

Communicative Styles in a Contact Situation: Two German National Varieties in a Third Country

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This paper reports on a small-scale exploratory study of metapragmatic perceptions of apologies, directives, and modal particles in two national varieties of a pluricentric language in contact. It investigates the way in which Austrians and Germans (believe they) communicate in German when they are married to each other and living in an environment where the national language is not German, that is, where they do not need to converge toward the national variety of the wider community. The study finds that those informants of Austrian background tend toward negative politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987), focus more on blame and guilt, and engage more in the art of conversation. Those of German background tend more toward positive politeness and the verbal fulfillment of respectability. There is some evidence of convergence but a surprising amount of residual national variation in the realization of the speech acts. However, there is a limited use of modal particles and evidence of a weakening of intuition in relation to their use.*

1. Pluricentric Languages.

Pluricentric languages, such as German, English, Spanish, and Arabic, are ones with several interacting centers, each providing a national variety with at least some of its own (codified) norms (Kloss 1978 II:66–67, Clyne 1992:1). They are thus both unifiers and dividers of peoples. Pluricentricity is usually asymmetrical, in that the dominant nation(s) using the language will feel that their norms are superior, an attitude that is often transmitted to and accepted by those (especially

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elites) from other nations using the language. The powerful nations not only have demographic, economic, and political strength and/or historical strength on their side, but also have within their borders publishers of dictionaries and grammar books, and language teaching institutes diffusing the language internationally. Convergence tends to occur towards the more powerful national variety/ies. Trudgill (1986) includes some instances of convergence between national varieties in his study of "dialects in contact." There is widespread belief that the variation between national varieties is insignificant, but minor structural differences may have substantial significance in terms of identity to people from the less powerful nations (Clyne 1992:1, 459–460). There has been relatively little research so far on pragmatic variation among national varieties of pluricentric languages (but see the papers in Clyne 1992 for some sketches), and surprisingly little contrastive work. The exceptions are Herbert 1989 on compliments in South African and American English, Muhr 1994 on speech act differences between German and Austrian speakers of German, Muhr 1987 on the use and nonuse of modal particles by German and Austrian speakers of German, and Barden, Großkopf, and Auer 1996 and Birkner and Kern 2000 comparing the interaction management of East and West German applicants in job interviews.¹ Contrastive information can be obtained indirectly by comparing existing data that does not intend to contrast national varieties. This was done by Creese (2001) as a preliminary to her pilot interviews to elicit British and American informants' perceptions of British-American variation in communication patterns.

1.1. Rationale for the Current Study.

This study aims at investigating the extent of variation and convergence at the pragmatic level between a less powerful national variety and the most powerful national variety of German, namely Austrian German and German German respectively. Convergence in this case means that speech acts in one variety are realized the way that they are realized in the other variety. The study aims to ascertain if there are differences in the (perceived) communicative behavior of the Austrian-born (A) and the German-born (G) partner, what the nature of these differences is, to what extent the participants perceive differences in communicative behavior,

¹ Whether there were distinct East and West German national varieties and the extent to which they have converged is a matter of debate (See, for example, Clyne 1995:66–88, Stevenson 2002:115–130).

and their attitudes toward these. We take into account information on language use, networks, and overseas trips, and attempt to establish if any convergence toward the other variety has taken place.

As we have mentioned above, contrastive studies among national varieties are not very common, and neither pragmatic aspects of this contrast nor the convergence among national varieties has been the subject of much research. This small-scale study is a modest attempt to encourage more research in these areas. In this case, it is possible to build on Muhr's studies. Moreover, the contact is a close one in that the sample comprises 10 pairs of marriage partners, most of whom have lived together for a very long period. We might expect some convergence to have occurred. The special feature of the informants is that they do not live in either their own or their partner's original German-speaking country but in a migration country, Australia, where neither variety of German but English is the national language.² This means there is no external push for convergence toward one or the other variety. In this context, the study can act as a test of the durability of pragmatic formulas underpinned by deep cultural values. This in turn can contribute to the discussion on the feasibility and desirability of adapting to other ways of realizing speech acts. It can also provide information relevant to the production of materials for the teaching of German as a pluricentric language (Muhr 2000).

1.2. The Crosscultural Study of Apologies and Requests.

This study is in the tradition of Cross Cultural Pragmatics, informed by the framework of the Cross Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project (CCSARP), which is also adopted by much research in interlanguage as well as contrastive pragmatics. Apologies and requests are among the most commonly studied speech acts in both fields of inquiry. In accordance with Searle (1969), speech acts in which the speaker is asking for something (requests, commands) are designated here as directives.

Most of the studies contrast English with other languages, especially German or Japanese (see literature review in Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989, Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993, also Spencer-Oatey 2000).

² However, this is not a contrastive study of Australian English and German communication styles, and our empirical base does not enable us to discuss possible pragmatic transference from Australian English into either national variety of German.

Unlike the present study, much of the literature concerns the inter-language of second-language acquirers.

Much of the CCSARP tradition is based on a common framework of levels of directness. These vary in number and, in the case of directives, range from the imperative (most direct), a kind of imposition where a mood is derivable, to the use of a "mild hint" or suggestion (least direct). In between are performatives (*I am asking you to ...*), hedged performatives (*I would like to ask you to ...*), obligation statements, want statements, suggestions, queries, and strong hints (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989:18). Degrees of directness are also differentiated on the basis of modality markers such as modal verbs (*could, would*) or modal particles (*wohl, eben*); see section 5. In Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989 the contrast is between language use in Argentinian Spanish, Australian English, Canadian French, German German, and Israeli Hebrew.

House and Kasper (1981), for example, had 24 informal everyday situations—complaints and directives—acted out by two pairs of native speakers, one (British) English and one German pair. They established eight levels of directness for each of the speech acts and found the German responses heavily concentrated in the sixth (third most direct) level and the English in the third level. The least direct level, however, was far more frequently used by Germans than by English. Downgraders such as *please, kind of, or I guess* (or their equivalents) were attested in the speech of the English informants 1 1/2 times as frequently as in that of the Germans in the same situation. Upgraders such as *absolutely, I'm sure, and you must understand* were employed 4.6 times as frequently by the Germans as by the English.

In CCSARP, Blum-Kulka (1989) reports variation in substrategies of "conventional indirectness" in requests (directives), with Hebrew speakers opting less than her other groups (the English, French, and Spanish speakers) for *can/could* and most for possibility and willingness/readiness, and the Spanish speakers more than the others for prediction. Though there is variation according to the situations, Australian English speakers generally opt for the least direct communicative behavior followed by Germans, French Canadians, Israelis, and Argentinians, in that order. On the other hand, "hints" are used in the same proportion by Israelis and Australians, followed closely by Canadian French speakers, with Germans and Argentinians employing them very infrequently (Blum-Kulka and House 1989). However, there was a large measure of agreement in apology strategies with subtle intergroup variation in the expression according to situation.

Another study of apologies and directives, House and Kasper 1988, employing discourse completion tasks (see section 1.3), examines the incidence of three types of strategies—direct, conventionally indirect, and nonconventionally indirect. They differ in the degree of explicitness with which the speech act is performed. Direct strategies include performative verbs (e.g., *ask, apologize*), conventionally indirect ones are of the type “*Could you do P?*”, and nonconventionally indirect strategies, “mild” and “strong” hints. The study draws attention to how much variation in strategies is perceived to occur in German, depending on interactional situation and social distance. Downtoners and modal particles in German, which correspond to highly conventionalized idiomatic formulas in English, occur least frequently where indirect strategies are employed.

Olshtain's (1989) study of apologies found a similar response among speakers of Australian English, Canadian French, German, and Hebrew to expression of responsibility across seven situations in a university context. Also, the intensification of an apology is not related to social distance, social power, or severity of offense. The main difference in the responses concerns Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), formulaic routines such as verbs of apology and adverbial phrases such as *unfortunately*. Speakers of Canadian French, Australian English, and Hebrew record a low use, and German German speakers a high use of such devices. The similarity in results could be attributed to the commonality of institutional context requiring similar responses. In a study focusing on the German apology data, Vollmer and Olshtain (1989) show that the IFIDs used by the Germans are of a weaker kind (such as *Tut mir Leid* ‘sorry’), which downgrade the seriousness of the offense. Intensification is related to situational factors. Expressions of responsibility are determined by cost benefits on the speaker's part.

Béal (1990) actually works with natural data collected in a French company in Australia. The French tend to use directives employing the future tense, imperatives, and *il faut* ‘it is necessary’, while the Australians conventionalize query preparatories. The French convey the impression of authoritarianism, disagreement, impatience, and assertiveness. Béal explains the contrast in terms of French speakers believing that the interlocutor has a strong ego and Australians that they are vulnerable.

The notion of directness in CCSARP is rejected by Wierzbicka (1991) who considers directness to be a relative and not a discrete category, a vague term that does not enable second-language learners to

acquire an appropriate pragmatic formula. As we have seen above, Canadian French express themselves more directly than Australian English speakers but less directly than Germans. For the purpose of this study, levels of directness do, we believe, offer a good starting point for comparisons between the communicative styles of two national varieties of the same language (see especially section 5).

1.2.1. Methodological Considerations.

The most commonly used instrument within the contrastive approach is the discourse completion test (DCT), employed in the CCSARP and in many other projects. This highly constrained instrument comprises scripted dialogues representing socially differentiated situations. Each dialogue is preceded by a brief description of the situation and followed by an incomplete (written) dialogue, which respondents are requested to complete (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989:13). Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989) are very mindful of the shortcomings of DCTs in comparison with natural data, but they make the indisputable point that the collection of a comparable corpus of two speech acts in a range of socially controlled situations "would have been virtually impossible" (1989:13). Except in its newest variant, the dialogue completion (see Kasper 2000), this test is written but is intended to indicate spoken communication. A study by Rintell and Mitchell (1989) comparing written DCTs and oral role-plays found that, for native speakers, there was only one difference between the results of the two elicitation techniques, namely that direct strategies for requests were employed more in the DCTs. (The reader is reminded that our informants were native speakers.)

It is not clear how significant the difference is between real interaction and people's beliefs about how they communicate. This is acknowledged by three researchers involved in the CCSARP, Wolfson, Marmor, and Jones (1989). They also (1989:185) accept Beebe and Cumming's (1985) criticism that written role-plays yield less negotiating, hedging, repetition, elaboration, variety, and talk in general. It is also possible that expectations and stereotypes are introduced by the role player. On the other hand, Blum-Kulka and House (1989) present evidence of overall similarities in patterns of results between CCSARP data and ethnographic studies. We would concur with Holmes's (1991:121) assessment that "the CCSARP approach provides a speedy method of gathering a large amount of data; it provides a means of developing a classification system for strategies and semantic formulas that will occur

in natural speech; it provides evidence of the stereotypical perceived requirements for a socially appropriate response; it identifies social and psychological factors likely to affect speech behavior; and it elicits the canonical formulas and responses realizing particular speech acts." As Kasper and Roever (forthcoming:12) concede, DCTs "provide knowledge displays of speech act strategies and linguistic forms, but they cannot inform about sequential aspects of speech act performance in interaction."

Differences in outcomes between natural data, analyzed through conversational analysis, and DCTs contextualized on the basis of the natural data (Golato 2003) revealed both commonalities and differences between the sets of data in German responses to compliments. Confirmation *ja* was always used in combination with other responses in DCTs, but occurred mainly on its own in the natural data. On the other hand, *danke* occurred often in the DCTs but never in the natural data. These differences could perhaps be attributed to the nature of compliments and the embarrassment that may be associated with them. Billmyer and Varghese (2000) investigate the influence of systematic modification on the situational prompts for directives in DCTs. Such modification included adding information on social and contextual variables. While this did not affect the actual directive strategy or extent of internal modification, longer, more elaborated responses were produced.

