



MAKING REQUESTS IN CASUAL LEAVE APPLICATIONS: A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF PAKISTANI TEACHERS' APPLICATION DISCOURSE

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Abstract

This research explores the practices of Pakistani teachers in the use of internal and external modification strategies in the applications for casual leave addressed to the principals. The study is qualitative in nature and is based on a collection of authentic leave applications from two government colleges, selected through purposive sampling. The analysis is based on Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) framework, which has been modified by Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011) for written requests so that internal and external modification strategies are systematically identified. The results indicate that the internal modification of requests was more common, particularly the use of lexical and phrasal downgrader “humbly,” “kindly,” “with due respect” along with external modifiers like grounders and expressions of gratitude. The requests that teachers made showed differing degrees of mitigation which revealed varying levels of formality, deference, and in some cases, institutional hierarchy awareness. The implication of the study is that Pakistani teachers use a mix of internal and external modifications in leave applications to show politeness, respect, and pragmatic awareness of institutional norms; the study recommends focusing on pragmatic competence in teacher training programs to ensure smooth and effective communication in academic settings.

Keywords:

Internal & external modifications, Pakistani teachers, institutional communication, professional decorum, pragmatics, requesting.

1. Introduction

In institutional and professional settings, making requests is a common yet sensitive communicative act that requires careful language choices, especially in hierarchical contexts like education. In Pakistan, teachers' casual leave applications exemplify the tension between personal needs and institutional formality, reflecting both social hierarchy and the need for politeness. According to Searle's (1969) speech act theory, requests are directive acts intended to prompt action from the addressee, but they often require pragmatic modifications to be perceived as polite and appropriate.

CCSARP of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) a model for analyzing request strategies, distinguishing between internal modifications (such as lexical and phrasal mitigators like “please” or “I was wondering”) and external modifications (such as justifications or expressions of regret). These strategies help soften the imposition of requests, especially in formal or hierarchical relationships. In the Pakistani educational context, the power imbalance between teachers and principals makes leave requests particularly sensitive. Teachers must balance institutional norms, societal



expectations of deference, and professional decorum, often resulting in language that is both polite and direct. However, there is limited research on the pragmatic aspects of written leave requests in Pakistan.

Using the modified CCSARP framework, the current study addresses this gap by examining how Pakistani teachers use internal and external modification strategies in their casual leave applications. This research aims to analyze how Pakistani teachers use internal and external modification strategies in their casual leave applications to principals, focusing on the pragmatic ways they balance politeness, respect, and institutional hierarchy. The study addresses the gap in existing research regarding how teachers in Pakistan employ specific linguistic and pragmatic strategies to negotiate power dynamics and social roles in formal leave requests within academic settings.

1.2 Research Questions

1. How do Pakistani teachers utilize internal modifications, such as lexical or phrasal downgraders, in their requests for casual leave applications addressed to principals?
2. To what extent do Pakistani teachers employ external modifications to mitigate the force of their requests in casual leave applications?

1.3 Research Objectives

- To examine Pakistani teachers utilize internal modifications, such as lexical or phrasal downgraders, in their requests for casual leave applications addressed to principals.
- To explore the extent to which Pakistani teachers employ external modifications to mitigate the force of their requests in casual leave applications.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This research is significant because it enhances understanding of how Pakistani teachers use language to navigate cultural and institutional norms in formal written requests. It contributes to linguistics and applied linguistics by highlighting the role of pragmatic strategies in academic communication. The study also informs curriculum design and language teaching by emphasizing the importance of pragmatic competence. Additionally, it adds to discourse analysis and speech act theory by examining how politeness and hierarchy are managed in written institutional interactions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Speech Act Theory and Requests

The basic concept of speech acts within the context of requests was first introduced by Austin (1962) and then advanced by Searle (1969). In the context of this theory, a request is considered a directive speech act, where the speaker attempts to influence the hearer to execute a particular action. In formal hierarchical contexts like a teacher requesting principals to do something, these requesting behaviors seem to obey formal external rules and cultural norms. Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) developed a comprehensive classification of request strategies in different languages and cultures, which they published as part of CCSARP framework. This idea is still important in understanding how speakers shift the balance between direct and polite forms to make requests. It also introduced the most important concepts of basic and peripheral modification which is important for this research.



