirect)

Strategy 2
Strategy 2 consists of questioning hearer’s ability or willingness and Statements of ability and willingness. The first depends on the ability of the hearer’s capacity in performing the act and the hearer’s willingness in performing the act, for example:
(1) Maybe you could help John dig the garden tomorrow?
(2) Would you lend me a copy of your book?
The latter depends on hearer that can not give any excuses because speaker has conveyed that he/she considers this condition is fulfilled and anticipates compliance.
(3) Mary, you can clear the table now.

Strategy 3 - Suggestory formulae
A request can be made by means of various “suggestory formulae”. When employing these formulae, the requester does not question any particular hearer-based condition, rather he/she tests the hearer’s cooperativeness in general by inquiring whether any conditions exist that might prevent the hearer from carrying out the action specified by the preposition,
(5) How about lending me some of your records?
(6) Why don’t you come with me?

Category III - Speaker-based conditions
(Conventionally Indirect)
A requester can choose to focus on speaker-based conditions, rather than querying hearer-oriented conditions, thereby making his/her own desires the vocal point of the interaction. By placing the speaker's interests above the hearer’s, the request becomes more direct in its demand. The speaker's statement of his/her intent may be expressed politely as a wish (Strategy 4) or more bluntly as a demand (Strategy 5).

Strategy 4
In strategy 4 there would be statements of speaker’s wishes and desires, for example, (1) I would like to have some more coffee.

Strategy 5
In strategy 5 there would be statements of speaker’s needs and demands, for example,
(2) I need a pen.

Category IV — Direct Request

Strategy 6
In strategy 6 there would be statements of obligation and necessity. The speaker uses his/her own authority in stating his/her desire. For example,
(1) You should/ought to leave now.

Strategy 7
Strategy 7 is performatives verb that is considered more or less polite (ask vs. command), for example,
(2) I ask/request/order/command you to leave.

Strategy 8
Strategy 7 is the imperative that is grammatical form directly signaling that the utterance is an order (this can be also added by adding tags and/or the marker please) as in the example of number (3), Strategy 7 shows elliptical phrases in which only the desired object is mentioned as in the example of number (4).
(3) Open the door, please.
(4) Two coffee, please.

Internal Modification
Modification is another strategy according to the directness level by emphasizing the proposition, so the hearer will notice how the speaker feels toward him or her. The modification can be less or higher face threatening, so that the form of the modification can be indirect or direct.
Modification is divided into two major categories namely *internal* and *external modification*. Internal modification is part of head acts, and plays a role in minimizing or intensifying the illocutionary force of a request act as a downgrader or upgrader. Whereas external modification is achieved by intensifying or mitigating devices occurring in the immediate context of the speech act internal modifications occur within the speech act itself (Faerch & Kasper, 1984).

Faerch and Kasper (1989) in Gabriele Casper (1995:82-83) reported that internal and external modification work independently. Internal modification is mandatory and external modification is optional. The research will be limited to the internal modification category, because the writer focuses the research only on the internal modification. In this case, the topic on the internal modification that mentions categories of the categories of requests strategies applied by the requester in expressing their requests.

There are various ways in which a requester can vary the politeness of a request. Indirect request is more likely to be polite than a straightforward order. In addition to the selection of directness level, it is possible to soften, or increase, the impact a request strategy is likely to have on the requestee by modulating the request.

There are various devices used for this purpose referred to as "modality markers" (cf. House-Kasper 1981). These are markers which either tone down the impact an utterance is likely to have on the hearer, downgraders, or which have the opposite effect of increasing the impact, upgraders. In connection with requests it is clearly the former which are particularly relevant.

**Downgrader**

Downtoners are propositional modifiers used by the speaker with the purpose of modulating the impact his/her request is likely to have on the addressee.

**Syntactic downgraders**

A requester who wants to mitigate his/her request has access to syntactic mitigating devices (syntactic downgraders), and/or he/she can include lexical/phrasal downgraders in the request (cf. House-Kasper 1987; Faerch-Kasper 1989).