Some of the controversy surrounding DCTs is part of the ongoing problem of finding the most appropriate methodology, as this will influence the results. Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (forthcoming), Kasper and Dahl (1991), Kasper (2000), and Kasper and Roever (forthcoming) describe the various scripted and nonscripted methods of data collection for this type of research and weigh their advantages and disadvantages. These include:

1. observational data of spoken interaction: authentic discourse (unscripted nonexperimental), elicited conversation, and role-plays (unscripted experimental);
2. self-reported questionnaire data: discourse completion, multiple-choice, scaled response (scripted experimental);
3. self-reports: interviews, diaries, verbal protocols.

Unscripted (authentic) data is real-life data with speakers being themselves. However, such data is difficult to collect and not comparable; the speakers have fixed roles and occurrences tend to be sporadic;

and the data is affected by the observer's paradox (cf. Labov 1970) and there may be ethical problems. Kasper and Dahl (1991) refer to its underrepresentation in contrastive and interlanguage pragmatics. Scripted (nonauthentic) and self-reported data are targeted and comparable but do not necessarily reflect the real behavior of the participants. Role-plays do not necessarily yield enough instances of the required pragmatic action though they do supply rich interactional data under controlled conditions. Wildner-Bassett (1989) argues that in role-play, speakers switch between coexisting worlds that the analyst may not be aware of.

As no method is perfect, we must either choose a combination of methods or decide on the one that is most feasible for the purposes of the study. In this case, we have chosen the DCT method to avoid requiring too much effort on the part of the respondents and because it enables us to compare our data with that of Muhr, collected in monolingual, monovariety contexts in Europe (see section 2).

1.3. Politeness and Face.

Speech act research, especially crosscultural research of the kind undertaken in this study, has been informed by Goffman's (1955) notion of "face"—"positive social value a person claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular context" (1955:213), that is, sensitivity to the rights of others as well as to one's own interests. This is reflected in two directions of research—sociolinguistics and social psychology (Tracy 1990). In the latter, an important instrument of interpretation of crosscultural variation is Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) pragmatic theory, based on the premise that speakers share assumptions about politeness, which inform their choice of communicative strategies. The three major tenets of the model, based on three unrelated languages and cultures—English, Tamil (a Dravidian language of South India), and Tzeltal (a Mayan language), are the degree of relative power, social distance, and relative ranking of "impositions" in the particular culture. Politeness is motivated mainly by face. Brown and Levinson differentiate between "negative face," the "want" not to be imposed on by others, and "positive face," the "want" to be approved. Similarly, they establish a concomitant dichotomy between "negative politeness," where a conflict is avoided through modesty, formality, and restraint, and "positive politeness," where a closer relationship is developed through frankness. Brown and Levinson also propose four categories of politeness strategies, which offer a degree of security and avoid a face-threatening action—bald on-record, positive politeness,

negative politeness, and being silent. Bayrataroglu's (1991) extension of Brown and Levinson's framework develops the notion of interactional imbalance, encompassing:

1. Face Boosting Act of self;
2. Face Threatening Act of self;
3. Face Boosting Act of other;
4. Face Threatening Act of other.

Spencer-Oatey (2000) establishes a framework for crosscultural communication around the concept of "rapport management," the management of harmony and disharmony. Spencer-Oatey (2000) abandons negative face on the grounds that it does not necessarily constitute face concerns. She considers the concept of rapport management involving the management of face and the management of sociality rights ("fundamental/social entitlements"), comprising equity rights and association rights, "that individuals effectively claim for themselves in their interactions with others" (Spencer-Oatey 2000:14). Similarly, face has two interrelated aspects: quality face (desire to be evaluated positively in terms of our qualities) and identity face (desire for our social identities to be acknowledged and upheld) (Spencer-Oatey 2000:14). Choice of strategy can be conditioned by orientation toward rapport enhancement, rapport maintenance, rapport neglect, and rapport challenge. People from different cultures may hold different principles for managing rapport in different contexts or for assessing contextual factors. They may employ different conventions for selecting and interpreting strategies.

While all cultures utilize both items of the politeness and face dichotomies, one may relate far more closely than the other to the core values of a culture as well as the personality of an individual. In the present study we are interested in whether there is any consistent tendency for Germans or Austrians to tend toward one or the other type of politeness in their responses.

Wierzbicka (1991 and elsewhere), in her crusade to "expose the anglocentric character of various supposedly universal maxims, principles and concepts" (Wierzbicka 2003:xiii), argues that "freedom from imposition" in Brown and Levinson is an Anglo-American cultural value and that even the word *impose* has no equivalent in some languages (2003:xi). She also regards face as an anglocentric rather than a universal construct.

In her study, Tracy (1990) draws on both sociolinguistics and social psychology in a discussion of facework, which "references the com-

municative strategies that are the enactment, support, or challenge of (the) situated identities” that people claim or attribute to others. The latter is concerned with self-presentation, often with a conflict between private, true and nontrue, and strategic face. Tracy shows that people have to manage competing and conflicting face wants. The challenge of self-presentation to Brown and Levinson, according to Tracy (1990:215), is that people “may want to be seen as intimidating, competent, needy, or dependent.” To Held (1992:137), politeness is both “status conscious behaviour” and “moral deportment and (bourgeois) decency which shows concern for general human dignity and the maintenance of one’s personal sphere.”

Space does not permit a discussion of critiques of Brown and Levinson’s model such as Ide 1989, Janney and Arndt 1993, Kwarciak 1993, and Watts 1992. We accept Wierzbicka’s criticism of universalistic assumptions based on Anglo cultures (see also, for example, Clyne 1994). The CCSARP methodology does facilitate a comparison between cross-variety comparisons in Australia and Europe.

2. The Study, Data, and Informants.

There are 20 participants in this study, 10 couples of which one partner is of Austrian background and the other of German background.³ All of them are now living in and around Melbourne

Of 76,444 people in Australia who were reported in the 2001 census as using German at home (a decrease of 22.8% as compared to 1996), 40,997 were German-born and 7,196 Austrian-born. Of these home users of German, 16,357 live in Melbourne, where this study took place. There is a 51.1% shift from German as the home language among German-born and 51.4% among the Austrian-born, making it the least maintained community language after Dutch. German is the least concentrated of the major community languages within Australian cities (Kipp and Clyne 2003).

In the first part of the study, the participants were requested to complete (in German) the discourse in 15 situations given in German. (English translations are provided for the reader here but were not included in the original situations.) All situations were taken from Muhr

³ One German is actually U.S.-born. He and his German parents returned to Germany when he was 4. Another informant was born in South Tyrol (Alto Adige) and moved to Austria at the age of 1.

1994 and originally derived from CCSARP (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989). The original situational frame and role relations were maintained as in Muhr's study; however, the situational setting was adapted from the university context to everyday situations familiar to the informants. Due to limitations of space and in the interests of a balance of speech acts and degree of formality, we have reduced the number of situations described here to eight. Table 1 provides an overview of situations, the degree of formality, and the anticipated speech acts for each. These have been coded according to speech act—Apologies (A1–A4) and Directives (D1–D4)—and differentiated between informal (everyday) and formal (situation-marked) events.

speech act: apologies (A) directives (D)	situation title	short description	setting: formal/ informal
A1	In einem guten Restaurant (in a good restaurant)	Waiter brings patron the incorrect order	formal
A2	Im Büro des Abteilungsleiters (in the departmental manager's office)	Departmental manager has not completed employees' work contracts on time	formal
A3	Im Wohnhaus (in an apartment block)	Elisabeth forgets to return a cookbook borrowed from her friend	informal
A4	In einem überfüllten Bus (in an overcrowded bus)	Karl's bag falls from the luggage rack onto another passenger	informal
D1	Am Telefon (on the telephone)	Michael inquires via telephone about a job	formal
D2	Im Büro des Abteilungsleiters (in the departmental manager's office)	Hans has not completed his work on time and goes to speak with his superior	formal
D3	In einer Studentenwohnung (in a student apartment)	Helmut has guests arriving for dinner but his flatmate has left the kitchen untidy	informal

D4	In der Abendschule (at night school)	Anna missed class the previous evening and wishes to borrow Maria's notes	informal
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Table 1. Overview of situations and anticipated speech acts.

The second part of the study was also based on Muhr's examples, in this case a multiple choice test involving eight situations. The choice was between different modal particles (such as *denn/etwa/vielleicht, eben/doch/halt*), or between the inclusion and exclusion of a modal particle, some of which alternatives Muhr had found to be more common in the responses of Germans or Austrians (see section 5 below).

The third part of the study involved a recorded conversation with each couple in which a series of questions was asked about the participants' language use patterns at home, work, and in the social domain, and about the frequency and duration of travel to German-speaking countries. The interviews also attempted to assess to what extent the informants were aware of the national variation of German and of convergence.

It was not easy to find couples of German and Austrian background in and around Melbourne and, as table 2 shows, the difficulty of locating informants resulted in a slight gender imbalance in the informant sample.

	Austrian	German	total
male	6	4	10
female	4	6	10

Table 2. Gender and language background of informants.

Most of the couples (all except the most recently arrived couple) had met and married in Australia. The participants have been in Australia between two and 66 years.⁴

⁴ This corresponds to the immigration vintages—the peak periods of immigration from German-speaking countries were the late 1930s and particularly the 1950s.

years in Australia	number of informants
2-10	2
11-20	0
21-30	0
31-40	4
41-50	8
51-60	2
61-70	4

Table 3. Period of residence in Australia.

The age range is from about 40 to early 80s.

age range (years)	number of informants
38-47	2
48-57	3
58-67	5
68-77	8
78-85	2

Table 4. Age range of informants.

The most recently arrived couple regularly travels to Europe as the male partner is a member of the German foreign service. Almost all the others had made sporadic visits to their country of origin or to that of their partner; however, one couple had not returned at all, and several had made only one visit since migrating. Those who traveled most frequently did so every two to five years. For six of the ten couples, English was the most frequently used language at home, but all used some German in the family and social domains. The remaining four couples used German almost exclusively at home, and three of the four extensively within their social networks. Unlike Muhr's (1994) informants, ours were not derived from the university context.

Informants are coded according to their background G (German) and A (Austrian), gender M (Male) or F (Female), and each couple is assigned a number 1-10. Valid responses are those where the informant clearly understood the requirements. Where an informant's response was incomplete or indicated that s/he had misinterpreted the requirement of a given situation, the response was considered invalid and was excluded

from the analysis. Thus in any given situation, the number of *valid responses* for each group is out of ten. The responses are reproduced as provided by the informants in the questionnaires, including nonstandard morphosyntactic features.

3. The Responses: Apologies.

The role of apology is to restore face relations between the participants in interaction. Apologies are face-saving for the hearer and face-threatening to the speaker (Olshtain 1989:156–157). Olshtain and Cohen (1983) refer to five potential strategies for an apology:

1. an illocutionary force-indicating device (e.g., *I'm sorry*; apology; excuse);
2. an explanation or account of the cause of the violation;
3. an expression of the speaker's responsibility for the offense;
4. an offer of repair;
5. a promise of "forbearance."

Both authors consider only *positive* strategies for an apology leading to the restoration of the threatened face relations. The analysis of the Austrian and German data collected for Muhr's (1994) study, however, showed the necessity to differentiate clearly between what he terms "hörerzugewandt" (hearer-oriented) and "hörerabgewandt" (speaker-oriented) apology strategies—the former boosting the hearer's face, the latter boosting the speaker's and threatening the hearer's face. These two basic categories were combined with two more criteria referring to the form of the apology as 1. explicit or 2. implicit. A "speaker-oriented" apology strategy in this case is the rejection of guilt—the speaker rejects the idea of having done anything wrong or even blames the interlocutor for the wrongdoing. In the CCSARP coding manual (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989:292) three speaker-oriented categories (showing lack of concern for the hearer) with several subcategories are mentioned but (with the exception of Vollmer and Olshtain 1989:199) these are not dealt with any further. The categories are: 1. refusal to acknowledge guilt; 2. admission of facts but not of responsibility; and 3. downgrading the offense. Vollmer and Olshtain subsume the negative strategies under the label "minimizing the offence."