2.2 Internal and External Modifications

Internal modifications refer to tactical elements situated at the center of the request's structure (the head act) that either mitigate or heighten the request. These include the lexical and phrasal downgrading of "kindly," "just," or "please," as well as "I was wondering if..." (hedging) (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). These markers mitigate the burden of enforcement and under most circumstances, signal politeness. In formal written contexts, such as applications for leave, the use of these mitigators serves to uphold the formal structure of the institution and convey respect to the person in authority. External modifications, in contrast, relate to the main request and are placed before or after it. They include, but are not limited to, justifications, apologies, expressions of regret, and circumstantial information that provide context or mitigating background to the request (Trosborg, 2011). For example, a teacher may express a personal reason for taking the leave or thank the principal, which situates the request within broader socio relational frameworks. These techniques are most helpful in contexts characterized by strong hierarchical relationships impacted by a power imbalance. Economidou-Kogetsidis (2008) adapted the CCSARP model for the study of email requests and highlighted the relevance of these modifications in written communication. Her findings revealed that requesters often rely heavily on both internal and external modifications to compensate for the lack of non-verbal cues and to maintain politeness and clarity in digital or written formats.

A significant number of studies have been conducted on the ways L2 learners adjust their request, particularly in their written forms. Findings consistently indicate that non-native speakers from various linguistic backgrounds tend to use less internal modification strategies in their email requests (Biesenbach-Lucas, 2004, 2006; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Hendriks, 2010; Pan, 2012). These studies highlight a general preference among students for using external rather than internal modifiers when making requests (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2009; Faerch & Kasper, 1989; Hassall, 2001). Within the limited range of internal modifiers employed, in non-native context exhibit variation in their preferences. For example, Hendriks (2010) observed that Dutch EFL learners rarely used lexical downtoners (e.g., *possibly*) or understaters (e.g., *just*), but showed a preference for subjectivizers (e.g., *I was wondering*). Biesenbach-Lucas (2004, 2007), in her study of Asian learners from Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand, found that the lexical marker *please* was the most frequently used internal modifier. A similar preference for *please* was also reported among Arabic speakers (Deveci & Hmida, 2017). Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011) noted a comparable trend among Greek Cypriot university students studying in an English-medium institution in Cyprus, where the majority of email requests included no internal modifications strategies, used *please*, or relied on consultative devices, with other lexical modifiers being largely absent. Regarding external modification, the most frequently used strategies were supportive moves such as grounders and expressions of gratitude or pre-closings. A similar pattern emerged in the email requests of Iranian students, where the use of certain modifiers led to pragmatic failures as perceived by Iranian faculty members (Zarei & Mohammadi, 2012).

Despite the growing interest in request modification strategies, detailed investigations into the linguistic production of non native speaker students addressing faculty remain rare. With the exception of studies such as Zarei and Mohammadi (2012), few have explored how nonnative speaker learners construct requests in institutional contexts where both interlocutors are non-native



English speakers. In particular, there is a lack of research addressing the pragmatic performance of non-native speakers such as Pakistani teachers.

While a substantial body of literature exists on speech act theory and request strategies in various languages and contexts, there is a notable gap concerning written requests made by teachers in the form of casual leave applications in Pakistan. Most existing studies focus on student or professional email requests, with limited attention to handwritten or typed formal applications in academic institutions. Moreover, not many research scholars apply the modified CCSARP framework within this scope, especially within the small town or rural governmental colleges. This study seeks to address this issue by investigating the internal and external modification strategies employed by Pakistani college teachers in their casual leave application to the principals. This research adds to the existing knowledge of pragmatics and the relationship between language, social structure, power dynamics.

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is best suited for exploring the use of language in its social context and for revealing the processes through which participants make sense of a given situation (Creswell, 2014). The data is collected by the researcher, who is a faculty member at Government Degree College Darra Adam Khel (current) and formerly at Government Degree College Lachi, Kohat. More than 100 authentic casual leave applications were collected from these two colleges, and 11 unique applications were purposively shortlisted for analysis, as the remaining applications exhibited significant similarities. For the analytical procedures, the selected applications were examined using a modified version of CCSARP request coding scheme, as adapted by Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011) for written requests. This framework facilitated the systematic identification and categorization of internal and external modification strategies employed by teachers in their leave applications. The analysis focused on uncovering patterns of pragmatic strategy use, with particular attention to how these strategies reflected cultural and institutional norms within the academic context.

4. Analysis and Discussion

The following casual leave application was analyzed using the internal modification framework proposed by Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011).

