The Development of Pragmatic Competence through Telecollaboration:

An Analysis of Requesting Behavior

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By

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Abstract

Telecollaboration is a pedagogical approach in which geographically distant parties work together for the purposes of culture and language learning. A growing body of literature documents the benefits of telecollaboration for the foreign language classroom, specifically in the area of interlanguage pragmatic development. While peer-peer telecollaborative studies are well represented in this strand of research, there has been a lack of attention to novice-expert telecollaboration, a gap this dissertation seeks to fill.

The study investigated the requesting behavior of American learners of German for Professional Purposes (‘novices’) as they interacted via synchronous Web conferences with German-speaking professionals in Germany (‘experts’). Requesting behavior was examined through four focal areas: directness, internal modification, external modification, and appropriateness. In addition to comparing the requesting behavior of novices and experts, the study also examined the effect of interaction with experts and data-driven focused instruction on the development of novices’ requesting behavior.

The research used a mixed methodology of quantitative and qualitative analytic approaches to evaluate transcribed and coded request sequences. The two groups showed a number of differences: novice speakers used more direct requests than experts, experts used more internal modification than novices, and experts were rated as more appropriate than novices. This result broadly corresponds to previous research findings. In contrast to earlier findings, the two groups showed similarities in their use of external modifiers, including both the frequency and range of use. Novice development was not evident from quantitative analysis, but qualitative analysis revealed individual differences among the learners profiled, including the emergence of an unexpected category of request modification: the modified external support move. Although certain learners were seen to exhibit pragmatic development, other learners showed the opposite trend, namely an overreliance on formulaic language use.

In addition to supporting previous research findings about the nature of request production in second language learners, the study confirms the utility of explicit instruction in pragmatic development occurring within a telecollaborative context. It further contributes new understanding to the field of second language acquisition by identifying the limits of existing coding taxonomies for speech act research, and it suggests the need to develop better tools for quantitative research of interlanguage pragmatic development.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Research Project

While teaching a fourth-semester German course that also served as an introductory course in German for Professional Purposes, the author noticed an ongoing disconnect between the parameters of the instructional setting (university classroom populated by age-similar peers) and the target communicative register (professional setting populated by age- and status-dissimilar individuals). This discrepancy came sharply into focus one day when the students were role-playing a job interview; in this very formal and high-stakes speech context, the students produced both formal and informal address pronouns (*Sie* and *du* in German), seemingly without regard to the sociolinguistic parameters governing the role play. The author came to see that the learners' random variation of pronominal address forms reflected a deeper phenomenon at work: lack of authenticity in certain kinds of classroom discourse. In other words, the learners knew each other first and foremost as fellow students with whom they had been taught to use *du*. Calling a new communicative situation into existence by means of a role play did not actually change this dynamic, nor did it create any real social consequences associated with violations of these linguistic norms. It therefore became imperative for the author to find a way to broaden the discourse options normally available in the classroom. As Kramsch (1993) contends, "If communicative activities are not only to meet the needs of social maintenance, but to potentially bring about educational and social change, then we have to search for ways of explicitly varying all parameters of the educational context" (p. 94). This dissertation reports on the process and outcome of one teacher's attempt to vary the parameters of a traditional educational context, by implementing a semester-length

Internet-mediated exchange between American learners of German for Professional Purposes in Kansas and German-speaking professionals in Germany within a pedagogical framework known as ‘telecollaboration’.

This study has two main lines of exploration: it is a comparative investigation of the requesting behavior of novice speakers of German versus expert speakers of German, and it is also a developmental investigation of how novice speakers of German change their requesting behavior as a result of interacting with expert speakers of German and taking part in focused instruction. As such, it is a study of pragmatic competence, or the ability to produce socially appropriate utterances according to the sociolinguistic rules at work in a given community of speech.

The research presented in the following pages is of instructed foreign language learning. As a necessary consequence, there will be substantial discussion of pedagogical matters, related to curricular framework, course development, lesson planning, and task execution. By treating these matters at length, the author intends to provide necessary background information that will inform the presentation of the research, which is the ultimate focus of this dissertation, but also to provide a foundation for exploring the study’s implications for language teaching and learning.

1.2 Theoretical Background

1.2.1 Speech Act Theory

Language is both a means of exchanging information and a way of performing specific actions with words. This latter view of language presupposes that the minimum unit in human communication is not based solely in linguistic expression, but rather in the performance of contextually dependent acts (i.e., “speech acts”) using language

(Austin, 1962; Grice, 1975; Searle, 1975). Searle (1975) explains that there is a difference between the literal meaning of the sentence and the “speaker utterance meaning,” and that a listener’s interpretation begins first at the level of the sentence before proceeding to the speaker utterance level. Speech acts such as promising, requesting, refusing, or apologizing are heavily context-dependent and can be encoded in a number of expressions wherein reliance on linguistic form alone may be insufficient for complete understanding. Consider an utterance like “I don’t feel well”; depending on the context, the statement could serve as a comment on one’s physical condition, a request for attention, or an excuse for not performing an action.

To help elucidate the potential ambiguity of linguistic expressions vis-à-vis the performance of speech acts, Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) state that the performance of a specific speech act is comprised of three interrelated subcomponents: the locutionary act, the illocutionary act, and the perlocutionary act. The locutionary act involves the speaker’s production of an utterance with a specific intent and reference. The illocutionary act expresses the conventional force associated with the utterance, such as the making of an offer, threat or request. The perlocutionary act is the actual result of the utterance, independent of the original speaker’s intent. To return to the previous example, one may produce the utterance, “I don’t feel well” as an explanation for refusing to attend a party. The illocutionary force of the speech act is an attempt to save face by providing a reason as to why the speaker will not be in attendance. The reaction of the listener (e.g., acceptance of the excuse and extension of best wishes for recovery) constitutes the perlocution of the speech act.

Speech act theory, with its focus on using language to accomplish social goals, is generally situated within the linguistic subfield of pragmatics. Pragmatics is “the study of language from the point of view of the users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the *act of communication*” (Crystal, 2007, p. 301, emphasis added). Within the domain of second language acquisition (SLA) research, the study of pragmatics is referred to as interlanguage pragmatics and the study of pragmatic development as interlanguage pragmatic development, or second language (L2) pragmatic development. As described by Kasper and Rose (2002), “[I]nterlanguage pragmatics investigates how L2 learners develop the ability to understand and *perform action* in a target language” (p. 5, emphasis added). The current study will focus specifically on the latter aspect of this description, namely, the performance of the speech act ‘request’.

1.2.2 Sociocultural Theory

In addition to drawing upon speech act theory, this dissertation also is informed by sociocultural approaches to second language learning. Fundamentally, sociocultural theory holds that all human thought is mediated, primarily through language, and, following from this, mental activity is wedded to social activity. As explained by Lantolf (1994), “[D]espite the label ‘sociocultural’ the theory is not a theory of the social or of the cultural aspects of human existence…it is, rather, … a theory of the mind…that recognizes the central role that social relationships and culturally constructed artifacts play in organizing uniquely human forms of thinking” (pp. 30-31). Furthermore, as linguistic knowledge is seen to be co-constructed in social interaction, “the co-

construction process results in linguistic *change* among and within individuals during joint activity" (Donato, 1995, p. 39, emphasis original). This understanding has direct implications for both pedagogy and research.

Two important pedagogical constructs have emerged from sociocultural theory that are particularly relevant to the current study: scaffolding and affordances. Scaffolding refers to the process by which "a knowledgeable participant can create, by means of speech, supportive conditions in which the novice can participate in, and extend, current skills and knowledge to higher levels of competence" (Donato, 1994, p. 40). In this regard, the term 'novice' is used in the current study to refer to the participants who are less knowledgeable than their 'expert' counterparts. The term is not to be confused with the narrower understanding of 'novice' as a strict designation of language proficiency, as per the American Council on Teaching Foreign Language (ACTFL) standards. With this understanding, in the context of the expert-novice interaction on which this research project focuses, many opportunities for scaffolding are likely to arise. Affordances, on the other hand, refer to those things (linguistic, physical, or otherwise) present in an environment and perceivable by an organism, and which afford the opportunity for further action. In reference to linguistic development, van Lier (1996) states, "If the language learner is active and engaged, she will perceive linguistic affordances and use them for linguistic action" (p. 252). Mapped onto a data-driven pedagogical approach, interaction with expert speakers and instruction based on authentic examples of language production may serve as linguistic affordances for a novice's development of pragmatic competence.

An understanding of sociocultural theory has important applications for SLA research design because “the researcher must attempt to show the emergence of learning, the location of learning opportunities, the pedagogical value of various interactional contexts and processes, and the effectiveness of pedagogical strategies” (van Lier, 1996, p. 250). Capturing linguistic development in a telecollaborative environment requires an appropriate analytical tool, and increasingly researchers are drawing on microgenetic analysis to understand language development from a sociocultural perspective (see 4.6.2.2.).

1.3 Speech Act ‘Request’

As this dissertation focuses on requesting behavior, it is pertinent to elucidate several aspects of this speech act that will be relevant for the ensuing treatment of the research topic. At its core, a request is a kind of directive, in which the function is to get the interlocutor to do something for the speaker (Searle, 1976). Brown and Levinson (1987) further characterize the request as “an intrinsically face-threatening act” (p. 65) that, in order to be successfully executed, calls for the strategic mitigation of threat to an interlocutor’s social face. Moreover, requests differ cross-culturally and linguistically and they require a high level of appropriateness for their successful completion (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1989; Lin, 2009). Finally, requests are usually realized by means of clearly identifiable linguistic formulae (Byon, 2004; Lin, 2009).

1.3.1 Features of Requesting Behavior

Requests are typically composed of recognizable constituent elements: a so-called head act (which is subject to internal modification) and support moves that occur before or after the head act (also called external modifiers). Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper

(1989) define the head act as “the minimal unit which can realize a request” (p. 275) and offer the following example request sequence:

Excerpt 1-1 (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 275)

John, get me a beer, please. I’m terribly thirsty.

In this example, the head act is “get me a beer”; the other utterances serve to enhance the request’s chances of success, but are not strictly necessary for the request to occur. These additional elements are known as internal or external modifiers and will be treated at length below.

It is important to understand three characteristics of the head act that are relevant for the present study. First, head acts can be formulated at different levels of directness (see also 1.1.3.1. and 4.2.2.). The example in Excerpt 1-1 is formed using the imperative mood and illustrates the most direct kind of request formulation. Second, the head act of a request is not bound at the sentence level. Indeed, given the proper felicity conditions, a request may be realized at the word level, or even in certain cases at the syllable level. The illocutionary force of such instances is very weak, though, and these requests often assume the status of hints. Last, it is possible for a request to have multiple heads. This phenomenon occurs in cases where there is more than one minimal unit realizing the requestive goal, and these units are formulated at the same level of explicitness (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). As will be seen, the data set for the present study includes many instances of request sequences with multiple head acts (see also 6.4.1.).

In addition to the compulsory head act, a request sequence may also feature internal and external modification. Internal modification consists of grammatical or lexical changes to the head act that serve to mitigate the illocutionary force of the request (see also 1.1.3.2. and 4.2.3.). In Excerpt 1-1, the example utterance contains the internal modifier ‘please’, a highly conventionalized linguistic means of marking politeness. Working in tandem with internal modification, external modification occurs outside the bounds of the head act. Excerpt 1-1 contains two external modifiers: an ‘alerter’ (“John”) and a ‘grounder’ (“I’m terribly thirsty”). The effect of successful internal and external modification is to mitigate the force of the request and to enhance its chances for success (i.e., obtain a desired perlocution).

1.3.2 Mitigation of Face Threatening Acts (FTAs)

If a request is not realized correctly, there may be serious social implications due to the fact that “the speaker may fail to achieve not only the desired requestive end but also the interpersonal end” (Weizman, 1989, p. 93). Seen through the lens of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) universal theory of politeness, neglecting the “interpersonal end” of communication is akin to neglecting an interlocutor’s “face” or “public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” (p. 61). Potential threats to an interlocutor’s face arise from three sources: **power** (*P*) of the interlocutor over the speaker, **social distance** (*D*) between speaker and interlocutor, and **imposition** (*R*) involved in doing the FTA (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 15). As these factors combine in an additive fashion, compounding the potential face threat, speakers are obligated to employ a correspondingly high degree of linguistic politeness to execute successfully FTAs whose collective degree of *P*, *D*, and *R* is high. As summarized by Kasper (1994), there exists “a positive correlation between the weight of contextual factors (social distance, power and imposition) and politeness investment” (p. 3209). In order to show respect for the face wants and needs of his or her interlocutor, a requester has several linguistic means to demonstrate politeness (LoCastro, 2003; Yule, 1996), including the strategic use of directness (internal to head act), internal modification (internal to head act), and external modification (external to head act). If these linguistic elements demonstrate politeness corresponding to the given degree of *P*, *D*, and *R*, an interlocutor is more likely to consider the request appropriate and to respond favorably.

1.3.2.1 Directness

The directness of a request depends on a number of factors, including the speaker's perception of *P*, *D*, and *R*. Direct requests occur when a speaker states without ambiguity what he or she desires, whereas indirect requests contain an implicit meaning that may not be readily deducible from the linguistic expression itself (Yule, 1996). Rather, contextual factors such as the setting in which the communication occurs and the relationship between hearer and listener become instrumental in understanding the illocutionary force of an indirect request. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1989) broadly group the directness of requesting strategies into three universally manifested categories: direct, conventionally indirect, and non-conventionally indirect[1]. As regards linguistic politeness, indirectness is seen as a strategy employed to reduce potential threats to social face (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Searle, 1975), and it is manifested through adherence to pragmalinguistic conventions (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2013; Lin, 2009), as defined and exemplified in Figure 1-1.

Table 1-1: Request strategy types (based on Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, pp. 278-280 and Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1989, p. 201)

Types	**Tokens**
Direct requests	
Mood derivable The grammatical mood of the verb in the utterance marks its illocutionary force as a request.	Leave me alone. Hau ab.

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[1] Although Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1989) regard (in)directness as a universal linguistic feature, they also

Explicit performatives The illocutionary intent is explicitly named by the speaker by using a relevant illocutionary verb.	I'm *asking* you to move your car. Ich *bitte* Sie woanders zu parken.
Hedged performative The illocutionary verb denoting the requestive intent is modified, e.g., by modal verbs or verbs expressing intention.	I *must/have to ask* you to clean the kitchen right now. Ich *muss* dich *bitten* sofort die Küche sauberzumachen.
Locution derivable The illocutionary intent is directly derivable from the semantic meaning of the locution.	Madam, you'll have to/should/must/ought to move your car. Sie müssen/soll(t)en diesen Platz freihalten.
Want statement The utterance expresses the speaker's desire that the event denoted in the proposition come about.	I'*d like* to borrow your notes for a little while. Ich *würde gern* deine Mitschriften leihen.
Conventionally indirect requests	
Suggestory formula The illocutionary intent is phrased as a suggestion by means of a framing routine formula.	*How about* cleaning up the kitchen? *Wie wärs* wenn du mal die Küche aufräumen würdest?
Query preparatory The utterance contains reference to a preparatory condition for the feasibility of the Request, typically one of ability, willingness, or possibility as conventionalized in the given language. Very often, but not necessarily so, the speaker questions rather than states the presence of the chosen preparatory condition (query preparatory).	*Can* I borrow your notes? *Würdest* du mir Deine Aufzeichnungen ausleihen?
Non-conventionally indirect requests	
Strong hints The illocutionary act is not immediately derivable from the illocution; however the locution refers to relevant elements of the intended illocutionary and/or propositional act.	(Intent: getting a lift home) Will you be going home now? Fahren Sie jetzt nach Hause?
Mild hints The locution contains no elements which are of immediate relevance to the intended illocution or proposition, thus putting increased demand for context analysis and knowledge activation on the interlocutor.	(Intent: getting a lift home) I didn't expect the meeting to end this late. Ich hatte nicht damit gerechnet dass die Sitzung heute so lange dauert.

Although (in)directness is achieved through the use of linguistic strategies that are marked by particular lexicogrammar (e.g., the imperative mood, modal constructions, performative verbs, etc.), directness is seen as a distinct concept from that of internal modification, which works in conjunction with directness (and external modification) to influence overall request appropriateness.

1.3.2.2 Internal Modification

In addition to the strategic use of directness, speakers can mitigate potential face threats to interlocutors by modifying requests internally (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1989; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Faerch & Kasper, 1989). Internal modifiers are “elements within the request utterance proper [i.e., the head act]...the presence of which is not essential for the utterance to be potentially understood as a request” (Blum-Kulka, 1989, p. 60). Internal modifiers may be classified as syntactic or lexical modifiers (Faerch & Kasper, 1989). Syntactic modifiers are comprised of conditional structures, negation, tense and aspect markings, and interrogatives, while lexical modifiers entail various specific word choices such as the marker ‘please’ or downgraders like ‘perhaps’ and ‘possibly’. (For a full discussion of syntactic and lexical modifiers, see section 4.2.3.) Internal modifiers may act either to intensify the coerciveness of the request (upgraders), or they may act to soften the impact of the request (downgraders). As this is a study of socially appropriate language use and downgraders are employed to demonstrate linguistic politeness and mitigate potential face threat, only this kind of internal modification will be treated.

1.3.2.3 External Modification

External modifiers are “supporting statements that are used by requesters to persuade the hearer to carry out a desired action” (Schauer, 2007). Moreover, external modifiers are extraneous to the head act of the request; that is, they do not occur within the request itself, but rather address the context in which the speech act is embedded, thus indirectly modifying the illocutionary force (Edmonson, 1981). Such external modifiers may include: checking on the hearer’s availability or willingness to perform the action, getting a precommitment, providing a rationale (i.e., a ‘grounder’), or minimizing the cost to the hearer. (For a full discussion of external modifiers, see section 4.2.4.)

1.3.2.4 Appropriateness

Appropriateness of pragmatic performance depends on two major factors: language knowledge and strategic competence to implement this knowledge in ongoing communication (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Language knowledge comprises organizational knowledge (grammar and discourse) and pragmatic knowledge (functional and sociolinguistic knowledge). Strategic competence involves goal setting, planning and assessment, and it operates in tandem with language knowledge (and all of its subcomponents) to contribute to effective and appropriate pragmatic performance. In the present study, appropriateness will be investigated in relation to request production.

1.4 Research Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate requesting behavior in novice and expert speakers of German in the context of a computer-mediated environment. Requesting behavior is operationalized according to four interrelated focal constructs: directness, internal modification, external modification, and appropriateness. Using these constructs, the research project investigates two complimentary strands of inquiry: a comparison of requesting behavior in experts and novices, and the development of requesting behavior in novices. The specific research questions posed are:

1. Is the requesting behavior of novice participants similar to or different from the requesting behavior of expert participants? If so, how?
2. Does the requesting behavior of novice participants change as a result of interacting with expert participants and taking part in focused instruction? If so, how?

1.5 Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation comprises six chapters. Following this opening chapter, a review of previous studies is offered, focusing specifically on requesting in second language learners. The literature review is divided into two main parts: cross-sectional (i.e., comparative) studies of requesting behavior and developmental studies of requesting behavior. Chapter 3 presents the experimental course design and covers all detail necessary to understand the larger pedagogical and curricular context in which the research was embedded, including information about the focused instructional module that forms the difference between the two experimental conditions of the study. Next, the dissertation moves to an explanation of the research methods, covering coding taxonomies that have been previously used in the study of requesting behavior, as well as those taxonomies developed for the present research. In addition, this chapter also explains the measures undertaken to ensure reliability of data coding and the specific data analysis methods used in the study. Quantitative and qualitative research results are presented in Chapter 5; the main focus here is on the qualitative analysis, presented in the form of microgenetic case histories. The final chapter of the dissertation steps back to discuss and draw conclusions emerging from the data analysis. In this regard, we see that a mixed research methodology has enabled the observation of comparative and developmental trends that bear further scrutiny.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

The following review of the literature focuses specifically on requesting behavior in second language (L2) learners, so as to make clear the rationale for the present study. The review begins with cross-sectional studies of L2 directness, L2 internal modification, L2 external modification, and L2 appropriateness, to frame the comparative focus of the study. Next, the review shifts to the second research focus by covering prior studies in the development of L2 pragmatic competence, including the relationship between pragmatic and grammatical development, the role of instruction in pragmatic development, and the characteristics of various L2 learning environments. It will be seen that the present study continues many lines of existing research, and it is well situated to contribute new findings in the area of instructed pragmatic development in a telecollaborative environment.

2.2 Cross-Sectional Studies of Requesting Behavior

2.2.1 Studies of Directness in L2 Requesting Behavior

When comparing L2 learners with native speakers, research reveals a generally positive correlation between L2 proficiency and the ability to produce indirect requests (Félix-Brasdefer, 2007; Hill, 1997; Rose, 2000; Su, 2010). For example, Hill (1997) examined Japanese L2 English learners at three different proficiency levels, finding that lower-level learners used more direct requests than higher-level learners. In a more recent study, Félix-Brasdefer (2007) investigated the request performance of American learners of L2 Spanish at three levels of proficiency. Like Hill (1997), the results showed that the beginner group produced the largest number of direct requests, while intermediate and advanced groups produced more conventionally indirect requests, with a corresponding decline in direct requesting behavior. Rose (2000) examined the production of requests, apologies, and complaints by three age-distinct groups of L2 English learners: seven-, nine-, and eleven-year olds. Comparison of linguistic expressions provided evidence of movement towards more indirect language production, with the oldest group employing the greatest degree of indirect expressions, as well as increased use of supportive moves to frame their speech acts. In an interesting variation on this line of research, Su (2010) compared the requesting behavior of intermediate- and advanced-level Chinese learners of L2 English, both in English and in Chinese, to native speakers of English and Chinese. Data indicated that the L2 English learners used indirect strategies less often than English speakers when making English requests, but more often than Chinese speakers when requesting in Chinese. The results thus showed not only differences between the request production of Chinese L2 learners and English native speakers, but also that the L2 request strategies adopted by the learners seemed to promote bidirectional pragmatic transfer, thereby influencing L1 production.

2.2.2 Studies of Internal Modification in L2 Requesting Behavior

An important finding regarding internal modification of requests by L2 learners of different languages is that learners tend to underuse internal modifiers when compared to native speakers or learners of higher proficiency levels (Chen, 2001; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2008, 2009; Faerch & Kasper, 1989; Göy, Zeyrek, & Otcu, 2012; Hassall, 2001, 2012; Hill, 1997; Kawamura & Sato, 1996; Trosborg, 1995; Wigglesworth & Yates, 2011; Woodfield, 2008). Faerch and Kasper's (1989) analysis showed that Danish learners of German used comparatively fewer syntactic modifications than German native speakers, and to a lesser degree, the same phenomenon was seen between Danish learners of English and English native speakers. Regarding lexical modifications, the study showed that Danish learners of English and German overused conventionalized politeness markers and underused downtoners in comparison to native speakers. Trosborg's (1995) study reports on the development of pragmatic competence in Danish learners of English at various proficiency levels. The findings indicate that, across proficiency levels, learners of English underused internal modifiers compared to native speakers, but that this usage went up as proficiency in the target language increased. Chen (2001) compared the e-mail requests of American and Taiwanese speakers of English to professors in a university setting. Analysis of the "linguistic realizations of requestive acts" (p. 23) revealed that American speakers used more internal modifications in their requests than their Chinese-speaking counterparts, both syntactically (e.g., 'would', 'could') and lexically (e.g., 'possibly', 'perhaps'). Göy et al. (2012) investigated request production in three different populations: two groups of Turkish learners of English with differing proficiency levels and a group of American English speakers. Subjects performed similarly in situations where the power (*P*) difference between speakers was minimal; however, when this difference became greater, the native speakers used more syntactic and lexical downgraders than the learner groups (with the exception of the politeness marker 'please'). Professional interaction comes sharply into focus with Wigglesworth and Yates' (2011) study of L2 English speakers requesting behavior in the workplace. The authors found that subjects "drew on a narrower range of lexical and syntactic devices which they also used less frequently" (p. 799) than their L1 English speaking colleagues, attributable perhaps to unfamiliarity with the mitigating function of these linguistic devices.

Unlike with other internal modifiers, L2 learners show a marked tendency towards overuse of the lexical downgrader ‘please’, a highly conventionalized politeness marker (Barron, 2003; Faerch & Kasper, 1989; Göy et al., 2012; House, 1989; House & Kasper, 1987; Pinto, 2005; Taguchi, 2011a). House (1989) and House and Kasper (1987) found that German and Danish learners of English overused this modifier in comparison to native speakers of British English. Faerch & Kasper (1989), observing a similar result, proposed that learners’ overuse of the marker ‘please’ could be attributed to their desire to adhere to Grice’s (1975) maxim of clarity. More recently, Pinto’s (2005) examination of four groups of Spanish learners showed that the marker ‘please’ was overrepresented in the learner data across all groups. These studies reveal that, for L2 learners ‘please’ functions as an unambiguous and easily produced downtoner, leading them to rely heavily on it as a means of mitigating requestive force.

2.2.3 Studies of External Modification in L2 Requesting Behavior

A key finding in research regarding L2 learners and external modification is that learners tend to overuse external modifiers compared to native speakers (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Faerch & Kasper, 1989; Hassall, 2001, 2012; Kasper, 1981). Kasper (1981) showed that German learners of English overused preparators as compared to native speakers, while Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) found that L2 Hebrew learners overused various external modifiers. Similarly, Danish learners of English and German were seen to use external support moves more often than native speaking counterparts (Faerch & Kasper, 1989). Hassall (2001, 2012) reports on the use of external modifiers by L2 learners of Indonesian, noting that their overuse of grounders sometimes resulted in provision of repetitive information and compromised pragmatic ability.

Research has also confirmed that learners prefer to employ external modification devices over internal modification devices. Faerch and Kasper (1989) point to the very explicit politeness function associated with their use, while Hassall (2001) notes that learners may be able to use these linguistic elements more easily than other more syntactically complex internal modification devices. Notably, when employing specific external support moves, learners tend to make use of the grounder more frequently than other modifications (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2008, 2009; Hassall, 2001, 2012).

2.2.4 *Studies of Appropriateness in L2 Requesting Behavior*

While several studies comment generally on the development of pragmatic appropriateness in requesting (DuFon, 2000; Hill, 1997; Rose, 2000; Röver, 2005; Trosborg, 1995), only Taguchi (2006, 2011a) has isolated this variable as a specific analytical unit. As such, the current study adds to an underrepresented strand in interlanguage pragmatics research and will help expand current efforts to understand appropriateness in requesting behavior. Taguchi (2006) investigated appropriateness of request production in low- and high-imposition contexts by using a combination of methods: 1) analyzing linguistic expressions to determine level of directness; 2) and rating speech act appropriateness. She compared three groups, lower-proficiency Japanese learners of L2 English (N=30), higher-proficiency Japanese learners of L2 English (N=29), and native speakers of American English (N=20), with the native speakers providing baseline data. She found that there was a significant difference in appropriateness scores between the lower- and higher-proficiency learners, with the lower group receiving an average appropriateness rating of 2.3/6 and the upper group averaging 3.6/6. The greater degree of appropriateness demonstrated by the upper group was especially influenced by their better command of grammatical and discourse features, and less so by overall pragmatic control.

In a more recent study, Taguchi (2011a) examined the appropriateness and fluency of L2 speech act production among three groups of EFL learners in both low- and high-imposition contexts, looking specifically at the role of proficiency and study abroad experience on performance. Group 1 was comprised of lower-proficiency students, while Groups 2 and 3 included higher-proficiency students. Additionally, Group 2 students had had no study abroad experience, while Group 3 students had spent an average of 15 months abroad. Group 1 students received appropriateness scores that were significantly lower than Group 2 and 3 students when producing high-imposition speech acts, indicating a strong effect for proficiency level. In contrast, Groups 2 and 3 received similar ratings for appropriateness of speech act production in both low- and high-imposition contexts, leading the author to conclude that proficiency was a stronger indicator of performance over study abroad experience.

2.3 Developmental L2 Pragmatics Studies

2.3.1 L2 Grammatical and Pragmatic Development

A number of studies have established empirically that L2 speakers might commit pragmatic failures, even when they have excellent grammatical and lexical command of the target language (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1989; Kasper, 1981). This finding points to a larger debate within interlanguage pragmatics: what is the relationship between grammatical and pragmatic competence? Two seemingly contradictory positions have emerged. Some researchers have argued that grammar and pragmatics should be considered independent of one another, and that ungrammatical realizations of pragmatic functions do not necessarily represent pragmalinguistic error (Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985; Schmidt, 1983; Walters, 1980). In opposition to this claim, other research has shown that a lack of structural control over the language can impede an L2 speaker's ability to perform intended communicative acts (Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Trosborg, 1995). Kasper and Rose (2002) attempt to reconcile these divergent positions by explaining that both trends are possible; indeed, they hold that the "pragmatics precedes grammar" scenario characterizes early stages of interlanguage development, while the "grammar precedes pragmatics" scenario appears typical of more advanced learners. In the latter case, learners with knowledge of a range of grammatical structures may not deploy them in pragmatically appropriate ways (i.e., they lack sociopragmatic knowledge). In the context of the current study, both scenarios are likely to be relevant, as the subjects span a range of proficiency levels (see section 3.3).

2.3.2 The Role of Instruction in L2 Pragmatic Development

2.3.2.1 Is Instruction in Pragmatics Effective?

Given the centrality of pragmatic competence in overall L2 communicative ability, much research has focused on whether pedagogical intervention can effect L2 pragmatic development. Evidence from interventional research confirms that "instruction in pragmatics is even more beneficial than exposure for developing pragmatic competence'' (Félix-Brasdefer, 2007, p. 168; see also Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). Studies of instructional intervention have investigated both L2 pragmatic comprehension (e.g., Bergman &

Kasper, 1993; L.F. Bouton, 1994; Koike, 1996; Kubota, 1995) and production (e.g., Fukuya & Clark, 2001; Martínez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005; Safont, 2003; Salazar, 2003; Takahashi, 2001, 2005). As the focus of this dissertation is on development of L2 pragmatic production (i.e., requesting behavior) as a result of instructional intervention, it is necessary to review research in this area. Safont (2003) and Salazar (2003) both examined the effects of instruction in English requests with Spanish-speaking university students in Spain. Safont's (2003) study of request modification showed that learners increased their use of internal and external modification on a written discourse-completion task (WDCT) posttest. In the case of Salazar (2003), by contrast, learners evidenced no change in their range of request strategies on the pre- and posttest, despite having used a wider range of strategies during one of the instructional sessions. Salazar (2003) concludes that pragmatic instruction seems to have a short-term effect, but that its long-term impact remains inconclusive. Despite inconsistent results between the two latter studies, most studies have shown instruction to be effective for a variety of pragmatic learning targets beyond requesting behavior, including compliments and compliment responses (Billmyer, 1990), suggestions (Koike & Pearson, 2005; Martínez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005), hedging strategies (Wishnoff, 2000), implicature (Bouton, 1988; Bouton, 1994; Kubota, 1995), modality markers (Belz & Vyatkina, 2005, 2008), and pragmatic fluency (House, 1996).

2.3.2.2 What Instructional Methods Are Most Effective?

Having reviewed the utility of instruction in developing requesting performance and other areas of L2 pragmatic competence, we must now address the question of which teaching approaches are most effective. While learners can certainly benefit from implicit instruction (Alcón Soler, 2005; Fukuya & Zhang, 2002; Takahashi, 2001, 2005), studies also confirm that explicit instruction of metapragmatic information regarding appropriate usage patterns and linguistic forms can be of particular help in developing pragmatic competence (Alcón Soler, 2005; Belz & Vyatkina, 2005, 2008; House, 1996; House & Kasper, 1981; Martínez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005; Rose & Ng, 2001; Takahashi, 2001, 2005; Tateyama, 2001; Yoshimi, 2001). House (1996) examined the fluency of German learners of English as a FL (EFL) who opened and closed speech acts by means of routine formulae, looking specifically at speech rate and frequency of pauses. One group received implicit instruction as part of a communicative language teaching approach, while the second group received explicit instruction in conversational routines. The results showed that both groups improved in their use of routine formulae, but that the explicit group was superior regarding the use of gambits (e.g., ‘ok’, ‘you know’, ‘well’) and discourse strategies. Alcón-Soler (2005) investigated the effect of implicit and explicit instruction on EFL learners’ ability to comprehend and use request strategies. Subjects from both groups demonstrated gains in comprehension, but the explicit group showed an advantage regarding ability to use request strategies productively. Implicit and explicit instruction can also lead to an increase in the pragmatically appropriate use of suggestions (Koike & Pearson, 2005; Martínez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005); however, in the case of Koike and Pearson (2005), a strong effect for task type was observed. Learners who received explicit instruction performed better on the multiple-choice assessment, while the implicit group was more successful at the open-ended task. Given that both implicit and explicit instruction can lead to pragmatic gains, Belz and Vyatkina (2005, 2008) instituted a series of pedagogical interventions that sequentially moved from being more implicit to explicit. As a result of this focused instruction, subjects began to use German modal particles more productively in their correspondence with native-speaking keypals. In keeping with this approach, the pedagogical intervention for the current study (see section 3.9) also moved from implicit to explicit instruction. (For more about the implicit-explicit continuum, see Takahashi, 2010.)

2.3.3 The L2 Learning Environment

The acquisition of pragmatic knowledge can be facilitated through instructional means, with implicit and explicit teaching approaches affecting performance differentially. Before proceeding, it is now necessary to examine the question of the learning environment. The following sections will deal with four different learning environments, and how they contribute to the development of pragmatic competence: Foreign Language (FL) settings, Untutored Immersion (UI) settings, Study Abroad (SA) settings, and Telecollaborative (TC) settings.

2.3.3.1 L2 Pragmatic Development in FL Settings

Research of pragmatic development in a foreign language (FL) setting[2] presents a mixed picture. On the one hand, if the target language is used consistently, the FL classroom can provide an acquisitionally rich environment. For example, Kanagy and Igarashi's (1997) study of English-speaking children in a Japanese FL (JFL) immersion kindergarten showed that, after several weeks of exposure to pragmatic routines, the learners increased their use of spontaneous utterances, and relied less on formulaic routines to convey pragmatic information. Cohen (1997) presents a self-study of acquisition of JFL during a semester-long accelerated course. The author reports that he acquired some pragmatic ability, such as expressing gratitude, and engaging in a limited range of requesting and apologizing behavior, but not the extent of functions that he had hoped for.

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[2] FL refers to a situation wherein the target language is different from the language(s) used outside of the classroom/learning environment, such as the case of learners of German who reside in the United States.

The status of FL learners' pragmatic competence becomes especially contentious when compared with the pragmatic competence of second language (SL) learners[3]. As Kasper and Schmidt (1996, p. 159-160) note:

> Because pragmatic knowledge, by definition, is highly sensitive to social and cultural features of context, one would expect input that is richer in qualitative and quantitative terms to result in better learning outcomes. A second language environment is more likely to provide learners with the diverse and frequent input they need for pragmatic development than a foreign language learning context, especially if the instruction is precommunicative or noncommunicative.

An initial attempt to investigate the differential influence of SL and FL learning environments is seen in Takahashi and Beebe (1987), who found that Japanese EFL learners produced refusals that were less target-like than refusals produced by the ESL group. Röver's (1996) study produced similar results; German EFL learners' productive use of pragmatic routines was positively correlated with extended stays in the United States or the United Kingdom. Even subjects who had spent as little as six weeks in an SL context demonstrated superiority in their knowledge of situational routines. By contrast, Röver's (2001) replication of the study showed different results. In this case, general proficiency was the decisive factor: Highly proficient EFL learners performed almost as well as the native American English-speaking control group. Perhaps the best-known study of pragmatic comprehension in SL and FL contexts is Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) comparison of EFL and ESL learners' detection and judgment of pragmatic and grammatical errors in requests, suggestions, refusals, and apologies. Results showed that EFL learners were better able to discern errors in grammar, while ESL learners were more sensitive to pragmatic infelicities. Counterevidence for these claims, however, is found in Niezgoda and Röver (2001), a replication of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998). In the replication study, low- and high-proficiency Czech EFL learners were compared with low- and high-proficiency ESL learners in the United States. The results of Niezgoda and Röver (2001) support the findings of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) in one central regard: namely, ESL groups in both studies considered pragmatic errors to be more serious than grammatical errors. The high-proficiency EFL learners of Niezgoda and Röver (2001), in contrast, displayed pragmatic awareness more similar to the ESL learners (and far beyond the Hungarian EFL learners) of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998). Niezgoda and Röver conclude that their Czech EFL learners constitute a “highly select sample” that “probably use a great deal of top-down processing and actively search for grammatical rules and pragmatic conventions” (p. 77). In other words, the small and select nature of FL participants in the replication study made seamless comparison with the original study participants problematic. Despite the uncertainty regarding environmental effects on sensitivity to mistakes of grammar and pragmatics, there is emerging consensus that a L2 learner’s pragmatic abilities can improve significantly as a result of studying the target language in a SL setting; such an environment affords rich exposure to target language input and ample opportunity to use the language (Kasper, 2000; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996).

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[3] SL refers to a situation wherein the target language is also in use outside of the classroom/learning, such as learning English in the United States or German in Austria.

2.3.3.2 L2 Pragmatic Development in Untutored Immersion (UI) Settings

Early longitudinal research reported individual case studies of pragmatic development of untutored learners in immersion settings (Achiba, 2002; R. Ellis, 1992; Schmidt, 1983). R. Ellis (1992) conducted a 2-year study of the development of requesting behavior in two beginning-level L2 learners of English (ages 10 and 11) in a classroom-based setting. While noting that the subjects “failed to acquire a full range of request types and forms” (p. 20), R. Ellis (1992) also concluded that limited pragmatic development did occur, evidenced by emerging use of certain indirect request strategies, including query preparatory requests (i.e., “can” questions) and hints. The case of seven-year old Yao, as presented in Achiba (2002), documents pragmatic development that both mirrors and surpasses that demonstrated by the subjects of R. Ellis’s (1992) study. By the end of the seventeen-month study, Yao evidenced nuanced ability to soften the illocutionary force of her requests through linguistic devices (i.e., the modal ‘could’ to suggest and to question willingness) and hinting strategies. In contrast to R. Ellis (1992) and Achiba (2002), Schmidt (1983) focused on an adult learner of L2 English (Wes) over a three-year observation period. In general, Wes displayed high levels of strategic competence (Bachman & Palmer, 1996), but due to lack of grammatical control, often had difficulty realizing requests pragmalinguistically, which led to non-target-like utterances such as, “If you back to room, can I bring cigarette?” (intended meaning: ‘please bring me a cigarette’). Despite lack of structural accuracy, Wes was seen to be an effective communicator who demonstrated sensitivity to the face needs of his interlocutors, due mainly to his desire to conduct business and maintain interpersonal relationships in an English-language environment. Collectively, the work of R. Ellis

(1992), Achiba (2002), and Schmidt (1983) suggests that L2 learners in UI settings proceed through stages in the development of requesting behavior, moving from reliance on unanalyzed routine formulae to more productive use of indirect strategies.

2.3.3.3 L2 Pragmatic Development in study abroad (SA) Settings

For North American collegiate FL learners, an immersion experience is typically associated with participation in a study abroad (SA) program, wherein the learners often take part in formal language instruction. Recent research efforts provide mounting evidence that, following SA, learners may improve certain aspects of their speech act performance, including requests (Barron, 2003; Cole & Anderson, 2001; Magnan & Black, 2006; Schauer, 2004, 2007; Woodfield, 2012), compliments (Hoffman-Hicks, 1999), apologies (Cohen & Shively, 2007; Warga & Schölmberger, 2007), offers and refusals (Barron, 2003, 2007; Félix-Brasdefer, 2004), suggestions (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1993), and advice (Matsumura, 2001, 2007).

Many studies have shown that learners who participate in a SA program can develop more target-like request production. For example, Cole and Anderson (2001) noted increased ability to use indirect request strategies (e.g., ‘‘Open the door please’’ developed into ‘‘Can you open the door please?’’) after Japanese learners of English participated in a 10-month SA program in Canada. Magnan and Back (2006) also observed an increase in the use of indirect request strategies among SA participants (American learners of French in France) whose language proficiency had improved, as well as a higher degree of formal address pronoun usage. Schauer (2004) documented a correlation between length of SA experience and subjects’ ability to use internal and external modifiers to mitigate requests. The learners acquired such external modification strategies as ‘‘small talk’’ (e.g., ‘‘good to see you’’). Additionally, participants started using internal syntactic modifiers (e.g., the conditional clause) with more frequency the longer they stayed abroad. Schauer (2007) analyzed the requesting behavior of three groups of participants: German learners of English studying abroad, German learners of English in Germany, and native speakers of British English. She noted comparable trends in the wide range of external modifiers used by the British English speakers and the group of SA students, while the FL learners in Germany were seen to use a narrower range and quantitatively fewer external modifiers.

While a range of studies confirm the positive effect of SA on request production, other research presents a more uneven view. Recently, Woodfield (2012) investigated request modification in eight SA graduate students at a British university over an eight-month period. Results showed that subjects used fewer internal modification devices than native speakers, and that this frequency actually declined over data collection points. At the same time, the SA group used external modification devices to a similar degree as the native speakers. The learners thus displayed trends that both converged towards and diverged from the control group. Focusing on American SA students in France, Hoffman-Hicks (1999) examined the learners’ development of greetings, leave-takings, and compliments during an eight-month stay. Unlike learners from the control group in the United States, the SA participants began to use routine formulae in their leave-takings. SA participants also demonstrated increased frequency, range and distribution of discourse markers in comparison to the control group. That the two groups showed similar results in their complimenting behavior (i.e., a continued preference for L1 English compliment structures) shows that not all focal pragmatic features benefitted to the same extent from SA participation. Also with mixed results, Barron (2003) studied pragmatic development in Irish learners of German, who had completed 7-8 years of formal FL German instruction prior to SA. Three times during their stay abroad, the learners filled out discourse completion tests and metapragmatic assessment questionnaires. After the last survey was completed, participants also conducted role plays and participated in retrospective interviews. Barron's (2003) subjects expanded their use of routinized formulae, but also increased their use of non-routinized expressions, leading the author to conclude that the development of pragmatic routines is an uneven process, even in a SA context. Looking at the effect of SA after returning to the FL context, Taguchi (2011a) compared the request performance of three groups of JFL learners: low-proficiency, high-proficiency with SA experience, and high-proficiency without SA experience. Both of the upper groups were able to perform more appropriate requests than the lower group, but no difference was found between the two upper groups, showing that proficiency, not SA experience, influenced appropriateness of request production. From these studies it is apparent that SA alone leads to limited or uneven pragmatic development; more effective are models in which the interactional affordances of SA can be combined with explicit instruction in target features, and in which students can reflect on their observations and participation in the host culture (see also Kinginger, 2011). Such an arrangement also becomes possible in telecollaborative environments, to which we now turn our attention.

2.3.3.4 L2 Pragmatic Development in Telecollaborative (TC) Settings

Studies present a mixed picture regarding the utility of SA in enhancing pragmatic performance, highlighting again the need for more explicit instruction in a range of pragmatic targets. In addition, barriers exist that prevent all FL students from participating equally in a SA experience, as related to factors such as participant gender, racial/ethnic identity, and chosen field of study (Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut, & Klute, 2012). In order to expose a greater number of FL learners to the benefits of SA, including the rich interactional affordances of communicating with native speakers of the target language, FL teachers have begun to incorporate the use of computer- and Internet-mediated communication into their instruction to cooperate with geographically distant partners in the development of linguistic and cultural knowledge. Such ‘online intercultural exchange’ (OIE) has been the subject of active study in recent years (e.g., Belz & Müller-Hartmann, 2002; Belz & Thorne, 2006; Blake, 2008; English, Furstenberg, Levet, & Maillet, 2001; Kern, Ware, & Warschauer, 2004; Levy, 2007), leading O'Dowd (2013) to conclude that OIE “is considered to be one of the main tools for developing intercultural communicative competence in the foreign language classroom” (p. 2).

One specific kind of OIE that places emphasis on the development of pragmatic competence as well as on the role of the teacher in such exchanges is called ‘telecollaboration’. It is defined by Belz (2003) as “institutionalized, electronically mediated intercultural communication under the guidance of a languacultural expert (i.e., a teacher) for the purposes of foreign language learning and the development of intercultural competence” (p. 2). In TC exchanges, it is the teacher’s role to provide assistance to learners in their ‘languacultural’ (Agar, 1994) development using the very discourse that the learners themselves produced in interactions with expert speakers. This pedagogical method originated in corpus linguistics, where it became known under the term ‘data-driven learning’ (Johns, 1986), Telecollaboration occurring in a peer-peer model can be especially conducive to the development of L2 pragmatic competence. Belz (2007) comments that this TC configuration “may expand the variety of discourse options to which learners are exposed as well as create opportunities for the performance and practice of L2 pragmatic competence in meaningful interactions” (p. 52). As Belz and Kinginger (2003) demonstrate, the building and maintaining of personal relationships had a decisive impact on participants’ accurate usage of the German and French informal (T) and formal (V) pronouns of address. When participating in situations with increased social pressure to maintain face, learners attended more carefully to the accurate usage of either T- or V-pronouns. This effect was also seen in Belz and Kinginger (2002) when an American learner of German, Joe, came to understand the social consequences of pronominal address forms as a result of his interactions with his German keypal, Gabi. During initial interactions with Gabi, he seemed to exhibit free variation in his production of the T- and V-pronouns. Several weeks into the exchange, as Joe and Gabi are engaged in a long chat session characterized by flirting and other such linguistic play, Joe produced the V-pronoun and was immediately corrected by Gabi to use the T-pronoun. Following this “critical incident” (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996, p. 165), Joe no longer addressed Gabi with the V-pronoun and, as a result, his subsequent production became more similar to native speaker norms.

In a series of studies, Belz and Vyatkina (2005, 2008; see also Belz, 2005; Vyatkina & Belz, 2006; Vyatkina, 2007) employed data-driven pedagogical interventions within a TC setting to assist American learners in their acquisition of features of German that are difficult for L1 English speakers both grammatically and pragmatically: modal particles and pronominal adverbs. The American university students interacted by e-mail and text chat with German university students to complete several projects, including building Web sites and writing essays, which constituted a major portion of their intermediate FL German course. After a series of in-class pedagogical interventions, learners showed a marked increase in range, accuracy, and pragmatic appropriateness of usage of the focal features as well as in pragmatic awareness.