A speaker who is to apologize has first to make a choice between accepting and rejecting guilt, between restoring harmony and saving only his or her own face. Having chosen to admit guilt, it is possible to combine different apology strategies such as using an IFID plus an

explanation or an offer of repair, and so on. Guilt rejection usually comes in combination with other speech acts such as justifications/explanations and/or the denial of responsibility.

In the following sections, the responses are differentiated according to formal contexts (situation-marked) and informal (everyday) contexts.

3.1. Apologizing in Formal Contexts.

Situation A1: In einem guten Restaurant. [In a good restaurant.]

Birgit hat ein Steak bestellt, der Kellner bringt ihr aber ein Cordon bleu.

Birgit: Das stimmt nicht, was Sie mir gebracht haben. Ich hab' ein Steak bestellt.

Kellner: _____

(Birgit ordered a steak, but the waiter brought her a cordon bleu.

Birgit: You haven't brought me the right thing. I ordered a steak.

Waiter: _____)

Main speech acts employed	Group G	%	Group A	%
Apology + Commissive	7	70	2	20
Apology + Explanation/ Justification	1	10	3	30
Apology + Explanation/ Justification + Commissive	0	0	1	10
Apology + Explanation/ Justification + other*	0	0	2	20
Explanation/Justification + Commissive + other*	2	20	1	10
Other*	0	0	1	10
TOTALS:				
Apologies	8		8	
Commissives	9		4	
Explanations/Justifications	2		7	
Other speech acts:				
Contest error	0		1	
Convince patron to keep meal	0 1		3 2	
Admission of guilt for mistake	1		3	
Apportion blame to others/ deflect blame from self				

Table 5. Summary of speech acts.
Situation A1: In einem guten Restaurant.

Results for Group G: As Table 5 shows, there was a great degree of uniformity in the type of responses given by the Group G informants. Nine of the ten included a Commissive, undertaking to rectify the mistake by bringing the patron the dish she had ordered (described by Muhr 1994:12 as "konkrete Wiedergutmachungshandlung" 'concrete offer of restitution'). Seven of the nine combined Apology + Commissive, for example:

GM01: Entschuldigen Sie bitte das Versehen. Ich werde Ihnen sofort Ihr Steak bringen. [*I apologize for the error. I will bring you your steak immediately.*]

- GM06: Das tut mir aufrichtig leid (sic). Ich werde den Irrtum sofort berichtigen. [*I am terribly sorry. I will rectify the mistake immediately.*]
- GF07: Entschuldigung. Ich werde Ihnen sofort ein Steak bringen. [*I'm sorry. I will bring you a steak immediately.*]

Results for Group A: In contrast to the results for Group G, there was a great deal more variation in the types of responses offered by those in Group A. While the number of apologies is the same for both groups, the Austrians tended to interact with the patron through greater use of explanations and less frequent use of formulaic responses. Three informants in this group, for example, apologized but still left open the possibility of the patron keeping the cordon bleu, for example:

- AF06: Tut mir leid (sic), mein Irrtum aber vielleicht wollen Sie ein Cordon bleu, wenn nicht, bitte noch etwas Geduld. [*I'm sorry, my mistake, but perhaps you would like a cordon bleu, if not then a little patience please.*]
- AM04: Es tut mir leid (sic), aber Steak ist aus—aber ich bin sicher, dass unser Kalbfleisch Ihnen schmecken wird. [*I'm sorry, but we've run out of steak—but I'm sure that you will enjoy our veal.*]

One Group A respondent begins the interaction with *so etwas!*, an Austrian interjection expressing disbelief and expressing embarrassment about the mistake. It is an indirect but rather strong way of apologizing. The response as a whole is the performance of an elaborate interactive skill in which the speaker first piles up apologies of different kinds and then attempts to repair the situation. The response comprises four apologizing elements: 1. initial, indirect apology, 2. explanation of the error, 3. offer of repair, 4. indirect question as to whether the food served might nevertheless suffice:

- AF01: Ja, so etwas, gnädige Frau. Da ist offensichtlich ein Irrtum passiert. Ich bringe Ihnen selbstverständlich gleich das von Ihnen Gewünschte. Es sei denn, ich könnte Sie zum Cordon bleu überreden. [*How outrageous madam! Evidently there has been a mistake. Of course I will bring you your chosen dish straightaway. Unless I could convince you to have the cordon bleu.*]

Five of the Group A but only two of the Group G informants made direct or indirect reference to the source of the mistake, for example:

AM02: Entschuldigung, aber der Fehler liegt bei der Küche. Ich werde Ihnen das Steak wieder bestellen. [*I'm sorry but the mistake occurred in the kitchen. I will order you the steak again.*]

AM08: Entschuldigen Sie, ich werde gleich nachsehen, wo der Fehler passiert ist. [*I'm sorry, I'll go and see where the mistake was made.*]

Another politely called into question that there had been a mistake at all, which means that the speaker chose a guilt rejecting strategy:

AM07: Aber Gnädigste, das kann bestimmt nicht sein, solche Fehler passieren uns nie. [*Dear Madam, that simply cannot be, such errors never occur here.*]

The question of apportioning blame for the mistake appears to concern Group A respondents far more than those in Group G. Three female respondents—two Group A and one Group G—acknowledge guilt directly. Three Group A informants and one from Group G seek to make clear that the blame for the error does not lie with them.

Findings: In this scenario there is no evidence of convergence. Members of Group A are either creative and person-oriented in their ways of convincing the patron to keep the meal she had not in fact ordered, having profusely apologized, or are concerned about remission of guilt through explanation. The Group G informants, on the other hand, appear more focused on following formal conventions.

Situation A2: Im Büro des Abteilungsleiters. [In the departmental manager's office.]

Der Abteilungsleiter hat den Mitarbeitern versprochen, dass er heute den Arbeitsvertrag mit ihnen besprechen wird.

Mitarbeiter: Ich bin wegen meines Arbeitsvertrags gekommen und würde gerne mit Ihnen darüber sprechen.

Abteilungsleiter: _____

Mitarbeiter: Ach so. Und bis wann werden Sie soweit sein?

(The departmental manager had promised the assistants that he would discuss their work contracts with them today.

Assistant: *I have come about my work contract and would very much like to speak to you about it.*

Departmental manager: _____

Assistant: *I see. And when do you think you will be able to do it?)*

Main speech acts employed	Group G	%	Group A	%
Apology + Explanation	1	10	1	11.1
Explanation/Justification only	3	30	3	33.3
Explanation/Justification + Directive	1	10	4	44.4
Explanation/Justification + Commissive	4	40	1	11.1
Directive + Commissive	1	10	0	0
TOTALS:				
Apologies	1		1	
Explanations	8		8	
Commissives	5		1	
Directives	2		4	

Table 6. Summary of speech acts.
Situation A2: Im Büro des Abteilungsleiters.

In this scenario, the respondents were presented with a situation in which the superordinate could potentially offer an apology to his sub-

ordinate for failing to keep to the agreed time frame, and/or offer an explanation for his inability to do so.

Results for Group G: Of the Group G respondents, only one included an apology in his or her response. Five of the ten included an undertaking to make an alternative time for the discussion, which can be seen as an offer of restitution. Four of the five were women. Examples:

- GF02: Können Sie bitte in einer Stunde in meinem Büro sein, damit wir über Ihren Arbeitsvertrag uns unterhalten können? [*Can you please be in my office in 1 hour so that we can discuss your work contract?*]
- GF09: Bitte können wir einen anderen Termin machen. Ich hatte keine Gelegenheit, mich vorzubereiten. [*Please can we make another appointment. I didn't have an opportunity to prepare myself.*]

Four of the ten Group G responses are guilt rejecting strategies which consist of a bald, direct declarative to the effect that the speaker had "insufficient time" or was not yet prepared, offering no apology or further explanation as to why this was so, for example:

- GF04: Ich habe noch nichts vorbereitet. [*I haven't prepared anything yet.*]
- GM01: Leider habe ich es nicht geschafft, ihn für heute vorzubereiten. [*Unfortunately I didn't manage to prepare it for today.*]

Muhr (1994:141), in his study of the apologies of Germans and Austrians, describes such responses as "tendenziell gesichtsbedrohende Explikationen und Sprechhandlungen" ('potentially face-threatening explanations and speech acts'), as the speaker does not attempt to dissipate the potential threat to his/her face inherent in the transgression. In this situation, there is presumably the perception that the superordinate's position of relative power enables him to carry this off.

Results for Group A: The Group A responses (of which only nine were valid) contained one apology, and only one of the responses included an offer of restitution, which featured in several of those from Group G. Seven of the responses fall into the category of "potentially face-threatening" utterances referred to above, that is, these are more numerous in responses from Group A than from Group G. It is interesting to note that five of the responses in this category were from women. For example:

AF05: Es ist momentan nicht fertig. [*It's not ready right now.*]

AF03: Soweit sind wir noch nicht. Da müssen Sie noch etwas warten. [*We're not ready yet. You'll have to wait a bit longer.*]

AM08: Habe aber heute keine Zeit. [*Haven't got the time today.*]

Findings: The two groups once again display some distinctive traits. The tendency noted in situation A1 for the German informants to commit to rectifying the problem is also found in this scenario. The traditionally more hierarchical and authoritarian nature of Austrian society (Kuzmics and Axtmann 2000:207–232) is perhaps reflected in that group's responses to this situation: the person in the superordinate position asserts his authority with a high degree of directness and little expectation that further explanation is necessary. On the other hand, this behavior is not very common in present-day Austria.⁵ Even in an asymmetrical situation like this, it would be considered "normal" for the superordinate to give some explanation for his behavior and rude for him not to do so. Hofstede's (1984:87) data on workplace ethics show Austria with the smallest power distance between employers and employees so that our survey data may reflect long absence from the country of origin.

3.2. Apologizing in Informal Contexts.

Situation A3: Im Wohnhaus. [In an apartment block.]

Elisabeth hat sich von ihrer Freundin ein Kochbuch ausgeliehen und versprochen, es ihr heute zurückzugeben. Sie hat das Buch aber vergessen.

Freundin: Elisabeth, hast du das Buch mit?

Elisabeth: _____

Freundin: Also gut, aber bring es das nächste Mal mit.

(Elisabeth had borrowed a cook book from her (female) friend and promised to return it today, but had left it behind.

Friend: Elisabeth, have you brought the book?

Elisabeth: _____

Friend: All right, but bring it next time.)

⁵ Observations that are not taken from the literature have been made by the authors. Muhr has lived all his life in Austria and Clyne (who is of Austrian descent) has visited Germany and Austria numerous times. Both have been working on Austrian sociolinguistics for many years.

Main speech acts employed	Group G	%	Group A	%
Apology only	0	0	1	10
Apology + Commissive	2	20	0	0
Apology + Explanation/ Justification	3	30	3	30
Commissive only	1	10	0	0
Explanation/Justification + Commissive	2	20	0	0
Explanation/Justification only	2	20	6	60
TOTALS:				
Apologies	5		4	
Commissives	5		0	
Explanations	7		9	

Table 7. Summary of speech acts.
Situation A3: Im Wohnhaus.