Application 1

Excerpt 1

“Respected Sir, I humbly request you to kindly grant me one day’s casual leave as I have to attend an important personal matter. I shall be highly obliged for your kind consideration. Thank you very much. Yours sincerely.”

This application employs a high level of internal mitigation with multiple lexical downgraders. Rather, “humbly” functions as a downtoner, softening the directness of the request, which demonstrates respect to the principal’s power. In the same way, “kindly” operates as a marker of politeness which softens the impolite nature of the instruction. Moreover, “highly obliged” and “kind consideration” operate as phrasal downtoners which convey the teacher’s modesty while appealing to the principal’s sense of fairness and responsibility. Such modifications show a preference for indirectness and politeness. This approach to communication is common in institutions in Pakistan. Alongside internal strategies, the application makes use of external modifications, including, a grounder “as I have to attend an important personal matter”. This



grounder justifies the request, thereby legitimating it. In addition, “Thank you very much” and the formal salutation and closing “Respected Sir” and “Yours sincerely” enhance the politeness of the utterance and serve to mitigate the impact of the request.

Application 2

Excerpt 2

Sir, I am writing to request casual leave for one day for today. Kindly approve. Regards.”

This application presents a minimal and direct structure with limited use of internal or external modifications. It reveals a notably low level of mitigation, especially in terms of lexical or phrasal downgraders. The only lexical downgrader present is the word “*kindly*”, which serves as a politeness marker. This word slightly mitigates the directness of the imperative “approve,” but the overall structure of the sentence remains highly direct and brief. Compared to general applications this application lacks softening devices, hedges, all of which are considered common internal mitigation strategies in more formal or deferential request discourse. And there is a complete absence of external modifications. There is no grounder (reason for the leave), no expression of gratitude, no pre-closings, and no salutation or formal closing beyond the word “*Regards.*” The brevity and directness of this message could be interpreted as pragmatic inefficiency in contexts where social hierarchy and formality are valued, such as in Pakistani academic institutions. From a pragmatic perspective, this request may be perceived as abrupt or overly concise, especially given the context of teacher to principal communication. It highlights a minimalist approach to request formulation, relying on one lexical mitigator (*kindly*) without supporting moves or justificatory explanations, which may affect the perceived politeness or appropriateness of the request in the given institutional culture.

Application 3

Excerpt 3

“Respected Principal, with due respect, I would like to inform you that I need to attend a family event on Monday. Therefore, I request you to kindly allow me one day’s casual leave. I shall be thankful for your understanding. Sincerely.”

This application demonstrates a balanced and contextually appropriate use of both internal and external modifications in line with the internal modification framework by Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011). Internally, several lexical and phrasal downgraders are employed to soften the imposing force of the request. The use of the phrase “*with due respect*” signals politeness and deference, while “*I would like to inform you*” functions as a subjectivizer, making the statement less direct and more tentative. The word “*kindly*” serves as a downtoner, reducing the commanding tone of the verb “allow.” the closing statement “*I shall be thankful for your understanding*” acts as both a phrasal downgrader and a polite gesture that adds warmth to the request. Moreover, the application has additional external features that help soften the impact of the request. The leave reason “to attend a family event on Monday” serves as a polite justification that grounds the request. The formal address “Respected Principal” and the polite closing “Sincerely” strengthen the formal tone of the application, reinforcing professionalism and submission. All these modifications, whether internal or external, comply with the style of inter-institutional communication at colleges in Pakistan and demonstrate the accompanying social order and etiquette. In this way, the application exemplifies the skillful request mitigation in communication between teachers and principals.



Application 4

Excerpt 4

“Dear Sir, I was wondering if it would be possible to grant me casual leave for a day. I have some personal errands that I must attend to. I hope for your kind approval. Warm regards”

The application 4 uses some internal and external strategies to soften the request and reduce its imposition. *“I was wondering if it would be possible”* is a downgrader where it is not directly a request, but a tentative inquiry. Likewise, *“if it would be possible”* is a phrasal downgrader that suggests the request is not urgent, further minimizing the imposition of its fulfillment. *“I hope for your kind approval”* is also a hedge, where the speaker, for the sake of politeness, conveys a wish rather than a forceful request. Regarding external modifications, the application adds a “grounder” of *“I have some personal errands that I must attend to”* which is providing a reason for the request and simultaneously adds legitimacy to the leave request. This external modification softens the force of the request by making it seem indispensable and reasonable. *“Warm regards”* also serves to soften and polite the closure while still keeping the respectful tone of the message. This application illustrates significant internal mitigation by the use of hedges and downgraders, in addition to external modifications like the polite closing and grounder, all of which facilitate the reduction of imposition and ensure that the request is conveyed indirectly and respectfully