In comparison to research on peer-peer telecollaboration, studies of intercultural exchange for professional purposes are rare, with two notable examples provided by Vetter and Chanier (2006) and Golato (2008). Vetter and Chanier (2006) explored synchronous tutoring sessions with NS professionals that combined audio conferencing with text chat between vocational Master-level students enrolled in an English Language for Specific Purposes course at a French university. Their tutors were L1 English-speaking Master-level students with a similar professional specialization enrolled at a British university. The results showed that these exchanges helped the learners "regain self-confidence" (p. 5) and improve their rate of participation in conversations about professional topics at different levels of notional complexity. The authors conclude that "the equalizing effect that can be observed to take place between the two modalities (audio and chat) is particularly relevant for false-beginners" (p. 21) and strongly recommend simultaneously using multiple modalities in intercultural professional exchanges. Golato (2008) reported on a university German business language course, which used online text chats with German-speaking professionals as a culminating activity in a teaching unit on company presentations and workplace descriptions. After careful in-class preparation for this activity, students were divided into groups; each interviewed one German about their work place and reported back to the entire class. In Golato's study, however, the participants were either experts (German professionals) or novices (American students) not only in relation to language but also professional expertise. Reported benefits of the exchange included the students' involvement in meaningful intercultural communication and the learning of linguistic and cultural information first-hand from professionals working in the country of the target language. Given the scarcity of such studies, the present research will contribute significantly towards understanding the nature of novice-expert interaction in professional telecollaborative exchange.

2.4 Summary

As this chapter concludes, several important implications for the current research project can be drawn. First, given that previous research has demonstrated positive effects for explicit instruction in pragmatic development, as well as select benefits for participation in SA, the current study follows the approach of Belz and Vyatkina (2008) and seeks to combine the best practices of both approaches in a TC instructional framework. Although much interesting research in TC pragmatic development has been conducted, there are nevertheless few studies that specifically investigate requesting behavior in a TC arrangement. The current study thus brings a well-investigated phenomenon into a novel instructional environment. Moreover, the investigation extends previous research in TC exchange by adding an underrepresented feature to the study design: novice-expert interaction. Finally, the study has the potential to corroborate existing findings in request mitigation and to add additional weight to the investigation of 'appropriateness' as a distinct phenomenon in pragmatic production.

Chapter 3: Experimental Course Design

3.1 Introduction

An important characteristic of research that occurs in a telecollaborative setting is the fact that the investigator also often serves as the instructor (Belz & Müller-Hartmann, 2002, 2003; Belz & Vyatkina, 2005, 2008; Müller-Hartmann, 2006, 2007, 2012; O'Dowd, 2003; O'Dowd & Eberbach, 2004). In highlighting the duality of telecollaborative research and pedagogy, Müller-Hartmann (2012) comments: “Research on telecollaboration is mostly done by researchers who do not come as outsiders to the research process, but who, while being researchers, are also the practitioners who are actually responsible for the telecollaborative learning environment” (p. 163). This case is especially prevalent in pedagogical arrangements where a focused instructional module is deployed (see, for example, Belz & Vyatkina, 2008). Because such focused instruction is essentially driven by learner-produced data (Seidlhofer, 2002) and based on demonstrated linguistic needs, the pedagogical materials used therein are directly derived from one’s research activities.

Such reflexivity is also demonstrated in the current study. In order to understand fully the research agenda that is presented in Chapter 4, it is first necessary to explain in detail all aspects of the pedagogical setting in which the research occurred. This explanation will initially focus on the course in which the research took place, *German for the Professions,* and the greater curricular context in which the course is situated. Subsequently, the chapter provides a description of the study participants, including both the student participants and the invited expert guests, as well as a discussion of the influence of power, social distance, and degree of imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987) on the participants' communication. In order to understand better the context in which communication between the study participants occurred, a description of the Web conferencing software (Adobe Connect Pro) will be provided. This description includes details regarding the visual layout of the virtual conference room, as well as the various ways in which participants can interact with one another while in the virtual conference room. Following this description, the design of the pedagogical experiment is presented. It includes two experimental conditions: 1) interaction with expert speakers of German and 2) interaction with expert speakers of German following a focused instructional intervention. Lastly, recognizing that it forms the operational difference between experimental conditions 1 and 2 of the study, the exact procedures used in the focused pedagogical intervention will be laid out. After this explanation, the reader will understand the instructional context in which the research occurred and how the research design is tied to it.

3.2 Pedagogical Context

3.2.1 The Professional German Series

The Professional German Series at the University of Kansas represents a complementary curricular strand to the literary studies[4] track, and its main objective is to help learners develop their professional communicative competence in German. The series is comprised of three courses: 1) *Introduction to Business German*, 2) *German for the Professions*, and 3) *The German Business Environment*. After finishing the series, students have additional extracurricular and professional development opportunities. First, the series seeks to equip German learners for a six-week internship opportunity abroad, in which participants experience the day-to-day life of a working professional in Germany. Second, it aims to prepare German learners to take the Goethe-Institut[5] administered test *Zertifikat Deutsch für den Beruf* (Certificate of Professional German[6]). Successful acquisition of the certificate indicates a level of B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), roughly equivalent to Advanced Low on the American Council of Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL) framework (Mosher, Slagter, & Surface, 2010). As the second of the three professional German courses, *German for the Professions* serves as the core of the series and has a number of specific features, to which we now turn our attention.

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[4] Since conducting the study, changes have been implemented to the undergraduate curriculum; both literary and professional tracks now fall under a wider German Studies focus.

3.2.2 German for the Professions

The primary focus of *German for the Professions*, as articulated in the syllabus, is to "experience and attempt to understand the German business culture" by engaging with appropriate content, applying previously acquired knowledge, and improving written and oral communication skills. In order to take part in the course, students must have previously completed a four-semester proficiency sequence, or they are required to demonstrate adequate knowledge through a placement test. The German proficiency sequence consists of four semester-length courses: *Elementary German I* (5 credit hours), *Elementary German II* (5 credit hours), *Intermediate German I* (3 credit hours), and *Intermediate German II* (3 credit hours). Thus, a learner who has successfully completed the proficiency sequence has undergone approximately 250 hours of formal classroom instruction in German language and culture[7].

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[5] Germany's official cultural institution promoting study of the German language.

[6] In the period since the study was conducted, the Certificate of Professional German has been discontinued. The Goethe-Institut now offers only a general test of B2 proficiency.

The telecollaborative exchange constituted a mandatory component of *German for the Professions,* in addition to: active participation and attendance, four writing assignments, miscellaneous homework, and four tests. Students were expected to purchase and bring to class the required textbook *Dialog Beruf 1* (Beckert, Braunert, & Eisfeld, 2010) and the accompanying workbook. *Introduction to Business German* covered the first four chapters of the textbook, therefore *German for the Professions* was designed to incorporate material from the next four chapters (five through eight) of the textbook. For each chapter, a writing assignment was given that was meant to reinforce the content and language covered in that chapter of the textbook. Following the conclusion of each chapter, a test was given. The final formal assessment for the course was an exam given at the end of the semester.

Nested within this context, the Web conferencing component of *German for the Professions* purposefully aims to meet the course goals while also helping "students become better prepared to face likely working conditions when they begin their professional lives, including the use of communication technology with other professionals across the globe" (Dooly, 2012, p. 278). The focal online exchange is thus part of a carefully articulated curriculum (Byrnes, 2005) aimed at developing the professional language skills needed to operate successfully within a professional environment where German is the spoken language.

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[7] During the last semester of the proficiency sequence, students had the option of enrolling in the first of the professional German courses, "Introduction to Business German," with several of the participants in the current study having done so.

3.3 Study Participants

The study participants were comprised of both university-level American learners in *German for the Professions* and invited expert guests. The invited expert guests were native speakers of German living in Germany with expertise on a number of topics related to their respective areas of professional interest. As such, they were considered experts in both content and language, whereas the student participants were considered novices in both regards.

Student participants were recruited to participate in the study by enrolling in *German for the Professions* at the University of Kansas. At the beginning of the course, all students were given a statement of informed consent explaining the goal of the research project and informing them of their ability to withdraw from participation in the study at any time. During Fall 2010 (study instance 1), two students withdrew from the course, and were excluded from the study. During Fall 2011 (study instance 2), one student withdrew from the course and was excluded from the study. No students from either cohort withdrew from participation in the study while remaining enrolled in the course.

Invited expert guest participants were recruited in three main ways and shall be termed first-, second-, or third-level contacts. First-level contacts were those expert guest participants previously known to the researcher through his own time spent in Germany. Second-level contacts were those expert guest participants not directly known by the researcher, but known directly by one of the researcher’s first-level contacts. Third-level contacts were those expert guest participants wholly unknown to the researcher and with whom the researcher was required to establish new ties in order to secure their participation in the study. In all cases, the researcher solicited the participation of expert guests initially through e-mail, with follow up discussions taking place through synchronous Computer-Mediated Communication, or CMC (i.e., Skype or Adobe Connect Pro) or through face-to-face meetings. Having laid this foundation, let us now review the specific characteristics of the participants comprising both groups.

3.3.1 Experimental Cohort 1, Fall 2010

Experimental cohort 1 consisted of nine student participants (5 male, 4 female) with varying specialization and exposure to German prior to the course (see Table 3-1), as well as four invited expert guest participants (3 male, 1 female), all living and working in Germany at the time of the study (see Table 2). During this phase of the study, the researcher also served as the instructor for the course.

Table 3-1: Student participants, Fall 2010

Pseudonym	**Major (Minor)**	**High school instruction**	**University instruction (prior to study)**	**Time spent in a German-speaking country**
Karl	Linguistics (German)	none	4 semesters	2 weeks of private travel
Gregor	Architecture (German)	2 years	4 semesters	2 weeks of private travel
Tim	Film (German)	none	4 semesters	1 week of private travel
Andrea	Biochemistry (German)	3 years	2 semesters	6 weeks as a high school exchange student, 1 week of private travel
Bill	German	4 years	3 semesters	5 seven-day visits during 2006-2009
Beth	German, International Studies / Business	none	6 semesters	1 year spent living and studying in Germany
Jenny	Architecture	none	none	15 months spent living and studying in Austria and

				Germany
Jackson	German	3 years	4 semesters	9 days of private travel
Kate	International Studies	4 years	none	6 weeks as a high school exchange student, extensive private travel

Table 3-2: Invited expert guests, Fall 2010

Pseudonym	**Contact level**	**Expertise**	**Discussion topic**
Roland	First-level contact	Teacher at upper-level vocational school	Vocational education and entry into the working world
Erika	First-level contact	Project manager at Siemens	Project management at a large, multinational corporation
Thomas	First-level contact	Employee of community bank (*Volksbank*)	Banking in Germany
Thomas and Jürgen	First-level contact	Student internship coordinators	Internships and other professional opportunities in Germany

3.3.2 Experimental Cohort 2, Fall 2011

Experimental cohort 2 consisted of eight student participants (6 male, 2 female) with varying specialization and exposure to German prior to the course (Table 3-3), as well as four invited expert guest participants (3 male, 1 female), all living and working in Germany at the time of the study (Table 3-4). During this phase of the study, the researcher did not serve as the primary instructor for the course and was only responsible for details regarding the Web conferencing component.

Table 3-3: Student participants, Fall 2011

Pseudonym	**Major**	**High school instruction**	**University instruction (prior to study)**	**Time spent in a German-speaking country**
Chuck	Chemical Engineering	4 years	1 semester	none

Henry	Business	4 years	4 semesters	6 weeks summer study abroad program
George	no information	no information	no information	no information
Carson	Civil Engineering	2 years (3 years private instruction)	2 semesters	6 weeks private travel
Lisa	English and Psychology	3 years	5 semesters	6-week summer study abroad program
Max	no information	2 years	4 semesters	3 weeks private travel
Emily	German	none	4 semesters	none
Joshua	no information	3 years	6 semesters	6-week summer study abroad program

Table 3-4: Invited expert guests, Fall 2011

Pseudonym	**Contact level**	**Expertise**	**Discussion topic**
Thomas	First-level contact	Employee of community bank and student internship coordinator	Internships and other professional opportunities in Germany
Gisela	Second-level contact	Active member of Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD)	Comparing German and American politics
Roland	First-level contact	Teacher at upper-level vocational school	Controversies in the German educational system
Manfred	Third-level contact	Managing editor of *Die Sendung mit der Maus* (“The Show with the Mouse”)	The influence of television on children

3.4 Power, Social Distance, and Imposition

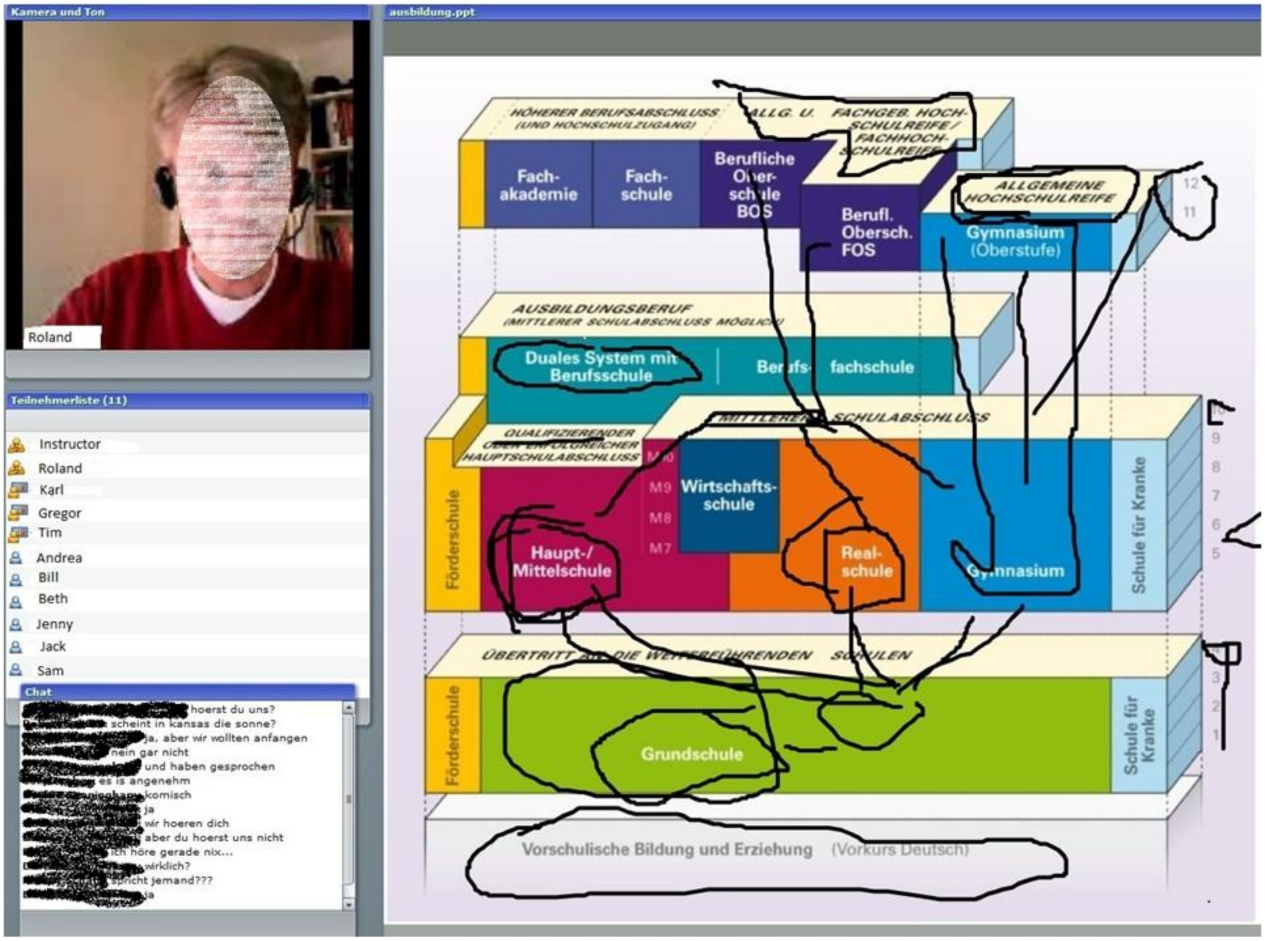
As discussed in Chapter 2, Brown and Levinson’s (1987) model of politeness holds that the production of face-threatening acts (FTAs) is directly influenced by three factors: power (*P*), social distance (*D*), and imposition (*R*). The authors maintain that the combination of *P*, *D*, and *R* affect the linguistic choices that speakers make; thus, the greater the hearer’s power, social distance from the speaker, and degree of imposition of the act, the greater the potential threat to the hearer's face. The degree of indirectness employed by the speaker thus directly correlates with the degree of the *PDR*.

In the pedagogical context of the current study, these variables are also at work. The superior content and linguistic knowledge subscribed to the invited expert guests result in what Brown and Levinson (1987) term "metaphysical control" (p. 77); the resultant power *(P)* differential between the expert guests and student participants may thus cause a deferential attitude among members of the latter group. Given the infrequency of contact between the expert guests and student participants and the different social roles they occupy (i.e., in-service professionals vs. pre-service students), the social distance *(D)* between these actors is large. Brown and Levinson (1987) link the degree of imposition *(R)* to the proportion of the expenditure of services (including time) and goods (including information). As the expert participants engaged in the Web conferences voluntarily, and their participation was limited to the provision of information during a one-hour timeframe, the influence of *R* is accordingly low. However, as *P*, *D*, and *R* combine in an additive fashion, the overall communicative context is still high-stakes, and calls for learners to use indirectness and internal/external modifiers that signal deference to the experts' higher status in the discussions. Furthermore, as was discussed in Chapter 1, differences of *PDR* result in L1 speakers using indirect requesting behavior. In order to help the L2 German learners successfully navigate these social constraints and to develop more target like use of indirect requesting strategies, the instructor implemented a pedagogical intervention with these outcomes (see 3.9.).

3.5 The Communications Medium: Adobe Connect Pro

All online communication between course participants and invited expert guests occurred within Adobe Connect Pro, a desktop Web conferencing program. Such programs facilitate the synchronous meeting of several individuals in an online environment by allowing the creation and use of virtual conference rooms. Upon entering a virtual conference room, participants see a number of "pods" analogous to the windows used in most computer operating systems (see Figure 3-1).

Figure 3-1: The virtual conference room


Kamera und Ton
Roland
ausbildung.ppt
HÖHERER BERUFSABSCHLUSS (UND HOCHSCHULZUGANG)
ALLG. U. FACHGEB. HOCHSCHULREIFE / FACHHOCHSCHULREIFE
Fach-akademie
Fach-schule
Berufliche Oberschule BOS
Berufl. Obersch. FOS
ALLGEMEINE HOCHSCHULREIFE
Gymnasium (Oberstufe)
12
11
AUSBILDUNGSBERUF (MITTLERER SCHULABSCHLUSS MÖGLICH)
Duales System mit Berufsschule
Berufsfachschule
MITTLERER SCHULABSCHLUSS
QUALIFIZIERENDER ODER ERFOLGREICHER HAUPTSCHULABSCHLUSS
M10
M9
M8
M7
Förderschule
Haupt-/ Mittelschule
Wirtschafts-schule
Real-schule
Gymnasium
Schule für Kranke
10
9
8
7
6
5
ÜBERTRITT AN DIE WEITERFÜHRENDEN SCHULEN
Förderschule
Grundschule
Schule für Kranke
4
3
2
1
Vorschulische Bildung und Erziehung (Vorkurs Deutsch)
Teilnehmerliste (11)
Chat

Instructor
Roland
Karl
Gregor
Tim
Andrea
Bill
Beth
Jenny
Jack
Sam

[redacted] hoerst du uns?
[redacted] scheint in kansas die sonne?
[redacted] ja, aber wir wollten anfangen
[redacted] nein gar nicht
[redacted] und haben gesprochen
[redacted] es is angenehm
[redacted] komisch
[redacted] ja
[redacted] wir hoeren dich
[redacted] aber du hoerst uns nicht
[redacted] ich höre gerade nix...
[redacted] wirklich?
[redacted] spricht jemand???
[redacted] ja

In the current case, four pods were selected to give visual support to the audio-based exchange of information. The top left-hand corner of the screen features the video pod, which acted as a visual reminder of who held the floor at a given time in the discussion. It was set to show only the current speaker at any given time, which meant that one saw either the face of the invited expert guest, or a wide-angle shot of the computer lab in which the student participants sat during the Web conferences.

Below the video pod is the list of participants. In addition to viewing the names of other participants, one could also see various icons associated with particular users. The icon preceding the name of the participant indicated his or her status in the virtual room, whether host, presenter or participant. Each status level gives users of the corresponding level particular rights. “Participants” were able to hear and see everything occurring in the room, and could speak if they had possession of the virtual microphone. Non-moderating course participants were assigned participant status. “Presenters” had all the rights of participants, and could also control others’ speaking rights by choosing whether a particular user (or all users) could have the virtual microphone. Student co-moderators were assigned presenter status. “Hosts” had all the rights of participants and presenters, and could change actual features of the virtual conference room, including: resizing, moving, or opening and closing pods; removing users from the virtual conference room; and uploading documents for display in the sharing pod (more below). Hosts could also change the status of other users at any time. The instructor and invited expert guests were given host status.

Beyond showing one’s status in the discussion, the participant pod displayed other useful information. Users could, for instance, signal that they would like to have the floor by displaying a virtual hand. Additionally, individuals could vote ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to poll-style questions. Participants also had the ability to select from a number of emoticons to display extralinguistic information, such as smiling, laughing or applauding. Such user-selected icons were shown adjacent to the name of the user, so that others were able to associate the information with the participant who selected it.

Situated below the list of participants is the text-chat pod. Any user could type a message here that was visible to all other users. During the Web conferences text chat was not the main mode of communication, but it did play a support role in two important ways. First, participants used text chat to make various small talk gambits, such as greeting one another or inquiring about the local weather or well-being of other participants. Such communication usually took place during the set-up phase of the Web conference, as the various participants logged on and entered the virtual conference room. During the actual discussion, text chat was used primarily to mediate technological questions, related to sound, connection quality, etc. As such, text was the preferred backup mode of communication when audio communication was not feasible. This usage is confirmed by Hampel and Stickler (2012), who, in analyzing the multimodal nature of Web conferencing, comment that "text chat was used as a less intrusive tool for managing technology" (p. 125).

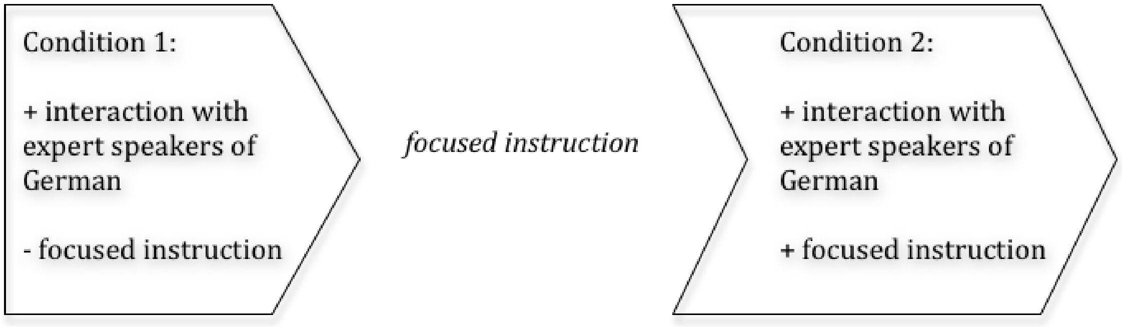
In Figure 3-1, the sharing pod is the largest of the four pods in the virtual room because it was used to visually "anchor" the audio communication taking place. This pod worked very much like a large whiteboard, with users able to enter text, draw freely, or add shapes, all in a variety of colors, fonts, and styles. Documents could be displayed in the sharing pod, and the drawing tools could be overlaid onto any displayed documents. Figure 3-1 exemplifies such usage: Roland has visually scaffolded his explanation of the various paths available through the German educational system with a number of black lines. If a guest did not use presentation slides, the sharing pod was minimized and the video pod enlarged, so that the latter became the dominant visual focus in the room.

To set up each virtual conference room, the host of the Web conference (i.e., the researcher/instructor) determined a name for the conference, as well as a list of participants. As each participant was associated with a unique e-mail address, a hyperlink was automatically generated and distributed to the invited users via e-mail. To log on, users clicked on the link, installed a small software add-on, and then they could enter the room. Individuals who were not on the approved list of participants were not able to enter the room. Privacy and security were further ensured by the host's ability to remove users from the virtual conference room at any time.

3.6 Design of the Pedagogical Experiment

The research project was conducted two times, over the course of two consecutive fall semesters with distinct groups of participants. Although particular aspects of the two groups differed, the design of the pedagogical experiment remained constant between both instances of the study. The study investigated changes in the requesting behavior of American learners of German as influenced by two different experimental conditions (Condition 1 and Condition 2), and as represented by Figure 3-2:

Figure 3-2: Design of the pedagogical experiment


Condition 1:
+ interaction with expert speakers of German
- focused instruction
focused instruction
Condition 2:
+ interaction with expert speakers of German
+ focused instruction

3.6.1 Experimental Condition 1: Interaction with Expert Speakers of German

During experimental condition 1 of the study, American university learners of German for Professional Purposes (who acted as novices both in relation to language and their professional expertise) interacted with German professionals (who acted as experts in both respects, similar to Golato, 2008). These interactions took the form of oral online discussions (i.e., Web conferences) and occurred in an online virtual conference room. According to Chun's (2008, pp. 18-19) taxonomy, this configuration can be described as synchronous multimodal (audio-based, video-based, and text-based), intercultural, multi-person CMC. Each Web conference was moderated by a pre-selected student dyad, who had prepared a set of 10-12 discussion questions designed to elicit responses from both the invited expert guest and from their fellow classmates, with the aim of generating an engaging and inclusive discussion of the designated topic. In addition to preparing and posing their questions, discussion co-moderators were also tasked with managing the discussion, which included greeting the invited expert guest, designating speakers during the discussion, and taking leave at the end of the conference. Students not acting in the capacity of co-moderator were instructed to participate meaningfully in the conferences by either responding to a discussion question or asking one of their own spontaneously. Each Web conference lasted approximately one hour.

3.6.2 Experimental Condition 2: Interaction with Experts Following Focused Instruction

Following the conclusion of Web conferences 1 and 2, the American learners of German received focused instruction in polite requesting behavior, a prerequisite for effective professional communication. To meet this pedagogical focus, the instructor/researcher transcribed audio data from Web conferences 1 and 2, analyzing the data for incidents in which the learners attempted to make polite requests. Using the results of this analysis, the instructor created an instructional module that aimed to improve course participants' ability to make appropriately polite requests of the invited expert guests (see 4.8.). The study therefore follows the approach of Vyatkina and Belz (2006) who also instituted a developmental pedagogical intervention based on analysis of learner data. Following the focused instructional module, course participants engaged in Web conferences 3 and 4 following the same procedure as described in experimental condition 1. Experimental condition 2 thus combines the effect of interaction with expert guests and the effect of focused instruction on learners' requesting behavior, as distinct from the effect of interaction alone as represented by experimental condition 1. Web conferences 3 and 4 thus fall under experimental condition 2, whereas experimental condition 1 covers Web conferences 1 and 2.

3.7 The Study Timeline

Given that the research occurred in the context of a semester-length university course (i.e., sixteen weeks), it was necessary that the study timeline adhere to and accommodate the standard academic calendar. The following section presents timelines for both instances of the study, accompanied by a brief explanation.

3.7.1 Study Timeline, Experimental Cohort 1

Table 3-5: Semester timeline, experimental cohort 1

Semester Week (SW)	**Activity**	**Discussion Moderator(s)**
3	Course participants select discussion topic they wish to moderate	N/A
4	Co-moderator dyads are set and assignment guidelines are discussed in class	N/A

5	Learner training Web conference	Instructor/Researcher
7	Web conference 1 (Education)	Karl, Gregor, Tim
10	Web conference 2 (Project management)	Andrea, Jackson
12	Focused instruction	N/A
13	Web conference 3 (Banking)	Beth, Kate
15	Web conference 4 (Internships)	Jenny, Bill

3.7.2 Study Timeline, Experimental Cohort 2

Table 3-6: Semester timeline, experimental cohort 2

Semester Week (SW)	**Activity**	**Discussion Moderator(s)**
2	Course participants select discussion topic they wish to moderate	N/A
3	Co-moderator dyads are set and assignment guidelines are discussed in class	N/A
4	Learner training Web conference	Researcher
6	Web conference 1 (Internships)	Henry, Chuck
8	Web conference 2 (Politics)	Carson
10	Focused instruction	N/A
12	Web conference 3 (Education)	Lisa, Joshua, Max
14	Web conference 4 (Television)	George, Emily

The arrangement of the semester timeline allowed sufficient time for an initial explanation of the pedagogical task (see 3.8.1.), as well as the provision of necessary technical training (see 3.8.2.) before conducting the actual Web conferences. A focused instructional module (see 3.9.) occurred between the first two Web conferences (1 and 2) and the second two Web conferences (3 and 4) in order to provide learners the opportunity to alternate between sessions of synchronous CMC and awareness-raising focused instruction (Belz & Vyatkina, 2005; Vyatkina & Belz, 2006). In the next section, we turn to a more detailed explanation of the different phases of the research project.

3.8 The Pre-intervention Stage

3.8.1 The Pedagogical Task: Moderate a Discussion

During the initial phase, course participants were informed of the four discussion topics, each of which was chosen in conjunction with the invited expert guests to correspond with their respective areas of expertise (see Tables 2 and 4). Course participants listed their three most preferred topics in descending order and submitted them to the instructor. Based on this information, student dyads were chosen to correspond with the topics of greatest interest to each student. After the discussion dyads were set, exact details of the pedagogical task were discussed in class, and each course participant received a handout with detailed guidelines for task completion. To successfully complete the task, each student dyad acted as discussion co-moderators during their selected Web conference. Co-moderators prepared a set of 10-12 discussion questions designed to elicit responses from both the invited guest and from their fellow classmates, with the aim of generating an engaging and inclusive discussion of the designated topic. In addition to preparing and posing their questions, discussion co-moderators were also tasked with managing the discussion, which included greeting the invited guest, designating speakers during the discussion, and taking leave at the end of the conference. Students not acting in the capacity of co-moderator were instructed to participate meaningfully at least once during the Web conference by either responding to a discussion question or asking one of their own.

3.8.2 The Learner Training Module

Following the selection of topics and determination of student co-moderators, a learner training conference occurred. As Hampel and Stickler (2012) point out, participants in online exchange “have to acquire appropriate...skills, and explicit training...has to be provided to enable students as well as teachers to successfully use multimodal synchronous online tools” (p. 135). Prior to the start of the learner training conference, course participants received an e-mail with a link to a virtual “demo” room. This room was created to allow the learners to see and experiment with the different interactive features present in the virtual conference room. At the designated time of the training conference, participants logged on and participated in a one-hour discussion led by the instructor on the topic of using digital media for communication. The goal of the learner training module was thus threefold: 1) to allow course participants to familiarize themselves with Adobe Connect Pro; 2) to allow course participants to observe the instructor moderate a conference; 3) to allow the instructor to gauge course participants’ level of experience and expertise in using digitally-mediated communication technologies. Subsequent to the learner training module, course participants engaged in a total of four Web conferences with invited expert guests.

3.9 The Pedagogical Intervention

Given the importance of the focused pedagogical intervention for the research design, it is now necessary to treat this aspect of the instructional context. Although both groups followed similar procedures (i.e., a gradual move from awareness raising to actual production), differences existed between cohorts 1 and 2 that may have influenced the results of the study. As such, procedures for each cohort are explained separately, and relevant changes between cohorts 1 and 2 are summarized at the close of the section.

3.9.1 Focused Instruction, Experimental Cohort 1

During two seventy-five minutes class sessions during SW 12, the learners from Group One received focused instruction in polite requesting behavior. To meet this pedagogical goal, the instructor transcribed audio data from Web conferences 1 and 2, analyzing the data for the instances in which the learners attempted to make polite requests of the invited guests. Using the results of this analysis, the instructor created a written judgment task asking the students to rate the grammaticality and appropriateness of several statements produced by expert or novice participants during Web conferences 1 and 2 (see Appendix A). These statements were chosen by the researcher as reflecting examples of both appropriate and inappropriate requesting behavior, so that learners could see and evaluate a range of such requests. Requests deemed by the researcher to be less appropriate featured both grammatical and discourse-level errors (Taguchi, 2006).

During the first 75-minute class session, course participants completed the judgment task individually and submitted the answers to the researcher/instructor. Directly afterwards, with the judgment task displayed on the overhead projector, the learners were asked to identify which of the interactions were appropriately polite and what structural elements rendered them so. They noted the use of modal verbs and questions as structural elements that can be used to make a request more appropriately polite in professional interaction. Because the learners did not mention it themselves, the instructor discussed the role of the subjunctive mood in polite interaction, focusing on subjunctive forms of the verbs *haben* / “to have” (i.e., *hätten*) and *sein* / “to be” (i.e., *wären*), as well as subjunctive forms of modal verbs (e.g., *dürfte* / “might”).

During the second 75-minute session, the instructor presented tabulated and anonymous student responses to the judgment task, and the results were discussed. Following this part of the focused instruction, the learners received a handout with examples of one person requesting that another person close a door (see Appendix B, “*Etwas höflicher*” / “A bit more polite”). This request was formulated many different ways, featuring varying levels of directness, including a very direct request (*Tür zu!* / “Door shut!”), a very indirect request (*Wärst du so freundlich und könntest die Tür zumachen?* / “Would you be so kind and could you close the door?”) and several formulations between these two extremes. Learners were asked to identify how indirect/polite the requests were on a 1-5 scale. Unlike responses to the judgment task from the first seventy-five minute session, responses to this task were not collected by the researcher/instructor. During in-class discussion of their responses, however, learners identified politeness tokens (e.g., *bitte* / “please”), modal verbs (e.g. *kannst du*, / “can you”) and the subjunctive mood of modal verbs (*würdest du* / “would you”) as modifiers that made the focal request more indirect, thereby contributing to its overall appropriateness in professional interaction. To close the instructional module, the researcher/instructor advised the students to keep the “*Etwas höflicher*” handout and to consider how this knowledge could be applied to the remaining two Web conferences. Subsequent to the focused instructional module, students engaged in Web conferences 3 and 4, during SW 13 and SW 15.

3.9.2 Focused Instruction, Experimental Cohort 2

During SW 10, the learners from experimental cohort 2 received focused instruction in polite requesting behavior. Due to the fact that the researcher was not the primary instructor of *German for the Professions* during the second instance of the study, certain modifications to the instructional intervention became necessary and are henceforth described. The chief motivation behind these modifications was the fact that the researcher could only meet directly with the course participants during one 50-minute session; thus, certain aspects of the instructional module were adapted for online delivery.

As an initial step, the researcher once again transcribed audio data from Web conferences 1 and 2, analyzing the data for the presence of instances in which the learners attempted to make polite requests of the invited guests. Using the results of this analysis and selected examples of requesting behavior produced by members of experimental cohort 1, the instructor created a written judgment task asking the students to rate the grammaticality and appropriateness of several statements produced by expert or novice participants (see Appendix C). These statements were chosen by the researcher as reflecting examples of both appropriate and inappropriate requesting behavior, so that learners could see and evaluate a range of such requests. Requests deemed by the researcher to be less appropriate featured both grammatical and discourse-level errors (Taguchi, 2006). Unlike in the first instance of the study, course participants completed the judgment task individually at home and submitted the answers via e-mail.

To begin the in-class portion of the focused instructional module, course participants listened to four different audio clips taken from previous Web conferences and selected by the instructor as models of appropriately polite requesting behavior. Participants focused on what aspects of the interactions rendered them appropriately polite, orally identifying the use of modal verbs and indirect questions as structural elements that can be used to make an utterance more appropriately polite in professional interaction. Because the learners did not mention it themselves, the instructor discussed the role of the subjunctive mood in polite interaction, focusing on subjunctive forms of the verbs *haben* / "to have" (i.e., *hätten*) and *sein* / "to be" (i.e., *wären*), as well as subjunctive forms of modal verbs (e.g., *dürfte* / "might"). In addition to focusing on these grammatical markers of politeness, the researcher also addressed a discourse function that was notably lacking in the first two Web conferences: acknowledging the previous speaker's contribution in a timely manner. While this discourse function is not specifically related to requesting behavior, it is necessary for effective synchronous CMC and was therefore included in the pedagogical intervention.

Following the awareness-raising activity (Belz & Vyatkina, 2005; 2008), students once again received a transcribed series of interactions taken from Web conferences 1 and 2, some of which had been included in the judgment task, and some of which had not been included (Appendix D). At this point, course participants did not rate the grammaticality and appropriateness of the interactions, but rather identified interactions that were less appropriately polite and revised them to make them more appropriately polite. This final step enabled direct production of polite requesting behavior in a low-stakes environment (i.e., not during a Web conference), and where more processing time was permitted. Subsequent to the focused instructional module, students engaged in Web conferences 3 and 4, during SW 12 and SW 14.

3.9.3 Changes Adopted between Experimental Cohorts 1 and 2

Although the goal of the pedagogical intervention remained constant for experimental cohorts 1 and 2 (i.e., improvement in appropriate requesting behavior), the fact that the researcher did not act as the primary instructor for cohort 2 necessitated certain changes in the delivery of the focused instructional module. Whereas two seventy-five minute periods were devoted to focused instruction for experimental cohort 1, only one fifty-minute period was available for meeting with experimental cohort 2. As such, cohort 2 responded to the judgment task at home and submitted their responses via e-mail, whereas cohort 1 responded to the judgment task in class, and submitted their answers directly to the researcher/instructor. This fact opens the possibility that cohort 2 was able to access additional resources (websites, dictionaries, German-speaking friends/family members, etc.) that cohort 1 was not able to access when completing the judgment task. It is not clear if students of cohort 2 did so, only that the possibility existed.

The other significant change involved the actual materials used in delivering the pedagogical intervention. Students of experimental cohort 1 were given the handout "*Etwas höflicher*," whereas students of experimental cohort 2 received no such handout. Instead, their task was to listen to audio clips taken from previous Web conferences in order to identify characteristics of appropriate requesting behavior. This decision was made in order to bring the pedagogical intervention in line with a data-driven approach (Johns, 1986; Seidlhofer, 2002) by using examples of actual production data derived from interactions in which the learners themselves participated. Additionally, the worksheet presented examples using the T-pronoun (*du*), which was in contrast to the student participants' and invited expert guests' usage of the V-pronoun (*Sie*). Therefore, all instructional materials developed and utilized for cohort 2 were derived solely from data produced by study participants in the context of online synchronous discussion (i.e., Web conferencing).

3.10 Summary

Research on telecollaborative exchange is typically conducted in a classroom-based setting. The current study is no exception, and it was thus necessary to provide a detailed description of the pedagogical context in which the research occurred. American university-level learners of German interacted with invited expert guests from Germany in a series of four Web conferences, hosted on Adobe Connect Pro. Between Web conferences 2 and 3 the learners underwent a focused instructional module with the aim of improving the appropriateness of their requesting behavior in synchronous online interaction. Two cohorts of students took part in the study, during successive fall semesters. Both groups engaged in the same number of Web conferences and received focused instruction in requesting behavior; however, there were differences in the procedures used to deliver the focused instruction due to the fact that the researcher was not the primary instructor for the second group.

Chapter 4: Research Methods

4.1 Introduction

Recent research has revealed that peer-peer telecollaboration can have a strong developmental influence on interlanguage pragmatics and intercultural communicative competence (Belz & Kinginger, 2003; Belz & Vyatkina, 2005, 2008; O'Dowd, 2003, 2006). Such research is generally conducted by examining written interaction (e.g., e-mails or chatting) occurring between age-similar partners. In contrast, the present study investigates the influence of synchronous oral interaction, occurring between non-peer partners. As such, the research seeks to extend the findings of earlier studies, while exploring two novel dimensions: expert-novice partnership and oral CMC interaction.

The current study used a mixed methods approach (i.e., both quantitative and qualitative analyses) to examine the collected data in order to provide both a broad picture of overall group trends, as well as a detailed view of individuals' linguistic production and development. The quantitative analysis relied on ratings for directness, internal modification, external modification and appropriateness to compare the requesting behavior of novice and expert speakers, as well as to investigate aggregate development in requesting behavior among novice speakers. The majority of analysis was conducted qualitatively by microgenetically analyzing dense sets of production data for selected novice participants in order to create developmental case histories that document "skill acquisition during a learning event" (Belz & Kinginger, 2003, p. 594). The study thus followed the quan → QUAL approach described by Dörnyei (2007, p. 169), wherein the quantitative analysis sets the stage for the subsequent qualitative analysis. In so doing, the goal was to provide a robust and multifaceted description of developments in requesting behavior among study participants, both in aggregate and on an individual basis.

The study investigated the pragmatic development of American learners of German who engaged in synchronous computer-mediated interactions with expert speakers of German and took part in a focused instructional module. More specifically, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Is the requesting behavior of novice participants similar to or different from the requesting behavior of expert participants? If so, how?
2. Does the requesting behavior of novice participants change as a result of interacting with expert participants and taking part in focused instruction? If so, how?

In the following pages, the study's research methodology is laid out in detail. First, the specific measures and coding taxonomies utilized in examining study participants' requesting behavior are presented. These coding frameworks are based on the notions of directness, internal modification, external modification and appropriateness in requesting behavior. Next, details are provided regarding the collection, transcription, and coding of data, including measures undertaken to establish the reliability of data coding procedures. Lastly, the methods for data analysis are described, consisting of a quantitative analysis using a Generalized Linear Mixed Model (GLMM) and a qualitative microgenetic analysis based on developmental case histories.

4.2 Key Concepts and Measures in Requesting Behavior

The request sequences in this study were analyzed pertaining to four aspects of requesting behavior: directness, internal modification, external modification, and appropriateness. In the next sections, these four key concepts are further clarified and corresponding taxonomies used previously in the study of requesting behavior are discussed.

4.2.1 Directness

The foundation of much of the current research that examines directness as a factor in the successful execution of requests can be traced to the work of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) on the Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP) project. In total, nine specific levels of directness in requesting behavior are identified, as shown in Figure 1-1 (pp. 9-10). Rating requests from most direct (1) to least direct (9) on the basis of this coding taxonomy allowed the researchers to implement a quantitative analysis of a large set of speech act production data, resulting in confirmation of certain "universal features" (p. 209) that exist across languages and speaker sub-groups, albeit with differing conventions used across languages to express these universal features.

The framework presented in Figure 1-1 has been adapted for use in a number of studies that focus on directness in request production by both native and non-native speakers. In comparing the requesting behavior of British speakers of English and Greek speakers of English as a second language, Economidou-Kogetsidis (2010) notes the emergence of two new requesting strategies not present in the original framework: the "reminder request" and "pre-decided statements" (p. 2270), and adapts her coding framework accordingly. In Taguchi (2006), the author investigates the requesting behavior of Japanese learners of English. In so doing, the author adds three additional levels to the coding taxonomy (for a total of 12) "in order to fine-tune the linguistic analysis" (p. 521). Directness level is thus used as a means to assess and compare the frequency of “main linguistic expressions” (p. 520) used by the two learner groups in their production of requests. In analyzing speech act production as it relates to proficiency and study abroad experience, (Taguchi, 2011a) utilizes a nine-level scale of directness, plus an additional category of “conventional questions.” Aijmer (1996) further demonstrates the complexity of measuring indirectness by identifying a total of 18 different sub-strategies. It is thus clear that level of directness is widely recognized as an important variable in the study of requesting behavior, but there remains flexibility in determining the number and nature of such levels in a specific research setting.

4.2.2 Internal Modification

The second focal feature of requests is internal modification (see also 1.1.3.2.). The study focuses on a particular group of internal modifiers known as downgraders, which have the function of mitigating the force of the requestive act. As is the case in measuring directness, taxonomies for measuring internal modification trace a common lineage to the work of Blum-Kulka et. al (1989) on the CCSARP project. Figure 4-2 shows the syntactic downgraders identified by the researchers, while Figure 4-3 presents the full range of lexical and phrasal downgraders.

Figure 4-1: Syntactic downgraders (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, pp. 281-283)

Types	**Tokens**
Interrogative	Could you give me a lift home? Können Sie mich mitnehmen?
Negation of a preparatory condition	You couldn’t give me a lift, could you? Könnten Sie mich nicht vielleicht mitnehmen?
Subjunctive	Might be better if you *were to leave* now. Es wäre besser wenn Sie jetzt *gingen*.
Conditional	I would suggest you leave now.
Aspect	I’m wondering if I could get a ride home with you.
Tense	I *wanted* to ask you to present your paper a week earlier. I *wollte* dich bitten dein Referat eine Woche vorzulegen.

Conditional clause	I was wondering if you could present your paper a week earlier than planned. I wollte mal hören ob du dein Referat eine Woche eher halten kannst.