Various syntactic devices can be used to make the request more polite. A common feature of syntactic downgraders lies in their ability to distance the request from reality. A shift away from the deictic center of the speaker (on temporal or personal dimensions) increases the politeness of the request by downtoning the expectations as to the fulfilment of the request. If the speaker's expectations are low, he/she will not lose face so easily if the request is refused. At the same time, it makes it easier for the requestee to refuse if he/she does not want to comply with the requester's wishes.

In the following, some syntactic devices useful for downtoning the impact a request is likely to have on the receiver are mentioned:

1. **Question**

A question is often more polite than a statement. Compare:

(1) Can/will you do the cooking tonight?
(2) You can/will hand me the paper

To ask someone to do something is to presuppose that they can and are willing to do it, and have not already done it (Brown—Levinson 1987: 146). To question these assumptions is to avoid commitment to them and questioning becomes a fundamental disarming device. In contrast, statements of willingness and ability present the request in a non-negotiable way as a future act. For these reasons, (1) is clearly more polite than (2), which approximates an order.

2. **Past tense/negation**

The inclusion of past tense and/or negation further downtones the expectations to the fulfilment of the request:

(3) Could you hand me the paper, please?
(4) Can't you hand me the paper?
3. Tag questions
   The requester can appeal to the hearer's consent by adding a tag question to a (fairly) direct request, thereby softening the impact considerably, for example:
   (6) Hand me the paper, will you?
   (7) Answer the phone, won't you?
   (8) You could carry this for me, couldn't you?
   When a hearer-based preparatory condition is negated, a tag questions the negation, for example if in (8) You couldn't carry this for me, could you?

4. Conditional clause
   The requester can distance his/her request further from reality by adding a conditional clause, for example:
   (9) I would like to borrow some of your records if you don't mind lending me them.

5. Embedding
   The requester can pre-face his/her request with a clause in which the request is embedded (hence "embedding clause") conveying his/her attitude to the request, by expressing tentativeness, or with expressions of hope, delight, thanks, etc., thereby adding an element of enthusiasm to the request. The embedding often occurs in connection with a conditional clause, for example:
   a. tentative:
      (10) I wonder if you would be able to give me a hand.
   b. appreciative:
      (11) I hope you'll be able to give me a hand.
      (12) I'd really appreciate it if you'd be able to give me a hand.
      (13) I'd be so grateful if you'd give me a hand.
   c. subjective: A request can be presented as the requester's personal opinion, belief, etc. Characteristic phrases are think/believe/imagine.

6. Ing-form
   By selecting the continuous aspect, instead of the simple present/past tense, the requester emphasizes the meaning expressed by the embedding clause, for example:
   (16) I was wondering if you would give me a hand.
   (17) I was thinking that you maybe wouldn't mind giving me a hand.

7. Modal
   A modal verb can be used to convey tentativeness, for example:
   (18) I thought that you might let me have one of your lovely decoration.
   (19) Might not I come with you?

Lexical/phrasal downgraders
At the lexical/phrasal level a number of devices are available which lower the requester's expectations to the fulfilment or the outcome of the request. The markers subjected to analysis in the present study are detailed below.

1. Politeness marker
   In order to signal politeness the requester can add elements of deference to the request. By adding, for example, the marker please the requester shows deference to the requestee and pleads for cooperative behaviour, for example:
   (20) Hand me the paper, please.
   (21) Could you close the window, please.
   (22) Would you kindly/be so kind as to send us your catalogue?

2. Consultative device
   Consulting the hearer is another way of asking for the hearer's consent. Ritualized formulae of the kind Would you mind, as well as other expressions can be used, for example:
(23) Maybe you wouldn't mind helping me.
(24) Do you think you could have the manuscript ready by tomorrow.
(25) Do you object to having the meeting on Friday?