Application 5

Excerpt 5

“Subject: Application for Leave

Sir,

Please grant me casual leave on 4 March, as I am required to visit my hometown for urgent family reasons. Your cooperation in this regard will be appreciated.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours obediently,”

This application demonstrates a moderate level of both internal and external shaping aimed at reducing the impact of the request. Regarding internal modifications, the word *“please”* acts as the primary lexical down grader, modifying the direct request *“grant”* and making it less demanding. Also, *“required”* adds some level of intangible reasoning, making it a polite. The application lacks more internal downgrading devices such as hedges, making the overall softening too simple, relying on *“please”* Concerning external modifications, the application does contain some strategies of politeness that enhance mitigation. *“As I am required to visit my hometown for urgent family reasons”* works as a grounder and explains the leave and justifies its need, making the request more acceptable. *“Your cooperation in this regard will be appreciated”* expresses a future oriented gratitude. This statement further softens the request by indicating appreciation in advance. The phrase *“Thanking you in anticipation”* illustrates a pre-frame that expresses thanks before a principal’s decision, which in this context, a polite way to make a request. The ending *“Yours obediently”* as the formal closing phrase to the letter shows the closing reinforces the power dynamic between the teacher and the principal. This application balances directness and indirectness. It balances directness and indirectness through a few internal and external modifications that soften the impact of the request. While this is more direct than some requests that employ more internal downgrading, external modifications including the grounder, gratitude, and closing make the request polite and formal.



Application 6

Excerpt 6

“Respected Sir, I am writing to request one day’s casual leave for 23 April. I have an appointment with a specialist doctor, which has been scheduled after a long wait. I would be grateful if you kindly approve my request. Thanks and regards,”

The application reflects a moderate level of mitigation for both external and internal modifications. Internally, the application uses a number of mitigators to reduce the formality of the request. *“I would be grateful”* and *“kindly approve my request”* phrases make a polite lexeme cluster that softens requests. Also, externally, the application uses *“I have an appointment with a specialist doctor, which has been scheduled after a long wait”* to ground the request and provide context. The external modification of the statement adds credibility, rationalizing the request, which enhances the leave making it more reasonable. Also, *“Thanks and regard”* as the closing phrase offers politeness express gratitude and ensure the conversation ends respectfully. It is clear that the internal and external modification have successfully mitigated the impact of the request. The elements of gratitude, politeness markers, and grounders highlight an approach of showing consideration and respect for the principal, and making the request professional and polite. Such communication in educational settings is common in Pakistan, where social order and professional decorum are deeply cherished.

Application 7

Excerpt 7

“Respected Sir, It is stated that I have some pressing work. I may please be granted leave. Thank you! Applicant,”

This application maintains a moderate level of formality. The internal modifier *“may please”* softens the request, though the application as a whole is brief and mostly unembellished. The external modifications, which include the grounder and the thanks, assist the request but do not add moves which would increase the politeness of the application. Pragmatically, the application seems a blend of both approaches: a middle ground that is not too blunt, nor overdone with politeness. This can be viewed as an adequate level of mitigation in situations where formalities are anticipated, but not to the degree of being over politely indirect. In contrast, the absence of extensive mitigations may be viewed as abrupt, lacking in justification, particularly in academic circles where deferential language is appreciated. External modifications are less pronounced in this application. The primary external modification is the grounder *“I have some pressing work”* which explains the reason for the leave request. This move helps to substantiate the application and provide the principal an explanation for the absence, thereby legitimizing the request. While this justifies the request, it also helps soften its impact. And saying, *“Thank you”* acts as a pre-closing step that shows appreciation while also neatly wrapping up the kindness that was previously extended. This is a typical external modifier that helps express appreciation and diminishes the burden that might be posed by the request. Addressing as, *“Respected Sir”* denotes a formal greeting, which is suitable for the level of talk between a teacher and a principal as they respect the hierarchy.