Figure 4-2: Lexical and phrasal downgraders (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, pp. 283-285)

Types	**Tokens**
Politeness marker An optional element added to a request to bid for cooperative behavior.	Clean the kitchen, *please*. Räum *bitte* die Küche auf.
Consultative device Expressions by means of which the speaker seeks to involve the hearer directly, bidding for cooperation.	*Do you think* you could present your paper this week? *Glaubst du* du kannst mit deinem Referat schon diese Woche fertig werden?
Understater Adverbial modifiers by means of which the speaker under-represents the state of affairs denoted in the proposition.	Could you tidy up *a bit*? Kannst du mal *ein bisschen* aufräumen?
Hedge Adverbials used by a speaker when he or she wishes to avoid a precise propositional specification in order to avoid the potential provocation of such precision.	I'd *kind of* like to get a lift if that's all right. Ich würde *irgendwie* gern mitfahren wenn's geht.
Subjectivizer Elements in which the speaker explicitly expresses his or her subjective opinion vis-à-vis the state of affairs referred to in the proposition, thus lowering the assertive force of the request.	I *think/believe/suppose* you're going my way. Ich *glaube/nehme an* Sie wollen in die gleiche Richtung wie ich.
Downtoner Sentential or propositional modifiers which are used by a speaker in order to modulate the impact his or her request is likely to have on the hearer.	Could you *possibly/perhaps* lend me your notes? Kann ich *vielleicht/mal/eben* deine Aufzeichnungen leihen?
Cajoler Cajolers commonly do not enter into syntactic structures, but are interspersed to increase, establish, or restore harmony between the interlocutors, which may be endangered by the request.	*You know,* I'd really like you to present your paper next week. *Weisst du* dein Referat würde echt besser in die nächste Sitzung passen.
Appealer	We're going in the same direction, *aren't we?*

Elements used by a speaker whenever he or she wishes to appeal to his or her hearer's benevolent understanding. Appealers function to elicit a hearer signal, occur in syntactically final position, and may signal turn-availability. Tags are a common realization.	Wir haben den gleichen Weg, *oder? / nicht?*

Various studies have utilized the taxonomies in Figures 4-2 and 4-3 (or adaptations thereof) to account for the presence of syntactic and lexical modification in requesting behavior. In the context of the CCSARP project, Faerch and Kasper (1989) used the taxonomy to compare the request realizations of five groups of subjects: native speakers of Danish, German, and British English, as well as Danish learners of English and German. In this case, they adapted the internal modification taxonomies of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) to include only three types of syntactic downgraders (past tense, continuous aspect, embedded clauses) and four types of lexical downgraders (downtoner, understater, hedge, consultative device). To investigate modifications in the oral request production of Greek Cypriot learners of English, Economidou-Kogetsidis (2012) used a seven-level taxonomy for lexical modification, collapsing the 'understater' and 'hedge' into one category. She analyzed syntactic modification with a six-level taxonomy, excluding the category of subjunctive. The current study utilizes a taxonomy that combines three kinds of syntactic modification with six categories of lexical modification and is detailed in section 4.3.2.

4.2.3 External Modification

Unlike internal modifiers, which occur within the request head act, external modifiers generally precede the head act, but in some cases can also follow it. External modifiers serve a range of functions, from signaling that a request is shortly forthcoming (the ‘alerter’ or ‘preparator’) to expressing gratitude for the granting of the request (the ‘appreciator’).

Several classification schemata have been developed and employed to account for the use of external modification in requests (e.g., Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2012, 2013; House & Kasper, 1987; Schauer, 2007; Trosborg, 1995; Woodfield, 2012). Figure 4-4 presents the taxonomy utilized by Schauer (2007), which also forms the basis for the researcher’s own taxonomy.

Figure 4-3: Overview of external modifiers (Schauer, 2007, p. 202)

NAME	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
Alerter	linguistic device that is used to get the interlocutor’s attention; precedes the Head	*Er; excuse me; hello; Peter (various)*
Preparator	short utterance that intends to prepare the interlocutor for the request; can follow or substitute the Alerter	*May I ask you a favor?*
Head	the actual request	*Do you know where the Portland Building is?*
Grounder	provides an explanation for the request	*Erm, unfortunately, I really don’t understand this topic here.*
Disarmer	used to pre-empt the interlocutor’s potential objections	*I know you are really busy by maybe you’ve got some minutes for me.*
Imposition minimizer	employed to decrease the imposition of the request	*I will return them immediately, the next day.*
Sweetener	employed to flatter the interlocutor and to put them into a positive mood	*I think you are the perfect person to do it.*
Promise of reward	the requester offers the interlocutor a reward for fulfilling the request	*I would fill in yours [the questionnaire] as well, if you need one, one day.*
Smalltalk	short utterance at the beginning of the request that is intended to establish a positive atmosphere	*Good to see you.*
Appreciator	usually employed at the end of the request to positively reinforce it	*That would be very nice.*

Considerator	employed at the end of the request; intends to show consideration towards the interlocutor's situation	*Only if you've got the time, of course.*

As was previously shown to be the case with taxonomies for measuring directness and internal modification, taxonomies that measure external modification have also been adapted for particular research contexts. For example, in revising the taxonomy, Woodfield and Economidou-Kogetsidis (2010) add a category for Discourse Orientation Moves (DOMs), which "serve an orientation function but do not necessarily mitigate or aggravate the request in any way" (p. 92). Pan (2012) also accounts for the presence of DOMs in her study of e-mail request behavior among American English speaking students and Chinese learners of English. Adaptations to the taxonomy utilized in the current study are addressed in section 4.3.3.

4.2.4 Appropriateness

As the fourth focal area in the current study, it is now necessary to consider the notion of L2 pragmatic appropriateness, as influenced by grammaticality and discourse control. Kasper and Rose (2002) note that the relationship between grammatical development and pragmatic development is complex, with grammatical development sometimes leading to pragmatic development, or, in other instances, pragmatic development preceding grammatical development (see also Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Chen, 2001). Studies differ in whether they combine measures of pragmatic knowledge with measures of grammaticality or treat them as separate variables. While the work of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) and Chen (2001) demonstrates a link between grammatical and pragmatic knowledge, their studies treat these two types of L2 abilities separately. In contrast, Taguchi (2006) traces the development of the pragmatic production of Japanese learners of English by linking the concepts of grammaticality and discourse control to overall appropriateness in requesting behavior. She does so through the use of a six-point rating scale, as shown in Figure 4-5:

Figure 4-4: Appropriateness rating scale (Taguchi, 2006, p. 520)

Ratings	Descriptors
5. Excellent	-Expressions are fully appropriate for the situation. -No or almost no grammatical and discourse errors.
4. Good	-Expressions are mostly appropriate. -Very few grammatical and discourse errors.
3. Fair	-Expressions are only somewhat appropriate. -Grammatical and discourse errors are noticeable, but they do not interfere with appropriateness.
2. Poor	-Due to interference from grammatical and discourse errors, appropriateness is difficult to determine.
1. Very poor	-Expressions are very difficult of too little to understand. There is no evidence the speech acts are performed.
0. No performance	-No performance.

The scale was used to measure “whether learners could use appropriate linguistic expressions at the proper level of directness and politeness” in a given situation (Taguchi, 2006, p. 519). The framework recognizes that appropriateness is influenced by grammatical competence and discourse control; that is to say, major errors in grammar or word choice, excessive pausing or repetition, and illogical or incoherent speech can all affect the perceived appropriateness of a given request. In a later study, Taguchi (2011b) rated appropriateness and grammaticality separately, but discovered that these measures developed similarly; one can therefore consider them to be connected, as in both Taguchi (2006) and the current study. Given this understanding, level descriptors in the coding framework for the present study (Figure 4-5) address the combined influence of grammaticality and discourse-level control on overall appropriateness ratings.

4.3 Taxonomies Used in the Study

The present study utilized four rating frameworks to investigate closely related linguistic phenomena in requesting behavior: directness, internal modification, external modification, and appropriateness. These rating taxonomies have been developed as a result of a thorough review of existing literature and an extensive process of piloting and revision undertaken with two other raters (see section 4.6 for details).

4.3.1 Directness

To measure the focal construct of directness, the researcher developed an eight-level taxonomy, as shown in Figure 4-6. (Note that for this taxonomy, and for those shown in Figures 4-7 and 4-8, all examples come directly from the transcribed production data.)

Figure 4-5: Directness taxonomy (based on Blum-Kulka et al., 1989 and Taguchi, 2011)

Directness level	Request Strategy	Descriptors	Examples
Direct expressions			
1	Direct questions (requests for information)	The request is conveyed by a direct question.	*Wie lange arbeiten Sie schon bei einer Bank?* (How long have you worked at a bank?)
	Imperatives (requests for action)	The grammatical mood of the verb in the utterance marks its illocutionary force as a request (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1989, p. 202)	*Sagen Sie doch mal was!* (Go ahead and say something!)
2	Indirect questions (requests for information)	The request is conveyed by an indirect question.	*Wissen Sie, wie viele Bundesländer es in Deutschland gibt?* (Do you know how many federal states there are in Germany?)
	Performatives (requests for	The illocutionary force of the request is named	*Ich bitte unsere zwei Moderatoren, die*

	action)	by the speaker (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1989, p. 202)	*Diskussion zu starten.* (I request that our two moderators begin the discussion.)
3	Obligation statements	The illocutionary force is derivable in obligatory sentences (Taguchi, 2011, p. 289)	*Du musst wohl wieder auf diese andere Seite gehen.* (You probably need to go back to the other page.)
4	Want statements	The illocutionary force is derivable in want/wish/need sentences (Taguchi, 2011, p. 289)	*Ich möchte wissen, wie viel Deutsch muss man sprechen können.* (I would like to know how much German one must be able to speak.)
Indirect expressions			
5	Preparatory questions and statements	Reference to preparatory conditions such as the hearer's ability, willingness or possibility to perform the action (Taguchi, 2011, p. 289)	*Können Sie alle sich bitte vorstellen?* (Can you all please introduce yourselves?)
6	Suggestions	The illocutionary intent is phrased as a suggestion (Taguchi, 2011, p. 289)	*Ich würde vorschlagen, dass wir jetzt beginnen.* (I would suggest that we get started.)
7	Permissions	The speaker asks for the hearer's permission (Taguchi, 2011, p. 290)	*Ich darf Sie nun bitten, sich vorzustellen.* (May I ask that you introduce yourself?)
8	Hints	Questions or statements with implicit reference to the action (Taguchi, 2011, p. 290)	*Er hat ein Bisschen mehr vorbereitet.* (He has prepared a little bit more.)

As is discussed in section 4.3.1, there is considerable variation among studies in the number of levels utilized in coding request directness. Based on a review of the oral production data and revision of a previous taxonomy (see section 4.6.2), the researcher determined that eight levels were needed to capture the range of directness in requesting behavior exhibited by the study participants. Each level of the directness taxonomy features a specific request strategy, a definition of the strategy, and an attested example coming from the transcribed data set. Based on this taxonomy, coders were able to assign directness ratings to the head act of transcribed request sequences. In analyzing the data, the researcher used directness ratings to assess and compare linguistic expressions used by the learners during their interactions with expert speakers. Unlike Taguchi (2011), the directness ratings were used not only to compare separate groups, but also to compare the production of one group (novice speakers) between two different experimental conditions.

4.3.2 Internal Modification

To measure the focal construct of internal modification, the researcher developed a taxonomy to include both syntactic and lexical modification (Figure 4-7).

Figure 4-6: Internal modification taxonomy (based on Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, pp. 282-285)

Internal syntactic modifiers		
NAME	EXAMPLES	
Conditional clause	*Wenn ich zu schnell spreche, bitte geben Sie mir Bescheid.* (If I speak too quickly, please let me know.)	
Past tense	*Ich wollte einfach fragen, was ist die erfolgreichste Abteilung für Siemens?* (I just wanted to ask, what is the most successful division for Siemens?)	
Subjunctive mood	*Wenn Sie ein paar Kommentare zu dieser Frage hätten, wäre das auch interessant zu hören.* (If you had a couple of comments on this question, that would also be interesting to hear.)	
Internal lexical modifiers		
NAME	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
Politeness marker	an optional element added to a request to bid for cooperative behavior (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p 283).	*bitte* (please) *gerne* (feel free)
Consultative devices	expressions by means of which the speaker seeks to involve the hearer directly bidding for cooperation (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 283)	*glauben Sie* (do you think) *ist es nicht so* (is it not so)
Downtoners	modifiers which are used by a speaker in order to modulate the impact his or her request is likely to have on the hearer	*vielleicht* (perhaps) *eigentlich* (actually) *doch* (why don't you)

	(Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 284)	*mal* (go ahead and) *eher* (rather) *einfach* (simply, just) *denn* (then)
Understaters	modifiers by means of which the speaker underrepresents the state of affairs denoted in the proposition (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 283)	*irgendwie* (kind of) *ein bisschen* (a little bit) *kurz* (brief, briefly) *ein paar* (a couple)
Subjectivizers	elements in which the speaker explicitly expresses his or her subjective opinion vis-à-vis the state of affairs referred to in the proposition, thus lowering the assertive force of the request (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 284)	*Ich glaube...* (I think/believe...) *Ich denke...* (I think...)
Appealers	addressee-oriented elements occurring in a syntactically final position, possibly signaling turn-availability and are used by the speaker whenever he or she wishes to appeal to his or her hearer's benevolent understanding (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 285)	...*oder?* (...isn't it?)

In adapting the framework of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), the researcher combined both categories of internal modification (syntactic and lexical downgraders) into one taxonomy for ease of use. Only those categories that could be attested with examples from the oral production data were included in the model. Each level of the revised internal modification taxonomy features a specific internal modifier, a definition of the modifier and/or attested examples coming directly from the transcribed data set. Based on this taxonomy, coders were able to identify kind and frequency of internal modifiers in transcribed request sequences. In analyzing the data, the researcher used these ratings to assess and compare linguistic expressions used by the learners and expert speakers during their interactions.

4.3.3 External Modification

To measure the focal construct of external modification, the researcher developed the taxonomy shown in Figure 4-8.

Figure 4-7: External modification taxonomy (Based on Schauer, 2007, p. 202)

NAME	DEFINITIONS	EXAMPLES
Alerter	linguistic device that is used to get the interlocutor's attention; precedes the head act	*Entschuldigung!* (Excuse me!) *Hey!* (Hey!) *Herr/Frau* (Mr./Ms.)
Preparator	short utterance that intends to prepare the interlocutor for the request; can follow or substitute the Alerter	*Ich habe eine Frage.* (I have a question.) *Ich möchte eine Frage stellen.* (I'd like to ask a question.) *Darf ich eine Frage stellen?* (May I ask a question?)
Grounder	provides an explanation for the request	*Da wir nicht so viele Zeit haben...* (Since we don't have that much time...) *Ich hab' das gleich auf den Folien.* (That's coming right up on the slides.)
Disarmer	used to pre-empt the interlocutor's potential objections	*Entschuldigung* (Excuse me) *Ich möchte nicht unterbrechen* (I don't want to interrupt)
Small talk	short utterance at the beginning of the request that is intended to establish a positive atmosphere	*Wir freuen und darauf, Sie durch diese Sitzung zu führen.* (We are pleased to lead you through this meeting.)
Appreciator	usually employed at the end of the request to positively reinforce it	*Vielen Dank* (Thank you very much)

In adapting Schauer's (2007) model, certain changes were necessary. First, the category of "Head" was eliminated due to the fact that it is not actually an external modifier, but instead signifies the core requestive move. Furthermore, the directness taxonomy (Figure 4-6) is focused on analyzing and coding the head act. Additional external modification categories (i.e., imposition minimizer, sweetener, promise of reward, and considerator) from Schauer's (2007) were not included in the revised taxonomy based on the fact that they were not attested in the actual production data. Each level of the resulting external modification taxonomy shown in Figure 4-8 features a specific external modifier, a definition of the modifier, and attested examples coming from the transcribed data set. Based on this taxonomy, coders were able to identify kind and frequency of external modifiers in transcribed request sequences.

4.3.4. Appropriateness

To measure the focal construct of appropriateness, the researcher developed the taxonomy shown in Figure 4-9.

Figure 4-8: Appropriateness taxonomy (based on Taguchi, 2006, p. 520)

Ratings	**Descriptors**
1. No performance	-No performance. -Interlocutor is unable to respond to request.
2. Poor	-Due to interference from grammatical and discourse errors, appropriateness is difficult to determine. -Expressions are more direct or indirect than the situation requires, no use of internal and external modification is evident -Interlocutor responds to request with difficulty. (i.e., pausing, false starts, characterization of request as unclear or hard to respond to, etc.).
3. Fair	-Expressions are only somewhat appropriate. -Grammatical and discourse errors are noticeable, but they do not interfere with appropriateness. -Expressions are more direct or indirect than the situation requires, use of internal and external modification is evident. -Interlocutor responds to request with some difficulty. (i.e., some pausing or false starts, repetition of some parts of request, etc.).
4. Good	-Expressions are mostly appropriate. -Very few grammatical and discourse errors. -Expressions are at the level of directness that the situation requires, use of internal and external modifiers may be lacking. -Interlocutor responds to request with little difficulty. (i.e., little pausing, few false starts, no explicit characterization of request).
5. Excellent	-Expressions are fully appropriate for the situation. -No or almost no grammatical and discourse errors. -Expressions are at the level of directness that the situation requires, use of internal and external modification is evident. -Interlocutor responds to request with no difficulty. (i.e., no pausing or

	false starts, characterization of request as interesting or easy to respond to, etc.).

In adapting Taguchi's (2006) framework, the researcher made two modifications to fit the current research context. The first change was the elimination of the level "Very poor" which previously existed between "Poor" and "No performance." This determination was made because the "Very poor" descriptor reads, "There is no evidence that the intended speech acts are performed," while the "No performance" descriptor simply reads "No performance" (Taguchi, 2006, p. 520). These descriptors seemed so close as to be synonymous and were thus collapsed into one level for coding purposes in the present study. Additionally, the researcher added descriptors addressing the use of internal and external modification within the request sequence.

In sum, the transcribed data were coded according to four different taxonomies in order to rate four important and related phenomena in requesting behavior: directness, internal modification, external modification, and appropriateness. In the following section, we turn to the specific procedures used in coding the data.

4.4 Data Transcription and Coding

4.4.1 General Approach

Although Web conferences are multimodal and feature audio-, video- and text-based data, the present study examines only audio data. The audio data from each hour-long conference were transcribed according to the conventions set forth by Jefferson (2004). This system was chosen for its relative intuitive coding of paralinguistic information (e.g., pausing, overlapping speech, etc.) and the resulting accessibility and understandability of the end transcription. The transcribed data were then analyzed to find all instances in which either expert or novice participants attempted to engage in requesting behavior. Each request was then rated to indicate its level of directness, frequency and kind of internal modifiers, frequency and kind of external modifiers, and level of appropriateness.

4.4.2 Transcription of Audio Data

Audio data from each Web conference were screened for participant request production using the freely available recording, editing and playback software Audacity (http://audacity.sourceforge.net/). After listening to the associated audio file and reading the transcription as many times as was necessary, the researcher established the boundary of each request sequence by documenting precisely when it began and when it ended, according to the time displayed on the Audacity playback stream. Only those audio file excerpts that contained request sequences were then transcribed into text-based data, using the time boundaries established in the previous step. The textual data also indicated the speakers involved in each request sequence. As such, each instance of requesting behavior was both preserved in its original audio form and documented as a written text.

4.4.3 Identification of Head Acts

In order to determine the head act of the transcribed request sequences in the data set, the researcher utilized the approach of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989, see also 1.3.1) and sought the “minimal unit” that conveyed the requestive force. Most head acts were formulated at the sentence level, and in requests featuring much internal modification, the head acts often showed a high degree of syntactic complexity. Many head acts were formulated at the phrasal level (i.e., a noun phrase + a verb phrase), and the researcher also identified elided head acts that relied on contextual information to convey the illocutionary force. Once the researcher identified the head act, it was highlighted in green in the transcription (for information regarding transcription of audio data, see 4.4.2).

To ensure reliability in identifying the head act of each request sequence, the researcher followed a designated set of procedures. First, the researcher read each transcribed request sequence several times and determined the sentence or set of sentences in which the minimal requestive unit was located. Next, the sentences were pared down by identifying the presence of external modifiers, which are a category of non-essential utterances occurring outside the boundary of the head act (see 1.3.2.3. and 4.2.3). After the external modifiers were excluded, the remaining utterance was then examined for a minimal unit occurring at the sentence or phrasal level. If such a minimal unit could be found, it was highlighted as the head act. (As noted above, the length of the head act often correlated with its syntactic complexity.) If such a unit could not be found at the sentence or phrasal level, the researcher proceeded to examine the data at the word level in order to determine which exact word(s) carried the requestive force. Once this element was identified, it was marked as the head act of the request sequence. By starting at a broad level and successively narrowing the focus, the researcher was able to determine with confidence the boundary of the head act for each request sequence.

4.4.4 Further Data Coding and Rating by Primary Researcher

After identifying all requests in the data set, the researcher coded the transcribed request sequences according to participant as well as the experimental condition and Web conference in which they were produced. Finally, the researcher rated each instance of requesting behavior according to the level of directness of the head act, the frequency and kind of internal modification, the frequency and kind of external modification, and the overall level of appropriateness.

4.4.5 Researcher Bias

It must be acknowledged that the procedures discussed thus far leave open the possibility for a subjective analysis and presentation of research results, for two main reasons. Firstly, the researcher devoted a great deal of time and energy to this project, both as a pedagogue and the principle investigator, and there existed a natural hope that pragmatic development had taken place among the learners. Secondly, and more broadly, the primary researcher is the product of his own ontological development, and may have exhibited an unconscious tendency to interpret the data subjectively (Merriam et al., 2002), as influenced by his position as an American speaker of German. However, the researcher decided against conducting an inter-coder reliability study of the process of identifying head acts for two reasons. First, by establishing and following a prescribed protocol, the researcher was able to approach each request sequence systematically and objectively, thereby helping to ensure a high degree of intra-coder reliability. Additionally, the researcher felt that the risk of researcher bias was more likely to occur in *rating* the illocutionary force of the data than in identifying head acts. It was therefore decided to utilize the researcher’s limited resources conservatively and to focus on establishing inter-rater reliability, as is described in the next section 4.5.

4.5 Establishing Inter-Rater Reliability

To mitigate researcher bias and to establish further the reliability of the coded data, two additional raters rated a portion of the data independently. One rater is a native speaker of German and participated as an invited expert guest during both instances of the study. As a participant in two Web conferences, this rater had intimate knowledge of the context in which the communication took place, which lends further reliability to his coding. The other rater was a fellow graduate student of German Applied Linguistics at the researcher's institution. This rater's status as a PhD student with expertise in both German and Applied Linguistics established him as a trustworthy and knowledgeable collaborator. Unlike the researcher, the additional raters did not know in which experimental condition the requests were produced. Such selective blinding was used to reduce the inadvertent influence of rater biases (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 242).

4.5.1 Inter-Rater Reliability: Round 1

In this round, raters focused on two aspects of requesting behavior, directness and appropriateness. Prior to rating the data, the additional raters received detailed guidelines (Appendix F) and examined example request sequences that had been coded by the primary researcher. After participating in the norming session, each rater received an identical set of 24 request sequences (i.e., 10% of the total data set), an amount sufficient for establishing confidence in rater reliability (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 243). Based on the additional rater responses, inter-rater reliability was calculated using Fleiss' Kappa. Fleiss' Kappa is a variation of Cohen's Kappa that allows for the inclusion of more than two raters; in the present case, reliability among three raters was sought. Interpretation of the results is based on the schema used in Viera and Garrett (2005), as presented in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1: Interpretation of Kappa (based on Viera & Garrett, 2005, p. 362)

Kappa value	**Rater agreement**
below 0	Less than chance agreement
0.01-0.20	Slight agreement
0.21-0.40	Fair agreement
0.61-0.80	Substantial agreement

0.81-0.99	Almost perfect agreement
1.00	Perfect agreement

The results for inter-rater reliability in the first round of coding are presented in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2: Round 1, inter-rater coding reliability

Number of raters	3
Number of items rated	24
Fleiss' Kappa: Directness	**0.529** (moderate agreement)
Fleiss' Kappa: Appropriateness	**0.173** (slight agreement)

After calculating the inter-rater reliability, the researcher determined that the agreement among the raters was not sufficiently high to indicate confidence in the rating procedures. As such, several steps were taken to improve the procedures, as described in the following section.

4.5.2 Revisions and Modifications to Rating Procedures

To determine why the inter-rater reliability was not sufficiently high, the researcher met with both additional raters separately. During each meeting, the researcher first asked the raters for their general impressions of the procedures. Following this, the additional raters were presented with specific instances in which their rating differed markedly from the other raters' and asked to explain the rationale behind the rating of these items. Based on these discussions two areas of concern became apparent. First, the rating taxonomies were not adequate for the data presented to the raters. Specifically, the directness taxonomy was not sufficiently detailed and had collapsed certain requesting behaviors into the same level in an artificial manner. To ameliorate these inadequacies, the directness taxonomy was expanded to include a total of eight levels. In addition, levels 1 and 2 were subdivided into requests for information and requests for action (see also, Félix-Brasdefer, 2012; Hassall, 1999). Regarding rating for appropriateness, the taxonomy was revised to include more detailed descriptors (more below).

The second area of concern to emerge from discussions with the additional raters was a conflation between the two focal constructs, directness and appropriateness. While the two constructs were separated for the purposes of data analysis, level of directness certainly has an influence on whether or not a request is appropriately executed. It thus became necessary to find a way to distinguish between the constructs for rating purposes, while also acknowledging the influence of directness level on the overall appropriateness of the request sequence. To accomplish this goal, several additional changes were made to the rating procedures. First, the rating instructions were clarified to communicate that raters should code only the head act of the request sequence for level of directness, and not to confuse this measure with overall appropriateness. Furthermore, the head act of each transcribed request was highlighted in green to delineate this element visually from the larger request sequence. Next, two additional focal constructs were added to the rating procedures: internal modification and external modification (see sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3). Raters then determined the overall appropriateness level of the request sequence by considering the combined influence of directness, internal modification, and external modification. In doing such, the researcher was able to separate the four focal constructs for purposes of data analysis, while also allowing raters to account for the interrelated nature of the constructs in determining overall request appropriateness.

4.5.3 Inter-Rater Reliability: Round 2

After revision and expansion of the rating procedures, the researcher generated a new set of requests to calculate inter-rater reliability using the new procedures. The revised set was comprised of twelve request sequences. Of these twelve, six requests were included due to widely ranging differences among raters during coding round 1, and six were included at random. The random items were chosen by taking the first six numbers of a randomly generated sequence (random.org) of the numbers 1-8. The numbers 1-8 represent online discussions 1-8 in chronological order. The results of the randomly generated sequence were: *6 3 8 7 4 5 2 1*, meaning that discussions 1 and 2 were excluded. One request was subsequently taken at random from the remaining discussions. These requests were chosen by randomly generating one number (random.org) from the total number of requests in the given discussion and matching this number with the request ID number from the corresponding request sequence in the data set. The results are displayed in Table 4-3.

Table 4-3: Random selection of request sequences for round 2 of coding

Discussion	**Total requests**	**Randomly-selected request ID number**
Discussion 6	32	24
Discussion 3	32	18
Discussion 8	23	22
Discussion 7	23	15
Discussion 4	34	28
Discussion 5	21	5

As a final step, the 12 newly selected requests were randomly renumbered (random.org) for final presentation to the raters. The revised request set was thus comprised of six requests seen in the previous round of rating and six requests not previously seen, presented in randomized order (see Appendix G).

Before rating the revised request set, the two additional raters received training in the use of the new taxonomies and guidelines (Appendix H). Following this norming session, each rater independently rated the same portion of the data set. The researcher once again calculated agreement among all three raters using Fleiss' Kappa (Table 4-4).

Table 4-4: Round 2, inter-rater coding reliability

Number of raters	3
Number of items rated	12
Fleiss' Kappa: Directness	**0.873** (almost perfect agreement)
Fleiss' Kappa: Internal modification	**1.000** (perfect agreement)
Internal syntactic modification	**1.000** (perfect agreement)
Conditional statements	**1.000** (perfect agreement)
Past tense	not enough data present
Subjunctive mood	**1.000** (perfect agreement)
Internal lexical modification	**1.000** (perfect agreement)
Politeness marker	not enough data present
Consultative device	not enough data present
Downtoner	**1.000** (perfect agreement)
Understater	not enough data present
Subjectivizer	not enough data present
Appealer	**1.000** (perfect agreement)
Fleiss' Kappa: External modification	**0.884** (almost perfect agreement)
Alerter	not enough data present
Preparator	**1.000** (perfect agreement)
Grounder	**1.000** (perfect agreement)
Disarmer	**-0.029** (less than chance agreement)
Small talk	not enough data present
Appreciator	not enough data present
Fleiss' Kappa: Appropriateness	**0.903** (almost perfect agreement)

As Table 4-4 makes clear, the reliability among the three raters is generally very high. Directness shows almost perfect agreement, with a Kappa value of 0.873. In aggregate, internal and external modification show high inter-rater reliability (Kappa values of 1.0 and 0.884, respectively), although lack of data among certain subcategories prevents calculation of a Kappa value. Appropriateness shows almost perfect agreement, with a Kappa value of 0.903. Taken together, Fleiss' Kappa demonstrates a high degree of agreement among all three raters in all four focal areas. This result shows that the extensive revisions undertaken to the rating procedures between rounds 1 and 2 were successful in producing substantial uniformity among the raters. Having established a high degree of reliability in the revised rating procedures, the researcher rated the remaining portion of the data set using these procedures.

4.6 Data Analysis Methods

Having established the key focal measures and the process by which these measures were rated in the data set, the discussion now turns to the methods used for analyzing the data.

4.6.1 Mixed Methods Research

There are several characteristics of qualitative research that distinguish it from quantitative research. Qualitative data is textual and aims to capture “rich and complex details” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 38). Qualitative research features “intense and prolonged contact with...the research setting” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 38). Due to the intensive nature of qualitative research, it typically utilizes small sample sizes. Finally, qualitative research “is the product of the researcher’s subjective interpretation of the data” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 38) and may thus be vulnerable to biases that emerge from the researcher’s own personal history and perspective on the topic (Merriam, 2002, p. 5).

Recognizing the characteristics of qualitative research, it must be noted that in working with such data, certain categories or results may exist that can be counted or measured in an objective way, and are thus subject to quantitative analysis. As quantitative research is based in numerical data, it can make use of statistical analyses that provide objective and verifiable results. Furthermore, given a sufficiently large sample size, one may begin to generalize the results of quantitative research to a larger population. The focus therefore is on trends that a group displays, rather than on the behavior and/or change apparent in individual members of said group.

As both research paradigms have areas of strength, researchers are increasingly turning to a “mixed methods” approach in which aspects of both qualitative and quantitative analyses are utilized. The advantages of such an approach are manifold. Chief among these benefits is the ability to understand complex issues from a multivariate perspective. As Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) confirm, research in second language acquisition often involves exploring changes in complex systems that are dynamic, adaptive, and non-linear (see also de Bot, 2008). As such, mixed methods research provides a useful approach for understanding the complexity of language acquisition from different and complementary viewpoints. One can, for example, use quantitative data to establish the distribution of a phenomenon in a population and supplement this broad investigation with qualitative analysis that seeks to explicate the reasons why certain individuals do or do not display the focal phenomena. Taguchi (2011b) advocates for such an approach, noting that the blending of quantitative and qualitative methods can allow “researchers to find *meanings* behind developmental phenomena” (p. 609, emphasis added). Additionally, if both the quantitative and qualitative research findings converge, a mixed methods approach can result in improved research validity (Dörnyei, 2007). Given these reasons, the present study also utilizes a mixed methods approach, as explained in the following sections.

4.6.2 Data Analysis Methods Used in the Study

In the present study, a mixed methods approach utilizing coded data was implemented. The quantitative analysis relied on the use of a generalized linear mixed model to provide an overview of aggregate trends among study participants. These initial findings were then expanded, contextualized, and clarified in a detailed qualitative examination that resulted in creation of developmental case histories of selected study participants.

4.6.2.1 Generalized Linear Mixed Models

The aggregate data analysis for the current study is based on a statistical tool known as a Generalized Linear Mixed Model (GLMM). GLMMs are a relatively new statistical tool and in applied linguistics research are often used to measure change over time (Cunnings, 2012). An assumption underlying the use of most statistical analyses (e.g., ANOVA, T-test, etc.) in applied linguistics research is that the data must fit a Gaussian (i.e., normal) distribution. GLMMs, in contrast, allow for analysis of a data set that is not normally distributed (*Introduction to GLMMs*, n.d.). A further advantage lies in the fact that the model can include multiple independent variables (i.e., predictors), allowing the researcher to consider the simultaneous influence of several factors in the experiment (Baayen, Davidson, & Bates, 2008; Cunnings, 2012; Jaeger, 2008). Additionally, GLMMs are flexible regarding the kind of data the researcher uses in the analysis: they can accommodate binomial/binary data (one of two possible outcomes), ordinal data (outcomes that can be organized into a set beginning at X and ending at Y), or count data (more than two outcomes, but the data are not ordered) (Cunnings, 2012). GLMMs are also useful for analyzing data collected in non-clinical settings because they are robust against missing data and they effectively account for the influence of randomness that is not part of the research design (Baayen et al., 2008; Hedeker, 2005). Most importantly, GLMMs are well suited to a longitudinal research design; however, they do not assume change over time to be linear, making interpretation of dynamic linguistic phenomena more feasible (Cunnings, 2012).

Because the present study occurred in a non-clinical setting, focused on longitudinal development, and utilized three categories of data (binary, ordinal, and count) that are not distributed on a Gaussian curve, the researcher implemented a GLMM for quantitative analysis. Binary analysis was used for the following predictors: Conditional, Tense, Mood, Subjectivizer, Disarmer, Small talk, and Appreciator. Ordinal analysis was used for: Directness, Internal syntactic modification, Internal lexical modification, Politeness markers, Downgraders, Understaters, and Appropriateness. Count analysis was used for the remaining predictors: Consultatives, Appealers, External modifiers, Alerters, Preparators, and Grounders (see section 4.4 for a description of all predictors).

4.6.2.2 Developmental Case Histories and Microgenetic Analysis

The qualitative analysis employed in the current study used dense sets of production data to create developmental case histories of individual study participants. The method used thus combines two complementary qualitative approaches: microgenetic analysis and case study. Before proceeding to an explanation of microgenesis, it is pertinent to clarify some important characteristics of case study research.

The case study is a suitable approach in the current research context for a number of reasons. First, following an initial quantification of the data, the case study provides “a more in-depth, personalized, qualitative description” of the phenomena at work (Duff, 2012, p. 99). Participants’ actions and utterances are no longer represented as numerical data points, but can be seen as the efforts of individuals who both shape and are shaped by the discourse in which they participate. Furthermore, the case study is a fitting approach when conducting research that occurs in a telecollaborative setting because it “allows a rich contextualization of the process, which is crucial to understand what is happening” (Müller-Hartmann, 2012, p. 164). In the present study, contextualization is reflected by providing background information about the participants as well as a detailed record of the interactions between participants prior to, during, and following the head act of each request sequence. As this study is concerned with the effect of interaction on L2 pragmatic development, the quality of input must also be considered (Taguchi, 2011b). In other words, each request sequence produced by participants was examined and coded based not only on the language produced by the focal participant, but also based on the utterances of other participants in the exchange. Ultimately, the goal of the case study is not to generalize, but to particularize, so as to “generate new hypotheses, models, and understandings about the nature of language learning or other processes” (Duff, 2008, p. 43).

As the case histories in the current study rely on dense sets of requesting production data, a discussion of the second qualitative approach, microgenesis, is now in order. Microgenesis is revealed in the examination of the development of a specific process (i.e., linguistic feature) over relatively short periods of time, and as situated within a learner’s personal history. Microgenesis thus seeks to “grasp the process in flight” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 68), so as to make observable the process whereby new skills and abilities emerge. This approach is rooted in sociocultural theory, which stipulates that development (i.e., genesis) can only be understood by delineating the social, material, and historical context in which such development occurs (Wertsch, 1985). Microgenesis is thus complementary to an understanding of language acquisition as a complex, dynamic process, and is suitable for examining linguistic change over time. Kasper and Rose (2002) suggest that the "analytical corollary of microgenesis is a microanalytic approach to the examination of interactions in which learners are involved" (pp. 35-36). A microanalytic approach (i.e., microgenetic analysis) thus involves close examination of dense sets of data with the aim of observing "how the human mind functions as a consequence of its formation in cultural activity" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 57).

Microgenetic analysis has become a mainstay for the study of linguistic development occurring in telecollaborative exchange (Belz & Kinginger, 2002, 2003; Belz & Vyatkina, 2005, 2008; Vyatkina & Belz, 2006), largely for its ability to reveal "critical incidents" (Belz, 2003; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996) in interaction that can spur real and significant change in a learner's development. In a series of studies, Belz and Vyatkina (2005, 2008) and Vyatkina and Belz (2006) discuss the microgenetic development of German modal particle usage among American learners of German. Their work demonstrates that the use of microgenetic analysis can reveal differences between learner and expert production, allowing for the "administration of *developmental* pedagogical interventions" (Vyatkina & Belz, 2006, p. 343, emphasis original). In other words, microanalysis can be used to construct and refine pedagogical tools uniquely suited to a particular group of learners. The researchers also note that "[microgenetic] analysis may reveal that the development of structures is often piecemeal and erratic" (Belz & Vyatkina, 2005, p. 42). Individual learners may trace different idiosyncratic pathways in their acquisition of particular structures or functions in the L2; such results closely reflect the current focus on epistemological orientations towards language development (de Bot, 2008; N. Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2006; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). Lastly, "[m]icrogenetic analysis helps reveal individual differences in the development of learners who produced a similar amount of the same features" (Vyatkina & Belz, 2006, p. 341). Such an approach thus provides a level of contextualized detail that quantitative analysis alone could not reveal.

4.7 Summary

The present study uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in order to examine two phenomena: 1) the differences in requesting behavior between novice and expert speakers of German and 2) the changes in requesting behavior among novice speakers of German between two experimental conditions. In utilizing a mixed methodology, the research aims "to capture variability at various levels and timescales, from the general shape of the developmental process over a long period of time to the short-term variability that takes place between data collection intervals" (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008, p. 245). Both the quantitative and qualitative analyses rely on request sequences rated to reflect directness, internal modification, external modification, and appropriateness. To ensure a high degree of reliability in the data, the researcher conducted an extensive examination of three different raters' rating decisions, which led to a revision and expansion of rating procedures. Quantitative analysis of the data is conducted using a Generalized Linear Multilevel Model, which frames an in-depth qualitative investigation of individual developmental case histories based on microgenetic analysis of dense sets of production data. In the next chapter, the results of the analytical procedures are presented.

Chapter 5: Results

5.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents the results of the study, both in aggregate and on an individual participant basis. The chapter begins by reviewing the research questions relevant for the analysis. Following this, aggregate data from the two experimental cohorts are briefly presented and analyzed using the Generalized Linear Mixed Model (GLMM) described in Chapter 4. Based on the limited number of study participants, the GLMM can only provide a rough overview of participant requesting behavior; the bulk of the analysis is therefore presented qualitatively using individual case histories and featuring microgenetic analysis of selected request sequences. As will be seen, the qualitative analysis allows for in-depth analysis of participants' requesting behavior and provides detailed and contextualized commentary.

Before proceeding, a brief note about the data presentation is in order. The quantitative data are displayed in a series of tables with accompanying text explanations regarding the statistical significance (or lack thereof) of the various measures. The qualitative analysis, presented in a series of developmental case histories, focuses on individual study participants and follows the same general format for each case history. First, the reader will see a table encapsulating the participant's requesting behavior, as measured by directness, internal modification, external modification, and appropriateness. Following this initial information, each case history then presents a series of transcribed instances of requesting behavior. In so doing, the aim is to provide highly contextualized analysis of the participants' production data at a fine level of detail. For each request transcription presented, the head act will be highlighted in green, so as to make clear what linguistic elements occur prior to, within, or following the head act of the request sequence.

5.2 Research Questions

The present study seeks to shed light on the development of appropriate requesting behavior among learners of German for Professional Purposes (i.e., novice participants) as they interact with expert speakers of German and participate in focused instruction. As discussed in Chapter 4, requesting behavior is operationalized as a four-way measurement consisting of: directness, internal modification, external modification, and appropriateness. To review, the specific research questions posed are:

1. Is the requesting behavior of novice participants similar to or different from the requesting behavior of expert participants? If so, how?
2. Does the requesting behavior of novice participants change as a result of interacting with expert participants and taking part in focused instruction? If so, how?

5.3 Aggregate Data Analysis

5.3.1 Expert vs. Novice Performance

The following section presents the results of the aggregate analysis for the first research question. It begins with the researcher's hypothesis, followed by a presentation of the overall frequency of request production and modification in both groups. The section concludes with the presentation of the statistical results from the GLMM.

5.3.1.1 Research Hypothesis 1

It was expected that the requesting behavior of novice participants would differ from expert participants in four ways. First, it was expected that novice participants would use more direct requesting strategies than expert participants. Second, it was expected that novice participants would use fewer internal modifiers than expert participants. Third, it was expected that novice participants would use more external modifiers than expert participants. Fourth, it was expected that novice participants would use less appropriate requests than expert participants.

5.3.1.2 Directness

Expert and novice participants varied in the directness of their requesting behavior. Experts produced 61 direct requests out of a total 86 requests (a ratio of 70.93%), while novice participants produced 130 direct requests out of a total 154 requests (a ratio of 84.42%). Tables 5-1 and 5-2 present the frequency for each request strategy in the expert and novice groups, respectively

Table 5-1: Expert frequency of directness level/request strategy

Directness level	Request strategy	Raw Frequency	Percentage of total
Direct expressions			
1	Direct question (information)	36/86	41.86%
1	Imperative (action)	14/86	16.28%
2	Indirect question (information)	4/86	4.65%
2	Performative (action)	3/86	3.49%
3	Obligation statement	4/86	4.65%
4	Want statement	0/86	0.00%
	Subtotal direct requests	**61/86**	**70.93%**
Indirect expressions			
5	Preparatory questions and statements	17/86	19.77%
6	Suggestions	5/86	5.81%
7	Permissions	0/86	0.00%
8	Hints	3/86	3.49%
	Subtotal indirect requests	**25/86**	**29.07%**
	Total	**86/86**	**100%**

Table 5-2: Novice frequency of directness level/request strategy

Directness level	Request strategy	Raw Frequency	Percentage of total
Direct expressions			
1	Direct question (information)	116/154	75.32%
1	Imperative (action)	7/154	4.55%

2	Indirect question (information)	4/154	2.59%
2	Performative (action)	0/154	0.00%
3	Obligation statement	0/154	0.00%
4	Want statement	3/154	1.96%
Subtotal direct requests		**130/154**	**84.42%**
Indirect expressions			
5	Preparatory questions and statements	18/154	11.69%
6	Suggestions	1/154	0.65%
7	Permissions	2/154	1.29%
8	Hints	3/154	1.96%
Subtotal indirect requests		**24/154**	**15.58%**
Total		**154/154**	**100%**

5.3.1.3 Internal Modification

Expert and novice participants varied in their use of internal modification. Experts produced a total of 34 syntactic modifiers and 60 lexical modifiers (94 in total) in 86 request sequences, while novice participants produced 22 syntactic modifiers and 48 lexical modifiers (70 in total) in 154 request sequences (Tables 5-3 and 5-4).

Table 5-3: Expert frequency/type of internal modification

Internal modifiers	Raw Frequency	Percentage of total
syntactic		
conditional clause	21/94	22.34%
past tense	0/94	0%
subjunctive mood	13/94	13.83%
Subtotal syntactic modifiers	**34/94**	**36.17%**
lexical		
politeness marker	13/94	13.83%
consultative devices	2/94	2.13%
downtoners	25/94	26.59%
understaters	7/94	7.45%
subjectivizers	5/94	5.32%
appealers	8/94	8.51%
Subtotal lexical modifiers	60/94	**63.83%**
Total	94/94	**100%**

Table 5-4: Novice frequency/type of internal modification

Internal modifiers	Raw Frequency	Percentage of total
syntactic		
conditional clause	7/70	10.00%

past tense	3/70	4.29%
subjunctive mood	12/70	17.14%
Subtotal syntactic modifiers	**22/70**	**31.43%**
lexical		
politeness marker	12/70	17.14%
consultative devices	4/70	5.71%
downtoners	14/70	20.00%
understaters	7/70	10.00%
subjectivizers	1/70	1.43%
appealers	10/70	14.29%
Subtotal lexical modifiers	**48/70**	**68.57%**
Total	**70/70**	**100%**

5.3.1.4 External Modification

Although there are certain differences between the novice group and expert group, in many ways the two groups show similar usage patterns (Tables 5-5 and 5-6). In both groups one can observe frequent production of ‘alerters’ and ‘preparators’, and to a lesser extent, ‘grounders’. In contrast, ‘disarmers’, ‘small talk’, and ‘appreciators’ are not well represented in the data set.

Table 5-5: Expert frequency/type of external modification

External modifiers	Raw Frequency	Percentage of total
Alerter	12/35	34.29%
Preparator	11/35	31.43%
Grounder	9/35	25.71%
Disarmer	1/35	2.86%
Small talk	2/35	5.71%
Appreciator	0/35	0.00%
Total	35/35	**100%**

Table 5-6: Novice frequency/type of external modification

External modifiers	Raw Frequency	Percentage of total
Alerter	17/80	21.25%
Preparator	48/80	60.00%
Grounder	8/80	10.00%
Disarmer	0/80	0.00%
Small talk	4/80	5.00%
Appreciator	3/80	3.75%
Total	80/80	**100%**

5.3.1.5 Statistical Analysis: Research Question 1

Based on the above data and including ratings of request appropriateness, the researcher employed a GLMM in order to determine significant differences between the requesting behavior of novice participants and expert participants (Table 5-7).

Table 5-7: Expert vs. novice performance

Predictor	Estimate	Standard Error	Wald-Z	p-value	Significance
Directness	**1.21**	**0.66**	**1.84**	**.0655**	**Marginal***
Internal modification	**1.11**	**0.25**	**4.35**	**.0000**	**Yes**
syntactic:	1.42	0.49	2.90	.0038	Yes
conditional clause	1.65	0.61	2.70	.0069	Yes
past tense	Not enough data present for analysis				
subjunctive mood	1.28	0.69	1.85	.0646	Marginal
lexical:	1.15	0.34	3.38	.0007	Yes
politeness marker	0.63	0.57	1.10	.2720	No
consultative devices	Not enough data present for analysis				
downtoners	1.33	0.47	2.85	.0044	Yes
understaters	1.13	1.02	1.12	.2640	No
subjectivizers	Not enough data present for analysis				
appealers	-0.14	0.83	-0.17	.8640	No
External modification	**-0.10**	**0.34**	**-0.29**	**.7710**	**No**
alerter	-0.14	0.40	-0.35	.7267	No
preparator	-0.60	0.41	-1.49	.1365	No
grounder	1.86	1.31	1.42	.1550	No
disarmer	18.12	8829	0.00	.9980	No
small talk	-0.79	0.90	-0.88	.3810	No
appreciator	-17.89	5197.13	-0.00	.9970	No
Appropriateness	**3.36**	**0.87**	**3.87**	**.0001**	**Yes**

*Marginal statistical significance is used to denote a p-value between .05 and .10.