3. Downtoner
A number of modal sentence adverbials and modal particles can be used to downtone the impositive force of the request. Typical modifiers are just, simply, perhaps, possibly, rather, etc., for example:

- (26) Just give me a ring, will you?
- (27) Perhaps you could hand me the paper.
- (28) Could you possibly let us know by tomorrow.
- (29) Maybe you wouldn't mind handing me the paper

Note that the inclusion of just sometimes has a moralizing undertone, or an element of irritation:

- (30) Just keep quiet, will you?
- (31) Couldn't you just keep out of my way?
- (32) Just hand me the paper, will you?

4. Understatement
A way of decreasing the imposition forced on the hearer is to understate or in some way minimize some aspects of the desired act. If the requester asks for very little or for something that is unlikely to be of great cost to the interlocutor, the degree of imposition is decreased and the impact of the request on the requestee has been played down, for example:

- (33) Would you wait just a second?
- (34) Could you spare me a minute?
- (35) Could I have just a spot of tea, please?

5. Hedge
By hedging the prepositional content the requester can be intentionally vague about certain aspects of the act to be carried out, thereby giving the requestee the option of specifying it him/herself. A "hedge" is a particle, word, or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a predicate of a noun phrase in a set; it says of that membership that it is partial, or true only in certain respects (Brown—Levinson 1987: 145). Adverbials like kind of sort of, somehow, and so on, more or less, etc. are typical:

- (36) Could you kind of put it off for a while?
- (37) Couldn't you sort of forget the whole matter?
- (38) Would you somehow find the time to see me next week?

6. Hesitator
By hesitating before uttering a request the requester can convey to the requestee that he/she has certain qualms about asking him/her about the matter:

- (39) I er, erm, er- I wonder if you'd er ...

The hesitation signals reveal the requester's doubt as to the appropriateness of his/her request.

7. Interpersonal marker
Some expressions have as their sole function the role of establishing and maintaining a good and amiable interpersonal relationship. Phrases such as you know, you see, I mean, etc., referred to as cajolers, help to attract the hearer's attention, interest, understanding, etc., and by using appealers, such as right?, okay? etc., the requester can appeal directly to the hearer's consent, for example:

- (40) You wouldn't mind helping me, I mean, would you?
- (41) You might come with me tonight, right?
- (42) Could you do that for me. okay"!

Both syntactic and lexical/phrasal downgraders have been presented in isolation, but a combination of these markers may be preferable. The categories outlined above do
not exhaust the means of request mitigation, but are the major categories observed in the data.

**Upgraders**

Whereas downgraders are employed by speakers to tone down the impact an utterance is likely to have on the hearer, upgraders have the opposite function; they increase the impact of an utterance on the hearer. Typical are adverbial intensifiers modifying part of an utterance, do-constructions, sentence modifiers, and lexical intensification.

1. **Adverbial intensifier**: Some typical intensifiers are: such, so, very, quite, really, etc., terribly, awfully, frightfully, absolutely, for example:
   - (43) You *really* must come and see me.
   - (44) I'd be *terribly* grateful if you'd help me out.
   - (45) I'd be *so/awfully* disappointed if you don't help me out.

   In (43), the requester increases the impact on the requestee by upgrading the illocutionary force expressed by *must* by inserting the upgrader *really*. In comparison, (44) expresses the requester's positive attitude to the prepositional content enforced by the upgrader *terribly*, while in (45), the impact on the requestee is increased by upgrading the unfavourable consequence following from a refusal.

2. **Do-construction**:
   - (46) Oh, *really*, do come and see us, we'd be so pleased.

3. **Commitment upgrader**

   The requester can add a sentence modifier that increases his/her commitment towards the proposition, for example: *I'm sure, I'm certain, I'm positive, it's obvious, surely, certainly, positively, obviously, unfortunately, etc.*
   - (47) You *surely* wouldn't mind helping me.
   - (48) I'm *absolutely positive* that you'll lend me your car.

4. **Lexical intensification**

   The requester's choice of lexical items reveals his/her attitude. He/she can be positive/negative, and in extreme cases swear words may be used, for example:
   - (49) You'd be such a *darling* if you helped me just this once.
   - (50) Get the hell out of here.
   - (51) You'll *damned well* carry this for me.