Application 8

Excerpt 8



“Respected Sir, With respect, I would like to request your kind approval for one day’s casual leave on April 14, if convenient. I have a personal commitment that requires my presence. I shall remain obliged for your understanding. Warm regards,”

This application utilizes both internal and external modifications to soften the impact of the request and uphold the standards of politeness in the teacher principal interaction. *“With respect”* serves as a hedge and deference marker as it softens the request. The use of *“I would like to request”* introduces a modal verb which, in the context of the application, becomes less forceful and aligns with negative politeness. The principal permitting the teacher to take a leave of absence would *“kindly”* do so, after which the phrase *“if convenient”* further hedge down the effect of request. *“Kind approval”* is a politeness marker which shows the speaker possesses low humility and high respect. Further, *“I shall remain obliged”* is a phrasal downgrader that hedge substitutes expresses *“I owe you”* and enhances the indebtedness, thus reinforcing humble tone. Externally, a stronger application is made with the grounder *“I have a personal commitment that requires my presence”* which serves to justify the leave request, thereby increasing its face value. Adding gratitude to the phrase *“I shall remain obliged for your understanding”* expresses the appreciation to the principal which lessens the possible inconvenience that the request might impose. *“Respected Sir”* is the formal salutation of the application which alongside the closing *“Warm regards”* is also polite. Both of these add to the respectful tone of the application which is in accordance with the hierarchy in Pakistan’s education system. the application demonstrates a thoughtful balance of internal and external modifications that illustrate an effort to balance politeness with request mitigation.

Application 9

Excerpt 9

“Most Respected Principal, With profound respect, I wish to inform you that I am in need of a casual leave for April 5, owing to a necessary personal obligation. Kindly consider my request and oblige. I shall remain ever grateful for your kind approval. Obediently yours,”

This application processes several internal changes, particularly through lexical and phrasal mitigators. The phrase *“With profound respect”* lexically downgrades the request while simultaneously adding politeness, which illustrates deference to the principal. *“I wish to inform you”* also employs mitigation, and in this case, the informality employed indicates that the writer is not demanding the leave but is instead politely informing the principal. The request *“Kindly consider my request”* employs lexical downgrading as *“kindly”* makes the request softer. The phrase *“I shall remain ever grateful”* illustrates phrasal downgrading through the subjective phrase which expresses gratitude while softening the request further. The request is also softened through additional external modifications. Explanation is provided *“owing to a necessary personal obligation”* which justifies the leave, renders the request more reasonable and subsequently increases the likelihood of acceptance. The gratitude cited in *“I shall remain ever grateful”* strengthens the external supportive move which in this case shows the teacher’s courtesy in expecting the principal’s response to be positive. Besides this, the formal salutation *“Most Respected Principal”* along with the closing *“Obediently yours”* which is also formal blends with the polite conventional phrases that, rather softens the directness of the request, reinforces the teacher’s and principal’s hierarchical relationship in the context. The application shows that there is a strong consideration of both internal and external adjustments to lessen the imposition of the



request. This mix of internal and external mitigation showcases the strategic balance of Pakistani academic culture centered around courtesy and formality in the teacher-principal relationship.

Application 10

Excerpt 10

“Respected Sir, I hope you’re doing well. I just wanted to check if it would be alright to take casual leave due to an unavoidable domestic commitment. Looking forward to your kind permission. With respect.”

This application shows some important lexical and phrasal downgrading techniques. The phrase *‘I hope you are doing well’* is a polite introductory way which is a softener and shows consideration for the person’s well-being, which is a bending the rules of politeness in formal settings. The use of *“just wanted to check”* does the work of a phrasal downgrader which in this case reduces the request’s directness and conveys a degree of reluctance. This phrase hidge down the effect of the leave request and implies that the decision rests with the principal. *“If it would be alright”* mitigates the request’s impact even more by making the request conditional which shows that a great deal of respect for the principal’s power is being exercised and that the teacher is not demanding leave but is asking for permission. And the external modifications, *“due to an unavoidable domestic commitment”* is a phrase that serves as a grounder offering a rationale for the leave request. This rationale makes the request seem less forward and more legitimate because it casts the leave as essential and not optional. The phrase *“Looking forward to your kind permission”* is the closing phrase which casts the requesting move as supportive while reinforcing politeness and humility. Including *“With respect”* as a closing remark reinforces the formality of the request while showing consideration for the principal’s position. This respectful closing, combined with the earlier politeness markers, enhances the overall tone of deference in the application. This application reflects a high degree of politeness and mitigates the potential imposition of the leave request, in alignment with negative politeness strategies.