Results for Group G: As in situations A1 and A2, the use or nonuse of commissives is again noteworthy here. Five of the ten Group G informants used a commissive in their reply, undertaking either to return home to get the book immediately, or to bring it on their next visit, for example:

- GM06: Nein. Ich werde es aber sofort holen und dir zurückgeben.
Bitte entschuldige, dass ich es noch nicht zurückgab. [*No, But I'll go and get it immediately and give it back to you. Sorry that I didn't give it back to you yet.*]
- GM05: Nein, aber ich komme gleich zurück, ich gehe es holen. [*No, but I'll come back soon, I'll go and get it.*]
- GF02: Nein, bitte entschuldige *vielmals*, ich werde es dir das nächste Mal bringen. [*No, I'm very sorry, I'll bring it to you next time.*]

By contrast, commissives were absent from the responses of group A, which tended to favor explanations, either alone or combined with other speech acts, for example:

- AF06: Na, da hab ich es doch wieder in der Küche vergessen. [*Oh, I left it in the kitchen again.*]

AM09: Nein, ich habe ganz vergessen. [*No, I completely forgot.*]

AF03: Ach nein, es tut mir leid (sic), aber ich habe es zu Hause vergessen. [*Oh no, I'm sorry but I left it at home.*]

Findings: In this scenario, as with situations A1 and A2, there is little evidence for convergence between the two groups. Once again the Group G informants appear to be more focused on repairing the transgression that has occurred and doing so as quickly as possible. The Austrian informants seem content with providing an explanation for the transgression, and do not feel the need to undertake any further (hearer-oriented) action. A possible explanation for this could be that this situation is marked by a close or even intimate relationship between two female friends. In this case Austrians are usually, according to our experience, willing to accept a simple explanation as an apology as it is assumed that a promise was not broken on purpose, and by someone who is trusted and known to make amends, otherwise the friendship itself would be in danger. As in situation A1, Group G's behavioral patterns tended more toward observing formal routines.

Situation A4: In einem überfüllten Bus. [In a crowded bus.]

Karl hat viel eingekauft und legt seine volle Einkaufstasche in das Gepäcknetz über den Sitzen. Als der Bus in einer Kurve plötzlich scharf bremst, fällt die Tasche hinunter, und dabei genau auf einen anderen Fahrgast.

Fahrgast: Au! Wem gehört die Tasche da?

Karl:

Fahrgast: Also, Sie können schon etwas besser aufpassen, wo Sie Ihre Sachen hintun!

(Karl has done a lot of shopping and places his heavy shopping bag in the luggage rack above the seats. As the bus suddenly brakes sharply, the bag falls down onto another passenger.

Passenger: Ow! Whose bag is that?

Karl:

Passenger: Well, you could be more careful where you put your things!

Main speech acts employed	Group G	%	Group A	%
Apology only	3	33.3	0	0
Apology + Expression of concern	2	22.2	1	10
Apology + Explanation/Justification	1	11.1	4	40
Apology + Explanation/Justification + Expression of Concern	1	11.1	3	30
Expression of concern + Commissive	1	11.1	0	0
Explanation/Justification only	1	11.1	2	20
TOTALS:				
Apologies	7		8	
Expressions of concern	4		4	
Explanations/Justifications	3		9	
Commissives	1		0	

Table 8. Summary of speech acts.
Situation A4: In einem überfüllten Bus.

Results for Group G: Among the nine valid Group G responses, six provided a direct answer to the question of ownership of the bag, and seven offered an apology to the injured passenger. Four respondents expressed concern about the well-being of the other person, and there was some uniformity in the manner in which this was done, with three of the four using *ich hoffe* and the last using *hoffentlich*, for example:

GM01: Tut mir leid (sic), ich hoffe, Sie haben sich nicht wehgetan.

[*I'm sorry, I hope you haven't hurt yourself.*]

GM05: Ja, die gehört mir. Ich hoffe, Sie sind nicht verletzt. Ich bitte um Entschuldigung. [*Yes, it belongs to me. I hope you're not hurt. I am sorry.*]

GF08: Oh, das ist meine. Ich hoffe, es hat Ihnen nicht wehgetan. Ich muss sehen, ob ich es irgendwie besser festmachen kann. (sic) [*Oh, that's mine. I hope it didn't hurt you. I must see if I can somehow make it more secure.*]

GF07: Es ist meine Tasche. Ich dachte, sie wäre OK da oben. Es tut mir wirklich leid (sic). Hoffentlich sind Sie nicht verletzt.

[*It's my bag. I thought it would be o.k. up there. I'm really sorry. Hopefully you're not hurt.*]

One of the Group G informants was concerned with attributing blame for the incident:

GF10: Entschuldigen Sie mir, aber der Busfahrer war zu schnell und es ist nicht mein Schuld (sic) [*I'm sorry, but the bus driver was too fast and it is not my fault.*]

GF10's husband also attributed the blame to the busdriver, using very similar wording.

Results for Group A: The Group A responses contain a similar number of direct answers to the question posed—six in all, and eight of the ten informants included an apology. As in the Group G responses, four in Group A expressed concern about the welfare of the passenger. Unlike the former, however, three of the four used a direct yes/no-question to make the inquiry:

AF01: Mir! Haben Sie sich wehgetan? Tut mir leid (sic), die Tasche war wohl etwas schwer. [*It's mine! Did you hurt yourself? I'm sorry, the bag was a bit heavy.*]

AF03: Die gehört mir. Es tut mir leid (sic), dass sie auf Sie gefallen ist. Ist Ihnen etwas geschehen? [*It belongs to me. I'm sorry that it fell on you. Did anything happen to you?*]

AF06: Tut mir leid (sic), sie gehört mir, haben Sie sich wehgetan? [*I'm sorry, it belongs to me, did you hurt yourself?*]

Only one in this group used *hoffentlich*, and this was the spouse of the German informant who had used it also:

AM07: Gnädiger Herr, das tut mir aber fürchterlich leid (sic). Hoffentlich haben Sie sich nicht ernstlich wehgetan. Ich bitte vielmals um Entschuldigung. Hätte nicht an solch wilde Fahrt gedacht. [*Sir, I am terribly sorry. Hopefully you didn't hurt yourself seriously. Please excuse me. I didn't think it would be such a wild ride.*]

Findings: The different modes for expressing concern are of interest. It could be argued that Group G, by beginning with *ich hoffe* and combining this with a negative *ich hoffe, Sie sind nicht verletzt*, are subtly imposing on the hearer a requirement to downplay the extent of the harm caused. This is consistent with the findings in Vollmer and

Olshtain's (1989) study that showed that the IFIDs preferred by Germans tend to downgrade the seriousness of an offense. Group A, on the other hand, by posing a question, are leaving the hearer open to express the extent of the harm for him/herself. This reflects a very common Austrian social attitude—do not impose yourself on others (live and let live) and save the social face of the hearer—a type of negative politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987).

As with previous scenarios, the question of fault or blame arises here more frequently among the Austrian background informants than with those from Group G. Five male informants attempt to diminish their responsibility for the incident because of the unpredictable nature of the event, or because of other circumstances for which they were not responsible. This is reflected in the greater number of explanations/justifications used by this group (nine compared to three from Group G), for example:

AM02: Entschuldigen. Aber ich war auf so ein Geschehen nicht vorbereitet. [*I'm sorry. But I wasn't prepared for such an event.*]

AM09: Es war so viel andere (sic) Gepäck im Netz, dafür kann ich auch nichts. [*There was so much other luggage in the rack, I couldn't do anything about it.*]

This can be attributed to the fact that the harm that could result from a bag dropping on someone's head is potentially considerable and requires additional efforts to repair the situation, which is best done by attributing it to an external cause beyond the speaker's control.

4. Directives.

Searle (1976:11), Hindelang (1978), and the CCSARP (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989) all proposed taxonomies of directives. What they all have in common is that they are based on semantic criteria that make it difficult to relate them to concrete utterances and for discrete categories to be established. A further shortcoming particularly of the CCSARP is the large number (42) of single criteria without an indication as to how the single criteria contribute to the directness of a given utterance.

To overcome these problems, a new classification scheme was developed.⁶ It is based on the assumption that the general level of directness of a directive speech act is linked to the grammatical mood of the utterance (imperative, declarative, interrogative, subjunctive) in combination with IFIDs and downgrading or upgrading elements. Three levels of criteria are distinguished:

Level 1: Elements conveying main illocutionary force:

- 1.1 Grammatical mode of the sentence: imperatives, declaratives, questions;
- 1.2 Use of different verb-types: full verb, copula verb, modal verb;
- 1.3 Use and position of specific IFIDs like *bitte* 'please' in sentence-initial or post-verbal position;
- 1.4 Use of negations like *nicht* 'not' or *kein* 'none';
- 1.5 Use of negative or positive evaluations;
- 1.6 Use of rhetorical/ironic declaratives or questions.

Level 2: Elements modifying the main illocutionary force by downgrading or upgrading the basic illocutionary content of the utterance:

- 2.1 Modal Particles such as (*einmal*, *doch*, *eben*) that are indicators of the attitude of the speaker toward the propositional content;
- 2.2 Adverbial elements (mostly temporal or modal) enforcing the illocutionary content;
- 2.3 Appeasing/Harmonizing formulas (e.g., 'be so good') mostly used to cajole the hearer;
- 2.4 Discourse-opening elements giving indications about the attitude of the speaker.

Level 3: Use of supportive moves:

Supportive moves (mostly declaratives) are used to give additional information and backing for what the speaker expresses in the head of the speech act. They enforce the illocutionary content of the head act, as this example from an Austrian informant shows:

Du hast gestern Deinen Spass gehabt! Das heißt jetzt aber nicht, dass hier ein Saustall sein muss. Bitte räum auf. [*You had your fun yesterday! This doesn't necessarily mean that there has to be a pigsty! Please tidy up!*]

⁶ This is a modified version of the classification developed by Muhr (2000), which is based on the empirical analysis of DCT data from informants in Austria and Germany and took into account the analysis of the CCSARP.

A combination of the different criteria leads to the following types of directives:

A. Explicit performatives:

1. Explicit verbal performatives: Ich hoffe, du räumst hier sofort auf. [*I hope you will tidy up here at once!*]

B. Imperative orders and requests:

2. Imperative order: Räum die Küche auf! [*Clean up the kitchen!*]
3. Imperative request with request in second position: Räum bitte die Küche auf! [*Clean up the kitchen, please!*]
4. Imperative request with request in first position: Bitte räum die Küche auf! [*Please clean up the kitchen!*]

According to the grammatical categorization, the next entry would be:

5. Cajoling imperative requests with particularly mitigating phrases: Maria, sei so lieb und leihe mir deine Mitschrift vom Kurs. [*Maria, be so kind as to lend me your course notes.*] Requests of this type are among the most indirect directives even though an imperative form is used. The reason for the discrepancy between form and illocutionary content is that the form has become a conventionalized appeaser. This request type is also used in the interrogative. In this case it is the most indirect directive of all types presented here (see 22).

C. Declarative orders, declaratives, and ironic/negative evaluative statements:

6. Modal declarative order: Du musst hier aufräumen! [*You must tidy up here!*]
7. Explicit declarations of will/want statement:
 - a. Indicative: Ich will wissen, ob die Stelle noch frei ist. [*I want to know whether the position is still available.*]
 - b. Subjunctive: Ich möchte wissen, ob die Stelle noch frei ist. [*I would like to know whether the position is still available.*]
8. Negative evaluative modal verb declarative order: Ich möchte nicht in diesem Saustall kochen. [*I don't want to cook in this pigsty.*]
9. Negative evaluative full-verb declarative: Die Küche sieht aber noch chaotisch aus. [*The kitchen still looks rather chaotic.*] Utterances like this are depreciating remarks which act as indirect directives.

10. Implicit full-verb declaration of a will/want statement: Ich rufe wegen dem Zeitungsinserat an. [*I am ringing about the newspaper advertisement.*]
11. Rhetorical declaratives: Wäre ganz witzig, wenn du aufräumtest. [*Would be quite funny if you tidied up!*] This type of declaratives mainly consists of ironic or cynical comments about a situation which the speaker dislikes.