   In connection with requests, upgraders can make the request realization more or less polite according to which elements are upgraded. If the requester chooses to intensify an embedding phrase expressing the requester's positive attitude towards the fulfilment of the request, as in (44), and (48), the upgraders add to the politeness of the request. If, on the other hand, the requester expresses a negative attitude (45) or the requester upgrades the illocutionary force of the utterance, as in (47), (50), and (51), the imposition forced on the requestee increases; hence politeness decreases. Modifiers may occur individually or in combination as in example (8).

**FORMULATION OF THE STUDY**

Based on background of the study, this study tries to answer the following questions:

1. What request strategies are applied by the requester to express his/her requests?
2. What kinds of internal modification are used by the requester in modifying their requests

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The Objectives of the study are to describe the request strategies applied by the requester to express his/her requests and then describe kinds of internal modifications used by the requester in the movie.

**THEORETICAL OUTLINE**

In analyzing the data the writer conducts the theoretical overview in order to get the references for analyzing the data. The main references that the writer mainly uses are adapted from Trosborg (1995). Trosborg
classifies the request strategies into internal and external modification. In this case, the writer limits the topic on the internal modification which mentions categories of the categories of request strategies applied by the requester in expressing their requests.

The other references that the writer takes to support the main theories are derived from Yule (2000) who propose the type of speech acts, Brown and Gilman (1960) who explain power and solidarity, Brown and Levinson (1987) who define politeness, and By making a request, Blum-Kulka et al., (1989) who define the speaker infringes on the recipient’s freedom from imposition. The recipient may feel that the request is an intrusion on his/her freedom of action or even a power play. As for the requester, she/he may hesitate to make requests for fear of exposing a need or out of fear of possibly making the recipient lose face.

**METHOD AND TECHNIQUE**

**METHOD**

Method is very important in conducting a research. It systematically gives a guidance to reach the objective of the research. The writer uses the descriptive method as it is one way to describe the phenomenon that takes place among the society. According to Kumar (2005:5) the descriptive method is art attempt to describe systematically a situation, problem or phenomenon, or to provide information about, say the condition of living in the communities or an issue. Therefore, this research is conducted systematically through the technique of data collecting and study technique.

**THE TECHNIQUE OF DATA COLLECTING**

The writer takes the data from the movies which are considered representing the real-life phenomenon language use in society. There are some steps conducted to select the data, watching the movies, selecting the utterances (as the data) indicating requests in the conversation between the characters in the movies, putting the data in the data cards.

The objective of the research is to describe and to analyze the requests made by the characters in the movie, the analyzing data is done through the following steps:
1. The utterances in the data are classified based on the categories of requests strategies.
2. The data are analyzed based on the theories of Trosborg.
3. The conclusion is drawn.

**DATA SOURCE**

Data are taken from the conversations among the characters in the movie of “The Big Bang Theory” which is produced by Chuck Lorre Peter Chakos.

There are some reasons why the writer chooses this movie as the data source. First, the movie describes the real-life phenomenon. Second, the stories in the movie represent the characters utter a lot of requests in the conversations.

**WEIGHT AND RELEVANCE**

In every community there must be an interaction that frequently requests in social relationship. The ways people cope with these are usually conducted through communication by a language. The cooperative principles and politeness in the language use may lead to the maintenance of their social relationship. Therefore, the ability and knowledge of how to use the appropriate utterances and to comprehend the utterances are required by the communicants. The study of the relationship between language and social interaction is much related with sociolinguistics while the study of what are meant by the utterances is in the area of pragmatics.

In our social interactions, the utterances of requests may arise. Knowledge of using and understanding the utterances of requests including the strategies to express them are therefore needed in order to be polite.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Referring to the research questions, the data will be analyzed based on the pragmatic point of view which highlights the categories of requests strategies and the internal modification of requests applied by speakers.

The data taken from the conversation on the first series (episode one to four) of The Big Bang Theory movie, there are 21 data which are classified based on the classification of requests strategies and the internal modification of requests. The followings are the conversations in the movie.