As Table 5-7 shows, there is a marginally significant difference between the directness of expert speakers and novice speakers, with expert speakers more likely to use indirect requesting strategies. This result supports the research hypothesis, wherein it was expected that novice speakers would utilize more direct requests and expert speakers would use more indirect requests. Table 5-7 further shows that expert speakers use significantly more internal modifiers than do novice speakers, a result that confirms the research hypothesis. Regarding external modification, no significant difference was observed between expert and novice speakers, which does not corroborate the research hypothesis. Finally, the appropriateness of expert requesting behavior is significantly higher than that of the novice speakers, a result that is in line with the stated hypothesis. In sum, three of the predicted outcomes (i.e., more indirect requests, higher internal modification and higher appropriateness among expert speakers) were met, whereas one of the predicted outcomes (i.e., lower external modification among expert speakers) was not observed in the data.

5.3.2 Development of Novice Requests

The following section presents the results of the aggregate analysis for the second research question. It begins with the researcher's hypothesis, followed by the presentation of the statistical results from the GLMM.

5.3.2.1 Research Hypothesis 2

It was expected that the requesting behavior of novice participants would change as a result of interacting with expert participants and taking part in focused instruction. This change would be characterized by the production of request sequences that are more similar to the request sequences of expert participants. Therefore, the author anticipated a general rise in two of the four main measures (internal modification and appropriateness), as well as concomitant decline in external modification and level of directness (i.e., production of more indirect requests).

5.3.2.2 Statistical Analysis: Research Question 2

To determine the aggregate effect of the instructional module and interaction with experts in the novice group, the novice production data from experimental condition 1 were compared with the novice production data from experimental condition 2. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5-8.

Table 5-8: The effect of the instructional module among novice speakers

Predictor	Estimate	Standard Error	Wald-Z	p value	Significance
Directness	**-0.25**	**0.49**	**-0.52**	**.6065**	**No**
Internal modification	**0.14**	**0.27**	**0.51**	**.6070**	**No**
syntactic:	0.17	0.52	0.32	.7487	No
conditional clause	-0.44	0.80	-0.56	.5778	No
past tense	Not enough data present for analysis				
subjunctive mood	0.73	0.70	1.04	.2970	No
lexical:	0.12	0.38	0.30	.7614	No
politeness marker	-0.24	0.63	-0.39	.6990	No
consultative devices	Not enough data present for analysis				
downtoners	-0.04	0.58	-0.07	.9461	No
understaters	0.33	0.96	0.34	.7310	No
subjectivizers	Not enough data present for analysis				
appealers	-0.75	0.85	-0.89	.3750	No
External modification	**-0.04**	**0.28**	**-0.15**	**.8810**	**No**
alerter	-1.06	0.57	-1.86	.0635	Marginal
preparator	0.55	0.31	1.78	.0758	Marginal
grounder	0.82	1.22	0.67	.5010	No
disarmer	0.00	12,870	0.00	1.000	No
small talk	-17.61	3487.21	-0.01	.9960	No
appreciator	-0.59	1.24	-0.48	.6350	No
Appropriateness	**0.49**	**0.47**	**1.05**	**.2961**	**No**

Table 5-8 clearly shows the lack of overall significant difference between experimental condition 1 and experimental condition 2 among the novice speakers, largely disproving research hypothesis 2. Only in two categories (‘alerter’ and ‘preparator’) can a marginally significant effect for instruction be seen. In this case the data reveal that the learners actually use *fewer* alerters and preparators in experimental condition 2 than in experimental condition 1. This result seems to hint at a move away from over-reliance on the formulaic use of external modification to mitigate requesting behavior among novice speakers.

While the aggregate data analysis provides a useful starting point, it nevertheless fails to provide a complete explanation of what is actually occurring in the production data. For example, the analysis shows no significant difference in expert vs. novice use of understaters. This result does not reflect the qualitative difference between the two groups' production data, however. To illustrate, among the novice speakers there are seven instances of an 'understater'; of these '*ein Bisschen*' ('a little bit') is used six times (85.7%), and '*kurz*' ('briefly') is used just once (14.3%). Compared with the native speaker production data, there are also seven instances of an understater. Among these instances, there are five occurrences of '*kurz*' (71.4%), one instance of '*irgendwie*' ('sort of') (14.3%), and only one instance of '*ein Bisschen*' (14.3%). The difference between the two groups therefore lies in the speakers' choice of specific lexical items. While it is possible to analyze for such differences using a GLMM, the overall low frequency of such modifiers in the production data would result in quantitatively insignificant results, failing to capture such fine distinctions. As the aggregate analysis has the effect of neutralizing such differences, it is pertinent to conduct a fine-grained, highly contextualized qualitative analysis of the production data to provide a more robust and complete picture of what is happening among the various participants as they engage in requesting behavior.

5.4 Qualitative Data Analysis

5.4.1 Experimental Cohort 1, Expert Case Histories

In the following section, oral production data from the expert participants of experimental cohort 1 is presented. The presentation of this data precedes the analysis of the learner data so that any influence of expert participants on learners' subsequent oral production can be adequately addressed. With the exception of John, the expert participants are all native speakers of German living in Germany. As such, they serve as a model of appropriate requesting behavior for the learners of German. Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, expert oral production data will serve as a baseline for comparison with learner oral production data. Each expert case history is presented according to chronological order of participation.

5.4.1.1 Roland

Roland is the first invited guest to participate in an online discussion during the first instance of the study (Fall 2010). He is an experienced teacher of English as a Foreign Language who also has previous knowledge of Web conferencing software for the purposes of language teaching. Production data reveal that Roland engages in very active requesting behavior. During the discussion, he produces a total of 18 requests (Table 5-9).

Table 5-9: Overview of Roland's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10*	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16	R17	R18
Conference	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Condition	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Directness	1(a)	6	1(i)	8	1(i)	1(i)	2(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)
Internal modifiers	2	4	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
syntactic:																		

conditional clause	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
lexical:																		
politeness marker	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
understaters	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appealers	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
External modifiers	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
alerter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
preparator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
grounder	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

R1 occurs at the outset of the discussion, as illustrated in Excerpt 5-1:

Excerpt 5-1

	Roland	Also, wenn's Fragen gibt, jederzeit.
R1		Wenn Sie irgendwas nicht verstehen,
		wenn ich zu schnell spreche,
		oder Sie mich gar nicht verstehen,
		bitte geben Sie mir Bescheid.
		Ja.
		So, if there're any questions, anytime.
		If you don't understand something,
		if I speak too quickly,
		or you don't understand me at all,
		please let me know.
		Yeah.
	Tim	[Okay.
		Vielen Dank, Herr Schmidt.
		[Okay.
		Thank you very much, Mr. Schmidt.

In this request sequence, Roland seeks to establish a positive atmosphere by letting the learners know that they are free to ask questions and seek clarification at any time. The request begins with an occurrence of the external modifier ‘small talk’ (*‘Also, wenn’s Fragen gibt, jederzeit’*), followed by the occurrence of the head act. Although the head act contains an imperative structure (*‘geben Sie mir Bescheid’*), there are two internal modifiers that mitigate the imposition of the request: the use of a conditional *‘wenn’* clause and the presence of the politeness marker *‘bitte’*.

R2 and R3 occur is close proximity to one another, as illustrated in Excerpt 5-2.

Excerpt 5-2

R2	Roland	Wenn Sie wollen, könnte ich nen (?) jetzt mal ganz kurz das deutsche Schulwesen skizzieren. Damit Sie sehen, wa- was ist eigentlich mittlerer Schulabschluss, und äh wie komme ich dann eigentlich an eine Berufsschule, und was kann ich danach machen. *If you want, I could a (?) go ahead and very briefly* *present the German school system.* *So that you see* *what the Certificate of Intermediate Education actually is,* *and uh how I can actually join* *a vocational school* *and what I can do afterwards.* (2 second pause)
R3		Ist es okay? *Is that okay?* (1 second pause)
	Gregor	Äh...Tim? *Uh...Tim?*
	Tim	Ja. *Yes.*
	Karl	[Ja. *[Yes.*
	Gregor	Ja. *Yes.*
	Roland	Okay, dann gehen wir mal ganz kurz zu dieser Folie. *Okay, then let’s very briefly go over to this slide.*

In formulating R2, Roland uses two syntactic modifiers (a *‘wenn’* clause and the subjunctive *‘könnte’*) as well as two lexical modifiers (the downtoner *‘mal’* and the understater *‘ganz kurz’*). The resultant indirect request functions at the directness level of a suggestion (Directness=6) and is followed by a ‘grounder’ (*‘Damit Sie sehen, wa- was ist eigentlich mittlerer Schulabschluss,..und was kann ich danach machen.’*). The illocutionary force of Roland’s request sequence does not seem clear to the student participants, however, as indicated by the 2-second pause following it. When no response to the request is forthcoming, Roland reformulates his utterance more directly (R3), using no external or internal modifiers.

The same pattern of behavior is evident in R4 and R5, which also occur in quick succession (Excerpt 5-3).

Excerpt 5-3

	Roland	Dann sind Sie ein sogenannter Geselle.
		Then you are a so-called journeyman.
		(1.5 second pause)
R4		Der Begriff Geselle
		der sagt Ihnen wahrscheinlich gar nichts, oder?
		The term journeyman
		it probably doesn’t mean much to you, does it?
		(2 second pause)
	Gregor	Ähhhh
		Uhhhh
		(2 second pause)
	Tim	Wie bitte?
		Pardon?
	Roland	[Das würde mich sehr wundern.
		[I would be quite surprised.
	Tim	Wie bitte?
		Pardon?
	Roland	K- Den den Begriff,
		den ich hier gerade hingeschrieben habe,
R5		Der Begriff Geselle...kennen Sie den?
		D- the the term,
		that I just wrote down here,
		the term journeyman...do you know it?
	Tim	[Geselle.
		Nein.
		[Journeyman.
		No.

Roland’s requests are intended to clarify whether the learner participants understand the lexical item *Geselle*. Prior to R4, Roland stresses this word and pauses, thereby directing participants’ attention to it. He then formulates R4 as a declarative sentence with the ‘appealer’ *‘oder?’* appended at the end. This indirect request does not seem salient to the learners, as indicated by pauses, Gregor’s utterance ‘*Ähhhh*’, and Tim’s request for repetition. In response, Roland produces R5, a simplified and more direct reformulation of R4. Following this reformulation, Roland does not use any further indirect requests; instead, he employs direct request strategies throughout the remainder of the discussion.

As discussed, R4 and R5 are intended to checks the learners’ understanding of a certain lexical item; this pattern of interaction is also demonstrated by Roland in R8 (Excerpt 5-4).

Excerpt 5-4

R8	Roland	Sagt Ihnen der Begriff was sozialselektiv? *Does the term socially selective mean anything to you?*
	Tim	Äh? *Uh?*
	Roland	Oder haben Sie vielleicht schon mal was drüber gehört? *Or perhaps you’ve heard something about it before?*
	Tim	Sozialselektiv? *Socially selective?*
	Gregor	Sozial..Äh, ich denke nicht. *Socially..Uh, I don’t think so.*

In contrast to the indirect nature of R4 and subsequent direct reformulation (R5), R8 is formulated as two interrogatives, a specific request for information and a more general follow up. What results is a multi-part request sequence; that is, the production of multiple head acts that work in concert to help execute the request.

The last notable feature of Roland's requesting behavior is his propensity to engage the learners in discussion himself and to sustain that interaction when possible (Excerpt 5-5).

Excerpt 5-5

R11	Roland	Wer hat denn in Deutschland schon studiert? *Who has studied in Germany then?*
	Gregor	Äh, ich habe nicht studiert, aber ich habe durch Deutschland gereist nach meiner Studium. *Uh, I didn't study,* *but I traveled through Germany* *after my studies.*
	Roland	Ach so.
R12		Und haben dann auch Universitäten besucht, oder? *I see.* *And also visited universities then, or?*
	Gregor	Äh, nein. Ich habe- er...ich..ja, ich habe nur Berlin und Freiburg besucht, aber keine Universitäten. *Uh, no.* *I- er...I..yeah,* *I only visited Berlin and Freiburg,* *but no universities.*
	Roland	Okay. *Okay.*

The use of the interrogative pronoun *'Wer'* at the beginning of R11 indicates that the request is not addressed to a particular individual. Gregor responds to the request in the negative and provides some additional information about himself. Subsequently, Roland produces R12, in order to follow up with Gregor and sustain the interaction. When the interaction with Gregor is finished, learner participant Jenny then responds to Roland's previous request (R11). In this case, too, Roland sustains the interaction over several request sequences, as illustrated in Excerpt 5-6.

Excerpt 5-6

	Roland	Frage? Was haben Sie denn- *Question?* *So what did you-*
	Jenny	XXX
R13	Roland	Was haben Sie denn in Stuttgart studiert? *What did you study in Stuttgart then?*
	Jenny	Architektur. *Architecture.*
	Roland	Ah ja, okay.
R14		Und das Studium war aber dann auf Deutsch? *Oh, okay.* *And your studies were in German then?*
	Jenny	Ja, genau. Aber mit Architektur ist ein Bisschen anders, weil es soviel mit Bildern hat zu tun hat so viel mit Bildern zu tun. *Yes, exactly.* *But with architecture is a bit different,* *because it so much with pictures has to do* *has to do so much with pictures.*
	Roland	Ja, das verstehe ich.
R15		Und haben Sie dann Ihr ganzes Studium in Deutschland gemacht? Oder nur ein Semester oder zwei oder wie auch immer? *Yeah, I understand that.* *And did you complete* *your entire studies in Germany?* *Or only a semester or two* *or whatever?*
	Jenny	Ja, zwei Semestern. Also ein Jahr. *Yes, two semesters.* *So, a year.*
	Roland	Okay. Mm hm. Na, gut.
R16		Und haben Sie noch Kontakt nach Stuttgart? *Okay. Mm hm. So, good.* *And are you still in touch with those in Stuttgart?*
	Jenny	Ja..ein Bisschen. *Yes..a little.*
	Roland	[Mm hm. Da ist momentan alles Mögliche im Laufen, der Bahnhof wird dort abgerissen. *[Mm hm.*

	At the moment everything there is in flux, *the train station there is being torn down.*
Jenny	Ja, hab' ich gehört! *Yeah, I heard that!*
Roland	(laughs) Und da gibt's viele Proteste. *And there are a lot of protests.*

Roland's interaction with Jenny is similar to that with Gregor, in that he asks both student participants to talk about their own personal experiences in Germany. Also of interest is the multi-part request sequence present in R15.

To summarize, Roland engages in very active requesting behavior as the first expert participant in experimental cohort 1. His initial attempts to use indirect requests were not perceived as salient by the learner participants, so he adopts a more direct and clearer requesting style in subsequent requests. These requests include checking learners' understanding of specialized vocabulary, as well as instances of Roland engaging learners in sustained discussion over multiple turns. Lastly, we have noted the occasional presence of multi-part request sequences in Roland's production data.

5.4.1.2 Erika

Erika is the second invited guest to participate in an online discussion during the first instance of the study. She is a project manager at Siemens who uses digital communications technology in the context of her professional responsibilities. She is also the wife of the first invited expert participant, Roland.

Production data reveal that Erika engages in active requesting behavior. During the discussion, she produces a total of 12 requests (Table 5-10).

Table 5-10: Overview of Erika's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5*	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12

Conference	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Condition	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Directness	1(i)	5	1(i)	1(a)	8	1(i)	1(i)	5	2(i)	1(i)	1(i)	5
Internal modifiers	0	4	1	2	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	3
syntactic:												
conditional clause	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1
lexical:												
politeness marker	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	1	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
understaters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appealers	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
External modifiers	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
alerter	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
preparator	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
grounder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

Erika's requesting behavior is characterized by production of a mix of direct requests (N=8) and indirect requests (N=4). In order to understand this phenomenon, let us more closely examine and contrast R1 and R2, as illustrated in Excerpt 5-7:

Excerpt 5-7

	Erika	Da vielleicht eine Gegenfrage.
R1		Ähm, kennt jemand von Ihnen Siemens?
		Here perhaps a question in return
		Um, do any of you know of Siemens?
	Andrea	Ja, wir können auf 'zustimmen' klicken,
		wenn wir können,
		äh, kennten diesen äh Firma
		und ich glaube, alle kennen das,
		aber..Sie können das sehen.
		Yes, we can click on 'agree'
		if we can,
		uh, knew this company,
		and I think, everyone knows of it,

		but..you can see that.

R2	Erika:	Ähm, John, könntest du dann bitte mal die erste Folie aufblenden bitte? *Um, John, could you please go ahead then* *and show the first slide please?*

In comparing R1 with R2, there are numerous differences that distinguish the respective requests. First, R1 is a direct request for information (Directness=1), whereas R2 is formulated as a preparatory question (Directness=5). R1 contains one external modifier, the preparator *'Da vielleicht eine Gegenfrage'*, and no internal modifiers. In contrast R2 contains a number of internal modifiers, including both lexical modifiers (downtoner *'mal'*, politeness marker *'bitte'*) and a syntactic modifier (subjunctive mood). Despite the qualitative differences between these request sequences, both have been given an Appropriateness rating of '5/excellent'. The key to understanding the difference in these requests is in recognizing that R1 is a request for information, whereas R2 is a request for action. Erika's performance is thus a reflection of the fact that, as a request for action, R2 contains a higher degree of imposition and must therefore be mitigated to a concomitant degree. This conclusion is corroborated by the request sequences illustrated in Excerpt 5-8.

Excerpt 5-8

R8	Erika	Ähm, John, wenn wir mal auf Folie sieben gehen könnten. *Um, John, if we could just go to slide seven.* (1 second pause) Oh, das ist noch animiert (laughs) Ge...nau. *Oh, it's still animated (laughs)* *Ex..actly.*

R12	Erika	Ähm, John, könntest du mal bitte auf Folie drei springen? *Um, John, could you please go ahead and jump to slide three?*

In both R8 and R12, Erika uses the subjunctive mood and the internal modifier *‘mal’* to mitigate her requests. Additionally, R8 is syntactically modified through the use of a *‘wenn’* clause, and R12 contains the lexical modifier *‘bitte’*. R2, R8 and R12 thus collectively serve to demonstrate that when Erika requests an action be performed, she uses numerous linguistic devices concurrently to help mitigate the perceived imposition (see QUAN analysis of internal modifiers). Finally, it should be noted that Erika’s use of *du* when speaking with John in R2 and R12 is a reflection of the fact that the two speakers had established a friendly relationship prior to Erika’s participation in the Web conference. For her to use *Sie* with John would therefore have been inappropriately formal.

Of additional interest for the analysis is R9, as seen in Excerpt 5-9.

Excerpt 5-9

	Erika	Vielleicht eine Frage von von mir? Ähm, ähm, in Deutschland gab es auch von Seitens der Politik ähm, eine gesetzliche Neuregelung zum Thema Kurzarbeit. Das heisst, dass Mitareiter eben nicht gekündigt werden müssen, sondern, dass sie zum Beispiel, statt vierzig Stunden ähm, nur zwanzig Stunden arbeiten, und bekommen vom Staat, also nicht nur von der Firma Ihr-Ihr Gehalt, aber auch vom Staat, auch noch ein’ gewissen Anteil an zum Gehalt. Also d-die Firma zahlt eben nur für zwanzig Stunden und der Staat finanziert mit um eben Entlassungen äh entgegenzuwirken. *Perhaps a question from me?* *Um, um, in Germany there was also* *from the political side um,* *a new legal regulation on the topic of reduced working hours.*

		That means that employees actually don't *have to be laid off,* *but rather that they, for example,* *instead of working forty hours, only work twenty hours,* *and receive from the state,* *that is to say, not from the company,* *a certain portion of their salary.* *So th-the company only pays for twenty hours* *and the state helps to finance* *in order to counteract lay offs.*
R9		Und da wäre meine Frage an Sie, ob es sowas auch in den USA gibt? *So my question for you would be* *if something like this exists in the USA?*
	Andrea	Interessante Frage, aber ich glaube nein. Ich weiß das nicht sicher, aber... vielleicht jemand in der Klasse kenne das, oder gehört von das? Aber ich glaube, alle sagen nein. *Interesting question, but I think no.* *I don't know that sure, but...* *perhaps someone in the class* *know that, or heard from that?* *But I think, everyone says no.*

The request sequence begins with the preparator *'Vielleicht eine Frage von von mir?'* and proceeds with a brief explanation of the concept of *'Kurzarbeit'*, before the head act occurs. Erika's explanation prior to her request for information shows that she anticipates a lack of learner knowledge in this area and she moves preemptively to counteract it. The fact that Andrea is able to respond to the request with no difficulty is indicative of the fact that Erika's preparatory explanation was successful and has helped with the execution of R9.

R10 shows a similar attempt by Erika to provide an explanation related to her request for information (Excerpt 5-10).

Excerpt 5-10

R10	Erika	Ähm, wie wird denn in in USA mit

dem Thema ähm Fortbildung umgegangen?
Das heisst, ähm dass äh Mitarbeiter in der Firma
entsprechend weiter ausgebildet werden.
Also nicht wenn Sie anfangen
mit Ihrem Berufsleben,
sondern während Ihres Berufsleben.
Bekommen S- dann Mitarbeiter auch Seminare
oder Kurse, um ja an der Technik dranzubleiben,
oder an den neuesten US-GAP Richtlinien, zum Beispiel.
Um, so how is the topic of
continuing education handled in in the USA?
That means, um that employees in the company
are commensurately further educated.
So not when you start your career,
but rather during your career.
Y- Employees also receive seminars
or courses, to stay up-to-date with technology,
or with the newest US-GAP regulations, for example.
Andrea Können Sie das ähm erklären?
Ich glaube, dass wir verstehen das nicht so,
Could you um explain that?
I think we don't understand it
Erika [Ja.
[Yes.
Andrea: wie Sie wie Sie möchten.
how you how you would like.
Erika: Ähm, okay.
Um, okay.

In this case, the explanation follows the head act rather than preceding it, as was seen in R9. Whether for this reason, or due to inadequate explanation, the request is not fully understood by Andrea, and she asks for further explanation. In comparison to R9, R10 is executed less successfully and consequently received an Appropriateness rating of '4/good'.

To summarize, Erika uses a mix of direct requests for information and indirect requests for action. The indirectly formulated requests for action are additionally modified through the use of multiple internal (both lexical and syntactic) modifiers.

When engaging in requests for information, Erika often accompanies the request with a brief explanation in order to make the content of the request more salient.

5.4.1.3 Thomas

Thomas is the third invited expert to take part during the first instance of the study and he participates during both Discussions 3 (SW 13) and 4 (SW 15). Although he has familiarity with digital communication tools for personal use (e.g., Skype), Thomas does not utilize such programs in his professional capacity as a credit officer at the bank in which he works.

Thomas' requesting behavior stands in contrast to that of Roland and Erika. In comparison to the first two expert participants of experimental cohort 1, Thomas produces markedly fewer instances of requesting behavior. In total, seven requests are produced, three during Discussion 3 (SW 13) and four during Discussion 4 (SW 15).

Table 5-11: Overview of Thomas's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
Conference	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
Condition	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Directness	1(a)	1(i)	5	1(a)	5	5	6
Internal modifiers	0	0	2	2	2	2	3
syntactic:							
conditional clause	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
lexical:							
politeness marker	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
understaters	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
appealers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
External modifiers	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
alerter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
preparator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
grounder	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

Thomas' participation in the discussions tends to be heavily monologic and involves long turns in which he presents information in a lecture-style format. His requesting behavior centers predominantly around managing the technicalities of the discussion. Such behavior is illustrated in R1 (Excerpt 5-11).

Excerpt 5-11

R1	Thomas	Okay. Sonst versuch das nochmal mit Headset gleich. *Okay.* *Otherwise try it again with the headset in a moment.*
	John	Mach' ich. *I will.*

R1 occurs at the outset of Discussion 3 (SW 13) and is a request for assistance in testing out the sound of the headset prior to beginning the discussion formally. It is formulated using an imperative structure (*'versuch das nochmal'*) and does not feature any sort of internal or external modification.

R2 is produced approximately 30 minutes into Discussion 3 (SW 15) and is the first instance of Thomas making a request of the learner participants (Excerpt 5-12).

Excerpt 5-12

R2	Thomas	Haben Sie dazu Fragen? *Have you got questions about that?*
	Kate	Ich glaub', jetzt eben nicht. *I don't think so at the moment.*
	Thomas	Nicht? Gut, dann würde ich weiter machen? *No? Good, than I would go on?*
	Kate	Gut, bitte. *Good, please.*

R2 is an unmodified request for information (Directness=1) about whether student participants have any questions regarding the content Thomas has thus far presented. This interaction seems to indicate that Thomas perceives his role to be one in which he presents information as an authority on the content matter of the discussion topics. As such, his focus is on communicating information about these topics, not on establishing dialogue and interaction with the student participants. Further evidence for this claim is to be found in R3 (Excerpt 5-13).

Excerpt 5-13

	Kate	Ähm, haben Sie noch Fragen für uns, oder?
		Um, do you have any other questions for us, or?
		(2 second pause)
	Thomas	Für Sie habe i'...keine Fragen.
		Weiter...äh guck mal durch,
		ob sich noch was ergeben hat.
		Nee, bei mir jetzt nicht.
		Äh, ich weiß nicht,
R3		wenn Sie jetzt noch was wissen möchten
		zu Eutin, zur Volksbank...
		zum Praktikum auch,
		was wir anbieten...
		äh, was wir machen Eutin-Lawrence,
		können Sie gerne noch fragen.
		For you I have...no questions.
		Further...look through,
		if anything else has come up.
		Nope. Not from my side.
		Um, I don't know,
		if you want to know more
		about Eutin, about the People's Bank,
		about the internship as well,
		what we offer...
		what we do with Eutin-Lawrence,
		feel free to ask more.

In response to Kate's request (*'Haben Sie noch Fragen für uns, oder?'*), Thomas responds in the negative (*'Für Sie habe i'...keine Fragen.'*). He next indicates that he has covered all the content of his presentation (*'Weiter...äh guck mal durch, ob sich noch was* *ergeben hat. Nee, bei mir jetzt nicht.'*). This move is then followed by R3, in which he invites the student participants to engage in further requests for information (*'wenn Sie jetzt noch was wissen möchten...können Sie gerne noch fragen.'*). Based on this analysis, the conclusion can be drawn that Thomas expects to respond to requests for information, but not to produce any of his own.

The emerging trend in Thomas' production data seems to involve requests for assistance in managing discussion technicalities, a tendency also present in Erika's requesting behavior. Unlike Roland and Erika, however, Thomas engages in very little requesting for information, and does not seek to stimulate discussion with the student participants in the same way as the first two expert participants.

5.4.1.4 John

John is the author of the study and the instructor of the student participants of experimental cohort 1. Given his dual role as researcher and instructor, he was present during all online discussions. He has a high degree of familiarity with the communications medium and was responsible for organizing all aspects of the online discussions. He does not serve as a content expert and does not moderate any discussions, but he does have expert knowledge of the German language. In the capacity of discussion coordinator, he produces a total of 18 requests over four discussions (Table 5-12).

Table 5-12: Overview of John's requesting behavior

Request number	R1*	R2	R3	R4	R5*	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16*	R17	R18*
Conference	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4
Condition	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Directness	5	1(a)	5	1(a)	5	8	6	5	1(a)	2(a)	5	2(a)	1(a)	3	2(a)	3	5	3
Internal modifiers	2	1	0	1	2	0	2	2	2	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	2
syntactic:																		
conditional clause	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1

past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
lexical:																		
politeness marker	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
understaters	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appealers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
External modifiers	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
alerter	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
preparator	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
grounder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

John's requesting behavior is characterized chiefly by a need to ensure that the discussions proceed smoothly and by a desire to minimize potential technical and logistical difficulties. To that end, his requests often involve performing various actions that are necessary for the continuation of the interaction among participants. He produced ten requests related to managing the communications hardware/software, as exemplified by the interaction in Excerpt 5-14:

Excerpt 5-14

R3	John	Okay, können Sie auf dem Rechner Rechner äh äh da vor der Klasse gehen? Also auf einem anderen Rechner? *Okay, can you go to the computer computer uh uh* *there in front of the class?* *That is to a different computer?*
	Gregor	[Können Sie mir jetzt hören? *[Can you hear to me now?*
	Roland	Ja, jetzt höre ich wieder alles. *Yes, now I can hear everything again.*
	Gregor	Ja, okay, it's just stopped working.
R4	John	Dann gehen Sie wohl auf einem anderen Rechner. *Then perhaps go to a different computer.*
	Roland	(laughs) Okay.

In the given context, John is attempting to help student participant Gregor resolve a problem with a malfunctioning headset. His request to Gregor (R3) is formulated as a preparatory question (Directness=5) and does not contain internal or external modification. The lack of any modification coupled with the fact that Gregor does not respond in the desired manner (namely, switching computer terminals) resulted in the request sequence being assigned an appropriateness rating of ‘4/good’. Subsequently, John reformulates the request more directly (R4) so as to raise the imposition on Gregor and communicate the urgency of the request. Accordingly, R4 is formulated as an imperative (Directness=1), but is mitigated by the use of the downtoner ‘wohl’.

Request sequences related to managing the technology also occur between John and the expert participants, as shown in R11 (Excerpt 5-15).

Excerpt 5-15

R11	John	Okay, äh, kannst du äh dein’ Kamera jetzt anmachen? *Okay, uh, can you uh turn your camera on now?* (2 second pause)
	Thomas	Ich dachte die wär’ an, Moment. *I thought it was on, just a moment.* (2 second pause) So, ne? *Like this, right?*
	John	Ja. *Yes.*
	Thomas	Wunderbar. *Wonderful.*
	John	Okaaay! Super.

Similar to John’s interaction with Gregor in R3, this example shows John using a preparatory question (Directness level=5) in formulating his request. Unlike in the earlier interaction, though, there is no need for John to reformulate his request in more direct terms. It is likely the case that, as an expert speaker of German, indirect requests are more salient to Thomas than they are to the novice participant Gregor.

In order to ensure an efficient use of the allotted discussion time John produced four total requests for the student discussion moderators to begin their respective discussions. One such request (R15) is exemplified in Excerpt 5-16.

Excerpt 5-16

R15	John	Dann, äh ja, also ich würde bitten, unsere zwei Moderatoren ähm zu starten? *Then, uh yeah, so I would request,* *that our two moderators um begin?*

Although this request is formulated as a performative (Directness=2), it is mitigated through the use of the subjunctive form *'würde'*.

During Discussion 1 (SW 8), John produces R6 (Excerpt 5-17), which would prove to have an impact on his future requesting behavior.

Excerpt 5-17

R6	John	Also, Tim, Tim, wenn ich kurz ein- einbrechen darf, ähm hat er auch äh so ein Bisschen mehr vorbereitet. *So, Tim, Tim, if I may briefly bre- break in,* *um so he has also uh prepared a little bit more.*
	Gregor	Ja, ja, er ist nicht fertig, ich denke. *Yeah, yeah, he is not finished, I think.*
	Roland	Ist okay. *It's okay.*
	Tim	[Das habe ich nicht verstanden. *[I didn't understand that.*
	Roland	Ist egal. Wir können sofort auf das Thema Berufsoberschule gerne eingehen. Äh, wenn Sie möchten. *It doesn't matter.* *We can gladly go into the topic* *of upper-level vocational schools.* *Uh, if you'd like.*

In this request sequence (Directness=8), John is hinting that Tim should not interrupt the speaker by stating that there is more information to come. Tim's reaction indicates that he did not realize that Roland was planning on continuing with his presentation of information. Roland accommodates this topic shift, however, and the discussion continues. In retrospect, John felt that R6 was too intrusive and served to hinder Tim's freedom to moderate the discussion. Henceforth, he remained cognizant of the risk in producing requests that inhibit the moderator's ability to manage the discussion independently.

In the subsequent request sequence, R7 (Excerpt 5-18), we see evidence of John's attempt to maintain an unobtrusive presence in the online discussion.

Excerpt 5-18

R7	John	Wenn ich ganz kurz einbrechen darf, wir haben auch äh Studenten, die die jetzt im Raum sind, die in in Deutschland studiert haben. Also, wenn Sie ein paar Kommentare äh zu dieser Frage ähm haben, oder hätten, wäre das auch interessant zu hören. *If I could very briefly break in,* *we also uh have students,* *who who are now in the room,* *who have studied in in Germany.* *So if you um have, or had,* *a couple of comments uh on this question,* *that would also be interesting to hear.* (1.5 second pause)
	Roland	Allerdings, genau. Sie können es vielleicht genauer sagen als ich. *Absolutely, exactly.* *You can perhaps put it more precisely than I can.* (2 second pause)
	Tim	Beth, haben Sie etwas? *Beth, have you got something?* (laughter)
	Gregor	Nein. *No.*

Tim	Nein? Okay. *No? Okay.*

John seeks to mitigate his initial interruption through the use of the Preparator *'Wenn ich ganz kurz einbrechen darf'*. Following this, John offers a suggestion (Directness=6) that students who have studied in Germany respond to a prior request produced by the invited expert, Roland. R7 is further mitigated by the use of multiple internal syntactic modifiers: a *'wenn'* clause and two subjunctive forms (*'hätten'* and *'wäre'*).

In sum, John's requesting behavior is chiefly characterized by the use of requesting strategies that aim to keep the online discussions focused and free of technical and logistical problems. When engaging in potentially threatening requests (e.g., requests that interrupt or sideline the discussion moderator) he uses indirect requesting strategies combined with internal and external modifiers in order to execute the request sequence appropriately.

5.4.2 Experimental Cohort 1, Learner Case Histories

Having examined the production data of the expert participants from experimental cohort 1, it is now possible to analyze and comment on the data produced by the student participants of experimental cohort 1. To begin, a brief summary of each novice participant is presented, including prior exposure to German instruction, time spent traveling in a German-speaking country, and current level of proficiency in German. Although the students did not take an official test of proficiency, the author determined proficiency ratings using various measures of student performance, such as in-class work, take-home work and formal assessments (i.e., chapter tests), and based on descriptors set forth by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

Proficiency Guidelines (ACTFL, 2012)[8]. Similar to the expert case histories, summarized production data for novice participants will be presented in the form of a table, in order to allow an overview of each individual's requesting behavior. Unlike the expert participant data, when looking at learner data it is important to note clearly the change of experimental condition. To that end, each table includes a gray shaded column to visually represent this shift. Following the tabulated data, specific instances of requesting behavior are analyzed in context using the microgenetic approach described in Chapter 4.

For analytical purposes, the student participants have been placed into one of three groups corresponding to the pattern of their respective requesting behavior: *minimalists* (Andrea, Ben, Jackson, Jenny), *explorers* (Beth, Karl, Kate, Tim) and *risk-takers* (Gregor). Minimalists are characterized by a tendency to stick very closely to pre-scripted requests for information and do not produce requests outside of the discussion they moderate. Explorers are characterized by a tendency to produce requests mainly when moderating a discussion, but also produce a small number of requests when not tasked with discussion moderation. The requests are often pre-formulated, but there is also evidence of some spontaneous request production. Risk-takers are characterized by a general willingness to engage in requesting behavior both while moderating a discussion and while acting as a normal discussion participant. Due to the fact that explorers and risk-takers produce requests in both experimental conditions of the study, it is possible to offer some tentative comments regarding development in the requesting behavior of these subgroups. In contrast, the lack of production data among the minimalists does not permit their inclusion among the learner case histories.

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[8] Specific ACTFL proficiency designations(e.g., "Intermediate Mid") are distinct from the more general designation of 'novice' used throughout the study. Thus the group encompassing 'novice participants' comprises individuals of various ACTFL proficiency designations.

5.4.2.1 Beth

At the time of the study, Beth was an Advanced Low learner of German. She had received no high school German instruction, but had completed six semesters of university-level instruction prior to the focal semester. Beth spent the year prior to the study living in Bonn, Germany and attending classes at the University of Bonn.

During the study, Beth produced a total of 11 requests (see Table 5-13).

Table 5-13: Overview of Beth's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11
Conference	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Condition	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Directness	4	1(i)	5	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	5
Internal modifiers	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
syntactic:											
conditional clause	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
past tense	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
lexical:											
politeness marker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
understaters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appealers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
External modifiers	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
alerter	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
preparator	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
grounder	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

R1 and R2 take place during Discussion 2 (SW 10), as Beth interacts with the invited expert Erika. As will be seen, a close analysis of the two request sequences reveals that Beth's initial interaction with Erika (R1, Excerpt 5-19) seems to affect the manner in which they subsequently interact during R2 (Excerpt 5-20).

Excerpt 5-19

	Andrea	Ja, ich glaube, ähm, Moment, ich glaube eine Teilnehmer haben eine Frage. So, Beth, wenn Sie will. *Yes, I think, um,* *Just a moment, I think a participant have a question.* *So, Beth, when you wants.*
	Beth	Hallo. *Hello.*
	Erika	Hallo. *Hello.*
R1	Beth	Ähm, ich wollte einfach fragen, ähm was ist die erfolgreichste Abteilung für Siemens? *Um, I wanted simply to ask, um* *what is the most successful division for Siemens?*
	Erika	Oh! (laughs) Ok. Das ist eine schwierige Frage! *That's a difficult question!*
	Beth	[oder *[or*
		(2.5 second pause)
	Erika	ähmm *ummm* (1 second pause) Medizintech- äh.. Es ist gan- hm ...ich.. Wenn ich jetzt unterscheid- äh ganz grob unterscheiden würde, zwischen Industrie, Energy, und Health Care, ähm dürfte Industrie vorne anstehen, und dann Health Care, und dann Energy. Das weiß ich aber nicht ganz genau, weil ich den Geschäftsbericht..die Zahlen aktuell nicht parat habe. *Medical tech- uh..* *It's reall- hm* *...I..*

	If I were to differenti- uh *very roughly differentiate,* *among industry, energy and health care,* *um industry might be ahead,* *and then health care, and then energy.* *I don’t know with exact certainty though,* *because I don’t have the business report..the numbers* *currently at hand.*

Beth greets Erika with the alerter *‘Hallo’*, before producing R4. The head act, whose formulation is likely based on the calque from English ‘I just wanted to ask’, features two internal modifiers, a past tense form (*‘wollte’*) and the downtoner *‘einfach’*. In her response, Erika characterizes the request as difficult and Beth’s production of the hedging device *‘oder’* seems also to indicate that she senses the request sequence was not totally felicitous. It is further evident that Erika has much trouble responding to the request based on the numerous pauses and false starts that occur. The request is not reformulated, however, and the overall appropriateness rating of the request sequence stands at ‘3/fair’. There are two factors at work that result in this appropriateness rating. First, the content of the question seems outside the scope of the guest’s expertise. Secondly, the internal modifiers present in R1 seem not so much to mitigate the force of the request, but to trivialize it. Beth’s formulation thus puts Erika in the face-threatening position of not having information available that Beth has implied should be easily known.

Later in the same discussion, Beth produces R2 (Excerpt 5-20).

Excerpt 5-20

Erika	Ich überleg’ gerade, was für Sie für Siemens noch noch interessant wäre. Ähm. *I’m thinking about*

		what about Siemens
		would still still be of interest for you.
		Um.
		(3.5 second pause)
	Beth	Hallo, ähm, darf ich eine Frage stellen?
		Hello, um may I ask a question?
	Erika	Ja, natürlich, gerne!
		Yes, of course, gladly!
	Beth	Okay (smiley voice)
		Ähm, zum anderen Themen, aber
R2		als Managerin, wie motivieren Sie Ihre Mitarbeiter?
		Um, on a different topic, but
		as a Manager, how do you motivate your employees?
	Erika	Ähm...ist eine gute Frage...ähm
		Um...it's a good question...um

Like R1, R2 is preceded by the alerter *'Hallo'*. Following this, Beth produces two preparators: *'darf ich eine Frage stellen?'* and *'zum anderen Themen'*. The head act is formulated as a direct question and does not contain any internal modifiers. In terms of content, R2 is more directly related to Erika's professional purview than is the case in R1. In contrast to R1, Erika characterizes R2 as a 'good question', rather than a 'difficult question'. Based on these factors, R2 was rated at an Appropriateness level of '5/excellent'. The differences in requesting behavior witnessed in R2 thus seem to provide tentative evidence that Beth has modified her production based on her less successful interaction with Erika during R1.

R3-R11 occur during experimental condition two in the context of Beth acting as Discussion 3 moderator. A look back at Table 7 reveals that the first request (R3) and last request (R11) are indirectly formulated, whereas the intervening requests (R4-R10) have all been rated at directness level 1. A closer examination of R3 (Excerpt 5-21) shows Beth requesting the invited expert Thomas to introduce himself.

Excerpt 5-21

R3	Beth	Möchten Sie sich vorstellen? Dann können wir mit unsere Fragen anfangen. *Would you like to introduce yourself?* *Then we can begin with our questions.*
	Thomas	Das mach' ich gerne. *I'm happy to do so.*

R3 is formulated as a preparatory question (Directness=5) and is followed by the Grounder *'Dann können wir mit unsere Fragen anfangen'.* Despite the lack of a dative ending on the possessive pronoun *'unsere'*, the request is understood and elicits the desired response, thereby receiving an Appropriateness rating of '5/excellent'.

In R4, we see the first of several sequential direct requests for information (Excerpt 5-22).

Excerpt 5-22

R3	Beth	Ähm, wie lange arbeiten Sie schon bei einer Bank? *Um, how long have you worked at a bank?*
	Thomas	Bei, äh, ich arbeite bisher nur bei der Volksbank Eutin. *At, uh, I have only ever worked at the People's Bank of Eutin.*

Similar such requests occur during the following several interactions between Beth and Thomas, and generally serve to stimulate Thomas' continued participation in the discussion. This pattern is also evident, for example, in R5, in which Beth requests more information about the procedures required to obtain a loan following the financial collapse of 2008 (Excerpt 5-23).

Excerpt 5-23

R5	Beth	Ähm, war dieses Prozess ähm immer so streng, oder ist es..ähm..mehr, also strenger geworden nach nach die Krise? *Um, was this process always so strict,* *or did it..um..get more, that is*

	get stricter after after the crisis?
	(2 second pause)
Thomas	Bei uns im Haus war das schon vorher so. *In our institution it was already like that before.*

R5 has been coded as a direct request for information (Directness=1) and features Beth producing a multi-part request sequence. Although there is no use of internal or external modification, the request sequence was assigned an Appropriateness rating of '5/excellent' within the given context. The phase of direct questioning represented by R4-R10 seems similar to the pattern of direct questioning evident in Roland's production data (R5-R18). It may thus be the case that Roland has served as a model for Beth in this regard, lending support for the effect of interaction with expert speakers on novices' requesting behavior.

The phase of direct questioning comes to an end in R11, seen in Excerpt 5-24.

Excerpt 5-24

R11	Beth	Wenn Sie etwas vorbereitet haben, können Sie es gerne präsentieren, wenn Sie möchten? Wir ähm hab- haben noch nicht ähm irgend Frage. *If you have prepared something,* *feel free to present it,* *if you would like?* *We um don't hav- have um any question yet.*
	Thomas	[Ja. *[Yes.*
		(1 second pause)
	Beth	Keine Fragen mehr- (laughs) *Any more questions- (laughs)*
	Thomas	[Sie haben keine Fragen mehr, meinen Sie. *[You don't have any more questions, you mean.*
		(1 second pause)
	Thomas	Keine...keine Fragen mehr. *No...no more questions.*

R11 is formulated as a preparatory statement (Directness=5) and contains a number of internal modifiers, including *‘wenn’* clauses, the politeness marker *‘gerne’*, and the subjunctive form *‘möchten’*. It is followed by an external modifier, the grounder *‘Wir ähm hab- haben noch nicht ähm irgend Frage’*. Based on these features, the request sequence received an Appropriateness rating of ‘5/excellent’. It seems that R11, like R3, serves as a signal that the discussion is entering a different phase. Whereas R3 signals the beginning of active requesting from the learner participants, R11 signals the end of this phase and a request for Thomas to present any additional material he has prepared.

In sum, Beth produces a total of 11 requests as part of experimental cohort 1. R1 and R2 occur during experimental condition 1, as she interacts with invited expert Erika. These requests show an increase in Appropriateness that can be attributed to the effect of interaction with the expert participant. R3-R11 occur during experimental condition 2, as Beth interacts with invited expert Thomas. This series of requests is characterized mainly by the use of direct requests for information, which may be attributable to the effect of previous interaction with the expert speaker Roland. Lastly, production data show that R3 and R11, as indirectly formulated requests, serve the function of alerting the other participants that the discussion has entered a new phase.

5.4.2.2 Gregor

At the time of the study, Gregor was an Intermediate Mid learner of German. He had completed two years of high school German instruction and four semesters of university-level German instruction prior to the focal semester. These four semesters comprise the entirety of the German proficiency sequence at the University of Kansas, and included GERM 218: *Introduction to Business German*. The study author was

Gregor's instructor for three of the four semesters, and based on class performance and personal observation, it was clear that Gregor was making steady progress in his acquisition of German. Prior to the study, Gregor had spent two weeks of private travel in Germany.

During the study, Gregor produced a total of 8 requests (see Table 5-14).

Table 5-14: Overview of Gregor's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5		R6	R7	R8
Conference	1	1	1	1	1		3	3	3
Condition	1	1	1	1	1		2	2	2
Directness	1	8	1	1	1		1	1	1
Internal modifiers	1	0	2	0	1		0	1	0
syntactic:									
conditional clause	-	-	1	-	-		-	-	-
past tense	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	-	1	-	1		-	1	-
lexical:									
politeness marker	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
downtoners	1	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
understaters	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
appealers	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
External modifiers	1	-	1	-	-		1	-	-
alerter	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
preparator	1	-	1	-	-		1	-	-
grounder	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
small talk	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
Appropriateness	4	5	3	4	3		4	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

Gregor represents a unique case history among the novice participants of experimental cohort 1 in that he is the only one to display the requesting profile of a risk taker; namely, one who produces multiple requests in both experimental conditions. It is therefore possible to make some interesting observations regarding Gregor's requesting behavior. We begin with R1, as illustrated in Excerpt 5-25.