D. Interrogative requests:

12. Rhetorical questions: Wie wär's, wenn du hier mal sauber machst? [*How about tidying up here?*]
13. Simple full-verb questions: Räumst du mal kurz auf? [*Would you just clean up?*] Declaratives with an interrogative intonation are also subsumed under this category.
14. Simple full-verb interrogative requests: Machst du bitte die Küche sauber? [*Can you please clean the kitchen?*] This type differs from number 13 only by the use of the IFID *bitte* 'please'.
15. Simple auxiliary/modal verb interrogatives:
 - a. Indicative: Kannst du hier noch aufräumen? [*Can you tidy up here?*]
 - b. Subjunctive: Könntest du hier noch aufräumen? [*Could you tidy up here?*]
16. Negated auxiliary/modal verb interrogatives:
 - a. Indicative: Willst du nicht die Küche aufräumen? [*Don't you want to tidy up the kitchen?*]
 - b. Subjunctive: Möchtest du nicht die Küche aufräumen? [*Wouldn't you like to tidy up the kitchen?*]
17. Auxiliary/modal verb interrogatives + IFID:
 - a. Indicative: Kannst du bitte noch die Küche aufräumen? [*Can you please still tidy up the kitchen?*]
 - b. Subjunctive: Könntest du bitte noch die Küche aufräumen? [*Could you please still tidy up the kitchen?*]
18. Negated auxiliary/modal verb interrogatives + IFID:
 - a. Indicative: Kannst du nicht bitte die Küche aufräumen? [*Can't you please tidy up the kitchen?*]
 - b. Subjunctive: Könntest du nicht bitte die Küche aufräumen? [*Couldn't you please tidy up the kitchen?*]

19. Auxiliary/modal verb interrogatives with IFID in initial position:
 - a. Indicative: Bitte, kannst du die Küche jetzt aufräumen?
[*Please, can you tidy up the kitchen now?*]
 - b. Subjunctive: Bitte, könntest du die Küche jetzt aufräumen?
[*Please, could you tidy up the kitchen now?*]
20. Copula verb interrogatives asking about the feasibility of the desired action:
 - a. Indicative: Ist es Ihnen möglich, mich mit dem Auto zu nehmen? [*Is it possible for you to give me a lift?*]
 - b. Subjunctive: Wäre es Ihnen möglich, mich mit dem Auto zu nehmen? [*Would it be possible for you to give me a lift?*]
21. Modal verb interrogatives with the verb *darf* 'may' that realize a very indirect request for permission:
 - a. Indicative: Darf ich bitte deine Mitschrift haben? [*Can I please have your lecture notes?*]
 - b. Subjunctive: Dürfte ich bitte deine Mitschrift haben? [*Could I please have your lecture notes?*]
22. Cajoling interrogative requests with particularly mitigating phrases: Maria, bist du so lieb und leihst mir deine Mitschrift vom Kurs? [*Maria, would you be good enough to lend me your course notes?*]

Can we establish the directness/indirectness of a directive? Generally speaking the (in)directness of a speech act is governed first, by the overall number of downgrading or upgrading illocutionary elements used and second, by the number of elements that restrict the hearer's ability to act on his/her own will. In the first place this means that the larger the number of downgrading elements in an utterance, the more indirect it will be. Secondly, the use of an imperative maximally restricts the ability of the hearer to act on his/her own will—s/he only has the choice to comply to the speaker's will or to refuse, which in both cases is face-threatening.

In contrast, the use of evaluative declaratives puts a positive or negative light on the hearer's actions but they are only an *indirect* appeal to act according to the hearer's will as expressed by the evaluation: the hearer can challenge the speaker's evaluation and thus has more opportunities to act on his/her own. The speaker's use of an interrogative leaves the choice of action completely to the hearer. For this reason

interrogative directives that include an explicit request indicator like *bitte* 'please' can be counted as among the most indirect type of directives.

The categorization (Types 1–22) set out above is based predominantly on the grammatical mood of the utterance. This generally correlates with level of directness but not necessarily in linear progression. For instance, utterances 3–5 are less direct than those in categories 6–8. This is because in 6 and 7 the declarative mood is overridden, in 6 by the use of a modal verb and in 7 by the explicit expression of will, both of which have the illocutionary effect of an imperative.

Therefore the 24 directives from the above schema have been reclassified according to their level of directness. This results in three groups of directive types:

Group 1—very direct types (orders and negative declaratives): 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11;

Group 2—fairly direct types (imperative requests and direct interrogatives): 3, 4, 12, 13;

Group 3—indirect types (modal verb questions and requests): 5, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

The directness of these directive types can be modified by elements of level 2 (upgraders, downgraders, alerters and modal particles, etc.) as mentioned above. In addition to that, speakers may use supportive moves.

In the following sections, the examples are ordered according to speech act and differentiated between informal (everyday) and formal (situation-marked) events. The tables at the beginning of each situation summarize the data according to the categories outlined above. The responses are classified according to level of directness linked to grammatical mood and categorized under three groups—very direct, fairly direct, and indirect. Included in the tables are only the categories that occur in the data.

4.1. Directives in Formal Contexts.

Situation D1: Am Telefon. [On the telephone.]

Michael sucht eine Ferienarbeit. In der Zeitung hat er ein Inserat gesehen, in dem Fließbandarbeiter in einem Montagewerk gesucht werden. Er ruft in der Personalabteilung der Firma an, um nähere Einzelheiten über die Arbeit zu erfahren.

Michael: Hallo. Mein Name ist Brunner. _____

Personalchef: Tut mir Leid. Wir haben im Moment leider keine freien Stellen mehr.

(Michael is looking for a holiday job. In the newspaper he saw an advertisement for assembly-line workers in a factory. He rings the personnel department of the company to find out more details about the work.

Michael: Hello. My name is (Michael) Brunner. _____

Personnel Manager: *I'm sorry, unfortunately we have no vacancies at the moment.)*

Category	Example	Group G	%	Group A	%
Group 1: very direct					
7	Ich will/möchte wissen, ob die Stelle noch frei ist.	5	50	1	11.1
Totals for Group 1		5	50	1	11.1
Group 2: fairly direct					
13	Räumst du mal kurz auf?	0	0	3	33.3
Totals for Group 2		0	0	3	33.3

Group 3: indirect					
10	Ich rufe wegen dem Zeitungsinserat an.	2	20	1	11.1
15	Kannst/Könntest du hier noch aufräumen?	1	10	3	33.3
17	Kannst/Könntest du bitte noch die Küche aufräumen?	2	20	1	11.1
Totals for Group 3		3	30	4	44.4

Table 9. Summary of directive types.
Situation D1: Am Telefon.

Results from Group G: Among the Group G responses, five of the ten were in the form of one or more declaratives, without a specific request or interrogative, with the declarative as the head of the speech act, for example:

- GM01: Sie haben da in der Zeitung nach Leuten gesucht. Ich will mich bewerben. [*In the paper it says you are looking for people. I want to apply.*]
 GF02: Ich möchte mich um die in der Zeitung stehende Stelle bewerben. [*I want to apply for the job that is in the paper.*]

Four of the five declaratives are want-statements expressing a direct wish or the will of the speaker by using a modal verb and thus display a high level of directness (group 1). The remaining responses include a direct or indirect interrogative, where the speaker specifically requests further information about the position, with one in the form of a modal interrogative request in the subjunctive, an indirect form of request, for example:

- GM06: Ich habe Ihr Inserat in der Zeitung gelesen. Würden Sie mir bitte etwas Näheres mitteilen? [*I read your advertisement in the paper. Would you please tell me more about it?*]
 GF09: Ich suche eine Ferienarbeit für ein paar Stunden täglich. Können Sie bitte mehr Auskunft geben? [*I am looking for a holiday job for a few hours per day. Can you please give me more information?*]

Results from Group A: In contrast to those of Group G, seven out of the nine valid Group A responses consisted of a combination of declarative plus an interrogative with the interrogative constituting the head speech act. Only two of the nine valid Group A responses were in the form of a declarative, and only one was an explicit want-statement (type 7). Three of the interrogatives belong to type 15; that is, they are modal verb interrogatives, two of which are in the subjunctive that represent a particularly indirect form of requests. The remaining responses included direct or indirect interrogatives, where the speaker sought more information about the position or asked directly whether the position was still available, for example:

- AF03: Ich suche eine Ferienarbeit—bin Student. Haben Sie vielleicht etwas für mich? [*I am looking for a holiday job—I'm a student. Do you have something for me?*]
- AM04: Ich rufe wegen der ausgeschriebenen Fließbandarbeiterstelle an—ist eine noch frei? [*I am ringing about the advertised position(s) for assembly-line workers—is one still available?*]
- AM07: Ich bin interessiert an Ihrem Inserat. Ist die Stelle noch offen und was sind die Bedingungen? [*I am interested in your advertisement. Is the position still available and what are the conditions?*]

Findings: The two groups' responses are quite distinctive. It would appear that there are some underlying differences in cultural norms for situations that are not face-to-face, and where the listener is unfamiliar. The approach of the majority of the Group G informants was to avoid engaging with the unfamiliar person on the other end of the line, simply stating the purpose of their call and directly expressing their desire through a large number of want-statements. The majority of the Group A informants, on the other hand, sought not only to engage with the other speaker, but explained the reason for the call and then asked for the information. This means that encroaching on another's territory needs to be counteracted by an explanation that symbolically repairs the infringement (negative politeness). Group G is more self-image driven and content with uttering a simple declarative that is both the reason for the call and an interrogative request for information on whether the job is still available.

Situation D2: Im Büro des Abteilungsleiters. [In the departmental manager's office.]

Hans ist mit der Arbeit nicht rechtzeitig fertig geworden. Deshalb will er einen Tag vor dem Abgabetermin mit seiner Vorgesetzten, Frau Rieser, sprechen.

Hans: Ich werde mit meiner Arbeit bis morgen leider nicht fertig. _____

Frau Rieser: Also gut, dann bis Ende nächster Woche, das aber sicher!

(Hans has not finished his work on time. Therefore, a day before the due date, he goes to speak to his superordinate, Ms. Rieser.

Hans: *Unfortunately I won't have my work finished by tomorrow.*

Ms. Rieser: All right, so until the end of next week, but no later.)

Category	Example	Group G	%	Group A	%
Group 1: very direct					
7	Ich will/möchte wissen, ob die Stelle noch frei ist.	5	50	2	22.2
Totals for Group 1		5	50	2	22.2
Group 2: fairly direct					
13	Räumst du mal kurz auf?	1	10	2	22.2
Totals for Group 2		1	10	2	22.2
Group 3: indirect					
10	Ich rufe wegen dem Zeitungsinserat an.	2	20	2	22.2
15	Kannst/Könntest du hier noch aufräumen?	0	0	1	11.1
17	Kannst/Könntest du bitte noch die Küche aufräumen?	0	0	1	11.1

19	Bitte, kannst/könntest du die Küche jetzt aufräumen?	1	10	1	11.1
21	Darf/Dürfte ich bitte deine Mitschrift haben?	1	10	0	0
Totals for Group 3		4	40	5	50

Table 10. Summary of directive types.
Situation D2: Im Büro des Abteilungsleiters.

Results from Group G: Seven of the ten responses from Group G were in the form of a declarative, where the worker simply stated that he had not succeeded in finishing the work and, as with the previous scenario, these did not include a specific interrogative. Five of the seven included a reference to an alternate time by which the work would be completed, for example:

- GM01: Ich werde es erst in ein paar Taagen (sic) geschafft haben, die Arbeit abzuschließen. [*I will only have managed to complete the work in a few days' time.*]
- GF07: Ich bräuchte noch ein bisschen Zeit, um sie sorgfältig zu vollbringen. [*I would need a bit more time to finish it carefully.*]

The response of one informant was of a fairly direct type, and the remaining three were of an indirect nature, including the use of *darf*, which is highly indirect, for example:

- GF02: Darf ich noch eine Fristzeit von einigen Tagen haben? [*Could I have an extension of a few days?*]
- GF09: Bitte kann ich noch ein paar Tage haben, es fertig zu machen? [*Please can I have a couple more days to finish it?*]

The responses with a higher level of indirectness were all from women.