DATA 1

Scene:
Apartment (downstair), Sheldon and Leonard meet Penny (the neighbor).

Penny : Bye.
Sheldon : Bye.
Leonard : Bye.
Leonard : Should we have invited her for lunch?
Sheldon : No. We’re going to start Season Two of Battlestar Galactica.

Conversation above show Leonard’s request on Sheldon’s ability/willingness to invite Penny as a new neighbor. The request strategy is conventionally indirect (hearer-oriented condition) of Questioning hearer’s ability/willingness because leonard ask for Sheldon’s agreement as the hearer on his willingness. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of question as it is more polite than a statement.

DATA 2

Scene:
Apartment (downstair), Sheldon and Leonard meet Penny (the neighbor).

Leonard : Should we have invited her for lunch?
Sheldon : No. We’re going to start Season Two of Battlestar Galactica.

Leonard : We already watched the Season Two DVDs.
Sheldon : Not with commentary.
Leonard: I think we should be good neighbours, invite her over, make her feel welcome.

Conversation above show that requester doesn’t ask any particular hearer-oriented condition. The request strategy is hearer-oriented conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of suggestory formulae. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of embedding, the embedding occurs in connection with subjective in which a request can be presented as the requester’s personal opinion as show with the word “think.”

DATA 3

Scene:
At Sheldon’s and Leonard’s apartment

Penny : I just, I can’t believe I trusted him.
Leonard : Should I say something? I feel like I should say something.
Sheldon : You? No, you’ll only make it worse.

Conversation above show that a requester can choose to focus on speaker-based conditions, rather than querying hearer-oriented conditions. The request strategy is speaker-based conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of speaker’s wish and desire. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of embedding which occurs in connection with tentative as shows in the word “feel like”.

DATA 4

Scene:
At Sheldon’s and Leonard’s apartment

Penny : Um, okay. Can I ask you a favour.
Leonard: A favour? Sure, you can ask me a favour, I would do you a favour for you.

Conversation above show that Penny requests on Leonard’s ability/willingness to do something for her. The request strategy is
conventionally indirect (hearer-oriented condition) of Questioning hearer's ability/willingness. In modifying the request, it is modified by lexical/phrasal downgraders of “Um, okay” as hesitator.

DATA 5
Scene:
On the stairs of Sheldon and Leonard’s building.
Howard: This is one of my favourite places to kick back after a quest, they have a great house ale.
Penny: Wow, cool tiger.
Howard: Yeah, I’ve had him since level ten. His name is Buttons. Anyway, if you had your own game character we could hang out, maybe go on a quest.
Penny: Uh, sounds interesting.

Conversation above show about how great the game is, Howard tries to ask Penny for hang out. The request strategy is hearer-oriented conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of suggestory formulae and in modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of conditional clause.

DATA 6
Scene:
On the stairs of Sheldon and Leonard’s building.
Penny: Really, thank you so much for going and trying you’re, uh, you’re so terrific. Why don’t you put some clothes on, I’ll get my purse and dinner is on me, okay?
Sheldon: Thank you. You’re not done with her, are you?
Leonard: Our babies will be smart and beautiful.

Conversation above show how Penny asks Leonard going for dinner considering that she wants to show her grateful. The request strategy is hearer-oriented conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of suggestory formulae and in modifying the request, it is modified by Interpersonal marker in which “okay” is an expressions as sole function the role of establishing and maintaining a good and amiable interpersonal relationship.

DATA 7
Scene:
Sheldon and Leonard’s apartment
Penny: Well, you know, it’s the Cheesecake Factory. People order cheesecake, and I bring it to them.
Leonard: So, you sort of act as a carbohydrate delivery system.
Penny: Yeah, call it whatever you want, I get minimum wage. Yeah, anyways, I was wondering if you could help me out with something, I was....
Leonard: Yes.
Penny: Oh. Okay, great, I’m having some furniture delivered tomorrow, and I may not be here, so....

Conversation above show how Penny emphasizes her request by trying to convey her good attitude. The request strategy is speaker-based conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of speaker’s wish and desire. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of “Ing-form” requester emphasizes the meaning expressed by the embedding clause.