Excerpt 5-25

	Gregor	Äh, ich habe eine Frage. *Uh, I have a question.*
	Roland	Okay.
R1	Gregor	Ähm...wie..äh...wie differenziert..äh Deutschland diese Personen..äh vielleicht von Hauptschule, Realschule, Gymnasium äh..gibt es eine..Abschluss..äh..exam? *Um...how..uh...how does..uh* *Germany differentiate these people..uh* *maybe from general school, intermediate school, secondary school* *uh..is there a..final..uh..exam?*
	Roland	Ja, es gibt für jede dieser Schularten Hauptschule..äh Realschule und Gymnasium gibt es einen bestimmten Abschluss? *Yes, there is for each of these school types* *general school..intermediate school and secondary school* *there is a particular degree?*

R1 is preceded by the preparator *'Ich habe ein Frage'*. Following this, Gregor produces a multi-part head act containing the downtoner *'vielleicht'*. As the request is mostly grammatical, as it is mitigated, and as the interlocutor has no trouble responding, it was rated '4/good' for appropriateness. R1 also shows Gregor pausing repeatedly as he produces the request sequence. These pauses seem to indicate that Gregor is spontaneously formulating the request, and not simply reading a pre-scripted request for information.

The same tendency to pause during spontaneous request production is evident in R3, as illustrated in Excerpt 5-26.

Excerpt 5-26

	Roland	Hat jemand von Ihnen..Entschuldigung, ja? *Do any of you..excuse me, yes?*

	Gregor	[äh...ich..ich... ich habe eine Frage. *[uh...I..I...* *I have a question.*
	Roland	Ja? *Yes?*
	Gregor	Ähm, Universität sind nach...äh...Gymnasium. *Um, university are after...uh...secondary school.*
	Roland	Richtig. *Correct.*
R3	Gregor	[So, so wie alt würde man er- Wie alt wäre man äh..wenn...äh..als als man mit der Universität fertig...sind? *[So, how old were one er-* *How old would one be uh..once...uh..when* *when one...are...done with university?*
	Roland	Jaaa, also, wenn man jetzt zum Beispiel, ich bin jetzt noch mal zurückgegangen, wenn man jetzt fertig ist mit dem Gymnasium, das haben wir ja hier- *Yeaaah, so, now if one for example,* *I've gone back again now,* *once one is done with secondary school,* *we've got that right here-*
	Gregor	Wenn man vielleicht äh achtzehn oder neunzehn? *Once one maybe uh eighteen or nineteen?*
	Roland	Ja, genau. Wenn man fertig ist mit dem Gymnasium, ist man ungefähr achtzehn Jahre alt. Und dann kommt die Universität. *Yes, exactly.* *Once one is done with secondary school,* *one is about eighteen years old.* *And then comes university.*

Not only does Gregor pause a number of times in R3, his production also exhibits a number of grammatical infelicities, such as the lack of subject-verb agreement between *'Universität'* and *'sind'*. Gregor also displays uncertainty regarding whether to use the conjunction *'wenn'* or *'als'*, ultimately producing the incorrect choice *'als'*. Roland provides the correct form in his response '*wenn man jetzt fertig ist...*', which seems to trigger a move to more target-like speech in Gregor's subsequent production ('*Wenn man vielleicht äh achtzehn oder neunzehn?*'). Interestingly, we also see Gregor adjusting his infelicitous production of the subjunctive form *'würde'* to the correct form *'wäre'*, but this change does not occur as a result of input from an interlocutor. R3 thus shows that although there is some uncertainty in Gregor's production, he is able to recognize and correct certain instances of infelicitous language, both as a result of interlocutor feedback and self-monitoring.

The self-correction witnessed in R3 stands in contrast to the error present in R5 (Excerpt 5-27).

Excerpt 5-27

R5	Gregor	Äh, wie schwer würde es äh, ..ein Job in Deutschland zu bekommen? *Uh, how difficult were it uh,* *..to get a job in Germany?*
	Roland	Pooh!
	Gregor	Für für eine Ausländer? *For for a foreigner?*
	Roland	Ist auch eine schwierige Frage, weil im Prinzip ist es so, in Deutschland war ja, nicht nur in Deutschland, aber auch in Deutschland, vor kurzem diese Wirtschaftskrise. Und ähm in Deutschland ist es so gewesen, dass dass die gar nicht so äh so so schhh so schwierig war, zu überstehen. *That's also a difficult question,* *because in theory it's like this,* *in Germany there was,* *not only in Germany,* *but also in Germany,* *recently this economic crisis.* *And in Germany it was such,* *that that it was not all that uh* *that that d- that difficult to pull through it.*

In this request sequence, Gregor produces an infelicitous subjunctive form *'würde'*, when the form *'wäre'* is needed. Unlike R3, Gregor does not correct his production; instead, it seems that the subjunctive mood is an area in which Gregor's production exhibits variation. This fact, in combination with Roland's characterization of the question as difficult, resulted in R5 receiving an Appropriateness rating of '3/fair'.

As R3 and R5 take place in experimental condition 1, it is pertinent to examine relevant comments that Gregor made during the focused instructional module. When presented with item #5 of the judgment task (Appendix A), Gregor wrote the following comment: "Subjunctive would be more appropriate when asking a question." In response to item #6 (Appendix A), Gregor commented, "Again, 'könnten' would be better." Such remarks seem indicative of Gregor's developing awareness regarding the use of the subjunctive mood in oral production.

During experimental condition 2, Gregor produces one more instance of the subjunctive mood, as seen in R7 (Excerpt 5-28).

Excerpt 5-28

	Beth	Gut, Danke. Gregor, Sie- Gregor, willst du etwas sagen? *Good, thank you. Gregor, you-* *Gregor, do you want to say something?* (2 second pause)
R7	Gregor	Äh..könnte ich als Ausländer äh... deutsche Kredit bekommen? *Uh..could I as a foreigner uh...* *get German credit?*
	Thomas	Das können Sie bekommen. Vorausgesetzt ist allerdings, Sie wohnen im Kreis Ost-Holstein. *You can get it.* *Provided however,* *you live in the district of East Holstein.*

In this request sequence, Gregor produces the subjunctive form *'könnte'* as part of the head act. As R7 is grammatical, mitigated syntactically, and does not cause any difficulty for Thomas, it was given an Appropriateness rating of '5/excellent'. Notably, this request sequence features the same pauses in production as the request sequences from experimental condition 1. As before, these pauses seem to indicate that Gregor formulates the request spontaneously. Given the success with which R7 is produced, it may thus be the case that Gregor's online request production has improved as a result of taking part in the focused instructional module.

The remaining two request sequences produced by Gregor in experimental condition 2 (R6 and R8) are of interest for a different reason. We begin with R6, as seen in Excerpt 5-29.

Excerpt 5-29

	Kate	Gut, danke. *Good, thank you.*
	Gregor	Äh, ich ich habe auch *Uh, I I also have*
	Thomas	[Aber ich weiss nicht- *[But I don't know-*
	Gregor	ich habe auch eine Frage, ähm.. *I also have a question, um..*
	Kate	[Mm hmm.
	Thomas	Ja? *Yes?*
R6	Gregor	Wie lange dauert äh Ihre Ferien? *How long does uh your break last?*
	Thomas	Die Ferien? *The break?*
	Gregor	Ja. *Yes.*
	Thomas	Ja? Äh Ferien..haben wir ja so nicht. Wir müssen Urlaub nehmen. Und wir haben dreißig..Werktagen Urlaub. Das sind sechs Wochen. *Yes? Uh..we don't really have a break.* *We have to take vacation time.*

		And we have thirty..work days of vacation time. *That's six weeks.*

As is the case in previous request sequences, Gregor produces the preparator *'Ich habe eine Frage'*, before moving on to the head act. Like the preparators preceding R1 and R3, this formulation uses the indicative mood, not the subjunctive. The head act features no internal modification and contains a small grammatical error in subject-verb agreement. Thomas' response makes it clear that Gregor has used the wrong lexical item to refer to vacation time. R6 takes on renewed significance when seen in conjunction with R8, which occurs later during the same discussion (Excerpt 5-30).

Excerpt 5-30

R8	Gregor	Ähm, gehen Sie im Urlaub äh irgendwo? Oder bleiben Sie im Eutin? *Um, do you go on vacation anywhere?* *Or do you stay in Eutin?* (2 second pause)
	Thomas	Also... (laughs) gute Frage. Bisher habe ich mein' Urlaub eher dazu genutzt, äh zu lernen. *So... (laughs) good question.* *So far I've tended to use my vacation time uh to study.*

R8 shows Gregor requesting information about how Thomas uses his allotted vacation time (*'Urlaub'*). This request sequence features very minor grammatical errors (using *'im'* instead of *'in'*). Unlike in R6, Gregor no longer uses the term *'Ferien'*. It thus seems that the interaction with Thomas in R6 has helped Gregor to realize the semantic difference between the two lexical items, and he is able to produce the more appropriate word when it is called for. Taken together, R6 and R8 provide an instance in which interaction with an expert guest may have resulted in improved production among novice participants.

As the only novice participant who produces multiple request sequences in both experimental conditions, Gregor's requesting behavior shows two interesting developmental trends. First, prior to the focused instructional module, Gregor's production of the subjunctive mood shows variation. In contrast, R7 occurring in experimental condition 2, reveals more appropriate request production using the subjunctive mood. As this is the only instance of the subjunctive mood in experimental condition 2, though, this conclusion must remain tentative. The second noteworthy trend regards Gregor's lexical development. During production of R6, Thomas corrects Gregor's infelicitous usage of *'Ferien',* which subsequently enables Gregor to produce a more appropriate request in R8.

5.4.2.3 Karl

At the time of the study, Karl was an Intermediate Low learner of German. He had received no high school German instruction, but had completed four semesters of university-level instruction prior to the focal semester. These four semesters comprise the entirety of the German proficiency sequence at the University of Kansas. The study author was Karl's instructor for one of the four semesters. Prior to the study, Karl had spent two weeks of private travel in Germany.

During the study, Karl produced a total of five requests (see Table 5-15).

Table 5-15: Overview of Karl's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4		R5
Conference	1	1	1	1		3
Condition	1	1	1	1		2
Directness	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)		1(i)
Internal modifiers	0	0	0	0		0
syntactic:						
conditional clause	-	-	-	-		-
past tense	-	-	-	-		-

subjunctive mood	-	-	-	-		-
lexical:						
politeness marker	-	-	-	-		-
consultative devices	-	-	-	-		-
downtoners	-	-	-	-		-
understaters	-	-	-	-		-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-		-
appealers	-	-	-	-		-
External modifiers	1	0	0	0		1
alerter	-	-	-	-		-
preparator	1	-	-	-		1
grounder	-	-	-	-		-
disarmer	-	-	-	-		-
small talk	-	-	-	-		-
appreciator	-	-	-	-		-
Appropriateness	5	5	4	3		2

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

In all five of the request sequences, the head act is a direct request for information (Directness=1). There is no evidence of internal syntactic modification in Karl's production, but we do see some minor use of external modification in R1 and R5, with each of these sequences featuring the Preparator *'Ich habe eine Frage'*. Where we see a clear change in Karl's requesting behavior is in terms of the Appropriateness ratings. Whereas the first two requests were each rated as '5/excellent', we see in R3-R5 a steady decrease in the Appropriateness rating. In order to explain this, let us look at relevant excerpts from the data, beginning with request sequences R1 and R2 (Excerpt 5-31).

Excerpt 5-31

	Karl	Ja, ich habe auch eine Frage. *Yes, I also have a question.*
	Roland	Mm hmm.
R1	Karl	Wie lange dauert eine Klasse? Äh, nur ein Jahr oder sechs Monaten? *How long does a class last?* *Uh, just a year or six months?*
	Roland	Nein, eine Klasse dauert ein Schuljahr. Ein Schuljahr beginnt in Bayern in mitte September und endet Ende Juli.

		Also, das heisst immer ein Schuljahr. *No, a class lasts a school year.* *A school year begins in Bavaria in mid-September* *and ends at the end of July.* *So, that means always a school year.*
	Karl	[Danke. *[Thank you.*
		(1 second pause)
	Gregor	Okay.
	Roland	Okay?
R2	Karl	Und äh Sie haben Urlaub ähm vom ähm..Juli, äh bis September? *And uh you have vacation* *um from um July, uh till September?*
	Roland	Richtig, von Juli, bis also Ende Juli bis Mitte September sind die sogenannten Sommerferien. *Correct, from July, until that is the end of July* *until mid-September is the so-called summer break.*

R1 and R2 occur in the context of a longer exchange regarding the timing of the German school year and the associated summer vacation period. R1 is preceded by the alerter, *'Ich habe eine Frage'*, whereas R2 does not feature any sort of modification. Although there are some small infelicities in Karl's production (e.g., the use of *'Urlaub'* rather than *'Ferien'* in R2), Roland shows no difficulty understanding the illocutionary force of the requests and responding in the desired manner. As such, the Appropriateness of these request sequences has been rated as '5/excellent'.

R3 (Excerpt 5-32) occurs in the context of discussing the costs associated with higher education in Germany.

Excerpt 5-32

R3	Karl	Wie viel Geld kostet äh die Master's..abschluss? *How much money does uh the Master's...degree cost?*
	Roland	Oh..das ist jetzt so eine Frage. Kann ich Ihn' ehrlich gesagt nicht wirklich sagen, das kommt darauf an. *Oh.. now that is quite a question.* *To be honest can't really tell ya,*

		it depends.

R3 features a grammatical mistake in the accusative article preceding *‘Master’s...abschluss’* (‘Master’s degree’). In addition, Roland’s response indicates some difficulty in supplying the requested information. For these reasons, the Appropriateness of the request sequence has been rated as ‘4/good’.

As the study participants continue to discuss the details regarding graduate study in Germany and the USA, Karl produces R4 (Excerpt 5-33).

Excerpt 5-33

	Roland	Ich, ich glaub auch nochmal drei Jahre, aber da frage ich Sie. Wie lang dort ein Masterstudiengang? *I, I also think again three years,* *but here I ask you.* *How long a master’s program there?* (1 second pause)
R4	Karl	Was für Fachbereiche äh bereitet Ihre Berufsoberschule die Studenten vor? *What subjects uh does* *your upper-level vocational school prepare students for?*
	Roland	An meiner Berufsoberschule gibt’s zwei Fachbereiche *At my upper-level vocational school there are two subjects*
	Tim	(chuckles)
	Roland	Einmal *First*
	Tim	[Wirtschaft *[Economics*
	Roland	Genau..das war hier *Exactly..that was here*
	Tim	Technik (chuckles) *Technology*
	Roland	(chuckles)
	Tim	[XXX schon gesagt hat *[XXX already said*
	Roland	Einmal Technik und einmal Wirtschaft, ne? Das sind die zwei Bereiche. *So technology and economics, right?* *Those are the two areas.*

R4 follows a request for information provided by Roland, but is not related to the content of Roland's request. Additionally, as can be deduced from Tim's response, Karl is requesting information that has been shared with the participants previously. Due to lack of attention to the broader discourse, Karl's execution of this request is less appropriate and has been rated as '3/fair'.

Karl produces one request (R5) in experimental condition 2, as seen in Excerpt 5-34.

Excerpt 5-34

	Beth	Karl? Willst du etwas sagen? *Karl?* *Do you want to say something?* (3 second pause)
R5	Karl	Äh, ja, ähm, ich habe auch eine Frage. Ähm äh für die Kunden ähm gibt es äh Sicherheit in der Volksbank Eutin? *Uh, yes, um, I also have a question.* *Um uh for the customers um is there* *um security in the People's Bank of Eutin?* (1.5 second pause)
	Thomas	Sie meinen für die Einlagen? *Do you mean for the deposits?* (5 second pause) Also, für die Spareinlagen? *That is, for the savings deposits?*
	Karl	Ah, super, ja. *Ah, super, yes.*
	Thomas	Ja? Meinen Sie das? *Yes? Is that what you mean?* (3 second pause)
	Karl	Äh- *Uh-*
	Thomas	Oder wie meinen Sie Sicherheit? *Or what do you mean by security?*
	Karl	Äh, ja, Sicherheit in in in der Bank.. ähm für die Kunden like äh, wenn Dieben äh haben gekommt, *Uh, yeah, security in in in the bank..* *um for the customers like uh,*

	when thieves did came,
Thomas	[Ah, okay *[Ah, okay*
Karl	[äh warten Sie für die warten Sie für die Polizei, oder? *[uh do you wait for the* *do you wait for the police then?*
Thomas	[Ja. *[Yeah.*
Karl	[Haben Sie Sicherheit? *[Do you have security?*
Thomas	Ja, also Thema Sicherheit. Sicherheit, okay. *Yes, so the topic of security.* *Security, okay.*

In this interaction, Karl is asking Thomas about the security measures in place at the bank where he works. Due to the lack of specificity in Karl's request, Thomas engages in a number of moves to elicit clarification from Karl. It is not until Karl's spontaneous circumlocution of the lexical item '*Sicherheit'* that Thomas is able to grasp the intended meaning of Karl's request. Due to Thomas' difficulty in understanding and the grammatical errors present in Karl's production, the request was given an Appropriateness rating of '2/poor'.

R5 is of interest for an additional reason; namely, Karl's use of the preparator *'Ich habe eine Frage'.* This formulation is identical to that produced by Karl in R1. Given that R5 occurs in experimental condition 2, after focused instruction in the use of the subjunctive mood, it is apparent that no change has resulted in Karl's use of this particular external modifier.

In sum, Karl engages in uniformly direct requesting behavior that is on two occasions mitigated by the use of the preparator, *'Ich habe eine Frage'*. The requests produced by Karl show an overall decrease in appropriateness, and this effect is attributed to a shift from pre-scripted to more spontaneous request production. Lastly, the focused instructional module does not appear to have had any overall effect on Karl's request production.

5.4.2.4 Kate

At the time of the study, Kate was an Advanced Mid learner of German. As a non-degree seeking high school student, Kate had completed four years of high school German instruction, and the research setting was the first university-level course in which Kate had participated. Kate had spent six weeks as an exchange student in Germany prior to the study. Additionally, she had spent extensive time living with relatives in Holland, where she was able to use her knowledge of the Dutch language. Overall, it was clear that Kate was an accomplished and successful learner of German.

During the study, Kate produced a total of 16 request sequences (Table 5-16).

Table 5-16: Overview of Kate's requesting behavior

Request number	R1		R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11*	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16
Conference	2		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Condition	1		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Directness	4		1(i)	1(i)	1(a)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(a)	1(i)	2(i)	1(i)	1(i)	5
Internal modifiers	2		0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	2
syntactic:																	
conditional clause	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
past tense	1		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
subjunctive mood	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
lexical:																	
politeness marker	-		-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
consultative devices	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
downtoners	1		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
understaters	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
appealers	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
External modifiers	1		1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0
alerter	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
preparator	1		1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-

grounder	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
disarmer	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Appropriateness	5		5	5	3	4	5	5	3	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

Kate's request production is more prolific (N=16) than any other novice participant in the study, making it possible to offer a number of observations. To begin, Kate produces one request (R1), during experimental condition 1, as seen in Excerpt 5-35.

Excerpt 5-35

	Erika	Ähm..kennt jemand von Ihnen den Unterschied zwischen einem Projekt und einem Programm? *Um..do any of you know the difference* *between a project and a program?* (2 second pause)
	Andrea	Kate, glaube ich? *Kate, I think?* (5 second pause)
	Kate	Ähm, können Sie mich hören? *Um, can you hear me?*
	Erika	Ja, ich höre Sie sehr gut. *Yes, I hear you very well.* (1 second pause)
	Kate	Ich hatte eine andere F-Frage, Andrea, wenn das auch okay ist? *I had a different qu-question, Andrea,* *if that's also okay?*
	Andrea	Ja, sehr gut, wir können das..machen. *Yes, very good,* *we can..do that.*
	Erika	Mm hmm.
R1	Kate	Ich wollte wissen, ob Sie mal für Siemens im Ausland gearbeitet haben? Oder arbeiten Sie mit vielen Ausländer? *I wanted to know,* *whether you have ever worked for Siemens abroad?* *Or do you work with a lot of foreign nationals?*
	Erika	Danke für die Frage. Ähm also ich hatte zwar äh Kunden im Ausland in der Schweiz zum Beispiel

ähm durfte aber selber noch nicht äh im Ausland arbeiten bei Siemens ähm wobei ich momentan dran bin ähm da auch ‘nen Ohr offen zu halten um mal ins Ausland zu kommen. *Thank you for the question.* *Um, so I’ve indeed had uh customers abroad* *in Switzerland for example* *um but myself have not yet been permitted uh* *to work abroad for Siemens um* *although at the moment I am keeping* *‘n ear open* *in order to go abroad.*

R1 is formulated as a want statement (Directness=4) and is mitigated by the presence of external and internal modifiers. The request sequence begins with a preparator (*‘Ich hatte eine andere F-Frage, Andrea, wenn das auch okay ist’*) that shows Kate’s intention to produce a request of her own rather than respond to the request that Erika has produced prior to this. Both Andrea and Erika verbally acknowledge the topic shift and Kate then produces the head act. The head act features two internal modifiers: a past tense form (*‘wollte’*) and a lexical downgrader (*‘mal’*). Overall, the Appropriateness of the request sequence was rated as ‘5/excellent’. It is also important to note that since this request occurred in experimental condition 1, it is clear that Kate had already developed successful requesting strategies prior to the occurrence of the focused instructional module.

The remaining requests produced by Kate (R2-R16) take place during experimental condition 2, as Kate co-moderates Discussion 3 (SW 13). Of interest for the analysis are R4 and R5, which illustrate some of the difficulties encountered by Kate in her request production (Excerpt 5-36).

Excerpt 5-36

	Kate	Toll!
		Great!
	Thomas	War das so, was Sie sich...
		Was that what...
R4	Kate	Oh- gehen Sie bitte weiter?
		Oh- please move along?
	Thomas	Wo weiter?
		Where along?
		(2 second pause)
	Kate	Ähm, ich habe noch eine Frage für Sie.
R5		Wie viele Kunden hat die Volksbank Eutin?
		Um, I have another question for you.
		How many customers does the People's Bank of Eutin have?
	Thomas	[Ja?
		Wie viele Kunden weiß ich gar nicht!
		Ich kann Ihn' aber sagen,
		die Volksbank Eutin ist eine Genossenschaft.
		[Yes?
		I don't know at all how many customers!
		I can tell ya though,
		the People's Bank of Eutin is a cooperative.

R4 is formulated as a request for action (Directness=1) and is mitigated through the use of the internal modifier *'bitte'*. It seems that Kate is requesting that Thomas continue with his prior explanation. The resultant formulation (R4) appears to be a calque from the commonly-used English expression 'Go on please'. Phrased as such in German, the request becomes less clear due to the semantic restrictions of the verb *'weitergehen'*; namely, as a verb of motion, not of speech. Thomas' response shows that the request is not fully understood, resulting in an Appropriateness rating of '3/fair' for R4. To repair the communication impasse, Kate seeks to restart the request sequence by producing the preparator *'ich habe noch eine Frage für Sie'.* R5 is formulated as a direct question, and does not feature any sort of internal modification. In his response, Thomas indicates that he has understood the request, but is not able to answer it as phrased. As such R5 was rated at an Appropriateness level of ‘4/good’.

Following on these requests, Kate continues to engage in direct requesting behavior during the remainder of the discussion, with the intent of sustaining the discussion with the invited expert Thomas. She produces her final request (R16) as the discussion comes to a close (Excerpt 5-37).

Excerpt 5-37

R16	Kate	Ja, okay, ich glaube, wir können dann Schluss machen, wenn das okay ist? Ähm, wir danken Ihnen noch mal für Ihre Zeit. Es was sehr interessant mit Ihnen zu reden heute. Also, tschau und noch mal vielen Dank. *Yes, okay, I think* *we can finish up then* *if that’s okay?* *Um, we thank you again for your time.* *It was very interesting to speak with you today.* *So, see you and again many thanks.*
	Thomas	Gerne. *Gladly*.

R16 is qualitatively different from the requests preceding it, based on a number of factors. First, it is indirectly formulated as a preparatory statement (Directness=5). R16 also contains one of the few instances of a subjectivizer (*‘ich glaube’*) in the oral production data. Additionally, the request sequence features a number of utterances following the head act (*‘Wir danken Ihnen...noch mal vielen Dank’*) that collectively act as an appreciator. The cumulative effect of these production features is an Appropriateness rating of ‘5/excellent’ for R16. At this point, it is pertinent to recall the trend established in the production data of Beth, Kate’s co-moderator: that when the discussion entered a new phase, the request signaling this shift was formulated in indirect terms. This phenomenon also appears to be at work in Kate’s production of R16 as she signals a formal end to the discussion.

In sum, Kate engages in very active requesting behavior as a novice participant in experimental cohort 1. Most of these requests occur as directly formulated requests while co-moderating Discussion 3 (SW 15). Following a period of direct requesting, Kate produces an indirect request in order to conclude the discussion. This pattern is similar to that displayed by Kate’s partner, Beth, which may, in turn, be traceable to the active pattern of direct requesting behavior displayed by the first invited guest, Roland.

5.4.2.5. Tim

At the time of the study, Tim was an Intermediate High learner of German. He had received no high school German instruction, but had completed four semesters of university-level German instruction prior to the focal semester. These four semesters comprise the entirety of the German proficiency sequence at the University of Kansas, and included *Introduction to Business German*. The study author was Tim’s instructor for three of the four semesters, and based on class performance and personal observation, it was clear that Tim was a highly motivated and successful learner of German. Prior to the study, Tim had spent one week of private travel in Germany.

During the study, Tim produced a total of 11 request sequences (Table 5-17).

Table 5-17: Overview of Tim’s requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5*	R6*	R7	R8*	R9	R10		R11
Conference	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		3
Condition	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		2
Directness	1(i)	1(i)	7	5	1(a)	8	1(i)	8	1(i)	1(i)		4
Internal modifiers	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0		0
syntactic:												
conditional clause	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-

subjunctive mood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
lexical:												
politeness marker	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-		-
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
downtoners	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
understaters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
appealers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-		-
External modifiers	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0		2
alerter	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
preparator	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-		2
grounder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
small talk	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
appreciator	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
Appropriateness	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	3	4		5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

R1 and R2 represent direct requests for information, and occur during the opening minutes of Discussion 1 (SW 8). In these interactions (Excerpt 5-38), Tim is seeking direction from John regarding how to proceed in the face of his co-moderator's technical problems.

Excerpt 5-38

R1	Tim	Sollen wir auf Gregor..warten? *Shall we..wait for Gregor?*
	John	Ähm...also vielleicht einfach diese diese Einführung noch mal lesen und dann...bis dann ist ist er da und können wir können weiter machen. *Um...so maybe just* *read this this introduction again* *and then...by then he will be will be there* *and can we can continue on.*
R2	Tim	Soll ich lesen? *Shall I read?*
	John	Ja. Klar.

These requests are direct and neither marked with internal nor external modifiers. Given the context, and the requested information (i.e., direction how to proceed), such formulations are appropriate for the situation and have been rated as ‘5/excellent’. Following on this exchange, Tim reads a prepared introduction for Roland, which sets the stage for R3 (Excerpt 5-39).

Excerpt 5-39

	Tim	Guten Tag. Wir freuen uns darauf,
		Hello. We are pleased
	Roland	[Hallo.
		[Hello.
	Tim	Sie durch diese Sitzung zu führen.
		Äh, ich Karl und Gregor sind zuständig für das Gespräch,
		aber alle in dieser Klasse
		werden mit Diskussionen teilnehmen.
		Äh, wir alle hoffen,
		dass wir eine bessere Vorstellung
		von Ausbildung in Deutschland bekommen können.
		Wir haben einige Fragen vorbereitet
		und laut unserem Lehrer,
		haben Sie ebenfalls etwas vorbereitet.
		Wir möchten damit anfangen,
		und vielleicht werden Sie einige unsere Fragen beantworten
		und neue Fragen geweckt könnten.
		Nach Ihrer Vorstellung,
		haben wir uns vorgestelltet,
		erneut über das Thema zu diskutieren.
		Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit.
R3		Ich darf Sie nun bitten, sich vorzustellen.
		to lead you through this meeting.
		Uh, I Karl and Gregor are responsible for this conversation,
		but everyone in this class will participate with discussions.
		Uh, we all hope
		that we can get a better idea
		of education in Germany.
		We have prepared some questions
		and according to our teacher,
		you have also prepared something.
		We would like to begin with that,
		and perhaps you will answer some of our questions
		and could inspired new questions.
		After your introduction,
		we imagined
		discussing the topic anew.
		I now kindly ask you to introduce yourself.
	Roland	Ja, vielen Dank für die Einführung.

		Yes, thank you very much for the introduction.

R3 is preceded by an alerter (“*Guten Tag”*) and several utterances intended to establish a positive atmosphere among the discussion participants. These utterances represent an occurrence of an external modifier (‘small talk’) preceding the request proper. Just prior to the head act, Tim produces the ‘appreciator’ “*Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit”*. The head act itself has been rated at Directness level 7, and features one internal modifier, the ‘downtoner’ *“nun”*. Based on these features, the appropriateness of the request was rated as ‘5/excellent’.

R4 occurs after introductions have been completed and the participants move into the main phase of the discussion (Excerpt 5-40).

Excerpt 5-40

R4	Tim	Ähm..äh..als ich gesagt..gesagt habe äh wir haben ein paar Fragen vorbereitet und..äh..ich musste Sie zuerst sagen, ähm..können Sie bitte uns erklären, was eine Berufsoberschule ist und wie sie sich von einer Universität in Deutschland unterscheidet? *Um..uh..as I said..said* *uh we have prepared a couple of questions* *and..uh..I had to say first,* *um..can you please explain to us* *what an upper-level vocational school is* *and how it is different* *from a university in Germany?*
	Roland	Eine Berufsoberschule. *An upper-level vocational school.*

R4 is preceded by two ‘preparators’; the first of these (*‘wir haben ein paar Fragen vorbereitet’*) is clearly formulated, but in producing the second ‘preparator’, Tim misuses the modal verb *“musste”*. In the given context, Tim has no past obligation to ask his question, so the more likely goal is that he is attempting to use a subjunctive form of a modal verb (*“möchte”*), but inaccurately uses *‘musste’* instead. The head act (preparatory question, Directness=5) occurs in the next line and features the modal verb *“können”* combined with the ‘politeness marker’ *“bitte”*. Although the head act is grammatical and indirect, the overall appropriateness of the request sequence has been rated as ‘4/good’ due to the influence of the awkwardly formulated ‘preparator’ *“ich musste Sie zuerst sagen”*.

The remaining request sequences in Discussion 1 (R5-R10) are a mixture of direct requests for information (Directness=1) and hints (Directness=8). Let us more closely examine the hints that occur in R6 and R8 (Excerpt 5-41).

Excerpt 5-41

	Roland	Dann dürfen Sie zum Beispiel als Zimmermann arbeiten, mmm? Ich sag’ deswegen Zimmermann- *Then you may for example* *work as a carpenter, mmm?* *The reason I say carpenter-*
R6	Tim	[Zi? *[Ca?*
	Roland	Sagt Ihnen der Begriff Zimmermann was? *Does the term carpenter mean anything to you?*
	Tim	[Zimmermann? *[Carpenter?*
	Roland	Ähm, äh carpenter glaube ich *Um, uh carpenter I think*
	Tim	Aha, okay.

	Roland	Sagt Ihnen der Begriff was sozialselektiv? *Does the term socially selective mean anything to you?*
	Tim	Äh? *Uh?*
	Roland	Oder haben Sie vielleicht schon mal was drüber gehört? *Or perhaps you’ve heard something about it before?*

R8	Tim	Sozialselektiv? *Socially selective?*
	Gregor	Sozial..Äh, ich denke nicht. *Socially..Uh, I don't think so.*

Due to the fact that R6 and R8 are formulated as partial or single-word utterances, the requestive force of each utterance is heavily context-dependent. In order to seek clarification on the meaning of the lexical items *'Zimmerman'* and *'sozialselektiv'*, Tim repeats the words with a rising intonation. His hints are successfully executed and Roland provides the information sought. Thus, despite the abbreviated formulations and lack of internal or external modification, R6 and R8 occur without problem and were given an Appropriateness rating of '5/excellent'.

During experimental condition 2 (Discussion 3, SW 13), Tim produces one more request sequence (R11). For a number of reasons this request sequence bears close examination (Excerpt 5-42).

Excerpt 5-42

	Tim	Äh, ich hätte äh eine kurze Frage. *Uh, I had a quick question.*
	Thomas	Ja? *Yes?*
R11	Tim	Ähm es ist äh mit diesem Thema ein Bisschen unverbind-verbunden vielleicht aber ich möchte wissen, ähm wie viel Deutsch möch- muss man sprechen können, um als Praktikant bei der Volksbank zu arbeiten? *Um it is uh a little unconnect-connected* *with this topic perhaps* *but I would like to know, um* *how much German woul-* *does one have to speak,* *in order to work as an intern at the People's Bank?*
	Thomas	Wie viel Deutsch ist schwer zu sagen, da ich die Levels nicht kenne. Also, sollte gut sein.

How much German is hard to say,
since I don't know the levels.
Well, should be good.

To recall, in Excerpt 5-40 Tim experiences difficulty producing the form *"möchte"* when it is needed. In contrast, as seen in Excerpt 5-42, he uses *"möchte"* appropriately and accurately and begins to produce an infelicitous structure (*"möch"*), but self corrects to the more appropriate *"muss"*. This example shows Tim carefully attending to correct and appropriate usage of modal verbs and reflects progress vis-à-vis his performance in experimental condition 1.

Of further interest is the commentary that Tim provided when asked to evaluate R4 (Excerpt 5-40) during the focused instructional module. He not only wrote a more appropriate reformulation (*'Ich möchte Sie zuerst fragen, wenn Sie uns erklären könnte, was eine Berufsoberschule ist'*), but also remarks on his own performance in Discussion 1 with the parenthetical comment "I didn't say that first part, did I?" Tim not only recognizes the utterance as his own, but he also seems able to note and correct the infelicities present in his previous production. When faced with a similar situation in Condition 2 (R11), Tim is able to produce a fully appropriate request sequence. The progression between R4 and R11 thus provides tentative evidence for the effect of focused instruction on Tim's ability to produce more appropriate requests.

Also striking in Excerpt 5-42 is Tim's use of the subjunctive form *"hätte"* in the 'preparator' preceding R11 (*"ich hätte äh eine kurze Frage"*). This is the first example of any student participant using a subjunctive form of the verb *"haben"*, and it is noteworthy in that it occurs in experimental condition 2 of the study, following the focused instructional module.

In sum, the oral production data for novice participant Tim indicate some interesting developments in his requesting behavior. These developments may, in turn, be attributable to the effect of focused instruction in the use of modal verbs and the subjunctive mood for polite requesting behavior. Less apparent from the data, however, are any developments that can be linked to interaction with the expert participants.

5.4.3 Experimental Cohort 2, Expert Case Histories

The expert participants of experimental cohort 2 presented here (Thomas, Roland and John) were all participants during the second instance of the study (Fall 2011). The remaining expert participants of experimental cohort 2 (Gisela and Manfred) did not engage in any requesting behavior during their respective discussions, and are not included in the following analysis. As was the case for experimental cohort 1, excepting John, the expert participants of experimental cohort 2 are native speakers of German living in Germany. As such, they serve as a model of appropriate requesting behavior for the learners of German. For the purposes of this analysis, expert oral production data serve as a baseline for comparison with learner oral production data. Each expert case history is presented according to chronological order of participation.

5.4.3.1 Thomas

Thomas is the first invited expert to take part in the second instance of the study and he participated during Discussion 1 (SW 6). Although he has familiarity with digital communication tools for personal use (e.g., Skype), Thomas does not utilize such programs in his professional capacity as a credit officer at the bank in which he works.

During the discussion, Thomas produced a total of four requests (Table 5-18).

Table 5-18: Overview of Thomas's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4
Conference	1	1	1	1
Condition	1	1	1	1
Directness	5	1(a)	1(a)	1(a)
Internal modifiers	1	2	1	0
syntactic:				
conditional clause	-	1	1	-
past tense	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	-	-	-
lexical:				
politeness marker	-	1	-	-
consultative devices	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	-	-	-
understaters	1	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-
appealers	-	-	-	-
External modifiers	1	1	1	0
alerter	-	-	-	-
preparator	-	-	-	-
grounder	1	1	1	-
disarmer	-	-	-	-
small talk	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	5	5	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

The frequency of Thomas' request production is very similar to his participation in experimental cohort 1, in which he produced a total of seven requests over two discussions (average = 3.5 requests per discussion). Also similar to his participation in experimental cohort 1 is the nature of Thomas' requests. Once again, his requests are not intended to elicit information from the student participants; instead, the requests he produces are related to managing the discussion. This tendency is evident in R1, as seen in Excerpt 5-43.

Excerpt 5-43

	Henry	Äh, wo wohnt man,
		wenn äh wenn..du
		ein äh ein Praktik..um äh machen?
		In ein Dormitorium?
		Ode..auf ein Haus?
		Uh, where does one live,
		when uh when..you
		a uh does an internship?
		In a dormitorium
		or..on a house?
	Thomas	Ja, es gibt verschiedene Möglichkeiten.
R1		Kann ich die Frage kurz zurückstellen?
		Ich hab' das gleich auf den Folien.
		Yes, there are different options.
		Can I briefly postpone the question?
		I've got that coming up on the slides.

R1 is formulated as a preparatory question (Directness=5) and is mitigated by the use of an internal syntactic modifier ('understater' *"kurz"*) and a grounder following the head act. The purpose of R1 is to manage the discussion by delaying briefly a response to Henry's request for information until a more appropriate time in the near future.

R2 provides further corroboration for the similarity of Thomas' requesting behavior to his participation in experimental cohort 1 (Excerpt 5-44).

Excerpt 5-44

	Thomas	Ich hab' weiter nichts mehr an Folien.
R2		Wenn Sie weitere Fragen haben,
		fragen Sie gerne.
		I don't have any further slides.
		If you have additional questions,
		feel free to ask.

R2 features syntactic modification through a conditional clause, and lexical modification through the use of the politeness marker *'gerne'*. It is formulated as a request for action (Directness=1) and contains an imperative structure (*'fragen Sie'*). The illocutionary force of the request is intended to encourage the students to ask any remaining questions they have so as to continue the discussion. As such, the similarity to Thomas' production of R3 during the first instance of the study (section 5.4.1.3.) is striking. In both request sequences, Thomas makes it explicit that he expects the students to engage in requests for information, and that he is happy to respond to such requests.

In sum, Thomas shows a requesting profile very similar to that displayed as an expert participant in experimental cohort 1. He produces relatively few requests, the focus of which are on discussion management. Also similar to his performance in experimental cohort 1 is the fact that Thomas indicates his general willingness to respond to requests for information, but he does not engage in such requesting behavior himself.

5.4.3.2 Roland

Roland is the third invited guest to participate in an online discussion during study instance 2. Similar to his production in study instance 1, Roland engages in very active requesting behavior. During the discussion, he produces a total of 17 requests (Table 5-19).

Table 5-19: Overview of Roland's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16	R17
Conference	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Condition	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Directness	1(a)	1(a)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	2(i)	1(i)	1(i)	2(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)
Internal modifiers	4	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	1	1
syntactic:																	
conditional clause	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
lexical:																	
politeness marker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
understaters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

subjectivizers	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appealers	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
External modifiers	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
alerter	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
preparator	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
grounder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

Roland's requesting behavior is markedly different from that of Thomas, both in terms of frequency and illocutionary intent. Whereas Thomas' requests focus on discussion management, Roland displays a strong tendency to engage the students in direct requests for information in order to initiate or sustain interaction. Such behavior is reflected in R5, as illustrated in Excerpt 5-45. The request takes place as the participants are discussing the age at which German elementary school pupils enter one of three different secondary schools.

Excerpt 5-45

R5	Roland	Aber da wäre es auch mal meine Frage an alle Teilnehmer. Was denken Sie? Ist es gut, wenn man sich so früh entscheidet? Oder finden Sie es eher besser, wenn man diese Entscheidung nach hinten schiebt? *So that would be my question to all the participants.* *What do you think?* *Is it good,* *when one decides so early?* *Or rather do you find it better,* *when one pushes this decision back?*
	Lisa	Ja, liebe Mitschüler, was denken wir? *Yes, dear fellow pupils,* *what do we think?*

The sequence begins with a preparator that makes clear the request is directed to any and all participants. The request features a multi-part head act, formulated as a direct request for information (Directness=1), followed by two more interrogative structures. Following R5, Roland produces R6 and R7 in quick succession (Excerpt 5-46).

Excerpt 5-46

R6	Roland	Wie sieht’s zum Beispiel mit Emily aus? Was würden Sie sagen? *What about Emily for example?* *What would you say?* (8 second pause)
	Lisa	Ist zehn Jahre alt ziemlich früh? *Is ten years old quite early?*
R7	Roland	Ja, was denken Sie? Ich meine, zehn Jahre alt. *Yes, what do you think?* *I mean, ten years old.* (1 second pause)
	Chuck	Ich glaube, ja. *I believe it is.*
	Roland	Sie denken schon? *You think so?*
	Emily	Es ist ziemlich früh, aber...das ist auch..das Ende der Grundschule, also. *It is quite early,* *but...that is also..the end of primary school, so.*
	Roland	Das ist richtig. *That’s correct.*

In contrast to R5, R6 is directed at a specific participant chosen by Roland from the list of student participants shown on screen. The request is met with eight seconds of silence, at which point the discussion co-moderator Lisa prompts Emily with another question. Roland’s response (R7) makes it clear that he does not understand that Lisa is speaking to Emily; he believes the question is directed at him and he deflects it back to the student participants.

As the sequence R5-R7 demonstrates, Roland is intent on getting students to participate actively by engaging in direct requesting behavior. This pattern is very similar to the requesting behavior Roland demonstrated as an expert participant in experimental cohort 1.

5.4.3.3 John

Unlike in study instance 1, John was not the primary instructor of the student participants in experimental cohort 2. His interaction with the students was limited to implementation of the Web conferencing course component, including learner training, focused instruction, and online discussions. He has a high degree of familiarity with the communications medium, and was responsible for organizing all aspects of the online discussions. He does not serve as a content expert and does not moderate any discussions, but he does have expert knowledge of the German language. In his capacity as discussion coordinator, he produced a total of 10 requests (Table 5-20).

Table 5-20: Overview of John's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10
Conference	1	1	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4
Condition	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
Directness	3	5	6	1(a)	5	5	6	5	1(i)	1(i)
Internal modifiers	4	1	1	1	1	3	3	1	0	0
syntactic:										
conditional clause	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	2	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
lexical:										
politeness marker	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
consultative devices	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-
understaters	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appealers	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-

External modifiers	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	2
alerter	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
preparator	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2
grounder	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
disarmer	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

As was the case in study instance 1, John's overriding concern is to ensure a smooth and productive online discussion for all participants. To that end, his requesting behavior centers mainly on managing various aspects of the discussion. To illustrate, R1 (Excerpt 5-47) shows John attempting to start Discussion 1 (SW 6).

Excerpt 5-47

R1	John	Äh, meine Herren? Entschuldigung, ich äh möchte nicht unterbrechen, aber ich glaube, wir sollten unsere Diskussion beginnen, wenn das in Ordnung wäre. *Uh, gentlemen? Excuse me,* *I uh don't want to interrupt,* *but I think,* *we should start our discussion,* *if that were okay.*
	Thomas	Ja, können wir machen. *Yes, we can do that.*

R1 takes place as Thomas is conversing with the primary instructor of the course prior to the start of the discussion. In order to avoid causing offense at the interruption, John's request is heavily mitigated through both internal and external modification. Internal modifiers include use of the subjunctive mood *('sollten', 'wäre'*) and occurrence of the subjectivizer *'ich glaube'*. Regarding external modifiers, the excerpt shows one of the rare instances of a disarmer occurring in the data set (*'Entschuldigung, ich äh möchte nicht unterbrechen'*). Thomas' response indicates successful execution of the request.

In subsequent request sequences, John’s production continues to be characterized by moves to manage the discussion, but when Discussion 4 (SW 14) occurs, a new trend emerges (Excerpt 5-48).

Excerpt 5-48

R10	John	Also, ich hab’ eine Frage. Zum ganz anderen Thema jetzt und zwar ähm...gibt es bei der Maus beziehungsweise beim WDR, äh die Gelegenheit als Praktikant zu arbeiten? *So, I’ve got a question.* *On a totally different topic now and that is* *um...is there any opportunity to work as an intern* *at the Mouse or at WGB, as the case may be?*
	Manfred	Ja, auf jeden Fall, ja. Da kann ich auch noch mal empfehlen, ähm die, wenn man noch mehr über den WDR oder über den westdeutschen Rundfunk wissen möchte, also auch wenn es darum geht, welche Möglichkeiten es da gibt von Praktikum und solchen Dingen, das ist auf der Seite w-d-r punkt d-e und da gibt es ein Unternehmensbereich. *Yes, absolutely, yes.* *In this case I can once again recommend,* *um the, if you would like to know more about WGB* *or about the West German Broadcasting,* *also when it concerns* *what opportunities there are* *for internships and such things,* *that’s on the page w-d-r dot d-e* *and there is a corporate division there.*

R10 is a direct request for information (Directness=1) that is not connected with discussion management. In total, John produces three such requests (R6, R9, R10) during Discussion 4 (SW 15). The explanation for this change in requesting behavior is twofold. First, as Manfred did not engage in any requesting behavior himself, and the discussion moderators had exhausted their prewritten questions before the end of the discussion, John was attempting to sustain discussion in a manner relevant to the students. Second, John had a genuine desire to interact with the invited guest due to the previous effort involved in recruiting him and securing his participation.

In sum, John shows both similarities and differences to his requesting behavior during study instance 1. While his requests serve to manage the discussions in both experimental conditions of study instance 2, only in experimental condition 2 do the data show John engaging the invited expert directly in requests for information.

5.4.4 Experimental Cohort 2, Learner Case Histories

The presentation of learner case histories for experimental cohort 2 follows the same procedure as used for experimental cohort 1. First, the learners were classified according to their level of participation as *minimalists* (Chuck, Emily, Henry), *explorers* (Grant, Joshua, Max) or *risk-takers* (Carson, Lisa). Once again, minimalists were excluded from the analysis due to lack of production data in both experimental conditions. For those classified as *explorers* or *risk-takers*, we note each participant's prior exposure to German instruction, travel in German-speaking countries, and overall German language proficiency. Participants' requesting behavior is then presented in a table with a shaded gray column representing the change in experimental condition. Following the table, selected request sequences are presented and discussed in detail using a microgenetic approach. In so doing, the aim is to determine whether or not interaction with expert participants and/or participation in focused instruction has effected a change in student participants' requesting behavior.