Results from Group A: Of the nine (out of ten) valid Group A responses, four were in the form of a declarative, two from category 7 and two from category 10:

- AF05: Ich hatte Probleme mit der Arbeit, werde nächste Woche fertig sein. [*I had problems with the work, I'll be finished next week.*]

AM09: Ich hatte Schwierigkeiten, das Material zu kriegen. [*I had problems getting the material.*]

The five remaining included an interrogative, along with three of the very indirect types of directive (15, 17, and 19) that include the use of the subjunctive form as a politeness marker. One informant asks for permission to extend the deadline, for example:

AF03: Bitte können Sie mir mehr Zeit geben, um die Arbeit fertig zu machen? [*Please can you give me more time to finish the work?*]

AF06: Kann ich noch einen Tag dazu haben? [*Can I have another day on it?*]

AM08: Könnten Sie bitte noch eine andere Woche (sic) warten? [*Could you please wait another week?*]

Findings: In this scenario, as in situation D1, the responses from the two groups are distinctive in their use of declaratives and interrogatives. Half of the Group G informants use very direct statements indicating that the work is not yet finished. Group A informants use more interrogatives with request forms constituting a lower degree of directness.

4.2. Directives in Informal Contexts.

Situation D3: In einer Studentenwohnung. [In a student apartment.]

Hans, der mit Helmut eine Wohnung gemeinsam bewohnt, hat am Vortag eine Geburtstagsparty gehabt und die Küche in einem chaotischen Zustand hinterlassen. Sein Mitbewohner Helmut hat damit Probleme.

Helmut: Hans! Marianne und Walter kommen heute Abend zum Essen, und ich muss bald mit dem Kochen anfangen.

Hans: O.K., ich mach's gleich.

(*Hans, who shares a flat with Helmut, had a birthday party the day before and left the kitchen in a chaotic condition. Helmut sees that as a problem.*)

Helmut: Hans! Marianne and Walter are coming for dinner tonight and I will have to start cooking soon. _____

Hans: O.K., I'll do it in a moment.)

Category	Example	Group G	%	Group A	%
Group 1: very direct					
2	Räum die Küche auf!	2	20	0	0
6	Du musst hier aufräumen!	2	20	1	14.2
8	Ich will/möchte nicht in diesem Saustall kochen.	0	0	1	14.2
11	Wäre ganz witzig, wenn du aufräumtest.	1	10	0	0
Totals for Group 1		5	50	2	28.4
Group 2: fairly direct					
4	Bitte räum die Küche auf!	3	30	1	14.2
Totals for Group 2		3	30	1	14.2
Group 3: indirect					
15	Kannst/Könntest du hier noch aufräumen?	1	10	2	28.4
16	Willst/Möchtest du nicht die Küche aufräumen?	0	0	1	14.2
17	Kannst/Könntest du bitte noch die Küche aufräumen?	1	10	1	14.2
Totals for Group 3		2	20	4	56.8

*Table 11. Summary of directive types.
Situation D3: In einer Studentenwohnung.*

Results for Group G: Five of the ten Group G responses took the form of a modal or negative declarative belonging to the group 1 of directives. Such declaratives, especially where a modal verb is used, can be perceived as highly direct and perhaps the most forceful way of expressing dissatisfaction, ordering the hearer to do what is requested:

- GM01: Du hättest die Küche ja mal aufräumen können. [*You could have cleaned up the kitchen.*]
- GF04: Du musst eben allein Ordnung machen. [*You'll just have to tidy things up on your own.*]
- GF02: Die Küche muss aber erst sauber gemacht werden. [*The kitchen has to be cleaned first.*]

Two of the four examples above utilize modal particles, which have the effect of emphasizing the minimal nature of the task and the need to start on the task immediately. The *ja* combined with *mal* (GM01) is consensus-imposing in that it is requiring the interlocutor to agree (see section 5).

Three from Group G formulated their response using an initial (*So*) *bitte* plus an imperative (which is fairly direct), one of them using the combination imperative request + explanation (which is also quite direct), for example:

- GM06: Hans, bitte mach den Saustall in der Küche sauber, ich habe später Gäste. [*Hans, please tidy up the pigsty in the kitchen, I'm having guests later.*]
- GM03: So bitte, räume mal alles auf! [*So, please clean everything up!*]

The remaining responses took the form of an interrogative. One speaker implies that the task of tidying up was not left up to Helmut, but would be shared:

- GF08: Könntest du mithelfen, dass wir die Wohnung wieder in Ordnung haben? [*Could you help so that we can have the flat tidied up?*]

Results from Group A: Of the Group A responses, only seven were valid. One included an imperative declarative, which constitutes an order:

- AM10: Die Wohnung muss jetzt sauber gemacht werden. [*The flat has to be cleaned up now.*]

Two responses were formulated using an imperative, one combining the imperative with an explanatory declarative, the other toning down the imperative with the request indicator *bitte* in sentence-initial position, for example:

AM08: Mach zu, Hans, ich kann in diesem Chaos nicht arbeiten.

[*Shut the door, Hans, I can't work in this chaos.*]

AF03: Bitte bringe die Küche in Ordnung und stell alles weg!

[*Please tidy the kitchen up and put everything away.*]

The remaining four were formulated as modal interrogatives, two of them in the subjunctive, a strong politeness marker and thus belonging to Group 3 of the indirect directives. Unlike the Group G informants, the females in Group A showed an overall preference for a lower degree of directness:

AF01: Könntest du die Küche wieder in Ordnung bringen? [*Could you tidy the up kitchen?*]

AM09: Würdest du bitte die Wohnung wieder zusammenräumen?
[*Would you please clean up the flat?*]

AF06: Kannst du nicht die Küche sauber machen? [*Can't you clean up the kitchen?*]

Findings: As the above discussion shows, the responses from the two groups display a different use of directive types, especially of the imperative. Eight of the ten directives used by the Group G informants in this situation belonged to the very direct group 1 and the fairly direct group 2. The Austrian responses were considerably less direct insofar as four out of the seven valid responses are group 3 directives using modal interrogatives in the subjunctive, a very low level of directness, and fewer modal imperatives. Most of the informants understood the situation to be an informal interaction; however, both GF02 and AM10 used a formal rather than an informal response.

Situation D4: In der Abendschule. [At night school.]

Anna war gestern nicht beim Kurs in der Abendschule und möchte sich von Maria die Mitschrift ausleihen.

Anna: _____

Maria: Sicher, aber ich möchte sie gern vor dem Kursabend zurückhaben.

(*Anna was not at night school yesterday and would like to borrow Maria's notes.*)

Anna: _____

Maria: *Sure, but I would like to have them back before the next class.*)

Category	Example	Group G	%	Group A	%
Group 2: fairly direct					
4	Bitte räum die Küche auf!	1	11.1	0	0
Totals for Group 2		1	11.1	0	0
Group 3: indirect					
5	Sei so lieb und leih mir deine Mitschrift vom Kurs.	0	0	1	12.5
15	Kannst/Könntest du hier noch aufräumen?	5	55.5	0	0
17	Kannst/Könntest du bitte noch die Küche aufräumen?	1	11.1	4	50
19	Bitte, kannst/könntest du die Küche jetzt aufräumen?	0	0	2	25
21	Darf/Dürfte ich bitte deine Mitschrift haben?	2	22.2	1	12.5
Totals for Group 3		8	88.8	8	100

Table 12. Summary of directive types.
Situation D4: In der Abendschule.

Results from Group G: In five of the nine valid Group G responses, the speaker offered an explanation as to why it was necessary to borrow Maria's notes. These responses were relatively lengthy, several comprising more than one speech act. Female respondents used more subjunctive constructions than males, for example:

GF07: Gestern war's mir gar nicht gut und ich konnte leider nicht zur Abendschule gehen. Könntest du mir vielleicht die Mitschrift ausleihen? [*Yesterday I wasn't feeling well and unfortunately I couldn't come to night school. Could you lend me your notes?*]

GF08: Maria, könntest du mir vielleicht deine schriftlichen Arbeiten vom letzten Kursabend leihen, damit ich auf dem Laufenden bleibe? [*Maria, could you lend me your written work from last night, so that I can keep up to date?*]

Two responses were semantically imperatives, realized with an imperative and the modal verb *darf* with *bitten* 'may I ask you' and *bitte*, respectively:

GM03: Darf ich dich bitten, mir die Mitschrift vom Kurs leihen (sic), da ich gestern nicht zur Abendschule gehen konnte. [*May I ask you to lend me the notes from the course as I couldn't attend night school yesterday.*]

GF02: Maria, bitte leihe mir deine Notizen aus, damit ich mir es (sic) abschreiben kann, was gestern abend in der Schule besprochen wurde. [*Maria, please lend me your notes so that I can copy what was done in last night's class.*]

In eight of the nine valid responses, the head speech act consisted of modal verb interrogative, which belongs to directive group 3. It is noticeable that the Group G responses included a number of requests with a low level of directness: Two of the eight interrogatives are of a very indirect type (21) modal request for permission, five responses are modal verb interrogatives with the verb *können* 'can' (type 15). Three of the six interrogatives are in the subjunctive, which are very indirect forms of directives, all used by female informants, for example:

GF04: Maria, würdest du mir deine Notizen leihen? [*Maria, would you lend me your notes?*]

One of the responses contained a reassuring supportive move that enforces the indirectness of the speech act, as the speaker reassures the listener that her notes will be promptly returned:

GM06: Maria, ich habe gestern gefehlt, möchte aber das Versäumte nachholen. Darf ich mir deine Mitschrift ausleihen? Du bekommst sie sofort zurück. [*Maria, I was absent yesterday, but would like to catch up on what I missed. Could I borrow your notes? You'll get them back straightaway.*]

Results from Group A: The eight valid responses from Group A were overall much shorter than those of Group G, with only two of the eight providing a reason for wanting to borrow the notes, for example:

AF01: Maria, ich hätte eine Bitte: darf ich mir von dir die Mitschrift von gestern ausleihen? Ich konnte nicht kommen. [*Maria, I'd like to ask you something: could I borrow the notes from yesterday? I couldn't come.*]

The head speech acts of seven of the eight valid responses from Group A were expressed as interrogatives, and all displayed a relatively low degree of directness. Four of the seven responses are modal verb interrogative requests (type 17; e.g., AF06, AM07) and two include *bitte* and the subjunctive (type 19; e.g., AF03). Women showed a greater preference for the subjunctive than did men:

AF03: Bitte, könntest du mir die Mitschrift borgen? [*Please could you lend me your notes?*]

AF06: Kann ich bitte deine Mitschrift von gestern kurz ausborgen? [*Could I please borrow yesterday's notes for a short time?*]

AM07: Maria, kannst du mir bitte deine Notizen vom gestrigen Kurs leihen. [*Maria, can you please lend me the notes from yesterday's course?*]

The responses of two other informants were also characterized by a low level of directness: One used a cajoling imperative request (type 5; AM08) and another used four politeness markers (AF01): 1. alerter first name; 2. an explicit performative in the subjunctive; 3. modal verb interrogative requesting permission; and 4. supportive move giving an explanation.