DATA 8
Scene:
Sheldon and Leonard’s apartment
Leonard: So, there’s gonna be some furniture delivered?
Penny: Yeah, yeah, if it gets here and I’m not here tomorrow could you just sign for it and have them put it in my apartment.
Leonard: Yeah, no problem.

Conversation above show how Penny as a speaker states her need and demand to Leonard. The request strategy is speaker-based conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of statement of speaker’s need and demand. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of conditional clause.
DATA 9
Scene:
Sheldon and Leonard’s apartment
Leonard: Penny, wait.
Leonard: Um, if you don’t have any other plans, do you want to join us for Thai food and a Superman movie marathon?
Penny: A marathon? Wow, how many Superman movies are there? Conversation above shows how Leonard tries to get closer with Penny by asking her to watch a movie and eat Thai food. The request strategy is conventionally indirect (hearer-oriented condition) of the question of the hearer’s ability/willingness. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of conditional clause.

DATA 10
Scene:
Penny’s apartment
Leonard (doing likewise): Fine. I accept your premise, now please let’s go.
Sheldon: I am not leaving until I’m done.
Leonard: O-o-o-oh! (Collapses against wall).
Conversation above shows how Leonard really needs Sheldon to approve his request to go together as soon as possible. The request strategy is speaker-based conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of the speaker’s wish and desire because it states the word of “would like”. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of modal that conveys tentativeness.

DATA 11
Scene:
Sheldon and Leonard’s apartment
Leonard: What is wrong with you?
Howard: I’m a romantic.
Leonard: Please don’t tell me that your hopeless infatuation is devolving into pointless jealousy.
Leonard: No, I’m not jealous, I’m just a little concerned for her.
Conversation above shows Sheldon’s request for cooperative behavior on Leonard. The request strategy is direct request of imperative that is grammatical form directly signaling that the utterance is an order (this can be also added by adding the marker please). In modifying the request, it is modified by lexical/phrasal downgrader of “please” as politeness marker the requester shows deference to the requestee and pleads for cooperative behavior.

DATA 12
Scene:
Howard and Lesley’s lab.
Leonard: Hello Lesley.
Lesley: Hi Leonard.
Leonard: Lesley I would like to propose an experiment.
Lesley: Goggles, Leonard.
Leonard: Right Lesley, I would like to propose an experiment.
Lesley: Hang on.
Conversation above shows Leonard’s request that he tries to attract the hearer’s attention, Lesley. The request strategy is speaker-based conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of speaker’s wish and desire because it states the word of “would like”. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of modal that conveys tentativeness.

DATA 13
Scene:
The hallway. Leonard knocks on Penny’s door.
Penny (opening door): Ah, hey Leonard.
Leonard: Good afternoon Penny, so hi, hey. Uh… I was wondering if you had plans for dinner.
Penny: Uh, do you mean dinner tonight?
Leonard: There is an inherent ambiguity in the word dinner.
Technically it refers to the largest meal of the day whenever it is consumed, so, to clarify here, by dinner I mean supper.

Conversation above show how Leonard has request to invite Penny for dinner. The request strategy is speaker-based conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of speaker’s wish and desire. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of hesitator begin with “hi, hey. Uh...” and it is also followed by syntactic downgrader of “Ing-form” requester emphasizes the meaning expressed by the embedding clause.

DATA 14
Scene: Sheldon and Leonard’s apartment.
Leonard: How do I look?
Sheldon: Could you be more specific?
Leonard: Can you tell I’m perspiring a little?
Sheldon: No. The dark crescent-shaped patterns under your arms conceal it nicely.

Conversation above show that Leonard says “How do I look?” as requester asks requestee (Sheldon) for an opinion on something then he repeats his request more clearly by saying “Can you tell…” because it is considered vague by Sheldon. In this case, Leonard’s request strategy is conventionally indirect (hearer-oriented condition) of Questioning hearer’s ability/willingness while Sheldon’s request strategy as when he says “Could you be more specific?” is direct request of performatives because Sheldon wants to soften his illocutionary force of the utterance.