5.4.4.1 Carson

At the time of the study, Carson was an Intermediate Mid learner of German. He had completed two years of high school German instruction, three years of private instruction, and two semesters of university-level instruction prior to the focal semester. The author was Carson's instructor for one semester. Carson had spent six weeks of private travel in Germany. Carson's father was born in Germany and speaks German as a first language; however, it is not clear the extent to which Carson actually used German at home.

During the study, Carson produced a total of 17 requests (see Table 5-21).

Table 5-21: Overview of Carson's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16	R17
Conference	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	4
Condition	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Directness	1(a)	1(a)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	5	1(i)
Internal modifiers	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
syntactic:																	
conditional clause	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
lexical:																	
politeness marker	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
understaters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appealers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
External modifiers	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	2	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1
alerter	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
preparator	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	-	1	1	1	-	-	1
grounder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
small talk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	2	3	3	4	5	4	5	4	3	2	3	4	3	2	5	5	3

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

As is evident from Table 5-15, Carson's requesting behavior is consistently direct, with 14 direct requests for information, two direct requests for action, and only one instance of an indirect request. It is also clear that Carson uses external modification to a higher degree than internal modification. Lastly, there is a wide range of appropriateness in his requesting behavior. Examination of specific request sequences will help to elucidate what is occurring in Carson’s request production.

R1 (Excerpt 5-49) takes place at the beginning of Discussion 2 (SW 8) as Carson requests that the invited expert introduce herself.

Excerpt 5-49

R1	Carson	Ja, äh...bitte...äh vorstellen Sie...unsere, ähm, ja. *Yes, uh...please...uh introduce...our, um, yeah.*
	Gisela	Ja...vorstellen. Mein Name ist Gisela Ziegler. *Yes...introduce. My name is Gisela Ziegler.*

R1 is formulated as a direct request for action (Directness=1) and features the internal modifier *‘bitte’*. The request sequence is not grammatical due to the missing reflexive pronoun *‘sich’* needed with the verb *‘vorstellen’*. Further missing is any sort of noun modified by the possessive pronoun *‘unsere’*. In response, Gisela repeats part of Carson’s request before introducing herself. Although the request is somewhat mitigated, the other infelicities result in an overall appropriateness rating of ‘2/poor’.

In contrast to R1, R7 represents an instance of a more successful request, as seen in Excerpt 5-50.

Excerpt 5-50

R7	Carson	Ja. Ähm..soo..auch an allen, ähm...wir haben viel über die deutsche politische System ähm angehört. So welche Vorteile hat das deutsche politische System ähm über das amerikanische System? *Yeah. Um..soo..also for everyone,* *um...we have um listened to much* *about the German political system.*

		So what advantages does *the German political system um* *have over the American system?* (9 second pause)
	Joshua	Also, ich würde sagen- könnt Ihr mich hören? Also, ich würde sagen, äh in Deutschland gibt es mehrere Möglichkeiten für kleinere Parteien. *So, I would say- can you all hear me?* *So, I would say, uh* *in Germany there are several prospects* *for smaller parties.*

R7 is preceded by the alerter *'an allen'* as well as a preparator (*'wir haben...angehört'*). The head act is formulated as a direct request for information (Directness=1) that, after a short interlude, elicits a response from student participant Joshua. The pause does not seem based on infelicities within the request, but rather represents the time needed for another participant to process and formulate a sensible response to the request, before taking the floor and delivering this response. Based on these features, the request sequence was rated at an Appropriateness level of '5/excellent'.

R10 represents an instance of a less successful request (Excerpt 5-51).

Excerpt 5-51

R10	Carson	Ähm, ein andere Frage. Wie politische sind äh den Deutschen? Ähm, in Amerika wir haben äh nur... ich weiß nicht, füngzig Prozent oder ähm...in den Wahlkampfs, und sind nicht viel. Sind das auch in Deutschland? Oder ist das anders? *Um, a different question.* *How political are uh the Germans?* *Um, in America we have uh only...I don't know,* *fifty percent or um...in the election campaigns,* *and are not a lot.* *Are that also in Germany?* *Or is that different?* (2 second pause)

Gisela	Ich hab' die Frage jetzt nicht verstanden. *I didn't understand the question now.* (1 second pause) Fünfzig Prozent was gibt es? *There is fifty percent of what?* (3 second pause)
George	Wahlbeteiligung. *Voter participation.*
Gisela	Ah, Wahlbeteiligung! *Ah, voter participation!*

R10 is formulated as a multi-part head act. It begins with a direct request for information (Directness=1) and is followed by a declarative statement and two more interrogatives intended to clarify the illocutionary force of the request. Gisela's response indicates that the request sequence was not sufficiently clear and she seeks to clarify the content of the question. After a three-second pause, the primary instructor of experimental cohort 2, George, provides the needed clarification for Gisela. As such the request sequence was given an Appropriateness rating of '2/poor'.

In R12, Carson once again produces a comparatively successful request sequence (Excerpt 5-52).

Excerpt 5-52

R12	Carson	Wir haben ein Bisschen über amerikanische Politik äh..gerade gesprochen, aber ähm was meinen denn Deutschen über amerikaschen amerikanische Politik? Sind das wichtig, oder nicht wichtig, oder? Ich weiß nicht. *We've spoken a bit about* *American politics uh..just now,* *but um what do Germans think then* *about Americish American politics?* *Are it important, or not important, or?* *I don't know.*
	Gisela	Bei uns wird immer derber berichtet. *The reporting here is getting bawdier.*

R12 is formulated as a multi-part request sequence and is modified both externally (preparator ‘*Wir haben...gerade gesprochen*’) and internally (downtoner ‘*denn*’; appealer ‘*oder*’). The head act consists of a direct request for information (Directness=1), followed by an additional interrogative structure. Although the request sequence is sufficiently mitigated, it contains both a grammatical mistake (‘*sind*’ rather than ‘*ist*’) and shows Carson experiencing pronunciation difficulties. Accordingly, the request sequence was rated at an Appropriateness level of ‘4/good’.

The four request sequences reviewed previously demonstrate that Carson evidences a great deal of variation in his request production. Certain sequences proceed smoothly and are relatively free of problems, whereas other sequences contain substantial infelicities that lower the overall appropriateness of these requests. As these request sequences all took place in experimental condition 1, it is necessary to examine the production data from experimental condition 2 to see if Carson’s requesting behavior continues to display such inconsistencies.

During experimental condition 2, Carson produced four requests, all occurring during Discussion 4 (SW 14). The analysis begins with R14, as shown in Excerpt 5-53.

Excerpt 5-53

	Carson	Eine andere Frage.
R14		Ähm, hat die Sendung äh die anderen deutschen Kindersendung ausgewechselt?
		A different question.
		Um, did the show uh exchange *uh the other German kids show?*
		(5 second pause)
	Manfred	Ähmm, das hab’ ich jetzt nicht ganz verstanden? Ähmm.
		Umm, I didn’t totally understand that? *Umm.*

R14 begins with the preparator *'Ich habe eine Frage'*. The head act is formulated as a direct request for information (Directness=1) and contains a small grammatical infelicity (lack of plural *Kindersendungen*). As Manfred's answer makes clear, the request is not totally understood. The locus of the problem appears to be Carson's use of the lexical item *'ausgewechselt'*. Carson seems to want to know how the show has changed (i.e., influenced) other children's programming, but he has selected a verb closer in meaning to 'exchange' or 'substitute', which does not collocate with the object of the sentence *'die anderen deutschen Kindersendung'*. The resultant Appropriateness rating of R14 is thus '2/poor'.

A few minutes after R14, Carson produces R15 (Excerpt 5-54).

Excerpt 5-54

R15	Carson	Haben Sie eine Lieblingsfolge oder Lieblingsstaffel? *Do you have a favorite episode or favorite season?*
	Manfred	Ähmm, kann man bei der Maus schlecht sagen. *Umm, it's hard to say with the Mouse.*

R15 is formulated as a direct request for information (Directness=1) and does not feature any sort of modification. The request is free of grammatical infelicities and successfully elicits a reply from Manfred. As such, it was given an Appropriateness rating of '5/excellent'. Carson follows up with another request on the same topic, as seen in R16 (Excerpt 5-55).

Excerpt 5-55

	Carson	Können Sie eine- *Can you-*
	Manfred	[Und Shaun, wie gesagt, als Serie- Ja? *[And Shaun, as I said, as a series-* *Yes?*
	Carson	Ah, bitte Entschuldigung.

R16		Können Sie äh für mich eine... äh, Folge empfehlen?
		Uh, please excuse me.
		Can you uh recommend...uh, an episode for me?
	Manfred	Ähmmm um die Sendung kennenzulernen,
		kann man eigentlich jede..jeden Sonntag gucken (laughs)
		Ummm to get to know the show,
		you can actually tune in an..any Sunday (laughs)

Of the 17 requests produced by Carson, R16 represents the only instance of an indirectly formulated request. Carson's initial attempt to produce the request occurs as Manfred is still finishing his response to the previous request. He thus pauses until Manfred signals he is prepared to respond to a new request. At this point, Carson produces a disarmer (*'bitte Entschuldigung'*) before moving on to the head act. The head act is formulated as a preparatory question (Directness=5) with the modal verb *'können'*. This result is noteworthy in that R16 is the only instance of such a formulation in Carson's production data, and it takes place in experimental condition 2, after focused instruction has occurred.

R17 represents the fourth and final request produced by Carson in experimental condition 2, as illustrated in Excerpt 5-56.

Excerpt 5-56

	Carson	Eine Frage über die Sendung.
R17		Ähm, warum nutzen Sie
		beides Animation und Leute?
		Äh, warum nicht nur eines?
		A question about the show.
		Um, why do you use
		both animation and people?
		Uh, why not just one?
		(2 second pause)
	Manfred	Warum wir trie-
		Also, Cartoon...und dokumentarisch mischen?
		Why we-
		That is, mix cartoons...and documentary?

R17 is preceded by the preparator *'Eine Frage über die Sendung'*. The head act is formulated as multi-part request, containing a direct request for information (Directness=1), followed by an additional interrogative structure. Manfred's response indicates that he is not entirely sure of the illocutionary force of the question, and he rephrases what he believes Carson's request to be. Based on these features, the request sequence was rated at an Appropriateness level of '3/fair'.

After reviewing the four requests produced by Carson in experimental condition 2, there still appears to be substantial variation in his request production. It must thus be concluded that any effect of focused instruction remains tentative, and may have led to only incremental changes in Carson's requesting behavior.

5.4.4.2 Grant

At the time of the study, Grant was an Intermediate Mid learner of German. As Grant did not elect to complete the background questionnaire, little information can be given regarding his previous instruction in German, time spent in German-speaking countries, or family members/friends with knowledge of German. The author of the study was previously Grant's instructor for GERM 216, the fourth and final semester of the German proficiency sequence.

During the study, Grant produced a total of nine requests, as seen in Table 5-22.

Table 5-22: Overview of Grant's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2		R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9
Conference	2	2		4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Condition	1	1		2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Directness	1(i)	1(i)		1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)
Internal modifiers	0	0		0	0	1	0	0	0	0
syntactic:										

conditional clause	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
past tense	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	-		-	-	1	-	-	-	-
lexical:										
politeness marker	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
consultative devices	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
understaters	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appealers	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
External modifiers	0	0		1	0	0	1	0	0	0
alerter	-	-		-	-	-	1	-	-	-
preparator	-	-		1	-	-	-	-	-	-
grounder	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
disarmer	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	4	3		5	4	5	5	4	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

A glance at Table 16 shows that there are very clear trends in Grant's production data. First, he uses only direct requests for information (Directness=1). Second, he modifies his requests very little, producing only one internal modifier and two external modifiers over the duration of the study. Finally, Grant's requests have been rated in most cases as '4/good' or '5/excellent' in terms of Appropriateness. Grant's production data thus demonstrate that unmodified, direct requests can still be appropriate.

R1 and R2 occur during experimental condition 1, with Grant acting as a normal discussion participant. The analysis begins with R1, as seen in Excerpt 5-57.

Excerpt 5-57

R1	Grant	Was denken Sie von Occupy Wall Street? *What do you think about Occupy Wall Street?* (2 second pause)
	Gisela	Äh, ja, gute Frage! Ich find's nicht schlecht. *Uh, yes, good question!* *I think it's not bad.*

R1 is formulated as a direct question (Directness=1) and does not feature any sort of modification. After a brief pause, Gisela responds to the request characterizing it as a good question. This pause is most likely due to the fact that the request was not preceded by any sort of alerter or preparator. Given the lack of external modification, Gisela must simultaneously process the content of the question and decide if this request is directed at her, resulting in a short lag before offering her response. Based on these features, R1 was given an Appropriateness rating of '4/good'.

R2 is also directed at expert participant Gisela, as seen in Excerpt 5-58.

Excerpt 5-58

Grant	Welche Partei ist äh mehr populär in Deutschland, ähm die äh republikanische Partei oder die demokratische Partei? *Which party is uh more popular in Germany,* *um the uh republican party or the democratic party?* (10 second pause)
Gisela	Das ist eine gute Frage! Das würden wir gerne selber wissen! (laughs) Nein, es ist es gibt etwas mehr Leute, die CDU-Anhänger sind als SPD-Anhänger. *That is a good question!* *We would like to know that ourselves! (laughs)* *No, it is there are slightly more people,* *who support the CDU than who support the SPD.*

R2 is formulated as a direct request for information (Directness=1) and contains neither internal nor external modification. Following the request, a 10-second pause occurs before Gisela begins her response. Her initial utterance *'Das ist eine gute Frage'* is not meant as an explicit evaluation of Grant's request, however. Taken together with the statement that follows (*'Das würden wir gerne selber wissen!)* and Gisela's laugh, it becomes clear that she is attempting to be humorous. After making her joke, Gisela provides the information sought after by Grant. Her response discusses the political parties in Germany, though, whereas Grant's request seems to be about the American political context. This lack of clarity on Grant's part and the extended pause following R2 resulted in an Appropriateness rating of '3/fair' for the request sequence.

During experimental condition 2, Grant produces a number of requests in his capacity as discussion co-moderator (Discussion 4, SW 14). R5 and R6 occur in close proximity to one another, as seen in Excerpt 5-59.

Excerpt 5-59

R4	Grant	Was ist äh das großte Problem mit äh Kinderfernsehen in Deutschland? *What is uh the biggest problem* *with children's television in Germany?* (6 second pause)
	Manfred	Ähmmmmm, wa-was meinen Sie mit Problem? Ähm, um es ähm, Problem um es populär zu machen? Oder? Oder um Programme gut zu machen? *Ummmmm, wha-what do you mean by problem?* *Uh, to um, problem making it popular?* *Or? Or to make good programming?*
R5	Grant	[Was könnte besser sein? *[What could be better?*
	Manfred	Ähm, besser kann man auf jeden Fall immer werden, aber wir können in Deutschland eigentlich ähm, also auch wenn man äh private Anbieter miteinbezieht, eigentlich sagen, dass wir ein sehr vielfältiges und sehr spannendes Kinderprogramm haben. *Um, one can certainly always get better,* *but in Germany we can actually,* *that is when you also consider private providers,* *actually say, that we have very multifaceted* *and very exciting children's programming.*

R4 is formulated as an unmodified direct request for information (Directness=1). There is a minor pronunciation error of the superlative adjective form *'größte'*, and as indicated by Manfred's response, some confusion regarding Grant's use of the lexical item *'Problem'*. Based on these features, the request was rated as '4/good'. R5 represents

Grant's reformulation of R4. In this case, the request no longer contains the lexical item *'Problem'*; instead Grant utilizes the subjunctive form *'könnte'* to reframe the question. Manfred's response indicates that he has understood the request and has no trouble responding to it. R5 was thus rated at an Appropriateness level of '5/excellent'.

The remaining requests produced by Grant do not reveal any additional trends and do not add anything to the overall profile of his requesting behavior. Therefore to summarize Grant's requesting behavior during the study, we see no change in level of directness between experimental conditions. Grant makes very little use of modification in his requests, producing only three modifiers in total. There is some variation in the appropriateness of Grant's requesting behavior, with less appropriate instances characterized by non-specific formulation of requests, requiring either reformulation or resulting in non-relevant responses. Overall, there appears to be little evidence for the effect of either interaction with expert participants or focused instruction on Grant's requesting behavior.

5.4.4.3 Joshua

At the time of the study, Joshua was an Advanced Low learner of German. He had completed three years of high school instruction and six semesters of university-level instruction in German prior to the focal semester. In the summer directly preceding the focal semester, Joshua spent six weeks in Holzkirchen, Germany as a participant in the University of Kansas Advanced Summer Language Institute.

During the study, Joshua produced a total of six requests, as seen in Table 5-23.

Table 5-23: Overview of Joshua's requesting behavior

Request number	R1		R2	R3	R4	R5	R6

Conference	2	3	3	3	3	4
Condition	1	2	2	2	2	2
Directness	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)
Internal modifiers	1	2	1	0	0	0
syntactic:						
conditional clause	-	-	-	-	-	-
past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	-	1	-	-	-
lexical:						
politeness marker	-	-	-	-	-	-
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	2	-	-	-	-
understaters	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-	-
appealers	1	-	-	-	-	-
External modifiers	0	2	2	1	1	2
alerter	-	-	-	-	-	-
preparator	-	2	2	1	1	2
grounder	-	-	-	-	-	-
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	5	5	4	5	5	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

Joshua's production data show consistent use of direct requests for information (Directness=1) in each instance of requesting behavior. As the following analysis reveals, however, he makes extensive use of external modification, specifically preparators, to mitigate his requests. These requests are highly appropriate, and in the case of R5, contain linguistic features not found in other learners' production data.

Joshua produces one request (R1) during experimental condition 1, as seen in Excerpt 60.

Excerpt 5-60

R1	Joshua	Ähm, in Deutschland muss man ungefähr nur fünf Prozent ähm eines Wahlkampfs winnen

		ähm in den politisches System zu kommen, oder? *Um, in Germany you only have to win* *approximately five percent of a political campaign* *um to enter the political system, right?*
	Gisela	Ja, und auf Ebene eines Stadtrats, bei uns in Bonn gibt es keine Anzahl. *Yes, and at the level of the city council,* *where we are in Bonn there is no fixed quantity.*

R1 is formulated as a direct request for information (Directness=1) and features the appealer *'oder'* at the end of the head act. Although the sentence features minor lexical errors (i.e., *'winnen'* instead of *'gewinnen'*) and grammatical infelicities (i.e., *'in den'* instead of *'in das'*), it is syntactically complex, sufficiently mitigated, and successfully elicits a response from Gisela. As such, it was given an Appropriateness rating of '5/excellent'.

The remaining requests produced by Joshua occur during experimental condition 2. The analysis begins with R2 (Excerpt 5-61), produced during Discussion 3 (SW 12) with Joshua acting in the capacity of discussion co-moderator.

Excerpt 5-61

R2	Joshua	Ja, also unser' erste Frage, ähm (1 second pause) glaub' ich, wir werden h-heute mit äh dem Anfang einer typischen deutschen Ausbildung beginnen. Also, äh bei welchem Alter beginnt man zu der Schule überhaupt zu gehen? Also, beginnt man mit der Vorschule? Oder vielleicht eher mit dem Kindergarten? *Yes, so our first question, um* (1 second pause) *I think, today we will start with the beginning* *of a typical German education.* *So, uh at what age* *does one even start going to school?* *That is, does one start with primary education?* *Or perhaps rather with Kindergarten?*
	Roland	Dann würd' ich fast sagen,

	nehmen wir nicht doch gleich mal als Beispiel..die Ausbildung, wenn man von Ausbildung sprechen möchte, beginnt wirklich mit dem Kindergarten. *Then I'd almost say,* *let's go ahead and take as an example...education,* *if we want to speak of education,* *really starts with kindergarten.*

R2 is preceded by two preparators. The first of these (*'Ja, also unser' erste Frage'*) is similar in nature to many of the preparators already seen in the learner production data. The second preparator, in contrast, foreshadows the specific content of the head act. The head act is formulated as a multi-part request, featuring three direct requests for information. The last of these requests features two internal lexical modifiers (*'vielleicht'* and *'eher'*) that serve to mitigate the utterance. Roland's response makes clear he has understood the request and is able to provide a response without difficulty. Given these features, the request was given an appropriateness rating of '5/excellent'.

R3-R8 proceed in much the same manner, with Joshua making elaborate use of preparators to mitigate his requests. Of interest for the present analysis is the fact that these preparators feature extensive modification. As these modifications take place outside the head act, use of such linguistic features as the subjunctive mood or conditional structures was not reflected in the QUAN data. As an example, let us consider R3 (Excerpt 5-62).

Excerpt 5-62

Joshua	Also, ja, ähm ich hätte auch noch eine Frage, wenn das okay ist. *So, yeah, um I also had another question,* *if that's okay.*
Roland	Jederzeit. *Any time.*
Joshua	Ähm, also ich habe irgendwo gelesen,

R3		dass ähm der Entscheidungsprozess Ausländer behinderte Kinder sowie Kinder die aus ärmeren Familien kommen benachteiligt. Also, die Entscheidung v- hängt vielleicht nicht nur von den akademischen Leistungen der Studenten ab sondern auch sogar von den Jobs oder von den Berufe der Eltern selbst. Also, ist das dann ganz ethisch, und es wird manchmal behauptet, dass das heutige deutsche Schulsystem, eigentlich ein gesellschaftliches Klassensystem unterstützt. Also, was würden Sie dazu sagen? *Um, so I read somewhere* *that the selection process discriminates against* *foreigners, disabled children, as well as children* *who come from poorer families.* *That is, the decision p- depends perhaps* *not only on the academic performance of the students* *but also even on the jobs or* *on the careers of the parents themselves.* *So, is that totally ethical then,* *and it is sometimes claimed* *that today's school system* *actually supports a societal class system.* *So, what would you say to that?*
	Roland	Ooh, das sind aber schwierige Fragen hier! Also, ich würd' mal sagen, äh, da ist was dran. *Ooh, those are some difficult questions there!* *So, I would say, uh, there's something to that.*

As in R2, R3 features two preparators. The first preparator (*'Also, ja, ähm, ich hätte...')* signals that a request is forthcoming and makes use of the subjunctive mood and a conditional structure. The second preparator (*'Ähm, also, ich habe irgendwo gelesen...unterstützt.'*) is much longer and addresses the content of the request. The head act is formulated as a direct request for information (Directness=1), but is mitigated through the use of the subjunctive form *'würden'*. Roland's response characterizes the request as difficult. The source of Roland's difficulty is likely two-fold and is to be found in Joshua's second preparator. First, the preparator is long and syntactically complex, featuring a number of topics interwoven together, which Roland is not able to address comprehensively. Second, the topics addressed in the preparator imply that there are certain fundamental inequalities in the German educational system. As Roland is a teacher in Germany, this implication may be face threatening for him, as it indirectly positions him as being complicit with such inequalities. Thus, although Joshua has made an effort to mitigate R3 through elaborate preparatory moves, the end effect remains not entirely successful. As such the request sequence was given an appropriateness rating of '4/good'.

R4 shows an instance of Joshua using external modification to direct his request to a specific interlocutor (Excerpt 5-63).

Excerpt 5-63

R4	Joshua	Ja, und eigentlich jetzt äh möchte ich die Frage an die Klasse stellen. Also, was denkt ihr? Ist es wirklich wisch- sehr wichtig, eine ein Universitätsdiplom in den USA zu haben, oder nicht? *Yes, and actually I would uh now like to pose* *the question to the class.* *So, what do you guys think?* *Is it really imp- very important,* *to have an a university degree in the USA, or not?* (6 second pause)
	Chuck	Ja, ich glaube es ist wichtig. *Yes, I think it is important.*

As the preparator (*'Ja, und eigentlich jetzt...stellen'*) makes clear, the request is directed at the student participants. Similar to Joshua's previous requests, R4's preparator is also mitigated through the use of syntactic and lexical modification; namely, the use of the subjunctive *'möchte'* and the downtoner *'eigentlich'*. The head act is a multi-part request formulated as two direct requests for information (Directness=1). There is a six-second pause before student participant Chuck responds to the question. This pause does not signal problems with R4, but rather indicates the time necessary for an interlocutor to formulate a cogent response and take the floor (cf. Carson, R7, section 5.4.4.1.). Based on these features, the request was given an Appropriateness rating of ‘5/excellent’.

R5 shows distinct similarities to R4, as seen in Excerpt 5-64.

Excerpt 5-64

	Joshua	Ja, das wäre eigentlich äh meine nächste Frage.
R5		Also, ist eine Ausbil- Ausbildung in Deutschland total kostenlos?
		Oder..muss man bezahlen?
		Yes, that would actually be uh my next question.
		So, it an educ- education in Germany totally free?
		Or..do you have to pay?
	Roland	Ja! Das ist eben genau die Frage.
		Und ich hab’ hier ein paar Folien.
		Warten Sie mal.
		Yes! That is just exactly the question.
		And I’ve got a couple of slides here.
		Hold on a second.

Like R4, Joshua first produces a preparator that contains both a subjunctive form (*‘wäre’*) and the downtoner ‘eigentlich’. This utterance is of special significance in that it represents the only instance of a novice participant utilizing the subjunctive mood of *‘sein’* in the entire data set. The head act of R5 is formulated as a multi-part request sequence consisting of two direct requests for information (Directness=1), also as seen in R4.

R6 (Excerpt 5-65) is the final instance of request production for Joshua, and takes place during Discussion 4 (SW 14) when Joshua is no longer acting as the discussion co-moderator.

Excerpt 5-65

	Joshua	Also, ich hätte auch eine Frage.

		Ähm, ich habe XXX auf...die Wikipedia-page,
		ähm, dass es eine Folge namens Atommaus gibt.
		Also, es ensteht ähm erstens 1988,
		und dann wurde es äh 2011 wieder neu produziert.
R6		Also, wie wurde es verändert?
		So, I also had a question.
		Um, I XXX on...the Wikipedia page
		um that there is an episode by the name of Atomic Maus.
		So, it produced um originally in 1988,
		and then in 2011 it was newly produced again.
		So, how was it changed?
	Manfred	Ähmmmmm..also...mmm im Prinzip erklärt wird,
		auch da noch mal die Atomenergie erklärt,
		wie die an- also wir sind-
		wir versuchen in unseren Sendung',
		auch nie ähm, wie soll ich sagen,
		nie eine Meinung zu vertreten,
		wir versuchen, die Dinge zu beschreiben.
		Und ähm, was halt einfach erneuert wurde,
		ähm ähm ich musste es noch mal konkret v-vergleichen.
		Ummmmm..so...mmm basically it explains,
		atomic energy is explained again,
		how it on- um we are-
		in our show we also try
		um never to take a position,
		we try to describe things.
		And um, what was updated simply,
		um um I would have to compare them again concretely.

In this request sequence, Joshua employs the same double-preparator strategy as seen in R2 and R3. His first preparator is mitigated through use of the subjunctive for *'hätte'* and indicates that a request is forthcoming, while the second preparator addresses the content of the request. As such, Joshua's production data show many similarities across multiple request sequences, whether acting as discussion co-moderator or a regular discussion participant.

In sum, Joshua displays a consistent trend in his requesting behavior. The head act of each request sequence is formulated directly, and in experimental condition 2 he makes extensive use of syntactically and lexically modified preparators to mitigate these requests. As these modifications are present in the data following focused instruction, it seems that there is an effect for instruction apparent in Joshua's data, but that this effect is only accounted for through microgenetic analysis (cf. Tim, R12, section 5.4.2.5.). Thus, although the aggregate data (section 5.3.4.) indicate no significant effect for focused instruction on learners' use of internal modification, Joshua's production data seem to belie this result[9].

5.4.4.4. Lisa

At the time of the study, Lisa was an Advanced Low learner of German. She had completed three years of high school instruction and five semesters of university-level instruction in German prior to the focal semester. In the summer directly preceding the focal semester, Lisa spent six weeks in Holzkirchen, Germany as a participant in the University of Kansas' Advanced Summer Language Institute.

During the study, Lisa produced a total of eleven requests, as seen in Table 5-24.

Table 5-24: Overview of Lisa's requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6		R7	R8	R9	R10	R11
Conference	1	1	1	2	2	2		3	3	3	3	4
Condition	1	1	1	1	1	1		2	2	2	2	2
Directness	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(a)	1(i)	1(i)		1(i)	1(i)	5	5	1(i)
Internal modifiers	2	0	1	1	0	0		0	0	4	1	1
syntactic:												
conditional clause	1	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	1	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	1	-	-
lexical:												
politeness marker	-	-	-	1	-	-		-	-	1	-	-

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[9] As will be discussed further in Chapter 6, the aggregate analysis of internal modification is limited to what takes place within the head act and cannot adequately account for syntactic modification of external modifiers, as seen in Joshua's requesting behavior.

consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	-	1	-	-	-		-	-	1	-	1
understaters	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	1	1	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
appealers	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
External modifiers	0	1	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
alerter	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
preparator	-	1	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
grounder	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
small talk	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	5	5	3	5	5	4		4	4	4	4	5

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

As Table 5-18 shows, Lisa displayed very prolific requesting behavior during the study, producing a number of requests in both experimental conditions. During experimental condition 1, she used only direct requesting strategies, whereas experimental condition 2 features two instances (R9 and R10) of indirect request production. Lisa utilized more internal modifiers than external modifiers, with only one instance of the latter (R2) present in her oral production data. Lastly, Lisa's requests are rated as mostly appropriate, with only one request (R3) rated as '3/fair'.

The analysis begins with R1 (Excerpt 5-66), produced during Discussion 1 (SW 6).

Excerpt 5-66

R1	Lisa	Also, wenn man Englisch als Hauptfach..h-hätte, gibt es eine Internship dafür? *So, if you were an English major,* *is there an internship for that?*
	Thomas	Sie haben die Möglichkeit, wenn Sie sagen, Sie möchten Lehrerin...sein. Oder als Lehrerin tätig sein. *You have the opportunity,* *if you say you want to...be a teacher.* *Or be employed as a teacher.*

R1 is a direct request for information (Directness=1), mitigated by the use of two internal modifiers: the subjunctive form *'hätte'* and a conditional clause. It is noteworthy that Lisa produces a subjunctive form during her very first request, as this indicates she has some knowledge of this structure prior to participating in the focused instructional module. The appropriateness of the request sequence was rated as '5/excellent'.

R3 (Excerpt 5-67) also occurs during Discussion 1 (SW 6) and shows an instance of less appropriate requesting behavior.

Excerpt 5-67

R3	Lisa	Hat Sean denn alles gemacht? *Did Sean do everything then?* (3 second pause)
	Thomas	Was meinen Sie, alles gemacht? *What do you mean, do everything?* (5 second pause)
	Lisa	Es war nur eine schlechte Witz. Entschuldigung. *It was just a bad joke.* *Excuse me.*

R3 occurs as Thomas is explaining how interns from the previous summer had spent their time in Eutin. The request is formulated as a direct request for information (directness=1) and features the downtoner *'denn'*. Her utterance indicates that Lisa knows one of these participants, and she attempts to make a joke about the individual's work ethic. After a three-second pause, Thomas' response indicates lack of understanding. After another pause, Lisa apologizes and clarifies that the utterance was only meant as a joke. Due to the lengthy pauses and opacity of Lisa's joke, the request sequence was rated as '3/fair'.

The remaining request sequences to be examined occur during experimental condition 2, beginning with R8 (Excerpt 5-68).

Excerpt 5-68

	Roland	Wie sieht's zum Beispiel mit Emily aus? Was würden Sie sagen? *What about Emily for example?* *What would you say?* (8 second pause)
R8	Lisa	Ist zehn Jahre alt ziemlich früh? *Is ten years old quite early?*
	Roland	Ja, was denken Sie? Ich meine, zehn Jahre alt. *Yes, what do you think?* *I mean, ten years old.* (1 second pause)
	Chuck	Ich glaube, ja. *I believe it is.*
	Roland	Sie denken schon? *You think so?*
	Emily	Es ist ziemlich früh, aber...das ist auch..das Ende der Grundschule, also. *It is quite early,* *but...that is also..the end of primary school, so.*
	Roland	Das ist richtig. *That's correct.*

R8 is formulated as a direct request for information (Directness=1) and does not feature any sort of internal or external modification. It occurs after Roland has produced a request and an eight-second pause has lapsed, and shows Lisa prompting Emily with a recast of Roland's previous request. Roland's response indicates that he believes R8 to be directed at him, and he reflects it back to the student participants. This confusion stems from the fact that Lisa did not produce any sort of alerter prior to R8, which would have clarified to whom the request was directed. For this reason, the request sequence was marginally less successful and received an appropriateness rating of '4/good'.

R9 (Excerpt 69) and R10 (Excerpt 5-70) are the two instances in which Lisa produced an indirect request, therefore meriting closer scrutiny.

Excerpt 5-69

R9	Lisa	Also..würden Sie für uns bitte ein Bisschen erklären wie diese Entscheidung eigentlich getroffen wird? *So..would you please explain for us* *how this decision is actually made?*
	Roland	Natür- *Of cou-*
	Lisa	[Äh, ist das per Durschnitts..note? Oder eine Prüfung das sie...während des Grundschule machen müssen? Oder darf man einfach für sich selbst entscheiden? *[Uh, is it based on average..grades?* *Or a test* *that they have to take during elementary school?* *Or may one simply decide for themself?*
	Roland	Das kommt jetzt wieder ganz stark drauf an wo Sie leben. *Again that depends quite heavily on* *where you live.*

R9 is formulated as a preparatory question (Directness=5) and is heavily mitigated through both syntactic (subjunctive *'würden'*) and lexical modification (downtoner *'eigentlich'*, politeness marker *'bitte'*, understater *'ein Bisschen'*). As formulated the request is highly appropriate, and Roland's response *'Natür-'* indicates he is prepared to respond. Lisa continues with two additional direct requests, resulting in a multi-part head act that preempts Roland's initial response. As such, the request becomes slightly less appropriate and was rated at an appropriateness level of '4/good'.

R10 (Excerpt 5-70) shows a similar pattern to R9.

Excerpt 5-70

R10	Lisa	Äh, können Sie uns ein Bisschen erklären wie wichtig es ist ein Diplom in dem deutschen Arbeitsmarkt zu haben? *Uh, could you explain to us a little bit* *how important it is* *to have a degree in the German job market?*
	Roland	Also, Sie meinen einen Universitätsabscluss

	oder überhaupt einen höheren Bildungsabschluss? *So, you mean a university degree* *or a postsecondary degree of any kind?*
Lisa	Ja. *Yes.*
Roland	Ja, das ist jetzt auch so eine schwierige Frage. Das habe ich auch XXX es kommt darauf an, ähm. Es kommt stark darauf an was Sie machen möchten. *Yeah, that's another really tough question.* *I have XXX that also it depends on, um.* *It depends heavily on* *what you want to do.*

Like R9, R10 is formulated indirectly (Directness=5) and mitigated through the use of the understater *'ein Bisschen'*. Roland characterizes the request as difficult before offering a tentative response. As such, the request was rated at an appropriateness level of '4/good'. Taken together, R9 and R10 demonstrate that indirect formulation of a request does not always correlate with increased appropriateness.

In sum, Lisa produces a high number of request sequences during the study. During experimental condition 1, these requests are uniformly direct in nature. Following the change in experimental condition, Lisa produces two indirect requests, lending support for the efficacy of the focused instruction module. Less apparent is any change in the appropriateness of Lisa's requests.

5.4.4.4 Max

At the time of the study, Max was an Intermediate Low learner of German. He had completed two years of high school instruction and four semesters of university-level instruction in German prior to the focal semester. Additionally, Max had spent three weeks of private travel in Germany.

During the study, Max produced a total of eleven requests, as seen in Table 5-25.

Table 5-25: Overview of Max’s requesting behavior

Request number	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11
Conference	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4
Condition	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Directness	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)	1(i)
Internal modifiers	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
syntactic:											
conditional clause	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
past tense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjunctive mood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
lexical:											
politeness marker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
consultative devices	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
downtoners	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
understaters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subjectivizers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appealers	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
External modifiers	3	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
alerter	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
preparator	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
grounder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
disarmer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
small talk	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
appreciator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appropriateness	5	5	4	4	3	5	3	2	1	5	3

*=elliptical request (i)=request for information (a)=request for action

Max’s requesting behavior displays both patterns and variability. He uniformly produces direct requests for information (Directness=1) across all 11 request sequences, strongly favoring the use of external modifiers to internal modifiers, the latter of which are present in only two cases (R7 and R9). Regarding the appropriateness of Max’s request production, there is much less regularity. He produces requests that are rated as ‘5/excellent’, but he also is the only participant in the entire study to produce a request that was rated at the appropriateness level of ‘1/no performance’.

R1 (Excerpt 5-71) and R2 (Excerpt 5-72) are of interest for the analysis, as they show Max engaging in requesting behavior unique among the novice participants.

Excerpt 5-71

R1	Max	Ich habe eine Frage?
		I have a question?
		(1 second pause)
		Hallo?
		Hello?
	Thomas	Mmm hmm. Ja?
		Mmm hmm. Yes?
	Max	Ah!
	Thomas	Ja?
		Yes?
	Max	Hallo, ich heiße Max.
		Gibt es Kunstmuseen in Eutin?
		Hello, my name is Max.
		Are there art museums in Eutin?
		(1 second pause)
	Thomas	Wir haben ein Kunstmuseum in Eutin, ja.
		Das nennt sich Schlossmuseum.
		Eutin hat ein Schloss.
		We have an art museum in Eutin, yes.
		It is called the palace museum.
		Eutin has a palace.

R1 occurs towards the end of discussion 1 (SW 6), after the discussion co-moderators have finished asking their questions. Max begins with the ‘preparator’ *‘Ich habe eine Frage’* followed by a short ‘alerter’ (*‘Hallo’*) to confirm that Thomas can hear him. Max next greets Thomas and introduces himself, which functions as an instance of small talk. This part of the interaction sets Max apart from the other discussion participants, who only engage in this sort of small talk when acting as a discussion moderator, not as a regular discussion participant. The head act is formulated as a direct request for information (Directness=1), and the request was given an appropriateness rating of ‘5/excellent’.

The success of R1 stands in contrast to R9, as seen in Excerpt 5-72.

Excerpt 5-72

	Max	In Amerika haben wir ähm
		In America we have um
		(2 second pause)
		Celebrities in unser Werben- Werbenfernsehen.
R9		*Celebrities in our advertising- advertising television.*
		Ist das auch in Deutschland, oder?
		Is that also the case in Germany, isn't it?
		(3 second pause)
	Gisela	Was versteht man da genau drunter?
		What exactly is meant by that?
		(1.5 second pause)
	Max	Äh, es tut mir Leid, ähm
		Uh, sorry, um
		(3 second pause)
		Äh, wir haben
		Uh, we have
		(5 second pause)
	Lisa	Meinen Sie Oprah und Barack Obama, zum Beispiel?
		Do you mean Oprah and Barack Obama, for example?
	Gisela	Ah, das haben wir.
		Ah, we have that.
	Max.	[Ja, oder, ähm,
		[Yes, or, um
		(1 second pause)
		ja, oder, ähm..
		Angelina Jolie and äh und ähm
		yeah, or, um..
		Angelina Jolie and uh and um
		(2 second pause)
		Äh
		Uh
		(1 second pause)
		seine Name..ich vergesse
		his name..I forget
	Gisela	Wir haben wir haben viele-
		We have we have a lot-

R9 is preceded by an alerter (*'In Amerika...Werbenfernsehen')* and formulated as a direct request for information (Directness=1). As Gisela's response makes clear, the request is not understood as formulated. This confusion most likely stems from Max's use of the English lexical item 'celebrities' in his alerter, which did not sufficiently prepare Gisela for the content of the subsequent request. Max is unable to successfully clarify the request for Gisela, and it is Lisa who provides an example that clarifies the concept for Gisela. Subsequent to this, Max attempts to provide his own example, but fails to recall the name of one celebrity. As the request was not understood as formulated and only became clear due to Lisa's intercession, the request was rated at an appropriateness level of '1/no performance'.

Max produces only one request (R11) during experimental condition two, as seen in Excerpt 5-73.

Excerpt 5-73

	Max	Ich möchte eine Frage zu schel zu stellen.
		Es tut mir Leid.
R11		Ähm, was für ein Handelsware haben
		die Sendung mit der Maus,
		äh, zum Beispiel, Sesame Street hat Kleidungen
		und Computerspielespielen und so weiter.
		Ähm, haben...etwas gleich...
		für ähm die Sendung mit der Mau- mit der Maus?
		I would like to ak to ask a question.
		Sorry.
		Um, what kind of commercial product does
		the Show with the Mouse have,
		uh, for example, Sesame Street has clothings
		and playing computer games and so on.
		Um, have...something similar...
		for the Show with the Mou- with the Mouse?
		(3 second pause)
	Manfred	Mm hmm. Ja, haben wir auch.
		Wiiir..ähm...wir dürfen aber,
		also wir als Sender dürfen die Dinge nicht vermarkten.
		Also wir dürfen keine..Merchandising machen.
		Mm hmm. Yes, we have that as well.
		Weee..um...but we are not allowed,
		that is we as a broadcast station are not allowed to market the things.
		That is we are not permitted to do any merchandising.

R11 is formulated as a multi-part request featuring two direct requests for information (Directness=1), and it is preceded by the 'preparator' '*Ich möchte eine Frage zu schel zu stellen'*. It is this preparator that is of interest for the analysis, as it contains the subjunctive form *'möchte'*. When contrasted with Max's production of R1, which features a preparator in the indicative mood, we see a similar developmental pattern displayed by other novice participants; namely, an effect for focused instruction not in the head act of the request, but in the preparator preceding the request. As R11 is the only instance of request production for Max in experimental condition 2, this conclusion must remain tentative, but it is bolstered by similar observations made in the production data of novice participants Tim and Joshua.

In sum, Max engages in consistently direct requesting behavior, with only moderate use of internal and external modification. The appropriateness of his requests displays high variability, with less appropriate requests due to infelicities with grammar or lexis. The lone request produced during experimental condition 2 (R11) shows progress in the use of the subjunctive mood, but as is the case with other learners, this shift is reflected in the preparator Max produces, not in the actual head act of the request.

5.5 Summary of Findings

In the previous sections, the author discussed the request performance of novice speakers in relation to expert speakers, as well as the development of novice speaker request production as a result of interaction with expert speakers and participation in focused instruction. Emerging from this analysis, there are three additional phenomena which will be addressed: 1) the production of multi-part request sequences, 2) the use of modified external support moves, and 3) the role of linguistic formulae in requesting behavior.

5.5.1 Multi-part Request Sequences

When producing a request, it is often the case that the request sequence has more than one element that corresponds to the Head Act (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989, p. 276). In the current study, both expert and novice participants produced multi-part request sequences out of a need to maintain clarity in communication, but, as will be discussed below, the groups also showed differences in their production of multi-part requests.

5.5.1.1 Expert Multi-part Requests

Multi-part requests in the expert group often involved reformulations of indirect requests in order to make them more direct and more salient to the novice participants. This finding was briefly mentioned when discussing directness among expert speakers, but it bears further discussion. In study instance 1, expert participant Roland twice reformulated indirect requests to make them more direct (R2 → R3, Excerpt 5-2, p. 101; R4 → R5, Excerpt 5-3, p. 102). In study instance 2, John also reformulates an indirect request to make it more direct and salient, as seen in Excerpt 5-74.

Excerpt 5-74

	John	Äh, Frau Bauer?
R7		Vielleicht..wenn Sie die Frage
		wiederholen würden,
		dann würden die die anderen
		Teilnehmer das äh dann besser äh verstehen.
		Uh, Miss Bauer?
		Perhaps..if you were
		to repeat the question,
		then the the other participants
		would uh then better uh understand it.
		(3 second pause)
R8		Können Sie das bitte wiederholen?
		Can you please repeat it?

It is interesting that John’s reformulation in Excerpt 5-74 is prompted by a similar cue from the interlocutor as Roland experienced in Excerpt 5-2, and to a lesser extent in Excerpt 5-3. That is to say, long pauses following the production of a request sequence functioned as signals to the speaker that the request had not been understood and needed reformulation. In a sense, the expert speakers seemed to anticipate potential problem spots in the communication and worked preemptively to overcome such difficulties. Seen from a sociocultural perspective, the experts are providing scaffolding for the less proficient learners as they formulate their responses.

5.5.1.2 Novice Multi-part Requests

In contrast to the preemptive scaffolding moves demonstrated by experts, novice speakers often waited for explicit signals of communication difficulty before rephrasing or repeating their requests. Examples of this tendency are seen in novice participants Karl (Excerpt 5-34, p. 140) and Grant (Excerpt 5-59, p. 174). In Excerpt 5-34, Karl requested information about the security measures present in the bank where Thomas worked. Although Thomas paused for 1.5 seconds, Karl did not respond to this signal, indicating a need for communication repair. Instead, Thomas was required to indicate his lack of understanding explicitly with a clarification question. Only after Thomas gave a series of such explicit signals did Karl begin to clarify the illocutionary intent of his request. In the case of Grant (Excerpt 5-59, p. 174), there was a six-second pause following his request for information, at which point Manfred explicitly asked for clarification. Such findings indicate a potential area for future focused instruction; that is to say, since expert speakers anticipated the need to rephrase spontaneously, as signaled by lack of novice response, novices should become sensitized to such communication patterns and be taught strategies that help them emulate this expert speaker behavior.

Whereas experts showed a tendency to rephrase requests more directly and clearly when faced with lengthy pauses, novices did not generally demonstrate this strategy. To illustrate, novice participant Emily did not modify an indirect request in her interaction with other participants in Discussion 4 of study instance 2 (Excerpt 5-75).