Application 11

Excerpt 11

“Subject: Casual Leave Application

Sir,

I request a day’s casual leave on 2 May due to personal reasons. Kindly approve.

Respectfully,”

This application uses a minimal level of internal modification, relying on simple and direct language. The phrase *“Kindly approve”* acts as a politeness marker, softening the directness of the request. The term *“kindly”* is a standard lexical down grader, commonly used in formal requests in Pakistan to express politeness without diminishing the directness of the request too much. The application overlooks the use of phrasal down toners like *“I would be grateful”* or *“I humbly request”* which could have further softened the request. And the external modifications, the application includes one supportive move: *“due to personal reasons”* This functions as a grounder, justifying the request and offering a reason for the leave. These phrases are somewhat justifying, the explanation remains vague and lacks elaboration or more details regarding the grounds for the leave. Also, the application finishes with *“Respectfully”* This is a formal, sign-off and a mark of politeness in formal conversations and therefore complies with the expectations. However, the casual leave application is blunt. This leave request does include one external modifier of



providing a reason for the leave, but the internal modifications are fewer in number than in other leave applications. “*Kindly*” is a term used in this application which is an internal modifier and reduces the directive force of the request. This application is a model of a request lacking sophisticated mitigation techniques and leaning on external justification and the formal closing to lessen the impact of the request.

4.1 Discussion

The current study aimed to analyze the pragmatic strategies related to the causal leave Discourse in Pakistani teachers to principals, focusing on the internal modifications (lexical and phrasal downgrading) and external modifications (grounders, thanking, and formal greetings). Both internal and external strategies of context mitigation are employed in Pakistani institutional communication, and the analysis showed that teachers also use numerous internal modifications to soften the requests. Teachers use phrases like “*humbly*” “*kindly*” “*with respect*” and phrasal downgrading to “*I would be grateful*” and “*I shall remain obliged*” which serve to express deference and politeness. Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011) noted that the internal mitigation in a request through down toners and hedges is a dominant feature in speech acts of formality and hierarchy. This is the same case for the argument posed by Brown and Levinson (1987) on negative politeness which the data supports, as the use of indirect speech and politeness strategies serves to reduce the force on the principal and uphold the cordial ordered relationship.

The degree of internal mitigation variation across applications is significant, with some having a higher degree of internal modification like Excerpts 1, 3, 8, 9, and 10 which use multiple down grader and hedges to maintain a respectful tone. Excerpts 2 and 11, however, are more direct and use minimal internal mitigation which in the Pakistani institutional context may come across as abrupt. This variation is consistent with the findings of Blum-Kulka et.al, (1989) which analyzed the degree of mitigation in requests and how it is impacted by perceived social distance and power dynamics.

The study also identified external modification strategies which include grounders and are used to justify the leave request which, in most applications, served to render the request more acceptable to the principal. Expressing gratitude, whether anticipatory “*Thanking you in anticipation*” or retrospective “*Thank you very much*” as well as formal salutations and closings “*Respected Sir*” “*Yours obediently*” also serve to reinforce the request as well as the hierarchy. The findings are consistent with CCSARP (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989) which considers the role of supportive moves in request discourse, paying attention to cultures with strict social stratification and formality. The marked use of external modifications in the data implies that Pakistani teachers tend to pay considerable regard to face and politeness in their written communication to the principals. The findings correspond with prior research concerning request patterns in formal and hierarchical settings like those by Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011) and Brown and Levinson (1987) and Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), which in some way, also emphasizes the role of internal and external adaptations in attaining pragmatic appropriateness in the academic discourse of Pakistan.

5. Conclusion

The focus of this research was on how teachers in Pakistan apply internal and external modifications in their applications for casual leave to the principals. Teachers employ internal modifications when making requests in leave applications to principals, even if it means compromising the expression of respect and deference. Some strategies that are common include



polite speech, hedges, and tentative forms which minimize the impositive effects of request in an interaction and are aimed at saving face in the interaction of power. The results indicated that external modifications are in common use, in addition to internal modifications. Causal Leave request justification, thanking, and formally addressed openings and closings are common among teachers. These moves serve to justify the request in an enhanced politeness level while reinforcing respect and formal tones for institutional communication. The research revealed that teachers from Pakistan understand the social and institutional setting which their requests are made. Through a blend of internal and external modification, they design requests which are useful and polite, honoring the need of the situation and the social order. This enables teachers and principals to communicate with each other in a professional and polite manner, while still upholding the decorum expected in educational institutions.

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