AM08: Maria, sei so lieb und leihe mir deine Mitschrift vom Kurs. [*Maria, would you be good enough to lend me your course notes?*]

AF01: Maria, ich hätte eine Bitte: darf ich mir von dir die Mitschrift von gestern ausleihen? Ich konnte nicht kommen. [*Maria, I have a favor to ask you. Please could I borrow the notes from yesterday? I wasn't able to come.*]

Findings: There was a greater incidence among the Group G responses of the speaker providing an explanation to support the request to borrow notes. This contrasts with the reported behavior of Group G in other situations. It is also remarkable that the Group G informants used a large number of type 15 modal verb interrogative requests in the subjunctive. It seems that there has been some convergence in Group G toward the more typically Austrian, indirect forms of directives, as the

German responses in the CCSARP corpus were overwhelmingly modal verb interrogatives in the indicative form. The second noteworthy trend here is that there are significantly fewer explanations on the part of the Austrians. This can, however, be attributed to the expectation on the part of the Austrians that such a circumstance requires no explanation as the situation is defined as personal. The speakers are already familiar, and therefore there is no necessity to do more than carry out the directive. Instead they indicate politeness by using such indicators as: *bitte + könntest* 'please' + 'could you' (subjunctive, corresponding to Australian English), or an appellation + appeaser construction, for example, *Maria + sei so lieb* 'be so kind' (subjunctive). Thus the brevity of the utterance and the lack of explanation are compensated for by additional politeness markers and the use of polite supportive moves.

5. Modal Particles.

German modal particles (MPs) are a kind of "lubrication" in discourse (Durrell 1996:175), which "enhance conversational coherence" (Fuller 2001), uninflected words indicating the speaker's attitude to a proposition (Weydt 1969:68) in relation to an expectation of the other's attitude. MPs such as *doch, ja, wohl, and eben/halt* are a means of interaction management (Franck 1979) employed mainly to achieve a consensus with the interlocutor on facts known to them (Lütten 1979), usually by appealing for agreement (Durrell 1996). *Ja* presupposes and reinforces clear evidence for the statement (König, Stark, and Requardt 1990:145, Hinrichs 1979). *Wohl* is based on not very clear presuppositions, for example:

- (1) Das wird *wohl* nicht stimmen.
'That can't really be right.'

According to Muhr (1987), this MP is rarely used and tends to be considered aggressive in Austria.

Doch implies less certainty and has a slightly more adversative meaning, for example:

- (2) Der will *doch* auch 'rein.
'Surely he wants to come in.'
(3) Das geht *doch* nicht. (with stress on *doch*)
'That isn't possible after all.'

Mal, also avoided and rated negatively in Austria (Muhr 1987), minimizes a proposition ('It's not a big deal'), as in 4.

(4) Kommst du *mal* her?

'Just come here for a moment.'

Eben expresses "a lack of alternative," an "inescapable conclusion" (Durrell 1992:137). Consider 5 below.

(5) Du musst *eben* mitkommen.

'You just have to come along.'

Halt, largely synonymous with *eben*, was originally used in Austria and southern Germany. It has been described as also having a warmer, friendlier connotation and can also be used to relate personal experiences and attitudes (Dittmar 1997:22). Its greater range of functions may explain its spread in recent years to northern German and its post-*Wende* use by some East Berliners (Dittmar and Bredel 1999).

Etwa gives a tentative suggestion or expresses fear that the answer to a yes/no-question may be negative (Durrell 1992:138). It corresponds to the question tag in English, for example,

(6) Hast du *etwa* getrunken?

'You haven't been drinking, have you?'

Denn expresses surprise and implies a request for confirmation although in *wh*-questions it can stress a preceding or following item and tone down the question. Compare 7 and 8.

(7) Hast du *denn* die Zeitung nicht gelesen?

'Haven't you read the paper?'

(8) Wo warst *denn* du die ganze Zeit?

'Where were you then all the time?'

Salmons (1990) and Goss and Salmons (2000) have found evidence of a gradual loss of modal particles in German-English bilinguals in the U.S. and their replacement by discourse markers transferred from English via codeswitching. Fuller (2001) finds that discourse markers (such as *well* and *you know*) transferred into Pennsylvania German are, according to Matras's (1998) model, high in pragmatic detachability—discourse markers that mark contrast, restriction, or change, are not lexical or deictic, and/or are turn-related. *Ja* and *mal* are examples of German MPs that are retained in Pennsylvania German. In data from German-English bilinguals, Hungarian-German-English trilinguals, and Dutch-German-English trilinguals in Australia (Clyne 2003), there is considerable variation between individuals and vintages with some

speakers maintaining “German,” “Dutch” or “Hungarian,” and “English” modes of behavior and others making choices. The decline in the use of German modal particles lies in the fact that they largely express a consensus imposition that conflicts with mainstream Australian cultural values. The Hungarian and Dutch modal particles that are not used much in Australia are those with a similar consensus-imposing function (Clyne 2003).

In this study the informants completed a multiple choice questionnaire that presented three to four different expressions with or without a modal particle. The different variants were obtained in a test with a large number of informants. In the test, different variants found in Weydt 1983 were presented, and those that achieved the highest rates were chosen for Muhr’s (1987) study and also used in the present study. The use of a multiple choice test with empirically established variants is a safe way to find out which language forms are thought by the informants to be commonly used. It is clear that the actual use may differ from that. Given a large enough number of informants, this difference can be determined by statistical methods. As the number of informants in this study is rather small, the results can only show tendencies but no clear variation patterns.

In their responses to the DCT section of the study, the majority of informants did not use modal particles. In fact, of the 150 valid responses to the situations, only nine instances of modal particle use were recorded: one couple, GM01 and AF01, who had been in Australia for only two years, together accounted for four of these. Two other informants from each group employed modal particles in their responses.

The prototype of the German consensus-imposing particle is the one employed (in situation D3) by GM01:

(9) Du hättest die Küche *ja mal* aufräumen können.

‘You could have cleaned up the kitchen.’

In this example, the interlocutor is urged to agree that he could have cleaned the room and that this task is not really a big deal. At the same time, we would interpret *ja mal* to indicate a reproach. This communicative behavior is most in keeping with that previously described in studies of German and Austrian pragmatics (Muhr 1994).

The multiple choice questionnaire on modal particle use showed some tendencies but no clear variation patterns. Some comparisons are drawn with Muhr’s (1987) study, in which he found that certain MPs

were more common in the responses of Austrians or Germans. Let us examine each of the situations briefly in turn:

Situation A: Franz und Ruth wollen ins Kino gehen und sind dabei, sich anzuziehen. Da es schon spät ist und Franz—der wie immer sehr lange braucht—noch im Badezimmer ist, sagt Ruth zu ihm ...: [*Franz and Ruth want to go to the pictures and are getting dressed. As it is late and Franz—who as usual is taking a very long time—is still in the bathroom, Ruth says to him ...*]

	Group A	Group G
Bist du immer noch nicht fertig?	6	5
Bist du <i>denn</i> immer noch nicht fertig?	2	4
Bist du <i>vielleicht</i> noch immer nicht fertig?	2	1
Bist du <i>etwa</i> immer noch nicht fertig?	0	0

Eleven informants (six Group A, five Group G) opt for the MP-free variant *Bist du immer noch nicht fertig?*, predicted on the basis of Muhr's work to be the preferred Austrian variant; six (four Group G and two Group A) for *Bist du denn immer noch nicht fertig?*; and the variant *Bist du vielleicht noch immer nicht fertig?*, which is very strong and comes across as impatient, occurs in one Group G and two Group A responses. Of the five Group G informants opting for the first-mentioned variant, four are using the same as their Austrian spouse. But the MP-less variant corresponds also to Australian English. One of the two Austrians opting for *vielleicht* used the same as her husband.

Situation B: Sie besuchen Ihre Mutter and trinken Kaffee, der heute (im Gegensatz zu sonst) scheußlich schmeckt. Sie haben den Verdacht, dass Ihre Mutter Salz statt Zucker in den Kaffee gegeben hat, hoffen aber, dass das nicht der Fall ist. Sie fragen: [*You visit your mother and drink coffee that today (in contrast to usual practice) tastes terrible. You suspect that your mother has put salt instead of sugar in the coffee. You ask:*]

	Group A	Group G
Hast du <i>etwa</i> Salz in den Kaffee getan?	1	4
Hast du <i>vielleicht</i> Salz in den Kaffee getan?	8	5
Hast du <i>denn</i> Salz in den Kaffee getan?	1	1

The variant *Hast du etwa Salz in den Kaffee getan?* is selected by four Group G and one Group A (the MP *etwa* is hardly used in Austria) and the variant *Hast du vielleicht Salz in den Kaffee getan?* is preferred by eight Group A and five Group G informants, including four couples. This is the preferred variant in Muhr's European study. A variant with *denn* is selected only by one informant from each group. This is the second variant preferred by Muhr's German informants.

Situation C: Hans stellt seinem Freund einen Arbeitskollegen vor. Überrascht stellt er fest, dass sich die beiden schon kennen und er sagt ... [*Hans is introducing a work colleague to his friend. He is surprised to find that the two already know each other and he says ...*]

	Group A	Group G
Kennt ihr euch <i>denn</i> schon?	1	3
Kennt ihr euch <i>etwa</i> schon?	3	0
Was, ihr kennt euch schon?	6	7

The variant expected on the basis of Muhr's project, *Was, ihr kennt euch schon?*, was chosen by seven members of group G and six people from Group A. Also consistent with expectations based on Muhr 1994, *Kennt ihr euch denn schon?*, indicating surprise, was preferred mainly by Group G (three as opposed to one from Group A). This variant would, according to Muhr's native speaker intuition, sound rather formal to an Austrian. Very surprising, however, were the three responses favoring *Kennt ihr euch etwa schon?* They were all from Group A (including the most recent arrival, who has much contact with Germans through her own and her partner's work) and are quite inconsistent with the general tendency that we have already discussed for Austrians not to use this modal particle. There appears to be a case for convergence here.

Situation D: Max ist per Autostopp unterwegs und wartet auf einer Autobahnauffahrt. Ein anderer Autostopper kommt hinzu und beginnt ein Gespräch. [*Max is hitchhiking and waiting at a freeway entrance. Another hitchhiker joins him and starts a conversation.*]

	Group A	Group G
Hallo, wo kommst du <i>denn</i> her?	4	4
Hallo, wo kommst <i>denn</i> du her?	1	2
Hallo, wo kommst du her?	5	4

The possible variant *Hallo, wo kommst du denn her?* yields responses from four informants from each group (including three couples). The variant *Hallo, wo kommst denn du her?* is preferred by two Group G informants and one from Group A. This is the one preferred by the Germans in Muhr's European study. The neutral one without a MP which Muhr suggests is favored by Austrians was selected by five members of Group A and four from Group G. This would suggest convergence, and the Austrian variant may be preferred because it is MP-free like the Australian equivalent.⁷

Situation E: Max antwortet auf die Frage des anderen Autostoppers, dass er aus St. Paul komme. Da dieser den Ort nicht kennt, fragt er ... [Max's answer to the other hitchhiker's question is that he comes from St. Paul. As the other person doesn't know this place, he asks ...]

	Group A	Group G
Wo liegt <i>denn</i> das?	5	9
Wo liegt das <i>denn</i> ?	0	0
Wo liegt das?	5	1

In accordance with Muhr's previous study, the variant without the *denn* (*Wo liegt das?*) is preferred by five of the Group A informants and the Group G spouse of one of them, who came to Australia as a young child. In that case, there is convergence toward the variant that is both more Austrian and more Australian. The variant *Wo liegt denn das?* is chosen by nine Group G and five Group A informants, all of whom are employing the same variant as their German spouse. Thus, both national variation and convergence are in evidence.

Situation F: Ein junges Paar ist gerade dabei, die Bilder in der neu bezogenen Wohnung aufzuhängen. Er hantiert mit dem Hammer, sie reicht ihm die Bilder. Da ihm der Hammer gerade im Weg ist, sagt er zu ihr ... [A young couple is just hanging up pictures in their newly occupied flat. He is working with the hammer, she is handing him the pictures. As the hammer is in his way, he says to her ...]

⁷ The illocutionary force of the German MP is often expressed prosodically in English, and this cannot be discerned from a written DCT.