In modifying the request, “Can you tell...” is modified by syntactic downgrader of modal and “Could you be more specific?” is modified by lexical/phrasal downgrader of hedge. The hedge modifies the performative force of the speech act. by hedging the prepositional content, the requester can be intentionally vague about certain aspects of the act to be carried out, thereby giving the requestee the option of specifying it him/herself.

DATA 15
Scene: Sheldon and Leonard’s apartment
Leonard: If I could calm down I wouldn’t be having a panic attack, that’s why they call it a panic attack.
Sheldon: Alright, alright, well, just, sit down, yes, sit down, now close your eyes.
Leonard: Why?
Sheldon: Just do it.
Leonard: Okay.

Conversation above show how requestee has to follow requester’s command to sit and close his eyes. The request strategy is direct request of imperative that is grammatical form directly signaling that the utterance is an order. In modifying the request, it is modified by lexical/phrasal downgrader of downtoner stated by Typical modifier of “just” to downtone the impositive force of the request.

DATA 16
Scene: A Restaurant
Waitress: Can I get you started with some drinks?
Leonard: No, (waves her away) You were saying, but...
Penny: I’d like a drink

Conversation above show how requester asks for willingness of requestee to have some drinks. The request strategy is conventionally indirect (hearer-oriented condition) of Questioning hearer's willingness. In modifying the request, it is modified by a syntactic downgrader of question as it is more polite than a statement.

DATA 17
Scene: Sheldon and Leonard’s apartment.
Leonard: Interesting.
Sheldon: Yeah, it really takes the pressure off.
Leonard: Sounds like a breakthrough. *should I call the science magazines and tell them to hold the front cover? (Exiting the apartment.)*
Sheldon: It’s time travel, Leonard, I will have already done that.

Conversation above show the ability of the hearer’s capacity in performing the act and the hearer’s willingness in performing the act. The request strategy is conventionally indirect (hearer-oriented condition) of Questioning hearer’s ability/willingness. In modifying the request, it is modified by a syntactic downgrader of question.

**DATA 18**
**Scene:**
*The apartment*
Leonard: You know, *I'm sure if you just apologised to Gablehauser he would give you your job back.*
Sheldon: I don’t want my job back. I’ve spent the last three and a half years staring at greaseboards full of equations.

Conversation above show how requester gives advise to the requestee on how to solve requestee’s problem. The request strategy is hearer-oriented conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of suggestory formulae. In modifying the request, it is modified by commitment upgrader in which the requester add a sentence modifier “I am sure” that increases his/her commitment towards the proposition.

**DATA 19**
**Scene:**
The supermarket.
Sheldon: This is great. Look at me, out in the real world of ordinary people, just living their ordinary, colourless, work a day lives.

Penny: Thank you.
Sheldon: No, thank you. And thank you, ordinary person. *Hey, you want to hear an interesting thing about tomatoes.*
Penny: Uh, no, no not really. Listen, didn’t you say you needed some eggs.

Conversation above show about how requester tries to tell something interesting to the requestee. The request strategy is conventionally indirect (hearer-oriented condition) of Questioning hearer’s ability/willingness. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of question.

**DATA 20**
**Scene:**
*On the stairwell of the apartment building.*
Sheldon: That was fun. *Maybe tomorrow we can go to one of those big warehouse stores.*
Penny: Oh, I don’t know Sheldon, it’s going to take me a while to recover from all the fun I had today.

Conversation above show that Sheldon is so enthusiastic asking Penny to go to the store so in this case he acts as a requestee and Penny as a requestee. The request strategy is hearer-oriented conditions (Conventionally Indirect) of suggestory formulae. In modifying the request, it is modified by Lexical/phrasal downgrader of downtoner in which there is a modal sentence adverbials of “maybe” can be used to downtone the impositive force of the request.

**DATA 21**
**Scene:**
Sheldon and Leonard’s apartment
Sheldon: I am sorry, I don’t understand which social situation this is?