Excerpt 5-75

R3	Emily	Ich möchte eine Frage an alle stellen? Ähm, denken Sie, dass Fernsehsendungen, die sich Kinder zur Zielgruppe nehmen, hilfreich oder nicht für ein mögliches Problem mit äh äh mit negativen Auswirkungen auf Kindern sind? *I'd like to ask everyone a question?* *Um, do you think, that television programs,* *that make children their target audience,* *are helpful or not* *for a possible problem with uh uh with* *negative effects on children?* (3.5 second pause)
	John	Äh, Frau Bauer? Vielleicht..wenn Sie die Frage wiederholen würden, dann würden die die anderen Teilnehmer das äh dann besser äh verstehen. *Uh, Miss Bauer?* *Perhaps..if you were* *to repeat the question,* *then the the other participants* *would uh then better uh understand it.* (3 second pause) Können Sie das bitte wiederholen? *Can you please repeat it?*
R4	Emily	Äh, denken Sie, dass Fernsehsendungen, die sich Kinder zur Zielgruppe nehmen, hilfreich oder nicht für ein mögliches Problem mit negativen Auswirkungen auf Kindern sind? *Uh, do you think, that television programs* *that make children their target audience,*

	are helpful or not for a possible problem with negative effects on children?

In this instance, Emily was reading a request from the list she and her partner had prepared in order to moderate the discussion. The long pause following R3 indicated to John that her request was not understood by the other participants, so he prompted her to repeat the question. Although John's intent was for Emily to reformulate the question, in formulating his requests, he twice used the verb '*wiederholen*'/'to repeat'. As such, the argument can also be made that Emily was merely responding to the literal meaning of John's request, and that the illocutionary force of his utterance was only a request to repeat, which she did almost verbatim. It may also be the case that Emily is not able to make the spontaneous simplifications in production of which an expert speaker is capable. In any case, the request as formulated is semantically unclear and, even after Emily's repetition of the request, a full 10 seconds elapsed before novice participant Lisa offered a response.

The data set also contain many novice request sequences characterized by overproduction or 'waffling', which is the "excessive use of linguistic forms to fill a specific discourse 'slot' or 'move', i.e., achieve a specific pragmatic goal" (Edmonson and House, 1991, pp. 273-274). Because Edmonson and House (1991) based their analysis on the data and conclusions of Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986), they link waffling explicitly to the overuse of external modifiers. In the current study, waffling occurs less in the context of external modification and more in the production of what Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) refer to as "multiple-headed" requests, with "more than one minimal unit realizing the requestive goal" (p. 276). In certain cases, these moves were produced as a counter to the grammatical and lexical infelicities that characterized learners' production and may also reflect the fact that they did not have complete confidence in the clarity of their request (cf. novice participant Max, Excerpt 5-72, p. 191). In other cases, multiple-headed requests seem to serve a similar supportive function as expert scaffolding and are used to provide the interlocutor with multiple potential avenues of response (cf. novice participant Lisa, Excerpt 5-69, p. 187 and novice participant Joshua, Excerpt 5-61, p. 177).

5.5.2 Modified External Support Moves

5.5.2.1 Syntactically Modified External Support Moves

From the group of 17 novice participants, 6 participants produced a total of 10 modified external support moves. This set of 10 modified external support moves has two striking features: 1) they are all 'preparators' and 2) they all feature syntactic modification (i.e., use of the subjunctive mood). In total, there are 6 occurrences of '*möchten*' ('would like'), 3 occurrences of '*hätten*' ('would have') and 1 occurrence of '*wären*' ('would be') in the novice-produced 'preparators'. A typical instance of the use of '*möchten*' is seen in the final request produced by Max (Excerpt 5-73, p. 192). Although the request sequence features some "waffling" (cf. 5.5.1.2.) and infelicitous grammar, the 'preparator' shows development in relation to the routine formula he used in R1 (Excerpt 5-71, p.190; for more about formulaic language use, see section 5.5.3.). In terms of using '*hätten*' in external modification, participant Tim demonstrated an increased capacity to do so in R11 of his data set (Excerpt 5-42, p. 152), as did Joshua in R6 of his data set (Excerpt 5-65, p. 181). Finally, there is only one instance of a novice producing a form of '*wären*' in an external modifier, as seen in R5 of Joshua's data set

(Excerpt 5-64, p. 181). In addition to using the subjunctive mood to modify ‘preparators’, novices also used a variety of lexical modifications, as discussed in the following section.

5.5.2.2 Lexically Modified External Support Moves

Lexical modification to external support moves occurred less frequently than syntactic modification, appearing in the data of two novice participants who together produced 4 instances. In Excerpt 5-42 (p. 152), Tim used both a ‘minimizer’ (‘*kurz*’/‘brief’) and a ‘downtoner’ (‘*vielleicht*’/‘perhaps’) to mitigate his external modifiers. Joshua also showed an emerging tendency to use ‘downtoners’ to mitigate his ‘preparators’; Excerpts 5-63 (p. 180) and 5-64 (p. 181) both illustrate him using ‘*eigentlich*’/‘actually’ in this capacity. Interestingly, these examples show the participants using lexical modification in conjunction with syntactic modification (i.e., the subjunctive mood) to external support moves. We do not see any examples of lexical modification of external support moves occurring by itself, whereas the previous section illustrated that participants did use syntactic modification to external support moves without also deploying lexical modification.

5.5.3 The Role of Formulae in Requesting Behavior

There appears to be an important role for prefabricated speech in the study. Not only did novice participants spend time composing and revising discussion questions prior to the Web conferences, but they also seemed to make use of routine-like formulae in certain interactional contexts during the Web conferences. In this sense, formulae consist of chunks of language that are open to extension and productive modification (Wildner-Bassett, 1994). This phenomenon is most clearly represented in the current research by novice production of the ‘preparator’ and the lexical and syntactic modifications associated with it . Overall, there appears to be a gradation that at one end is characterized by unanalyzed use and at the other end shows the emergence of more productive usage patterns (Figure 6-13).

Figure 5-1: Formulaic language use in 'preparators'

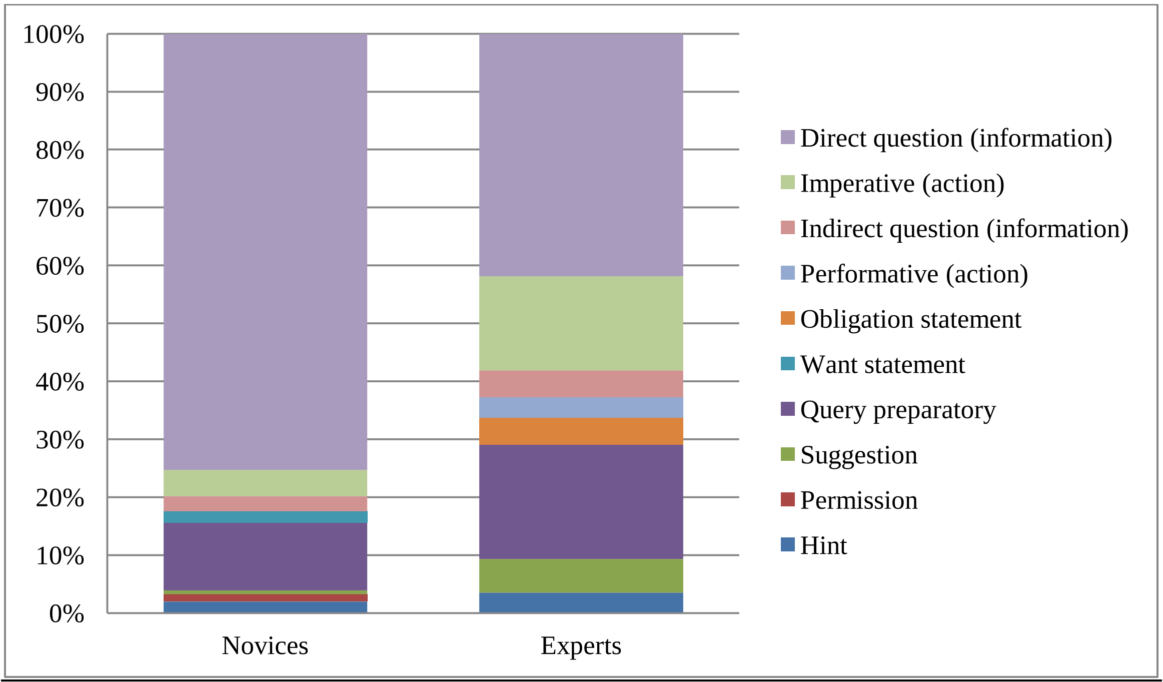
	Example ‘preparators’	Novice Frequency	Expert frequency
Unanalyzed use	Ich habe eine Frage. *I have a question.*	11 instances	1 instance
↓	Eine Frage… *A question…* Ich hatte/hätte eine Frage. *I had a question.*	14 instances	2 instances
Productive use	Darf ich eine Frage stellen? *May I ask a question?* Meine Frage wäre… *My question would be…*	8 instances	4 instances

Generally speaking, novice speakers utilize a high number of unanalyzed ‘preparators’ in comparison to expert speakers. Moreover, those instances in which they displayed more productive usage patterns correspond to times in which modified external support moves are used. As Table 5-20 illustrates, expert speakers vastly preferred productive ‘preparator’ formulae; the fact that such moves are also emergent in novice production is indicative of a move toward more expert-like language use and lends further support for the effect of interaction and focused instruction in developing requesting behavior.

5.5.4 Expert vs. Novice Performance

Production data indicated that, despite both groups using an overall majority of direct expressions, novice speakers used comparatively more direct expressions than expert speakers (Figure 5-2).

Figure 5-2: Comparison of within-groups distribution of request strategies by directness



This finding is further apparent in the quantitative analysis, in which the difference between groups was marginally significant (p=.0655), and it is confirmed by the qualitative analysis that showed a variety of indirect requesting moves by expert participants. As Gisela and Manfred did not engage in any requesting behavior, the analysis included only those participants who actually produced requests (Roland, Erika, Thomas, and John). Of these four, Roland produced the most requests (N=35, 40.6% of expert group requests) and his requesting behavior showed a very strong tendency to be direct (N=33, 92.4% of total requests). The other expert participants showed mixed use of direct and indirect requests, with John using proportionally more indirect requests (N=16, 57.1% of total requests) than direct requests (N=12, 42.9% of total requests).

Although novices used a range of requesting strategies, these strategies are not distributed in a balanced manner (Figure 5-2). Instead, direct questions for information account for a full 75.32% of all requests produced, while the remaining directness levels in total account for less than one quarter of novice requests produced. In contrast, while experts also used many direct questions for information, they exhibited a more balanced range of request strategies (Figure 5-1). Although the overall frequency of direct requests is very high in the novice group, the individual novice participants displayed tremendous variety in the directness of their request production (Table 5-26).

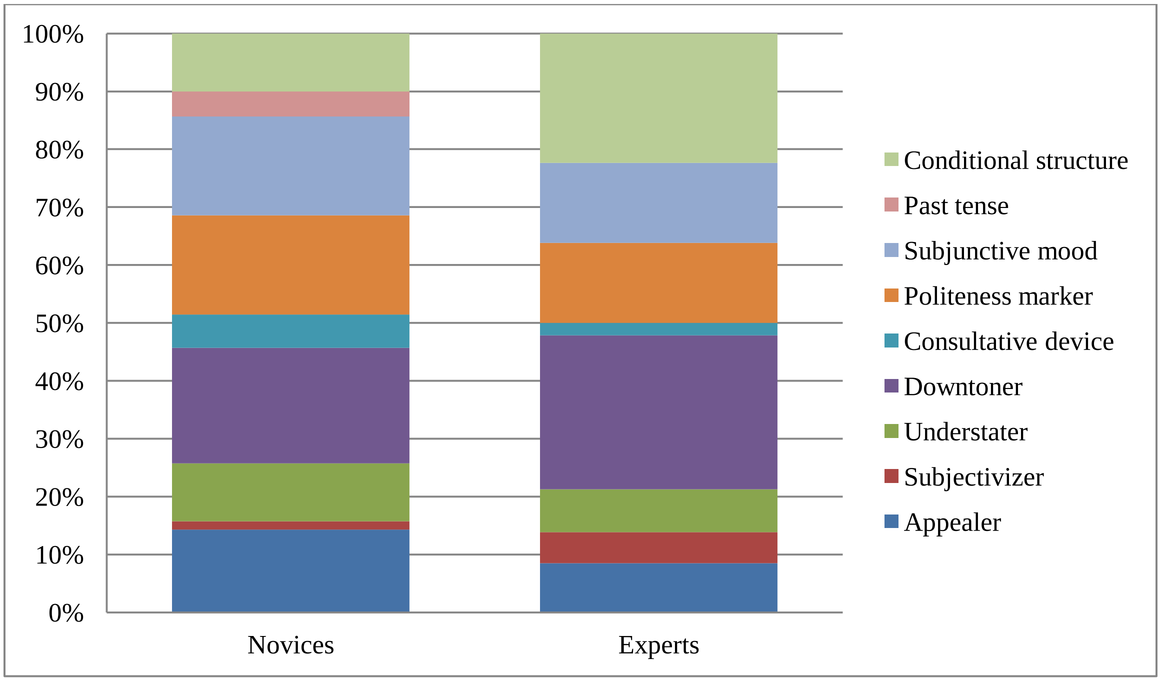
Table 5-26: Directness of requests by novice participant

Novice Participants	Frequency of direct requests (levels 1-4)	Frequency of indirect requests (levels 5-8)
Beth	9/11 (81.8%)	2/11 (18.2%)
Tim	7/11 (63.6%)	4/11 (36.4%)
Karl	5/5 (100%)	0/5 (0%)
Gregor	7/8 (87.5%)	1/8 (12.5%)
Andrea	3/8 (37.5%)	5/8 (62.5%)
Jackson	3/4 (75%)	1/4 (25%)
Kate	15/16 (93.8%)	1/16 (6.2%)
Bill	7/7 (100%)	0/7 (0%)
Jenny	9/11 (81.8%)	2/11 (18.2%)
Chuck	3/7 (42.9%)	4/7 (57.1%)
Henry	8/8 (100%)	0/8 (0%)
Grant	9/9 (100%)	0/9 (0%)
Carson	16/16 (100%)	0/16 (0%)
Lisa	9/11 (81.8%)	2/11 (18.2%)
Max	11/11 (100%)	0/11 (0%)
Emily	3/4 (75%)	1/4 (25%)
Joshua	6/6 (100%)	0/6 (0%)
Novice group total	**130/154 (84.42%)**	**23/154 (15.58%)**

It is particularly striking that, of seventeen total novice participants, seven novices produced no indirect requests at all during their interactions with expert speakers. The remaining 10 novice participants used indirect requests to varying degrees, with participants Andrea and Chuck actually producing more indirect request moves than direct requests. In contrast, all expert speakers produced indirect requests, even if the percentage of such requests varied widely.

When it comes to internal modification, novice speakers produced significantly fewer modifiers than expert speakers, excepting the lexical modifiers ‘politeness marker’, ‘understater’, and ‘appealer’. Interestingly, although the overall frequency of internal modification was higher in the expert group, both groups produced approximately the same ratio of syntactic to lexical modifiers, using twice as many of the latter type than the former (Figure 5-3).

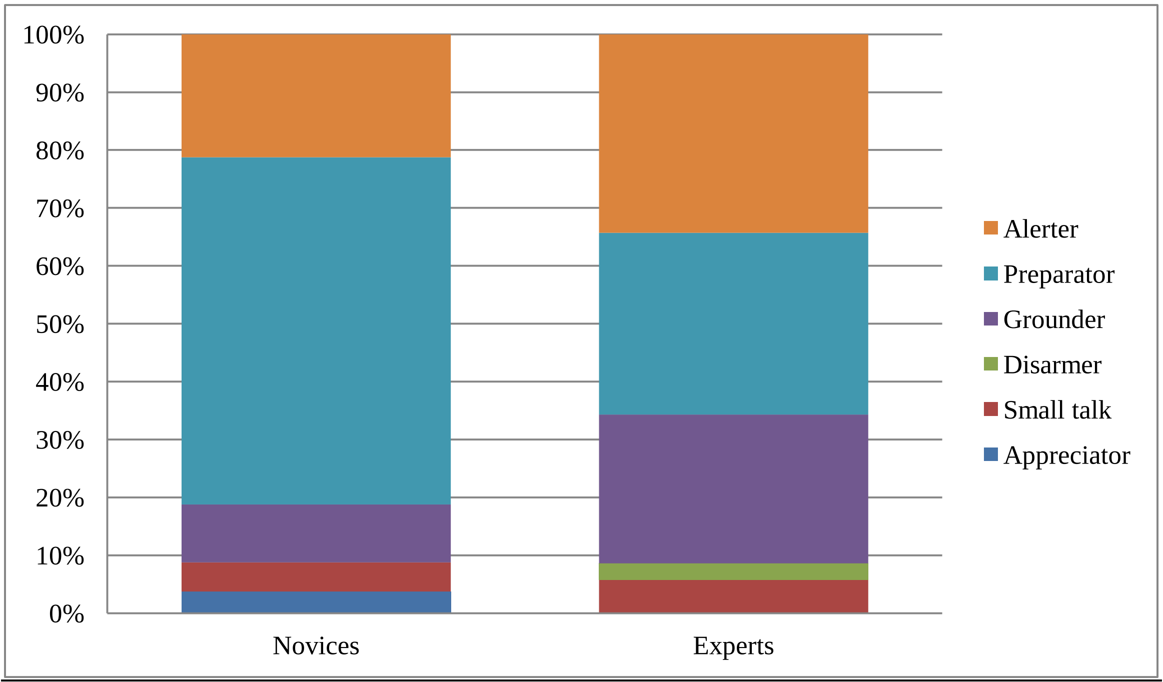
Figure 5-3: Comparison of within-groups distribution of internal modifiers



In fact, the entire range of internal modifications produced by the two groups shows a very similar distribution, which stands in contrast to the differences seen in the directness of the two groups’ request production.

Although there are certain differences in the usage patterns between the novice and expert groups (Figure 5-4), overall the two groups did not exhibit statistically significant differences in their use of external modification.

Figure 5-4: Comparison of within-groups distribution of external modifiers



Of the 35 external modifiers coded in the expert group, 32 of these instances (91.43%) occurred as ‘alerters’, ‘preparators’, or ‘grounders’. Similarly, the novice group produced a total of 80 external modifiers, 73 of which (91.25%) occurred as ‘alerters’, ‘preparators’, or ‘grounders’. ‘Disarmers’, ‘small talk’, and ‘appreciators’ comprise only a very small part of the data set for both groups, showing that these strategies were strongly dispreferred when attempting to modify requests externally.

Finally, in the focal area of appropriateness, novice requests received significantly lower ratings than expert speaker requests (p=.0001), averaging 4.14/5 vs. 4.93/5, respectively. Although rated lower than expert requests, novice requests corresponded in aggregate to ‘good’ on the appropriateness taxonomy.

5.5.5 Development of Novice Requests

In this section, the results from the learner case histories of both experimental cohorts are presented in summarized form.

Table 5-27: Summarized effect of interaction and effect of instruction

Participant	Cohort	Effect of interaction	Effect of instruction	Other observations
Beth	1	Use of elaborate preparators; high frequency of direct requests	not observable	N/A
Gregor	1	Lexical development	Improved use of subjunctive mood	Evidence of spontaneous request production
Karl	1	not observable	not observable	Move from scripted to spontaneous requests
Kate	1	High frequency of direct requests	not observable	High frequency of request production
Tim	1	not observable	Use of subjunctive form “hätte” in external modifier; improved use of modal verbs	N/A
Carson	2	not observable	not observable	High frequency of direct request production; high variability in request appropriateness
Grant	2	not observable	not observable	Low frequency of modifier production
Joshua	2	not observable	Extensive use of subjunctive forms in external modifiers	High frequency of direct request production
Lisa	2	not observable	Increased use of indirect requests	High frequency of request production
Max	2	not observable	Use of subjunctive form “möchte” in preparator	High variability in request appropriateness

As Table 5-27 shows, the learners displayed variability in the development of their requesting behavior, with certain individuals making evident progress and others lacking such progress. Learners of experimental cohort 1 seem to display a stronger effect of interaction due to the fact that experts Roland and Erika produce a greater frequency of requests (28 total) during experimental condition 1, thereby serving as a model of requesting behavior. In study 2 this effect is less apparent due to the fact that experts Thomas and Gisela produced markedly fewer requests (4 total) during experimental condition 1. The effect of instruction is especially apparent when it comes to learners' use of the subjunctive mood, with participants from both experimental cohorts showing development in this area. As these subjunctive forms do not appear in the head act, they could only be adequately described and accounted for through the use of qualitative analysis (see also 6.3.3.).

Chapter 6: Discussion

6.1 Introduction

Both the aggregate and microgenetic analyses have revealed interesting findings; it is now pertinent to reflect on the broader significance of these data and what they mean in regard to the study's research questions. To that end, the following sections present a discussion of the study results. The chapter begins with a discussion of the first research question, which focused on comparing novice and expert requesting behavior, as reflected in directness, internal modification, external modification and appropriateness. Having discussed the similarities and differences between the two groups, the chapter will turn to the second research question, which investigated development in the novice group as a result of interaction and instruction. In this area, the main finding centers on the emergence of 'modified external support moves' in certain learners' production data. To close the chapter and the dissertation, potential limitations to the research are considered, further avenues for investigation are suggested, and ramifications for the teaching of pragmatic competence are reviewed.

6.2 Research Question 1: Expert Speakers vs. Novice Speakers

The first research question investigated to what extent the requesting behavior of novice speakers was similar to or different from the requesting behavior of expert speakers, specifically regarding directness, internal modification, external modification, and appropriateness. The aggregate analysis showed that novices were marginally more direct than expert speakers in formulating their requests. This finding supports the research hypothesis and will be treated in more depth below. Results further indicated that novice speakers produced significantly fewer internal modifiers than experts, in both syntactic and lexical subcategories. This finding is in keeping with the research hypothesis. No difference was observed regarding both groups' use of external modifiers, which does not confirm the hypothesis. Finally, novice speakers produced requests rated as less appropriate than those of expert speakers, a result that is in line with the hypothesis. In sum, three of the four predictions of the research hypothesis (directness, internal modification, appropriateness) were supported by the quantitative analysis, while one (external modification) was not. Against this backdrop, qualitative analysis revealed additional interesting findings regarding the focal constructs, as shall be explained in the following sections.

6.2.1 Directness

As noted, expert and novice participants varied in the directness of their requesting behavior. Specifically, novices produced marginally more direct requests than experts (p=.0655). This result confirms a number of previous findings regarding the correlation between L2 proficiency and the ability to produce indirect requests (Félix-Brasdefer, 2007; Hill, 1997; Rose, 2000; Su, 2010). Furthermore, the two groups differed in their within-group distribution of request strategies. Despite this difference, both groups showed a marked preference for using direct requesting strategies over indirect strategies.

6.2.1.1 Directness in Expert Requests

Although each expert participant showed variation in the directness of their requesting behavior, it is possible to draw some general conclusions. First, there was a strong tendency for experts to use direct requests when seeking information, but to prefer indirect requests when requesting an action be performed. As there were several instances of action-oriented requests in the expert production data, this may have impacted the overall directness ratings attributed to the group. This conclusion must remain tentative until the correlation of request type and directness level can be more fully investigated, but if true, this tendency would certainly shape the nature of the expert discourse. Second, if attempts at indirect request formulation were not successful, experts adjusted their production to be more salient to the learners thereafter (e.g., Roland, Study 1, R2-R3 and R4-R5). This finding is similar to what Al-Gahtani and Röver (2012) observed in their study of requesting behavior in Saudi learners of Australian English. During role plays, native speakers accommodated the proficiency level of lower-level interlocutors by shortening the exchange and adapting the structure of the interaction. Third, expert participants displayed unique interactional styles, depending on their individual understanding of their role as expert. Two of the participants (Roland and Erika) used direct requests as a strategy to stimulate interaction, essentially adopting some discussion leading duties. Thomas, in contrast, showed a tendency to focus on transmission of information rather than interaction. He was willing to respond to novices' requests for information, but did not produce his own requests to extend the interaction. John, who had a different agenda than the invited experts (namely, discussion management and technical assistance), used the most indirect requesting behavior of all. Finally, in turning to a discussion of directness in requesting behavior in the novice group, it should be noted that the sheer number of direct requests produced by Roland and Erika may have in turn influenced the request production of novices in experimental cohort 1.

6.2.1.2 Directness in Novice Requests

Production data showed that novice participants used more direct requesting behavior than expert participants, confirming the research hypothesis and corroborating previous research (Félix-Brasdefer, 2007; Hill, 1997; Rose, 2000; Su, 2010). The novice group produced a total of 130 direct requests (84.42% of total group requests) during the study, and there are three possible factors that may help to explain this phenomenon. First, the requesting behavior modeled by certain expert speakers may have resulted in similar direct request production among novice participants. Additionally, certain learners may have elected to use syntactically less complex (and hence more direct) requesting strategies. While this suggests an effect for proficiency, such a claim is not entirely supported by the evidence, as will be seen in the case of high-proficiency novice participant Joshua, who used only direct requests, but also engaged in elaborate external support moves to mitigate his interaction with experts. Finally, the nature of the task itself may have influenced novice request production; that is to say, direct requests were often used to maintain active and sustained interaction for the duration of the Web conference.

6.2.1.2.1 An Effect for Interaction with Experts?

As reported, expert participant Roland had a very active interactional style, characterized by the frequent production of direct requests. Such requesting behavior served to establish solidarity with discussion participants, as well as to stimulate discussion among the novice speakers. This interactional style may have also had an influence on the subsequent request production of the novices, especially during study 1, when Roland was the first invited expert guest to participate in an online discussion. As the second guest during study 1, Erika displayed an interactional style similar to that of

Roland. She used direct requests to engage with discussion participants, to nominate topics and even to demonstrate playful behavior. While producing more indirect requests than Roland, such requests were directed at expert participant John and may not have been salient to the novice participants. Between them, Roland and Erika produce a total of 21 direct requests during discussions 1 and 2 of study 1, providing many examples of requests that, while direct, were also mitigated in other ways and appropriately executed.

These claims should be treated with caution, as contradictory evidence is also present in the production data. During study 2, Roland does not participate as an invited expert until discussion 3. Prior to this, Thomas and Gisela had acted as expert guests. As noted, Gisela produced no requests during the study, while Thomas produced a total of four requests during study 2, three direct and one indirect. This situation presents a stark contrast to the rich input afforded by Roland and Erika during discussions 1 and 2 of study 1. Nevertheless, novice participant Carson produced 13 direct requests during discussions 1 and 2 of study instance 2, suggesting that the interactional style of Roland (the third invited guest of study instance 2) did not influence Carson's production. It is possible, though, that the infrequency of requests produced by Thomas and Gisela influenced Carson in a different way. Since the two guests did not stimulate discussion with direct questions, Carson was left to moderate the discussion only with the assistance of his student co-moderator, Max, and consequently produced many direct requests for information, which again seems to suggest an effect for task design. Claims regarding the influence of expert interactional style remain speculative at best and require further substantiation and study before we can better understand the complex relationship between expert and novice production. Indeed, it is likely that another factor is also at work in Carson and other learners' request directness: proficiency.

6.2.1.2.2 Low-proficiency Direct Requests

Let it be clear at the outset that proficiency level did not form an explicit variable for investigation in this study. The comments put forth are based on *ex post facto* observation of production data and are meant to suggest avenues for further research (see section 6.4.1). With this caveat in mind, it seems that in certain cases directness in request production is subject to L2 German proficiency. In this case, it is instructive to look at the request data of Henry, a novice participant of lower proficiency. During the study Henry produced eight requests, all of which were direct, and many of which were incorrectly formulated. Excerpts 6-1 and 6-2 illustrate two such requests produced by Henry.

Excerpt 6-1

Henry	Lehren wohnt mit den- die Studenten? Ja? oder nein. *Teaching lives with the- the students?* *Yes? or no.*
Thomas	Nein. *No.*
Henry	[Nein. *[No.*
Thomas	Die Lehrer wohnen da nicht. *The teachers do not live there.*

Excerpt 6-2

Thomas	Eine Frage? *A question?*
Henry	Ja, ähm. Wenn äh, hab-haben hat man äh Freizeit auf eine Wochenende, oder was, äh nach ähm Berlin oder Hamburg gehen, oder? *Yes, um.*

	When uh, hav-have one uh free time *at a weekend, or such,* *uh to um Berlin or Hamburg go, right?* (1 second pause) Auf eine Reise gehen? *Go on a trip?*
Thomas	Ähm...ist natürlich schwierig für eine längere Reise, weil sie in der Woche in den Unternehmen tätig sind. *Um...it's of course difficult for a longer trip,* *because during the week* *they are busy in the companies.*

Although syntactically less complex than indirect request formulations, Henry still has trouble producing direct requests accurately. Based on his interlocutor's responses in Excerpt 6-1 and 6-2, it is apparent that the illocutionary force of his requests is clear, despite the grammatical infelicities. It is likely the case that at his current proficiency level Henry lacks the pragmalinguistic resources to formulate his requests more indirectly and still maintain enough clarity to be sociopragmatically appropriate. Such results would link to previous research that shows a correlation between L2 proficiency level and request directness (e.g., Félix-Brasdefer, 2007; Hill, 1997; Rose, 2000; Su, 2010), and certainly bear closer scrutiny.

6.2.1.2.3 High-proficiency Direct Requests

While lower L2 proficiency has been associated with directness in requesting behavior, that is not to say that high-proficiency novice speakers do not produce direct requests. In fact, production data show just the opposite case in the requests of participant Joshua. He produced seven requests during the study, all of which were rated as direct. As was seen in section 5.4.4.3, however, Joshua's requests are qualitatively different than those of novice participant Henry (Excerpts 6-1 and 6-2). Joshua made extensive use of syntactically complex external modification and engaged in elaborate preparatory work that preceded the head acts of his requests. In fact, Joshua is perhaps the clearest example of a novice participant who engaged in so-called ‘modified external support moves’ to mitigate his requesting behavior (see 5.5.2.).

6.2.1.2.4 Indirectness in Novice Requests

Unlike the expert speakers, novice indirect requesting behavior was usually not focused on management of discussion logistics. Instead, novice indirect requests were prevalent in introductory and/or leave-taking situations. As such situations call for routinized behavior, they could, in effect, be anticipated and planned for, and the novice participants displayed evidence of such planning. For instance, in Excerpt 5-39 (p. 149) Tim engaged in elaborate external support moves to introduce himself and his discussion co-moderators before indirectly requesting Roland to introduce himself. In the next discussion (study 1, discussion 2), novice participant Andrea produced the same sequence of external support moves followed by an indirect request for guest participant Erika to introduce herself. It can thus be concluded that Andrea and/or her partner, Jackson, were suitably impressed with Tim’s introduction during the previous discussion and sought out the same linguistic resources to draw upon in the introduction phase of their own discussion. In the previous section, it was suggested that expert speakers could influence the direct request production of learners. The case of Tim and Andrea provides reason to believe that learner-learner scaffolding also took place, influencing subsequent indirect request production. Such a result was also seen in Kinginger and Belz (2005), in which the learner Grace was able to adopt more appropriate use of pronominal address forms based more on assistance from a more knowledgeable peer, and not on her interactions with native speakers of German.

Our discussion of directness and indirectness in requesting behavior leaves us with some intriguing but unclear results. Directness in requesting behavior was dominant in both the expert and novice participant groups, with the novice speakers producing requests that were marginally more direct than the expert requests. Certain experts used direct requests to maintain dialogue and to establish solidarity and rapport with the novice discussants, while others did not. The novice participants also used direct questions to stimulate discussion with the invited experts to a great degree. Suggested reasons for this behavior include an effect for interaction with the invited experts (both input-rich and input-poor interaction), an effect for proficiency, and an effect for task design. Turning to indirect requesting behavior, expert indirect requests were produced in the context of technical assistance and discussion management. Although seen to a lesser degree than in experts, novices also produced indirect requests in certain interactional contexts, such as greeting and taking leave. With these broad conclusions in mind, let us shift attention to the next major focal feature of request mitigation, internal modification.

6.2.2 Internal Modification

Expert speakers used significantly more internal modification devices than novice speakers (p=.0000), in both lexical (p=.0007) and syntactic (p=.0038) subcategories, confirming the research hypothesis and corroborating many previous studies (Chen, 2001; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2008, 2009; Faerch & Kasper, 1989; Göy, Zeyrek, & Otcu, 2012; Hassall, 2001, 2012; Hill, 1997; Kawamura & Sato, 1996; Trosborg, 1995;

Wigglesworth & Yates, 2011; Woodfield, 2008). As in the previous section, we will first discuss the expert group before turning to the novice speakers.

6.2.2.1 Expert internal modification

Regarding syntactic modification, experts more frequently produced conditional clauses (p =.0069) and the subjunctive mood (marginal, p =.0646) than novice speakers. They did not produce any past tense structures, whereas there is record of two such instances in the novice participant data. In terms of lexical modification, the data show that experts not only produce the 'downtowner' significantly more often (p=.0044), but that these 'downtoners' are qualitatively different from novices. Whereas all expert speakers drew on modal particles such as 'mal' or 'doch', only very high proficiency learners (e.g., Kate) used modal particles. This finding was also seen in Vyatkina (2007), where L1 German exchange participants used a higher number and greater variety of modal particles than L2 German participants. Recognizing this, we now turn to a discussion of internal modification in the novice group.

6.2.2.2 Novice internal modification

Although lacking certain internal modification strategies, novices used the lexical modifier 'politeness marker' extensively in their interactions with expert speakers. Such usage supports similar findings from a number of earlier studies (e.g., Barron, 2003; Faerch & Kasper, 1989; Göy et al., 2012; House, 1989; House & Kasper, 1987; Pinto, 2005; Taguchi, 2011a), and can be attributed to the fact that the politeness marker 'please' is both easy to produce and functions as a universal and unambiguous signal to soften illocutionary force. At this point, it also bears mentioning that, although less frequently than experts, learners did produce some conditional structures and subjunctive forms. In the latter category especially, such usage often occurred external to the head act of the request (so-called ‘modified external support moves’, see section 6.3.3.) and was not captured by the quantitative analysis. For these reasons, the discussion now turns to the third area involved in mitigating requesting behavior: external modification.

6.2.3 External Modification

Statistical analysis of the two groups showed no difference in their use of external modification; in fact, the two groups displayed certain similarities in their use of external modifiers. Chief among these similarities is the frequent use of ‘alerters’ and ‘preparators’ preceding the request head act. The preponderance of ‘alerters’ and ‘preparators’ prior to the head act is explained by the need to maintain explicit verbal management of turn-taking. In other words, a computer-mediated environment does not afford interlocutors the normal paralinguistic cues (i.e., subtleties of facial expression and body language) that are available when managing face-to-face communication. Instead speakers must utilize more explicit verbal strategies (i.e., ‘alerters’ and ‘preparators’) to signal availability and willingness to communicate. Although not statistically significant, the learners did produce an overall higher frequency of ‘preparators’ than experts. This trend likely reflects an effect for the task design: in needing to maintain a structured discussion environment, student discussion moderators (and other novice participants) were obliged to use linguistic cues to provide coherence and flow.

In certain cases the data also showed that several novice participants (e.g., Karl, Jackson, Grant, Carson, Bill) used limited or no external support moves in conjunction with very direct requesting strategies. The effect of such requesting behavior is that such requests appear abruptly in the discourse, making it seem that these novice participants are eager to ask their questions in order to be done with them (Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2012). Such minimalistic request patterns may again be the result of task design, but in an unexpected way. The task guidelines stated that discussion moderators were to prepare a series of questions to stimulate discussion; some novice participants followed this proviso to the letter of the law, and seemingly did not engage in spontaneous production beyond that stipulated in the task description.

6.2.4 Appropriateness

In the current study, appropriateness is treated as a holistic category integrating the combined influence of internal modification, external modification, grammaticality, and overall discourse appropriateness. In certain instances, lack of internal or external modification in novice requests contributed to lower appropriateness ratings. In other cases, there is an effect for lack of grammaticality and/or discourse control, wherein request sequences with major grammatical infelicities or incorrect lexis received lower appropriateness ratings. Interestingly, the data analysis also suggests that ungrammaticality and lack of discourse control may conflate with novice participant interactional style, thereby strongly affecting overall appropriateness of request production in certain novice participants.

6.2.4.1 Novice Appropriateness: Internal and External Modification

Request appropriateness is subject to both internal and external modification. Depending on the particular circumstances and content of the request, a speaker may need to draw on both kinds of modifiers. In the current study, we can see several instances where lack of one and/or the other type of modification has resulted in lower request appropriateness in the novice group. In Chapter 5, the analysis presented novice participant Beth querying expert participant Erika with an appropriateness rating of '3/fair' (Excerpt 5-19, p. 123). Although this request features internal modification, these modifiers end up trivializing the request, not mitigating it. In other words, Beth framed the question as one that was easy to answer, but Erika's response indicated that she found Beth's request less than easy to answer. We also saw that novice participant Carson (Excerpt 5-49, p. 165) utilized a 'politeness marker' in his request that Gisela introduce herself, but the overall appropriateness rating of the request stands at '2/poor'. Part of the reason for this lower rating is the lack of external modification preceding the request, but also the numerous grammatical infelicities that characterize the utterance. Recognizing the prominent role of grammaticality in request appropriateness, the discussion will now briefly treat this topic.

6.2.4.2 Novice Appropriateness: Grammaticality and Discourse Control

As seen in Excerpts 6-1 and 6-2, novice participant Henry produced direct requests that featured a number of grammatical infelicities. These request sequences received appropriateness ratings of '2/poor', due mainly to lack of grammaticality. Such a trend was also evident in the production data of novice participant Carson (e.g., Excerpt 5-49, p. 165), as well as participant Gregor (e.g., Excerpts 5-26 and 5-27, pp. 130 and 132). In addition to the influence of grammaticality on appropriateness, the data revealed an effect for lack of discourse control, often in relation to production of specific lexical items. This phenomenon is apparent in several novice participants' requests, including those of Max, Carson, and Gregor. For example, in Excerpt 5-72 (p. 191), Max's illocutionary intent was obscured by use of non-target-like vocabulary. Unable to produce the German word for 'celebrity', Max was left to negotiate the meaning of his request with expert participant Gisela, and was unable to do so successfully despite multiple attempts. Ultimately, novice participant Lisa inserted herself into the discussion in order to assist with this clarification, and the discussion was then able to continue. In the case of Carson, Excerpt 5-51 (p. 166) showed that the low appropriateness rating was rooted in his unsuccessful attempt to circumlocute the German word '*Wahlbeteiligung'* ('voter participation') for expert participant Gisela, and the discussion only got back on track when participant George provided the word. Finally, Gregor's production in Excerpts 5-29 (p. 134) and 5-30 (p. 135), showed how use of the wrong lexical item can result in lower appropriateness, but also that such instances can present opportunities for correcting infelicitous vocabulary in subsequent production.

6.2.4.3 Novice Appropriateness: Interactional Style

In Chapter 5, it was noted that novice participants fit certain interactional profiles, namely as minimalists, explorers, and risk takers. Risk takers such as Gregor and Carson did not rely only on planned and pre-scripted requests, but were instead willing to produce requests spontaneously. Having not been subject to planning and peer review, instances of spontaneous request production often featured errors of grammar and discourse control, which in turn affected the appropriateness rating. In contrast, minimalists such as Jackson or Chuck "stuck to the script" and did not produce requests spontaneously, resulting in comparatively higher appropriateness ratings. It thus seems that learners who prioritized fluent interaction over accuracy produced requests with lower appropriateness ratings.

Before moving on to a discussion of the second research question, let us summarize the discussion comparing novice and expert request production. First, although novices used marginally more direct requests than experts, both groups produced a majority of direct requests in order to keep the communication clear and to build rapport among interlocutors. Next, as compared to expert speakers, novices underused internal modifiers, but not in the case of ‘politeness markers’, ‘understaters’, and ‘appealers’. The high frequency of ‘politeness markers’ in novice production data can be attributed to the fact that ‘please’ is both easy to produce and it has an unambiguous function in reducing illocutionary force. Regarding external modification, the groups showed similarities in their production patterns: namely, the frequent use of ‘alerters’ and ‘preparators’ as discussion management devices that signal willingness and ability to participate. Finally, appropriateness ratings in the novice group were lower than the expert group, due to the influence of internal and external modification, grammaticality and discourse control, and interactional style.

6.3 Research Question 2: Developmental Trends among Novice Speakers

The second research question investigated to what extent novice speakers changed their requesting behavior as a result of focused instruction and interaction with expert speakers, specifically regarding directness, internal modification, external modification, and appropriateness. Aggregate analysis showed that the major categories did not change significantly between the two experimental conditions; however, some change was seen in two subcategories of external modification: ‘alerter’ and ‘preparator’. Learners produced marginally fewer of these external support moves during experimental condition 2, which could represent a move towards more expert-like usage patterns. As with the first research question, the qualitative analysis has helped to provide context and depth to the explanation of these trends, and has revealed an especially interesting development regarding external modification in the novice group: the emergence of ‘modified external support moves’.

6.3.1 Directness

Novices did not change their requests to become more indirect, as was hypothesized. Rather, like the expert speakers, novices tended to favor clarity at the expense of syntactic complexity, and produced mostly direct requests in both experimental conditions. In addition, analysis revealed that solidarity and rapport were more important interactional goals than deference and social distance. As the need to build rapport functioned as a communicative imperative during both experimental conditions, this resulted in no observable change in novice requesting behavior. It may also be the case that interaction with expert speakers provided an interactional template that influenced the subsequent direct request production in novice participants, as discussed in section 6.2.3.1.1. Finally, the task design remained constant between the two experimental conditions, which may have further contributed to the lack of change in novice directness.

6.3.2 Internal Modification

As internal modification devices were the explicit focus of the instructional module, the researcher expected to see an increase in their use by the novice speakers. Such was not the case, as shown by the aggregate analysis. In fact, the data set contains relatively few instances of novice internal modification in experimental condition 2, and when these modifications were produced, they did not always lead to more appropriate requesting behavior (Excerpt 6-3).

Excerpt 6-3

	Jenny	Also, nach eine Frage,

	äh, hätten Sie Vorschläge, wie eine Praktikant in einer ausländischen Firma ähm erfolgreich arbeiten kann? *So, to a question,* *uh, would you have suggestions,* *how an intern can successfully work* *in an international company?*
Thomas	Vorschläge konkret nicht. *Concrete suggestions no.*

In Excerpt 6-3, novice participant Jenny produces the subjunctive form ‘*hätten*’ (‘would have’) when inquiring about suggestions for international interns. In this context, the subjunctive mood is ambiguous; while it has the effect of establishing social distance, it also serves to abstract and hypothesize the utterance, resulting in a reduced appropriateness rating of ‘4/good’. In contrast to this finding, the microgenetic analysis reveals a different and intriguing developmental pattern: an increase in the use of syntactic (and lexical) modification outside the boundary of the head act.

6.3.3 External Modification

Existing coding taxonomies (including the one used in the current study) are well able to capture both the type and frequency of various external modifiers. To that end, aggregate analysis revealed a marginal decrease in the novice group’s use of two specific external modifiers: the ‘alerter’ and the ‘preparator’. In conducting the current project, it has become apparent that such data tell just part of the story. While the GLMM found only small changes in the novice group between experimental conditions, microgenetic analysis revealed an opposite trend: that many learners were able to mitigate their requesting behavior by producing lexical and syntactic modifications outside the boundary of the head act. In other words, a given external modifier can be qualitatively different from the same type of external modifier, depending on the specific syntax and lexis deployed, even though this fact is not reflected in the quantitative analysis. In total, the novice data set included 10 instances of such ‘modified external support moves’. These moves are found in both experimental cohorts and appear predominantly in experimental condition 2 (N=9, 90% of total modified external support moves), thereby providing support for the effect of focused instruction in requesting behavior.

The emergence of syntactically and lexically modified external support moves in experimental condition 2 is of interest for a number of reasons. First, their presence provides evidence for the effectiveness of targeted instruction in developing pragmatic competence (Belz & Vyatkina, 2005, 2008; Vyatkina & Belz, 2006; Vyatkina, 2007), albeit in a manner the researcher did not expect. Second, they point out the urgent need to expand and modify coding procedures used for quantitative analysis of pragmatic development. Finally, and stemming from the previous insight, they reveal an underexplored area in speech act analysis, with potential implications beyond requesting behavior and interlanguage pragmatics. It must also be noted that, even as some novice participants began to modify their external support moves, others continued to produce formulaic utterances.

6.3.4 Appropriateness

Overall, novice participants did not increase their ability to produce appropriate requests as a result of interaction with expert speakers and participation in focused instruction. There are a number of possible explanations for this finding. First, although rated lower than experts, novice participants displayed generally high levels of appropriateness in the study. These high appropriateness ratings can be attributed to the fact that novice participants were cognizant of the fact that they were interacting with status unequal partners, and produced language reflecting this dynamic (i.e., requests rated as mostly appropriate). It is therefore not surprising that there was not a significant increase in a value that was high to begin with. A second possible explanation may be the fact that the length of the study was constrained by the institutional calendar of the university, meaning that data was collected over a period of three months, even though aspects of pragmatic competence can take much longer to develop (Barron, 2003; Schauer, 2004, 2007) . Finally, as the appropriateness taxonomy included a descriptor for grammaticality and discourse control, the continued presence of infelicitous utterances in experimental condition 2 has consequently impacted the appropriateness ratings of the novice group.

6.4 Study Limitations

In presenting the conclusions of the research, it is necessary to address three specific areas that present a potential limitation to the findings, but which also suggest future avenues of research: participant proficiency, the intensity of the pedagogical treatment, and the length of the study.

6.4.1 Participant Proficiency

Study data were collected from two separate groups of students enrolled in a third-year German class over two successive fall semesters. The minimum requirement to gain entry in to the class was completion of four semesters of foundational study in German; however, before enrolling in the course, several participants had acquired higher levels of proficiency through other coursework and/or through participation in a study abroad program. As a result, the classes were comprised of learners representing a large spectrum of proficiency and language ability. Future iterations of the study would be well served by carefully and empirically establishing learner proficiency at the outset (e.g., Hill, 2007; Taguchi, 2006) of data collection in order to allow for more robust conclusions regarding differences in requesting behavior in the novice group.

