

## The Effectiveness of Social Distance on Requests

Sumayyah Qaed Alsulami

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

### Abstract

This essay is an attempt to explain one of the fundamental discourse analysis theories in the field of politeness: Brown and Levinson's face-saving theory. They divide the face into positive and negative then they formulate five politeness strategies the speaker can use when the person faces any of the face threatening acts. The aim of this paper is to investigate how this theory can be adapted and applied to interview using requests. In addition, the essay will identify the strategies of request and politeness phenomena in producing a request speech act. It will record a 10-minute interviews with an Australian native speaker of English and an Indonesian nonnative speaker about topics of interest to the participants. The study will show how the social distance, the power that the speaker wield on the hearer and the imposition of the request on the hearer impact forming the request sentence.

**Keywords:** brown & levinson, face saving, politeness, request, social distance

**Cite as:** Alsulami. S. Q. (2015). The Effectiveness of Social Distance on Requests . *Arab World English Journal*, 8 (3). DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol6no3.24>