	Group A	Group G
Halt <i>mal</i> den Hammer!	0	2
Halt <i>einmal</i> den Hammer, bitte!	2	3
Halt den Hammer bitte!	7	5

The variant with *mal* (*Halt mal den Hammer!*), associated by Muhr (1987) with Germans, is selected by two Group G informants, the option with *einmal* (common in Austria instead of *mal*) and with *bitte* is chosen by three from Group G and two from Group A. The variant without an MP is chosen by seven Group A and five Group G informants, all except one of whom are employing the same variant as their A spouse.

Situation G: Karl, der gerade erst mit dem Schifahren begonnen hat, ist wegen seiner geringen Fortschritte verzweifelt und der Erschöpfung nahe. Sein Freund rät ihm daher, für heute aufzuhören und sagt ... [*Karl, who has only just started skiing, is frustrated because of his limited progress and is close to exhaustion. So his friend advises him to stop for today and says ...*]

	Group A	Group G
Wenn's heut nicht geht, dann hör <i>eben</i> auf!	1	4
Wenn's heut nicht geht, dann hör <i>doch</i> auf!	4	4
Wenn's heut nicht geht, dann hör <i>halt</i> auf!	5	2

According to Muhr (1987) *halt* is the Austrian variant (but see the reference to recent changes above), *eben* the German, and *doch* is neutral but is more persuasive. Five Group A and two Group G spouses opted for *halt*, four Group G and one Group A spouse for *eben*, and four from each group for *doch*. There appears to be a clear case here for convergence.

Situation H: Eine Gruppe von Touristen benimmt sich im Bahnhofswartesaal so laut, dass sie ein Bahnbeamter aus dem Wartesaal weisen will. Da es draußen kalt ist und die Touristen versprechen, leiser zu sein, sagt der Beamter schließlich ... [*A group of tourists are behaving in such an unruly way in the station waiting room that a railway official wants to evict them. As it is cold outside and the tourists promise to keep their voices down, the official finally says ...*]

	Group A	Group G
Na, dann bleiben Sie <i>eben</i> hier!	4	6
Na, dann bleiben Sie <i>halt</i> hier!	5	3
Na, dann bleiben Sie <i>eben mal</i> hier!	1	1

According to Muhr (1987) *halt* was the only Austrian variant at the time of immigration of all except one couple (see above). *Eben* is a German variant, as is *eben mal* (expressing a shorter period of time). Five Group A and three Group G (two of whom were married to Austrians choosing the variant) opted for *halt*. *Eben* was chosen by six Germans and four Austrians, two of whom had a German spouse with the same choice. *Eben mal* was selected by one member of each group.

Variants including MPs were not frequently chosen by our informants. Where they were selected, those employed tended to be those documented in Muhr 1987 as the preferred item for their national variety. However, there are also a considerable number of convergences. A factor that appears to be playing a role is a weakening of intuition in relation to German modal particles, in a context in which the dominant language, English, has no equivalent MP.

6. Some Intercultural Generalizations.

The above results provide evidence for pragmatic variation between national varieties in a pluricentric language. It will not be surprising that the variation is relative. In two of the situations, A1 and A4, the issue of blame and guilt features more prominently in the Austrian responses than in the German ones (see section 3). In these two situations, ten Group A responses deal with the issue of blame or guilt, through the admission of their own fault, deflecting blame from themselves, or apportioning blame to others. This contrasts with Group G, with only three such responses in the same situations. The Group A respondents in our sample tended to be more concerned with "freeing themselves of guilt"—the literal meaning of *sich entschuldigen* 'to apologize'. This is important in saving face. The importance of freeing oneself from guilt in Central European discourse patterns in Catholic-based cultures is discussed in Clyne (1994:78, 182–183).

In situation A1 (In a good restaurant), the Group A respondents were more concerned with face-saving in relation to guilt, whereas the Group G informants were more intent on creating the impression of a respectable and professional person committed to carrying out his/her duty and rectifying the situation to the patron's satisfaction. Similarly, in

situations A2 and A3, the Group G respondents seek to resolve conflicts through action: in situation A3 (In an apartment block), this can be seen in the offer to return home to get the forgotten cookbook immediately, and in situation A2 (In the departmental manager's office) in the offer to arrange an alternative time to discuss the work contract. The continuing, more hierarchical tradition in Austria is reflected in situations such as A2, where the manager is expected to assert his authority, whereas it is the German counterpart's responsibility to try to rectify the problem. While Austrians appear more concerned about attributing guilt and thereby saving face, the Germans seek to achieve the appearance of respectability through good deeds, nice words not requiring a response, and the work ethic.

In situation A4 (In a crowded bus), the concern of those in Group G about one's own face is reflected in the necessity to "say something appropriate", that is, 'I hope you are not hurt'. This contrasts with the more overt expression of concern through an interrogative from Group A informants: 'Did you hurt yourself?' Politeness and consideration in written and oral communication as essential features of German communication in Austria were prescribed by Sonnenfels as early as 1784 (Bodi 1996:132). However, the Austrian use of interrogatives where Germans are more likely to employ declaratives is both a politeness feature, in situation D3 (In a student apartment), and a means of engaging the partner in conversation, in situation D1 (On the telephone). Both over the telephone and in face-to-face encounters, a preferred means of doing business in Austria is to engage in the art of conversation. This enables shop assistants in the retail trade to offer advice on purchases, for instance, something that is expected of good service in Austria. The role of theatrical performance in everyday communication has a long tradition in Austria (Bodi 1996).

In previous crosscultural discourse research (Clyne 1994), it was found that Central Europeans will tend to produce long turns because they are downtoning something negative by adding additional speech acts (such as explanations/justifications after requests or apologies). The expectation that Austrians behave in this way more than Germans was fulfilled only in part of this research.

Table 13 shows the incidence of directives in the situations D1-D4 and summarizes the data in tables 9-12.

Category	Example	Group G	Group A
Group 1: very direct			
2	Räum die Küche auf!	2	1
6	Du musst hier aufräumen!	2	0
7	Ich will/möchte wissen, ob die Stelle noch frei ist.	10	3
8	Ich möchte nicht in diesem Saustall kochen.	0	1
11	Wäre ganz witzig, wenn du aufräumtest.	1	0
Totals for Group 1		15	5
Group 2: fairly direct			
4	Bitte räum die Küche auf!	4	1
13	Räumst du mal kurz auf?	1	5
Totals for Group 2		5	6
Group 3: indirect			
5	Sei so lieb/so gut ...	0	1
10	Ich rufe wegen dem Zeitungsinserat an.	4	3
15	Kannst/Könntest du hier noch aufräumen?	7	6
16	Willst/Möchtest du nicht die Küche aufräumen?	0	1
17	Kannst/Könntest du bitte noch die Küche aufräumen?	4	7
19	Bitte, kannst/könntest du die Küche jetzt aufräumen?	1	3
21	Darf/Dürfte ich bitte deine Mitschrift haben?	3	1
Totals for Group 3		19	23

Table 13. Use of directives.

The data is based on 39 valid responses from Group G and 34 from Group A. 38.4% of the Group G responses but only 14.7% of the Group A responses fell into the "very direct" category. On the other hand, 67.6% of the Group A responses and 55% of those of Group G informants were from the "indirect" category. The "fairly direct" category was quite evenly represented (12.8% Group G, 17.6% Group A). It is interesting that *bitte* + imperative (category 4) yielded four Group G responses as opposed to one from Group A, while *bitte* with the modal (categories 17 or 19 according to the position of the IFID) was preferred by ten from Group A and only five from group G. In view of the tendency for contrastive pragmatics studies (e.g., Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989, House and Kasper 1981) to locate Germans' responses at the direct end of the continuum, the high proportion of indirect responses in the G as well as the A groups may indicate convergence. The reason for the higher proportion of indirect responses and the lower proportion of very direct ones in Group A may be found in the historical hierarchical and patriarchal structure of Austrian society (Kuzmics and Axtmann 2000), which, even if it is receding, contrasts with the more open German society. Moreover, all except one of our Austrian respondents left their former homeland before the societal changes of the 1980s.

Of the 33 responses from both Groups A and G that occurred in the "indirect" category (group 3), twenty were from female informants.

7. Convergence.

In the interviews conducted in the course of this study (see section 2), informants were asked to comment specifically on the existence of pragmatic differences between the two varieties of German. Almost all of them cited lexical differences but appeared unaware of pragmatic variation between the German and Austrian national varieties. It may be that the responses to the DCT are the best comparable metapragmatic information on communicative styles. The interviews also elicited information about informants' language use patterns at home and in work and social domains. However, there was no significant difference in patterns of responses from those informants who used German regularly at home, and those whose use of the language was limited to family, social, and/or work domains.

It will appear from the above discussion that, even after so many years in Australia and a longstanding marital relationship with someone from the other German-speaking country, patterns of cultural variation are still discernible. This would indicate that the verbal behavior acqui-

red during primary socialization is an enduring feature of our communicative competence, even despite the fact that the speaker is living permanently in a different linguistic environment. However, in a number of the situations we have some Germans or Austrians recording behavior more identified with the other group, which is very similar or identical to the one indicated by their spouse. This has been mentioned in the respective situations. This is largely Group G behaving in a way that is characteristic of Austrian communication (and sometimes coincides with Australian English).

Eighteen of the twenty informants in our sample had been in Australia for over thirty years. There is no noticeable overall difference in communicative behavior between prewar refugees and postwar immigrants. The couple who had been in Australia for only two years (GM01 and AF01) displayed communicative behavior most in keeping with that previously described in studies of German and Austrian pragmatics (Muhr 1994). This applies, for instance, to the greater use of consensus-imposing modal particles by the German man and the more formal verbal fulfillment of respectability on his part in situations A1 and A4 (see section 3), and the more creative, lighthearted responses by the Austrian woman. These communicative behaviors are illustrative of those appropriate to their respective national groups.

It is especially difficult, of course, to gauge the effects of living in Australia on the communication patterns of immigrant groups such as those in this study. The best possibility of assessing these effects is through a comparison with the findings of the similar study among Germans in Germany and Austrians in Austria (see section 5). Perhaps the most obvious difference is in the limited use of modal particles by our Group G (see section 5). In the eight situations, designed to assess use or nonuse of modal particles (especially consensus-constituting ones), there is evidence of both the retention of national variation, largely of the MP by the German partner and the variant without the MP by the Austrian one, and also of convergence between the partners. In some instances, the variant preferred is the one without the MP that is both unmarked and the Austrian variant and that closest to the Australian English one. The variant without the MP is generally the one that allows the expression of negative politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987) and the one with the MP that of positive politeness.

However, the convergence patterns in the current study are not always clearly explicable, and it is possible that this reflects a weakening of pragmatic intuition in relation to modal particle use.

8. Concluding Remarks.

This small-scale exploratory study, based on discourse completion tasks and multiple choice answers, whose limitations are discussed, focuses on metapragmatic perceptions of German apology, directive, and modal particle usage by speakers of German and Austrian background in marital relations with each other in Australia. The surprising aspect of the findings is that, after such a long absence from the country of origin and a long marital relationship with a person using the "other" national variety, pragmatic variation persists, although there is some convergence towards the spouse's usage. Most of the variation in apologies and directives concurs with that in Muhr's earlier contrastive studies in homeland settings. Those of Austrian background tend to prefer lower levels of directness and to be concerned with negative politeness. Those of German background are more likely to prefer a higher degree of directness and to be concerned with positive politeness. Austrian-origin informants tend to opt for more creative routines and want to engage the interlocutor in social conversation while the German-born prefer conventional responses. While the Austrian-background informants focus more on blame and guilt, those of German background are more concerned with the verbal fulfillment of respectability. Women tend to opt for more indirect ways of requesting and apologizing than men. Period of residence in Australia and main language of the home, however, do not have much bearing on the choice of routines. All this reflects the importance of verbal behavior in early socialization. On the other hand, there is a tendency toward the omission of modal particles and a weakening of intuition relating to them. Overall, this study demonstrates that national variation within a pluricentric language is not trivial, it is not temporary, and it relates to cultural behavior.

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