6.4.2 Intensity of Pedagogical Treatment

The developmental aspect of the study is based in part on the novices' participation in an instructional module in appropriate requesting behavior (see 3.9.). In both experimental cohorts, the instructional intervention was comprised of 150 minutes of instruction delivered within one calendar week. The pedagogical intervention thus occurred once during each study instance, taking place between Web conferences 2 and 3 in the given semester. As was seen in Vyatkina (2007) and Belz and Vyatkina (2008), ongoing and iterative focused instruction leads to more developmental gains. One could therefore design a study (and, by extension, course curriculum) to include three instances of focused instruction, to occur between Web conferences 1 - 2, 2 - 3, and 3 - 4. This would certainly allow learners more contact with and discussion of production data, and could consequently expedite the development of requesting behavior. Such modifications to the study would also require more institutional support, in the form of additional transcribers to expedite the rapid development of multiple sets of data-driven instructional materials.

6.4.3 Length of Study

A final consideration regarding limitations to the research design regards the length of the study. Although data was collected over successive fall semesters, in each instance, the data collection did not continue beyond the end of the semester. As such, the production data represent learner performance and development over a period of approximately three months. In this limited time span, it is not surprising that learner development is emergent, but highly variable. To further the longitudinal scope of this study would require data collection over a longer period, such as an entire academic year; however, in the context of a university setting, with variable student majors and a fixed academic calendar, maintaining the integrity of learner cohorts over multiple semesters could prove challenging indeed.

6.5 Future Research Directions

In addition to the research possibilities discussed in the previous section, the study suggests three additional interrelated lines of exploration related to: research methodology, teacher education and curriculum design.

6.5.1 Coding Taxonomies for Speech Act Analysis

A major contribution of this study lies in its robust investigation of inter-coder reliability for coding pragmatic units. As discussed in section 4.3, the taxonomies developed for this study are based on other taxonomies previously deployed in the study of requesting behavior. The taxonomies were well suited to their respective domains of inquiry, with one main exception: external modification. This taxonomy was able to only capture the broadest trends in the production data due to the fact that it only classifies and quantifies specific external support moves. What is needed is a way to not only perform the necessary classification and quantification, but to also show that it is possible for such external modifications to feature additional layers of lexical and syntactic modification. As the modified external support moves in the present study were constrained to the 'preparator', this modifier seems like a promising place to begin developing an extended coding framework for external modifications.

6.5.2 Telecollaborative Teacher Competences

While not the main focus of the present study, the investigator/instructor acquired and demonstrated a number of telecollaborative teacher competences (O'Dowd, 2013) necessary for conducting an effective online exchange between participants (see also Cunningham, 2013). Of great interest for the broader field of teacher education is to know what experiences, attitudes, and knowledge enable the development of telecollaborative teacher competences in a broader sample of telecollaborative teachers. The specific areas to be investigated would include the role of praxis and reflection in developing telecollaborative competences, as well as whether or not guided praxis and critical reflection are predictive of further engagement with telecollaborative exchange.

6.5.3 Task Design in L2 Pragmatics Instruction

The study showed that a purposefully designed pedagogical task can prompt authentic language production, leading to specific instructional outcomes. Even though they displayed differential participation patterns and interactional styles, all learners produced requests in the context of the online discussions. In contrast, expert participants showed more variability: participants such as Roland and Erika requested very actively, while Gisela and Manfred participated in a more limited manner, producing no requests of their own. In additional to individual factors, another possible explanation for this outcome is that the instructor/researcher designed the pedagogical task so that the learners were given very specific directions to follow in preparing and performing the task, whereas the experts were given more general guidelines on how to prepare, leaving certain aspects of their preparation and participation voluntary (e.g., whether or not to create presentation slides). A future iteration of the study would therefore benefit from the expert participants receiving more detailed and systematic task guidelines to mirror more closely the task preparation of the novice participants.

In addition to ensuring adequate preparation for expert participants, the study suggests further research related to task design and novice participation. In section 6.2.5.2, the researcher noted that certain learners produced direct unmodified requests in order to finish their turns-at-talk quickly while still adhering to the task guidelines. Moreover, the analysis showed that certain learners (i.e., *minimalists*) produced requests only in order to complete the discussion moderation task and did not engage in any “unnecessary” and spontaneous request production. It is therefore clear that task design can have a differential impact on the quality and quantity of the language produced by various exchange participants.

Of interest for future investigation would be to determine the relationship between task design, learner participation, and learning outcomes. That is to say, would designing and implementing a wider selection of telecollaborative tasks more effectively engage a greater range of learners? Related to this question is the relationship of task design and learning outcomes. Implementing an oral production task in the context of the present investigation led to specific learning outcomes that were tied to the course curriculum. One idea for adapting the current pedagogical research model would be to implement a telecollaborative exchange in an advanced-level German for the Professions course (e.g., *GERM 462: The German Business Environment*) with a focus on developing skills and strategies for deliberation, argumentation and negotiation. So as to afford course participants opportunities to use their language skills productively in order to develop new knowledge, they could partner with L1 German business students to work through business case studies that reflect the content of the respective courses. Such a process would require participants to conduct and share research, plan and negotiate aspects of project completion and, ultimately, to present the results of their work in an engaging and comprehensive manner. A number of linguistic targets suggest themselves as potential research foci in the given example, including the speech acts of suggesting and dis/agreeing. Ultimately, as each individual learning context must specify its desired instructional goals, pedagogical tasks should be designed that enable participants to achieve the specified outcomes. It is therefore of great interest for both second language acquisition theory and language teaching practice to understand better the relationship between task design, language production, and curricular goals.

6.6 Telecollaboration and L2 Pragmatics Instruction

At the outset of the dissertation the author cited a perceived need to broaden the range of discourse options normally afforded to learners in a classroom environment, so as to provide authentic meaning-making possibilities in a professional communicative context. The researcher therefore implemented a telecollaborative exchange between American L2 learners of German and L1-German-speaking professionals living and working in Germany. The purpose of this exchange was to deepen cultural and linguistic knowledge related to professional communication, with a specific focus on developing polite requesting behavior. For many participants, the telecollaborative exchange proved useful and allowed for the development of linguistic knowledge both as a result of interaction with more knowledgeable partners as well as participation in a focused instructional module. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that not all learners developed in a similar manner, based on factors such as proficiency and interactional style. This finding confirms that telecollaboration can result in differential development and divergent learning trajectories, a result seen in other treatments of the topic (e.g., Belz & Vyatkina, 2006; Vyatkina, 2007). Along with these studies, the current research shows that, when implemented purposefully and mindfully, telecollaboration can have tangible benefits for the development of interlanguage pragmatic competence.

6.7 Conclusion

This study reported on two interrelated strands of inquiry: 1) a comparison of the requesting behavior of expert and novice speakers of German, and 2) the development of requesting behavior in novice speakers of German. The investigation was afforded by the integration of a telecollaborative exchange between learners of German for Professional Purposes and working professionals in Germany and emerged from a sociocultural understanding of language's role in mediating knowledge and mental activity. While the study demonstrates a positive effect for interaction and explicit instruction, which broadly corroborates previous interventional studies (e.g., Belz & Vyatkina; House, 1996; Takahashi 2001, 2007; Vyatkina, 2007), the effect is not universal and learners' individual developmental paths are shaped by other factors such as proficiency level, interactional style, and disposition towards task completion, each of which suggest a promising avenue for future research endeavors.

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Appendix A

1. *A: Kennt jemand von Ihnen diese Firma?*
B: Ja, wir können auf zustimmen klicken, wenn wir könnten...uh...kennten diese Firma.

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

2. Da wäre meine Frage an Sie...

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

3. Ich wollte einfach fragen, was die erfolgreichste Abteilung der Firma ist.

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

4. A: Können Sie mich hören?
B: Ja, ich höre Sie sehr gut!

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

5. *A: Ich hatte eine andere Frage, wenn das auch ok ist.*
B: Ja, sehr gut, wir können das machen.

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

6. *A: Können Sie das erklären? Ich glaube, wir verstehen das nicht so, wie Sie möchten.*

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

7. *A: Und in dem Feld könnte ich schon vorstellen, dass man da ein Praktikum machen kann.*
B: Ja, sehr interessant.

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

8. *Fast alle wissen nicht so sicher, was wir möchten wollen.*

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

9. Gibt’s schon von Ihrer Seite aus schon Fragen?

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

10. Ich musste Sie zuerst sagen, können Sie uns bitte erklären, was eine Berufsoberschule ist.

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

11. Ich habe eine Frage...

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

12. Sprich, dass dieses Unternehmen Ihnen beibringt, was Sie können müssen für Ihren Beruf.

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

*13.	Der Begriff Geselle sagt Ihnen gar nett, oder?*

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

*14.	Sie müssen oder wollen in diesen drei Jahren neue Erfahrungen sammeln.*

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

*15.	Aber da Frage ich Sie...*

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

Appendix B

Etwas höflicher, bitte!

Wie höflich sind diese Ausdrücke? Evaluieren Sie die Sätze nach dem folgenden Schema:

sehr unhöflich=1 unhöflich=2 höflich=3 ziemlich höflich=4 am höflichsten=5

Ausdruck	**Evaluierung**
Wärst du so nett und machst die Tür zu?	
Würdest du bitte die Tür zumachen?	
Mach die Tür zu!	
Kannst du bitte die Tür zumachen?	
Dürfte ich dich bitten, die Tür zuzumachen?	
Machst du bitte die Tür zu?	
Könntest du bitte die Tür zumachen?	
Wärst du so freundlich und könntest die Tür zumachen?	
Tür zu!	

Zum Nachdenken: Was unterscheidet die Sätze bezüglich des Höflichkeitsgrads?

Appendix C

On Friday, November 11 we will meet in order to discuss the online discussion component of the course and to prepare for the remaining two discussions. In order to facilitate our lesson, please complete the following survey. Once completed, save the file and upload it to the “Course Documents” folder of the class Blackboard site using the following format “survey_first name_last name” (e.g., “survey_joe_cunningham”).

Survey instructions: In order to complete the survey, you will be asked to evaluate several exchanges occurring in the context of a web conference between learners of German for Professional Purposes and invited experts from Germany.

After reading a given exchange, you will be asked to state whether you agree or disagree that an exchange is grammatical and appropriate. “Grammaticality” refers to whether or not the language conforms to the rules and patterns of Modern Standard German as spoken in Germany, and as taught in your German courses. “Appropriateness” refers to how acceptable a statement is as uttered by the speaker. Factors to consider when making your evaluations regarding appropriateness include both politeness (Is the speaker too direct or rude?) and context (Does the speaker’s utterance make sense given what other speakers have said?).

Following your evaluations, you will be asked to give a short written explanation of your rating. Please use this section to provide details about your evaluation of the exchange. There are no right or wrong answers to the survey items. Rather, I am interested in your individual evaluations of the exchanges given. Thank you for your participation.

Example:

Speaker A: *Und in dem Feld könnte ich schon vorstellen, dass man da ein Praktikum machen kann.*
Speaker B: *Ja, sehr interessant.*

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
It is grammatical.	[✓ 1]	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	[✓ 3]	4	5
Explanation of your rating: *I don’t think the response is appropriate. Speaker B’s response makes no sense in reply to an open-ended comment like that. “Das könnte ich mich auch vorstellen” or something more specific would make more sense.*					

1. **Speaker A:** *Dann können Sie alle sich bitte vorstellen...ein Bisschen...Name und Hauptfach.*
Speaker B: *Ich bin ______.* (To Speaker C) *Okay...Was ist Ihre Stelle?*
Speaker C: *Sie stellen sich nicht mehr untereinander vor?*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

2. **Speaker A:** *Können Sie mich hören?*
Speaker B: *Ja, ich höre Sie sehr gut.*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

3. **Speaker A:** *Also, wenn man Englisch als Hauptfach hätte, gibt es irgendeine Internship dafür?*
Speaker B: *Sie haben die Möglichkeit, wenn Sie sagen, sie möchten Lehrerin sein oder als Lehrerin tätig sein.*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

4. **Speaker A:** *Hallo, ich heiße _______ und ich bin Moderator für diese Diskussion. Ja, bitte vorstellen Sie unsere* (1 second pause) *Ja.*
Speaker B: *Ja...Vorstellen. Mein Name ist _______.*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

5. **Speaker A:** *Was denken Sie von Occupy Wall Street?*
Speaker B: *Ja, gute Frage. Ich find's nicht schlecht. Vielleicht ein Bisschen übertrieben...aber ein Zeichen zu setzen, dass manche Dinge in die falsche Richtung gehen, das finde ich immer gut.*
(10 second pause)
Speaker A: *Danke.*
(4.5 second pause)
Speaker C: *Es ist jetzt noch in Denver, ich glaube, Occupy Wall Street.*
(4 second pause)
Speaker C: *Wie alt ist der SPD?*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

6. **Speaker A:** *Ich hätte eine kurze Frage. Es ist mit diesem Thema ein Bisschen unverbind- unverbunden vielleicht, aber ich möchte wissen, wie viel Deutsch möch- muss man sprechen können, um als Praktikant bei der Volksbank zu arbeiten?*
Speaker B: *Wie viel Deutsch ist schwer zu sagen, da ich die Levels nicht kenne.*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

7. **Speaker A:** *Wir hoffen, dass wir das Haus nächstes Jahr wieder nutzen.*
(5.5 second pause)
Speaker A: *Reichte Ihnen das zum Thema Unterbringung?*
(3.5 second pause)
Speaker B: *Also, ist es..es ist immer die gemeinsame Haus?*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

8. **Speaker A:** *Bewerben können Sie sich erstmal, wenn Sie Interesse haben, denn ist unsere Aufgabe ein Unternehmen zu finden.*
Speaker B: *Danke. Das werde ich, wenn ich Interesse habe.*
Speaker A: *Ja, wunderbar!*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5

Explanation of your rating:

9. **Speaker A:** *So, auch an allen, wir haben viel über die deutsche politische System angehört. Welche Vorteile hat das deutsche politische System über das amerikanische System?*
(8.5 second pause)
Speaker B: *Also, ich würde sagen –Könnt ihr mich hören?– Ich würde sagen, in Deutschland gibt es mehrere Möglichkeiten für kleinere Parteien.*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

10. **Speaker A:** *Können Sie uns sagen, was würden einige Unterschiede zwischen deutsch Praktikum und amerikanische Praktikum?*
(3.5 second pause)
Speaker B: *Die Unterschiede von deutschem und amerikanischem Praktikum? Ich weiß jetzt gar nicht, wie das amerikanische Praktikum aufgebaut ist.*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

11. **Speaker A:** *So am Anfang bitte beschreiben Sie die Parteisystem ins Deutschland für uns.*
Speaker B: *Oh! Das ist nicht einfach, weil wir nicht nur zwei große Parteien haben.*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

12. **Speaker A:** *Ich hatte eine andere Frage, wenn das auch okay ist.*
Speaker B: *Ja, sehr gut, wir können das machen.*

	Agree Neutral Disagree				
It is grammatical.	1	2	3	4	5
It is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of your rating:					

Now please take a moment to reflect on the online discussion component of the course.

1. What do you think has gone well so far?

2. What do you think has been problematic so far?

3. Do you have any questions or suggestions regarding the next two discussions?

4. Is there anything else you would like to comment on?

Appendix D

Making interaction more appropriate and effective

DIRECTIONS: Please look at the five interactions given below. If you feel that any are lacking in appropriateness, rewrite the interaction to make it more appropriate. If you feel the interaction is already appropriate, do nothing.

Speaker A: *Dann können Sie alle sich bitte vorstellen...ein Bisschen...Name und Hauptfach.*
Speaker B: *Ich bin ______.* (To Speaker C) *Okay...Was ist Ihre Stelle?*
Speaker C: *Sie stellen sich nicht mehr untereinander vor?*

Speaker A: *So am Anfang bitte beschreiben Sie die Parteisystem ins Deutschland für uns.*
Speaker B: *Oh! Das ist nicht einfach, weil wir nicht nur zwei große Parteien haben.*

Speaker A: *Ich hatte eine andere Frage, wenn das auch okay ist.*
Speaker B: *Ja, sehr gut, wir können das machen.*

Speaker A: *Ich musste Sie zuerst sagen, können Sie uns bitte erklären, was eine Berufsoberschule ist.*
Speaker B: *Ist okay, wir können sofort auf das Thema Berufsoberschule gerne eingehen, wenn Sie möchten.*

Speaker A: *Ich habe eine Frage*
Speaker B: *Ja?*

Danke für Ihre Mitbeteiligung!

Appendix E

Coding requests for in/directness and appropriateness

I am conducting a study of the development of requesting behavior among learners of German for professional purposes in the context of Web conferences that occurred between the learners and expert speakers of German. In order to examine requesting behavior, I am looking at two specific aspects of requests: level of in/directness and level of appropriateness. To that end, each instance of requesting behavior that occurred during the Web conferences must be coded according to its level of in/directness and appropriateness, using two coding taxonomies that I have developed. Your participation will help to ensure that the rating of the data remains objective and unbiased. Thank you for your time and effort!

In order to assist you in your coding of the requests, a number of steps have been taken. First, you will see the coding taxonomies that are to be used in evaluating in/directness and appropriateness (Part 1). Next, you will see three examples of requests that have been coded using these taxonomies (Part 2). Here you will notice that in each case Speaker 1 is making the focal request. Speaker 2 is included in the interaction in order to provide contextual information that assists in determining the in/directness and appropriateness of the exchange. In Part 3, you are asked to code 24 requests, following the examples that have been given in Part 2. When coding these requests, please read each transcription carefully and determine the level of in/directness and appropriateness of Speaker 1 in each request, using the two separate coding taxonomies. Please also include a brief explanation of what features helped you to make your determination. Your explanations may be in German or English.

PART 1: Coding taxonomies

Coding taxonomy for in/directness:

This taxonomy is used to determine how direct a request is. Level 1 indicates the most direct requests, while Level 6 indicates the most indirect requests.

Ratings	**Descriptors**	**Examples**
1. -Conventional questions	The request is conveyed by a conventional question	*-Wie heißen Sie?* (What is your name?)
2. -Direct preparatory statements -Imperatives -Performatives	The request is preceded by a direct statement and/or directly conveyed by an imperative sentence or performative verb	*-Ich habe eine Frage...* (I have a question...) *-Stellen Sie sich bitte vor.* (Please introduce yourself.)
3. -Indirect preparatory statements -Want statements	The request is preceded by an indirect statement and/or is derivable in a want/wish/need sentence	*-Meine Frage wäre…* (My question would be…) *-Ich möchte, dass Sie sich vorstellen*. (I would like you to introduce yourself.)

4. -Preparatory questions	The request contains reference to preparatory conditions such as the hearer’s ability, willingness or possibility to perform the requested action	*-Können/Würden Sie sich bitte vorstellen?* (Could/Would you please introduce yourself?)
5. -Permissions	In formulating the request, the speaker asks for the hearer’s permission	*-Darf ich Sie bitten, sich vorzustellen?* (May I ask you to introduce yourself?) *-Ich darf Sie nun bitten, sich vorzustellen.* (I would now ask that you introduce yourself.)
6. -Mitigated preparatory statements	The request contains reference to preparatory conditions and to the speaker’s wants and wishes in embedded questions or sentences	*-Es wäre schön, wenn Sie sich vorstellen könnten/würden.* (It would be nice, if you could/would introduce yourself.)

Coding taxonomy for appropriateness:

This taxonomy is used to determine how appropriate a request is. Level 1 indicates the least appropriate requests, while Level 6 indicates the most appropriate requests.

Ratings	**Descriptors**
1. No performance	-No performance. -Interlocutor is unable to respond to request.
2. Very poor	-Expressions are very difficult or too short to understand. -Interlocutor responds to request with great difficulty (i.e., excessive pausing, many false starts, characterization of request as very unclear or hard to respond to, etc.).
3. Poor	-Due to interference from grammatical and discourse errors, appropriateness is difficult to determine. -Interlocutor responds to request with difficulty. (i.e., pausing, false starts, characterization of request as unclear or hard to respond to, etc.).
4. Fair	-Expressions are only somewhat appropriate. -Grammatical and discourse errors are noticeable, but they do not interfere with appropriateness. -Interlocutor responds to request with some difficulty. (i.e., some pausing or false starts, repetition of some parts of request, etc.).
5. Good	-Expressions are mostly appropriate. -Very few grammatical and discourse errors. -Interlocutor responds to request with little difficulty. (i.e., little pausing, few false starts, no explicit characterization of request).
6. Excellent	-Expressions are fully appropriate for the situation. -No or almost no grammatical and discourse errors. -Interlocutor responds to request with no difficulty. (i.e., no pausing or false starts, characterization of request as interesting or easy to respond to, etc.).

PART 2: Examples of coded requests

Example 1:

Speaker 1:	Das ist, glaub' ich, in den USA etwas anders, oder? Wenn ich hier mal die Frage stellen darf?
Speaker 2:	Ja, das ist sehr anders.

In/directness rating:	**5**
Explanation: *In formulating the request, Speaker 1 asks for permission using "Wenn ich hier mal die Frage stellen darf?"*	
Appropriateness rating:	**6**
Explanation: *The request is fully appropriate for the situation. There are no grammatical or discourse errors. The interlocutor has no trouble responding to the request.*	

Example 2:

Speaker 1:	Okay. Ääh..was ist äh Ihren Stelle? (4 second pause)
Speaker 2:	Sie stellen sich jetzt nicht mehr untereinander vor. So habe ich's eben verstanden, dass Sie noch irgendwas vorstellen würden.

In/directness rating:	**1**
Explanation: *In formulating the request, Speaker 1 uses a conventional question, "Was ist Ihren Stelle?"*	
Appropriateness rating:	**3**
Explanation: *The request is less appropriate for the situation. There is a small grammatical error (Ihren), but this does not seem to cause difficulty understanding the request. Rather, Speaker 2 indicates difficulty by pausing for a long time (4 seconds) and then explicitly questioning the abrupt shift of topic.*	

Example 3:

```
Speaker 1:    Hallo.
Speaker 2:    Hallo.
Speaker 1:    Ähm, ich wollte einfach fragen, ähm
              was ist die erfolgreichste Abteilung
              für Siemens?
Speaker 2:    Oh! (laughs) Ok.
              Das ist eine schwierige Frage!
Speaker 1:                     [oder
              (2.5 seconds)
Speaker 2:    ähmm
              (1 second)
              Medizintech- äh..
              Es ist gan- Hm
              ...ich
              Wenn ich jetzt unterscheid- äh
              ganz grob unterscheiden würde
              zwischen Industrie, Energy, und Health Care,
              ähm dürfte Industrie vorne anstehen,
              und dann Health Care,
              und dann Energy.
              Dass weiß ich aber nicht ganz genau,
              weil ich den Geschäftsbericht..die Zahlen
              aktuell nicht parat habe.
```

In/directness rating:	**3**
Explanation: *In formulating the request, Speaker 1 uses an indirect preparatory statement, “Ich wollte einfach fragen...”*	
Appropriateness rating:	**4**
Explanation: *The request is fairly appropriate for the situation. Although there are no grammatical errors in forming the request, Speaker 2 evaluates the question as “schwierig”. Furthermore, there are a number of pauses and false starts before Speaker 2 is able to formulate a response to the request.*	

PART 3: Requests in need of coding

Request 1:

Speaker 1:	Ja, das wäre eigentlich äh meine nächste Frage.
	Also, ist eine Ausbil- Ausbildung in Deutschland
	total kostenlos?
	Oder..muss man bezahlen?
Speaker 2:	Ja! Das ist eben genau die Frage.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 2:

Speaker 1:	Äh, ich möchte eine andere..Frage stellen, ähm.
	(1 second pause)
	Können Sie das Format
	der Sendung mit der Maus beschreiben,
	und hat die Sendung mit der Maus
	das Format den anderen gleichen-
	äh anderen oder gleichen Sendungen ausgewirkt.
	(8 second pause)
Speaker 2:	Ähm, das Format der Sendung mit der Maus
	ist sehr ungewöhnlich.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 3:

Speaker 1: Können Sie das ähm erklären?
Ich glaube, dass wir verstehen das nicht so,
Speaker 2: [Ja.
Speaker 1: wie Sie wie Sie möchten.
Speaker 2: Okay.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 4:

Speaker 1: Wie lange ist Siemens schön
ein weltweit bekannte Firma?
Speaker 2: Oh, ganz lange.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 5:

Speaker 1:	Ich möchte eine Frage zu schel zu stellen.
	Es tut mir Leid.
	Ähm, was für ein Handelsware haben
	die Sendung mit der Maus,
	äh, zum Beispiel, Sesame Street hat Kleidungen
	und Computerspielespielen und so weiter.
	Ähm, haben...etwas gleich...
	für ähm die Sendung mit der Mau- mit der Maus?
	(3 second pause)
Speaker 2:	Mm hmm. Ja, haben wir auch.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 6:

Speaker 1:	Möchten Sie sich vorstellen?
	Dann können wir mit unsere Fragen anfangen.
Speaker 2:	Das mach' ich gerne.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 7:

Speaker 1:	Können Sie ein Bisschen lauter sprechen?
Speaker 2:	Ja.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 8:

Speaker 1: Es..äh..ist es viel interessant,
oder ähm langweilig?
Sie.
(2 second pause)
Speaker 2: Mm, teils teils.
Wer sich nicht für Politik interessiert,
für den ist es langweilig.
Speaker 1: Ah...verstehe.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 9:

Speaker 1: So, und die-
Sie können mich jetzt alle hören..oder?
(1 second pause)
Oder nicht?
(3 second pause)
Sagen Sie doch mal was.
Speaker 2: Ja, wir hören Sie.
Speaker 3: Wir können Sie hören.
Speaker 1: Okay.
Speaker 3: [Hallo.
Speaker 1: Wunderbar! Hallo! (laughs)

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 10:

Speaker 1:	Weiß denn jemand von Ihnen, wie viele Mitarbeiter Siemens hat heute? (1.5 second pause)
Speaker 2:	(laughs) Ich glaube, wir kennen das nicht.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 11:

Speaker 1:	Also, nach eine Frage, äh, hätten Sie Vorschläge, wie eine Praktikant in einer ausländischen Firma ähm erfolgreich arbeiten kann?
Speaker 2:	Vorschläge konkret nicht.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 12:

Speaker 1:	So..wir warten, denk’ ich, kurz auf ihn. (2 second pause) Hoffe, dass alles klappt. (2 second pause) Sonst machen wir auch schon mal..weiter.
Speaker 2:	Äh, so, ja weiter.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 13:

Speaker 1: Ja, und eigentlich jetzt äh möchte ich die Frage
an die Klasse stellen.
Also, was denkt ihr?
Ist es wirklich wisch- sehr wichtig,
eine ein Universitätsdiplom in den USA zu haben,
oder nicht?
(6 second pause)
Speaker 2: Ja, ich glaube, es ist wichtig.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 14:

Speaker 1: Äh, meine Herren? Entschuldigung,
ich äh möchte nicht unterbrechen,
aber ich glaube,
wir sollten unsere Diskussion beginnen,
wenn das in Ordnung wäre.
Speaker 2: Ja, können wir machen.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 15:

```
Speaker 1:  Und da wäre meine Frage an Sie,
            ob es auch sowas in den USA gibt?
Speaker 2:  Interessante Frage, aber ich glaube nein.
```

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 16:

```
Speaker 1:  Ja, äh...bitte...äh vorstellen Sie...unsere
            ähm, ja.
Speaker 2:  Ja...vorstellen. Mein Name ist Gisela Ziegler.
```

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 17:

```
Speaker 1:  Ja, so, wie reagiert die Bürger oder Kunden,
            wenn Sie mit einem Praktikanten
            kommunizieren müssen?
            Sind sie oft verärgert vielleicht?
            (1 second pause)
            Oder?
Speaker 2:  Nein, nein.
```

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 18:

Speaker 1: Ähm..äh..als ich gesagt..gesagt habe
äh wir haben ein paar Fragen vorbereitet
und..äh..ich musste Sie zuerst sagen,
ähm..können Sie bitte uns erklären,
was eine Berufsoberschule ist,
und wie sie sich von einer Universität
in Deutschland unterscheidet?
Speaker 2: Eine Berufsoberschule.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 19:

Speaker 1: Äh, wie schwer würde es äh,
..ein Job in Deutschland zu bekommen?
Speaker 2: Pooh!
Speaker 1: Für für eine Ausländer?
Speaker 2: Ist auch eine schwierige Frage.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 20:

```
Speaker 1:  Und äh haben Part- äh Praktikanten
            für ihre Arbeit bezahlt z-zu bekommen?
            (3 second pause)
Speaker 2:  Äh, bezahlt bekommen, meinen Sie?
            (2 second pause)
            Habe ich Sie da richtig verstanden?
            Es kam nicht ganz an.
            (10 second pause)
Speaker 1:  Äh
            (1 second pause)
            Für...die Arbeit...
            Haben äh...die Part- äh
            Haben die Teilnehmer etwas äh Geld?
Speaker 2:  Mm hmm.
            (1 second pause)
            Geld für die XXX, meinen Sie.
Speaker 1:             [Ja.
```

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 21:

```
Speaker 1:  Äh, wo wohnt man,
            wenn äh wenn..du
            ein äh ein Praktik..um äh machen?
            In ein Dormitorium?
            Oder..auf ein Haus?
Speaker 2:  Ja, es gibt verschiedene Möglichkeiten.
```

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 22:

Speaker 1:	Toll!
Speaker 2:	War das so, was Sie sich...
Speaker 1:	Oh- gehen Sie bitte weiter?
Speaker 2:	Wo weiter?
	(2 second pause)
Speaker 1:	Ähm, ich habe noch eine Frage für Sie.
	Wie viele Kunden hat die Volksbank Eutin?
Speaker 2:	[Ja?
	Wie viele Kunden weiß ich gar nicht!
	Ich kann Ihn’ aber sagen,
	die Volksbank Eutin ist eine Genossenschaft.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 23:

Speaker 1:	Und äh wie läuft ein normaler Tag für Sie?
	(1 second pause)
Speaker 2:	Ein normalen Tag...für mich,
	also, eigentlich gibt es keine normalen Tage.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Request 24:

Speaker 1: Also..würden Sie für uns bitte
ein Bisschen erklären,
wie diese Entscheidung
eigentlich getroffen wird?
Speaker 2: Natür-
Speaker 1: [Äh, ist das per Durschnitts..note?
Oder eine Prüfung,
das sie...während des Grundschule machen müssen?
Oder darf man einfach
für sich selbst entscheiden?
Speaker 2: Das kommt jetzt wieder ganz stark drauf an,
wo Sie leben.

In/directness rating:	
Explanation:	
Appropriateness rating:	
Explanation:	

Appendix F

Requests in need of coding

Request 1:

Speaker 1: Ich möchte eine Frage zu schel zu stellen.
Es tut mir Leid.
Ähm, was für ein Handelsware haben
die Sendung mit der Maus,
äh, zum Beispiel, Sesame Street hat Kleidungen
und Computerspielespielen und so weiter.
Ähm, haben...etwas gleich...
für ähm die Sendung mit der Mau- mit der Maus?
(3 second pause)
Speaker 2: Mm hmm. Ja, haben wir auch.
Wiiir..ähm...
wir dürfen aber,
also wir als Sender,
dürfen die Dinge nicht vermarkten.
Also wir dürfen keine..Merchandising machen.

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 2:

```
Speaker 1:  Also, wenn man Englisch als Hauptfach..h-hätte,
            gibt es eine Internship dafür?
Speaker 2:  Sie haben die Möglichkeit,
            wenn Sie sagen, Sie möchten Lehrerin...sein.
            Oder als Lehrerin tätig sein.
```

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 3:

Speaker 1:	So, ja, ich habe eine Frage.
	Wie gut sollen Praktikanten
	Deutsch sprechen können?
	Oder wie oft müssen sie Deutsch sprechen?
Speaker 2:	Ähm, sie müssen eigentlich so gut Deutsch sprechen,
	dass man sie versteht.
	Besser ist noch ähm,
	dass sie ein [?] verstehen, ähm,

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 4:

```
Speaker 1:   Äh, wie schwer würde es äh,
             ..ein Job in Deutschland zu bekommen?
Speaker 2:   Pooh!
Speaker 1:   Für für eine Ausländer?
Speaker 2:   Ist auch eine schwierige Frage.
```

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker "bitte"		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 5:

Speaker 1:	Können Sie das ähm erklären?
	Ich glaube, dass wir verstehen das nicht so,
Speaker 2:	[Ja.
Speaker 1:	wie Sie wie Sie möchten.
Speaker 2:	Ähm, okay.
	Ähm...bei Siemens ist es zum Beispiel so,
	ähm, dass ein,
	dass es eine sogenannte äh
	Fortbildungsplanung gibt.
	Das heisst, dass man,
	dass ein Chef, ähm ein Manager
	für [inhales breath] Entschuldingung-
	alle seine Mitarbeiter,
	ähm, ’ne Fortbildungeinplan,
	das heisst, dass ein Mitarbeiter
	eine oder zwei Wochen im Jahr
	auf ein Seminar geht,
	um sich für speziellen Themengebiete fortzubilden.

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 6:

Speaker 1:	Ja, und eigentlich jetzt äh möchte ich die Frage an die Klasse stellen. Also, was denkt ihr? Ist es wirklich wisch- sehr wichtig, eine ein Universitätsdiplom in den USA zu haben, oder nicht? (6 second pause)
Speaker 2:	Ja, ich glaube, es ist wichtig.

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 7:

Speaker 1:	Möchten Sie sich vorstellen? Dann können wir mit unsere Fragen anfangen.
Speaker 2:	Das mach' ich gerne.

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker "bitte"		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 8:

Speaker 1: Wie viel Geld gibt die Volksbank jed-
jedes Jahr als Kredit aus?
(2 second pause)
Speaker 2: Äh, das ist schwer zu sagen.
Ich mach's mal anders.
Äh, im Jahr 2009
hat die Volksbank Eutin
insgesamt in ihre Bilanz
161 Millionen Euro Kredit vergeben.

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker "bitte"		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 9:

```
Speaker 1:  Okay, jetzt muss ich gleich noch mal fragen,
            was heißt denn „S-A-T“?
            (1 second pause)
Speaker 2:  Ja, es ist wie Abitur.
Speaker 1:  Okay.
```

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 10:

Speaker 1: Also, ich hab’ eine Frage
zum ganz anderen Thema jetzt,
und zwar, ähm...gibt es
bei der Maus beziehungsweise beim WDR, äh
die Gelegenheit als Praktikant zu arbeiten?
Speaker 2: Ja, auf jeden Fall, ja.
Da kann ich auch noch mal empfehlen,
ähm die, wenn man noch mehr über den WDR
oder über den westdeutschen Rundfunk
wissen möchte, also,
auch wenn es darum geht,
welche Möglichkeiten es da gibt
von Praktikum und solchen Dingen,
das ist auf der seite w-d-r punkt d-e
und da gibt es ein Unternehmensbereich.

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 11:

Speaker 1: Was für einen äh Werbenfernsehen?
Ähm
(2 second pause)
Ähm, sind äh ist es lustig?
Nicht so lustig?
(5 second pause)
Speaker 2: Die lustigen kommen besser an
Speaker 1: [Haben Sie-
Speaker 2: Viele sind leider nicht so lustig.

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker "bitte"		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Request 12:

```
Speaker 1:  Also, nach eine Frage,
            äh, hätten Sie Vorschläge,
            wie eine Praktikant in einer ausländischen Firma
            ähm erfolgreich arbeiten kann?
Speaker 2:  Vorschläge konkret nicht.
```

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:		
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		
consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:		

Appendix G

Coding requests for directness and appropriateness

I am conducting a study of the development of requesting behavior among learners of German for professional purposes in the context of Web conferences that occurred between the learners and expert speakers of German. In order to examine requesting behavior, I am looking at four specific aspects of requests: **level of directness, internal modification, external modification,** and **level of appropriateness**. To that end, each instance of requesting behavior that occurred during the Web conferences must be coded accordingly, using four related taxonomies. Your participation will help to ensure that the rating of the data remains objective and unbiased. Thank you for your time and effort!

DIRECTIONS:

You are asked to look at several transcribed instances of requesting behavior and to analyze the request sequences according to the following features:

1) Directness

2) Internal modifiers

3) External modifiers

4) Appropriateness

Directness

Directness is a measure of what strategy a speaker uses to form a request. In each request sequence, you will notice that the actual request (also called the ‘head act’) has been highlighted in green. You are asked to use the **directness taxonomy** to evaluate the level of directness of the head act.

For example:

John	Äh, meine Herren?
	Entschuldigung, ich äh möchte nicht unterbrechen,
	aber ich glaube,
	wir sollten unsere Diskussion beginnen,
	wenn das in Ordnung wäre.
Thomas	Ja, können wir machen.

Because this request is formed as an **obligation statement**, it has been coded as a **level 3** request strategy.

Note that the directness taxonomy is only to be used to determine the directness level of the request strategy that the speaker is using. It should not be used to evaluate the appropriateness of the request (i.e., whether it is too direct or indirect for the situation).

Internal modifiers

Certain request sequences will feature ‘internal modifiers’. Internal modifiers are lexical (vocabulary-related) and syntactic (grammar-related) elements that are used by a speaker to make a request less imposing. An internal modification must take place within the head act. If it is not part of the head act, it is an external modifier (more below). In order to evaluate the presence of internal modifiers, you are asked to use the **internal modification taxonomy**.

For example:

```
John          Äh, meine Herren?,
              Entschuldigung, ich äh möchte nicht unterbrechen,
              aber ich glaube,
              wir sollten unsere Diskussion beginnen,
              wenn das in Ordnung wäre.
Thomas        Ja, können wir machen.
```

In the example, the head act is ‘*Ich glaube, wir sollten unsere Diskussion beginnen, wenn das in Ordnung wäre’.* A total of four internal modifications are present:

1) Subjectivizer: ‘ich glaube”

2) Subjunctive form: ‘sollten’

2) Subjunctive form: ‘wäre’.

3) The head act contains a conditional clause.

External modifiers

Certain request sequences will feature ‘external modifiers’. External modifiers are linguistic elements that a speaker uses to make a request less imposing. They must take place outside of the head act. If it is part of the head act, it is an internal modifier (see above). In order to evaluate the presence of external modifiers, you are asked to use the **external modification taxonomy**.

For example:

```
John          Äh, meine Herren?,
```

	Entschuldigung, ich äh möchte nicht unterbrechen,
	aber ich glaube,
	wir sollten unsere Diskussion beginnen,
	wenn das in Ordnung wäre.
Thomas	Ja, können wir machen.

In the example, a total of two external modifications are present:

1) Alerter: ‘meine Herren?’

2) Disarmer: ‘Entschuldigung, ich äh möchte nicht unterbrechen’

Appropriateness

Appropriateness is a measure of the successful execution of a request sequence. It is based on the presence (or absence) of linguistic features that are required to make a successful request, including proper grammar, the presence of internal or external modifiers that mitigate the imposition of the request, and the reaction of the listener. In order to evaluate the appropriateness of requests, you are asked to use the **appropriateness taxonomy.**

For example:

John	Äh, meine Herren?,
	Entschuldigung, ich äh möchte nicht unterbrechen,
	aber ich glaube,
	wir sollten unsere Diskussion beginnen,
	wenn das in Ordnung wäre.
Thomas	Ja, können wir machen.

Based on the lack of serious errors, the presence of internal and external modifiers that help to mitigate the imposition of the request, and the speaker’s reaction, this request sequence was rated as **5 (excellent)** in terms of appropriateness.

In summary, the coding for the example request would appear as follows:

Category	**Rating/ Frequency**	**Devices used**
Directness level of head act:	3	obligation statement (‘sollten...beginnen’)
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause	1x	‘wenn...’
past tense		
subjunctive mood	2x	‘sollten’, ‘wäre’
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		

consultative devices		
downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers	1x	‘ich glaube’
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter	1x	‘meine Herren’
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer	1x	‘Entschuldigung, ich möchte nicht...’
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:	5	no serious errors, internal and external modifiers help mitigate imposition, speaker 2 answers with little difficulty

In order to assist you further with your coding, please look at coded examples 2 and 3, which follow:

<u>Coded example 2:</u>

```
Speaker 1:  Hallo.
Speaker 2:  Hallo.
Speaker 1:  Ähm, ich wollte einfach fragen, ähm
            was ist die erfolgreichste Abteilung
            für Siemens?
Speaker 2:  Oh! (laughs) Ok.
            Das ist eine schwierige Frage!
Speaker 1:                    [oder
            (2.5 seconds)
Speaker 2:  ähmm
            (1 second)
            Medizintech- äh..
            Es ist gan- Hm
            ...ich
            Wenn ich jetzt unterscheid- äh
            ganz grob unterscheiden würde
            zwischen Industrie, Energy, und Health Care,
            ähm dürfte Industrie vorne anstehen,
            und dann Health Care,
            und dann Energy.
            Das weiß ich aber nicht ganz genau,
            weil ich den Geschäftsbericht..die Zahlen
            aktuell nicht parat habe.
```

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:	4	want statement (‘wollte...fragen’)
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause		
past tense	1x	‘wollte’
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		
consultative devices		
downtoners	1x	‘einfach’
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers		
External modifiers:		
alerter	1x	‘hallo’
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:	3	no serious errors present, use of ‘einfach’ does not sufficiently mitigate imposition, speaker 2 has difficulty responding to request

Coded example 3:

Thomas	Eine Frage?
Henry	Ja, ähm,
	Wenn äh, hab-haben hat man äh Freizeit
	auf eine Wochenende, oder was,
	äh nach ähm Berlin oder Hamburg gehen, oder?
	(1 second pause)
	Auf eine Reise gehen?
Thomas	Ähm...ist natürlich schwierig für eine
	längere Reise,
	weil Sie in der Woche
	in den Unternehmen tätig sind.

Category	Rating	Devices used
Directness level of head act:	1	direct question
Internal modifiers:		
syntactic:		
conditional clause	1x	‘wenn...’
past tense		
subjunctive mood		
lexical:		
marker “bitte”		
consultative devices		

downtoners		
understaters		
subjectivizers		
appealers	1x	...oder?
External modifiers:		
alerter		
preparator		
grounder		
disarmer		
small talk		
appreciator		
Appropriateness:	2	many grammatical and discourse errors present, some internal modifiers present, speaker pauses before responding to question

This concludes the instructions for coding. Please now open the file “requests to be coded” and proceed with your evaluation.

Appendix H

KU RESEARCH & GRADUATE STUDIES
The University of Kansas

9/16/10
HSCL #18887

Darren Cunningham
Germanic Lang & Lit
2080 Wescoe Hall

The Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL) has reviewed your research project application

18887 Cunningham/Nina Vyatkina (GERMANIC LANG & LIT) Computer-Mediated Communication and Interlanguage Pragmatic Development: Using Webconferencing to Promote Authentic Interaction

and approved this project under the expedited procedure provided in 45 CFR 46.110 (f) (6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

Since your research presents no risk to participants and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context HSCL may waive the requirement for a signed consent form (45 CFR 46.117 (c) (2). Your information statement meets HSCL requirements. The Office for Human Research Protections requires that your information statement must include the note of HSCL approval and expiration date, which has been entered on the form sent back to you with this approval.

1. At designated intervals until the project is completed, a Project Status Report must be returned to the HSCL office.
2. Any significant change in the experimental procedure as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
3. Notify HSCL about any new investigators not named in original application. Note that new investigators must take the online tutorial at http://www.rcr.ku.edu/hscl/hsp_tutorial/000.shtml.
4. Any injury to a subject because of the research procedure must be reported to the Committee immediately.
5. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity. If you use a signed consent form, provide a copy of the consent form to subjects at the time of consent.
6. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.

Please inform HSCL when this project is terminated. You must also provide HSCL with an annual status report to maintain HSCL approval. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date. If your project receives funding which requests an annual update approval, you must request this from HSCL one month prior to the annual update. Thanks for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Jan Butin
Associate Coordinator
Human Subjects Committee - Lawrence

Human Subjects Committee Lawrence
Youngberg Hall | 2385 Irving Hill Road | Lawrence, KS 66045-7563 | (785) 864-7429 | Fax (785) 864-5049 | www.rcr.ku.edu/hscl

Appendix I

Approved by the Human Subjects Committee University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus (HSCL). Approval expires one year from 9/16/2010. HSCL #18887

STUDY INFORMATION STATEMENT

Name of the Study:	Computer-Mediated Communication and Interlanguage Pragmatic Development: Using Webconferencing to Promote Authentic Interaction
Principal Investigator:	Joe Cunningham
Other Investigators:	Nina Vyatkina

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Kansas supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to inform you of the purpose and procedures of the present study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is being conducted in order to investigate how learners of German are able to accomplish specific functions in the target language in the context of computer-mediated discussion. The research is expected to shed light on the linguistic strategies and forms that German learners employ to accomplish said functions. Furthermore, it will investigate how context and instruction play a role in the development of these linguistic features. Based on the findings, further research will be conducted to determine effective ways of providing instruction in this area.

PROCEDURES

KU student participants will not be asked to complete any assignments beyond the regular course work. The researcher will examine written and oral productions in the discussions between KU participants and German professionals as well as answers to written questionnaires. All electronic recordings (text, audio and video) will be stored in the principal investigator’s password-protected computer. In addition, the investigator will collect data from written assignments and will take notes regarding participation in class.

RISKS

There are no risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. KU participants’ grades will in no way be affected by participation in the proposed study.

BENEFITS

There are no direct benefits to you, but you will have had the opportunity to contribute to a worthwhile research endeavor that may improve foreign language teaching and learning practices.

PAYMENT TO PARTICIPANTS

No compensation will be provided.

PARTICIPANT CONFIDENTIALITY

Your name will not be associated in any way with the information collected about you or with the research findings from this study. The researchers will use a study number or a pseudonym instead of your name. Only the researchers will have access to your personal information. The researchers will not share information about you unless required by law or unless you give written permission.

The results of this research as well as samples of your productions and data about you may be published in paper format or electronically. However, your identity will be kept confidential and all your personal identifiers will be removed before publishing.

Permission granted on this date to use the data for research purposes remains in effect indefinitely. Completion of the questionnaire indicates your willingness to participate in this project and that you are at least eighteen years old.

QUESTIONS ABOUT PARTICIPATION should be directed to:

Joe Cunningham
Principal Investigator
Dept. of Germanic Languages and Literatures
2080 Wescoe Hall
University of Kansas
Lawrence, KS 66045
(785)864-9178

Nina Vyatkina
Faculty Supervisor
Dept. of Germanic Languages and Literatures
2080 Wescoe Hall
University of Kansas
Lawrence, KS 66045
(785)864-9178

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL) office at 864-7429 or write to the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas, 66045-7563, email mdenning@ku.edu.