Could you give me some guidance as to how to proceed?
Penny: The building manager’s showing an apartment downstairs and I haven’t paid my rent
Sheldon: Oh I see.

Conversation above show how Sheldon as a requester is clueless about what is going on around when Penny suddenly comes to his
apartment for hiding. The request strategy is conventionally indirect (hearer-oriented condition) of Questioning hearer’s ability/willingness. In modifying the request, it is modified by syntactic downgrader of past tense/negation which downtones the expectations to the fulfilment of the request.

The most common of request strategies which always requester/speaker utters in conversation at the movie of The Big Bang Theory is conventionally Indirect (Hearer-oriented condition) of questioning hearer’s ability/willingness and the most frequent of internal modification of requests which always requester/speaker utters in conversation at the movie of The Big Bang Theory is syntactic downgrader of question. The analysis data above will be concluded into table as below:

### TABLE OF DATA CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Code</th>
<th>Indirect Request</th>
<th>Conventionally Indirect (Hearer-oriented condition)</th>
<th>Conventionally Indirect (Speaker-based condition)</th>
<th>Direct Request</th>
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<td>Hints</td>
<td>Questioning hearer’s ability/willingness</td>
<td>Suggestory formulae</td>
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<td>Statement of speaker’s wish and desire</td>
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<td>Statements of obligation and necessity</td>
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</table>

TABLE OF DATA CLASSIFICATION
The research questions highlight the categories of requests strategies and the internal modification of requests applied by speakers/requester. The data taken from the conversation on the first series (episode one to four) of The Big Bang Theory movie, there are 21 data of conversations.

Based on the classification of requests strategies, there are 8 data classified as conventionally Indirect (Hearer-oriented condition) of questioning hearer’s ability/willingness, 5 data classified as conventionally Indirect (Hearer-oriented condition) of suggestory formulae, 4 data classified as conventionally Indirect (Speaker-based condition) of statement of speaker’s wish and desire, 2 data classified as conventionally Indirect (Speaker-based condition) of statements of needs and demands, 1 datum classified as direct request of performatives, 2 data classified as direct request of imperatives.

The sama data of conversations have been also classified into internal modification of requests, there are 4 data classified as syntactic downgrader of question, 1 datum classified as syntactic downgrader of Past tense/Negation, 3 data classified as syntactic downgrader of conditional clause, 2 data classified as syntactic downgrader of Embedding, 2 data classified as syntactic downgrader of Ing –form, 2 data classified as syntactic downgrader of modal, 2 data classified as Lexical/Phrasal downgrader of Politeness marker, 2 data classified as Lexical/Phrasal downgrader of downtoner, 1 datum classified as Lexical/Phrasal downgrader of Hedge, 1 datum classified as Lexical/Phrasal downgrader of hesitator, 1 datum classified as Lexical/Phrasal downgrader of interpersonal marker and 1 datum classified as commitment upgrader.

CONCLUSIONS
To understand the utterances used by the speakers, we need to study the pragmatics. Pragmatics has a lot of things to do with the study of people's utterances which can be viewed from many aspects. The first is the interpretation and the influence of the utterances. The second is the exploration of the speakers’ intention behind the utterances. The third is the study of the invisible meaning in the utterances. The last is the study of the utterances that can be connected with the other areas of linguistics.

The results of this study show that the most common of request strategies which always requester/speaker utters in conversation at the movie of The Big Bang Theory is conventionally Indirect (Hearer-oriented condition) of questioning hearer's ability/willingness and the most frequent of internal modification of requests which always requester/speaker utters in conversation at the movie of The Big Bang Theory is syntactic downgrader of question.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY
In analyzing the data the writer conducts the theoretical overview in order to get
the references for analyzing the data. The main references that the writer mainly uses are adapted from Trosborg (1995). Trosborg classifies the request strategies into internal and external modification. In this case, the writer limits the topic on the internal modification which mentions categories of the categories of request strategies applied by the requester in expressing their requests.

REFERENCES
International Pragmatics Association
(16:4.513-533)