UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

School of Humanities

Faces, roles and identities in argumentative discourse

The development of facework strategies by L2 learners of German

by

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Dedication

to my family for supporting me through all the ups and downs of life.

to my friends for always being there.

and, last but not least, to all those wonderful people with whom I have had the honour to cross paths throughout my journeys during the past ten years.

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ABSTRACT

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FACES, ROLES AND IDENTITIES IN ARGUMENTATIVE DISCOURSE
THE DEVELOPMENT OF FACEWORK STRATEGIES BY L2 LEARNERS OF
GERMAN

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This thesis presents a developmental account of facework strategies in L2 argumentative discourse. From an individual perspective, face denotes how speakers want to be seen in terms of their social role(s) and personal qualities; from a social perspective, face is the image that is actually conveyed to others.

Data were gathered from learners of German at three different levels of proficiency by means of argumentative discourse tasks and retrospective interviews, and interpreted within the framework of face as well as from a linguistic/psycholinguistic perspective. The results of the analysis show that linguistic limitations and processing constraints cannot alone explain the observed developments. Instead, the desire to be seen as good L2 speaker appears to be playing an important role. Learners actively tried to make the task easier for themselves by using strategies that contributed to accuracy and fluency, eased processing and helped avoid potential pitfalls. This suggests that learners acted not only within a 'discussion frame' in which it would be important to present a positive self-image based on the opinions expressed in the discussions and the manner of their presentation, but also within an overlapping 'language task' frame.

The thesis contributes to the field of interlanguage pragmatics by providing a theoretical framework for the interpretation of face alongside notions of identity, thereby moving it away from politeness and social appropriateness. By suggesting that learners act according to an internal context that they have set for themselves, it provides an integrated account of psycholinguistic/linguistic and individual/social approaches to second language acquisition.

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Introduction

Everyone who speaks a foreign language knows the feeling: you want to say something, and your thoughts are literally on the tip of your tongue, but you just cannot get out what you want to say. At other times, you feel you have not come across in the way you wanted to come across, e.g. as knowledgeable, polite, authoritative. This is not only an annoying feeling, but it can lead to far more serious repercussions: it can severely limit non-native speakers of a language in their efforts to present themselves as the kind of person they want to be seen as.

While working on this PhD thesis, I have certainly experienced these problems as well. Not only is English not my first language, but I also had to learn to describe my data and findings with the terminology specific to the various subdisciplines that contribute to this study. Quite frequently during this process I felt that I had not yet acquired knowledge of and control over linguistic resources in English generally and the subject-specific terminology in particular to a sufficient extent to truly feel I was part of the world of research in applied linguistics. Hence, a lack of linguistic resources severely influenced my identity and the role I saw myself in. This self-perception was not always shared: whilst I myself may have felt that I was not quite yet a worthy researcher in applied linguistics, others did take my work seriously.

These observations highlight the central themes of this thesis: face, self-image, role, and identity. I am going to investigate how learners of German as a foreign language learn to do facework or, in other words, learn to make particular roles and personal qualities relevant in and through the L2. The concept of *face* is a very powerful metaphor to describe these issues. It has been used in numerous cultures to describe people's strategies to be seen as a certain kind of person by others. In German for example, the concept appears in the term "sein Gesicht verlieren"; similarly, in English, one speaks of "having face" and "losing face". In Chinese culture, face has been described with the components *mien-tzu* and *lien* (Mao, 1994).

A debate is still on-going about the degree to which face is a social or an individual construct, i.e. how much influence individuals have on constructing face. Is face something that speakers project, or is it dependent on the perceptions of other people? I will take up the thread of this discussion in much more detail later; suffice it for now to say that face has for some time been a subject of research in social psychology and applied linguistics alike. Both these fields often refer to Goffman's (1967, p. 5) definition of face as "positive social value a person effectively claims for himself" and "image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes" and later elaborations and interpretations of this definition.

Within the field of second language acquisition (SLA), it is interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) that works with notions of face. Interlanguage pragmatics is the study of non-native speakers' ability to comprehend and produce action in a foreign or second language, and of the development of this ability (Kasper & Rose, 2000). Overall, interlanguage pragmatics is a relatively new branch of the study of second language use and development, only developing from the late 1970s onwards.

Due to the dominance of an approach that sees face as the desire not to be imposed on (negative face) and the desire to be acknowledged by others (positive face), with politeness being speakers' efforts to mitigate face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987), research activities within this field have traditionally focused on isolated speech acts considered to be a face threat to speaker and/or addressee, in particular requests, complaints and apologies. Together with a dominance within ILP research on second language use over second language development this has led, in the earlier days of the field, to frequent comparisons of learners' and native speakers' production of speech acts, resulting in the emergence of terminology such as *pragmatic failure* (Thomas, 1982). This means that interlanguage pragmatics was concerned with uncovering the deficiencies underlying learners' production of speech acts as compared to native speakers production, and has tended to see these deficiencies as failure to adapt to L2 norms of behaviour.

With the emergence of more developmental perspectives on L2 pragmatic data in recent years, this comparative view has given way to a wider range of perspectives on interlanguage pragmatic data. Further to psycholinguistic and linguistic perspectives research is also conducted on the influence of the learning environment or pedagogic intervention on the acquisition of pragmatic strategies, again often with a focus on speech acts and politeness. A growing trend within interlanguage pragmatics however is research on more extended pieces of discourse, focusing for example on various forms of institutional discourse. Examples of this are Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford's (1990, 1993, 1996) studies on the developments of students' contributions to the academic advising session, and some studies on argumentative discourse (Bardovi-Harlig & Salsbury, 2004; Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig, 2000, 2001; Kotthof, 1988).

What has been neglected so far is an individual and social perspective on interlanguage pragmatics. A question not explicitly asked is what learners actually achieve or even consciously try to achieve with the strategies they use. Hence, what speakers "do" with their strategies remains to be explored from an L2 user perspective as advocated by Cook (1999, 2002) and Belz (2002), although some studies working from the perspective of *subjectivity* (e.g. Siegal, 1996; LoCastro, 2001) are a step in this direction.

This thesis aims to provide such a perspective, and it will do so by exploiting and re-interpreting the concept of face as identity. Goffman's (1967) approach to face quoted earlier supports this approach, as does a more recent approach by Spencer-Oatey (2000) that distinguishes two reflexes of face: quality face as a want to be evaluated positively in terms of personal qualities, and identity face as a want to have our social identities and roles upheld. This makes a more holistic perspective on interlanguage pragmatic development possible, as it allows us to merge a linguistic/psycholinguistic perspective with an individual/social perspective. This means that we do not only ask in which way learners are constrained in their L2 use, but that we see learners as active contributors to their fate in their foreign language. Furthermore, this perspective extends our view of what linguistic action is, moving it away from politeness to identity work and self-presentation in a social environment.

This dissertation therefore aims to achieve two major interlinked goals. The first aim is to investigate how learners of German as a foreign language acquire the ability to do facework in argumentative discourse, and what role is played by the development of linguistic resources and processing capacities on the one side and social and individual factors on the other side in the way these strategies develop. The second aim is to describe what learners are able to express about their decision-making processes during these argumentative discussions, and how these processes are connected to maintenance of face and identity. In addition to these theroretical and methodological innovations, the study is also one of only a few developmental studies in Interlanguage Pragmatics with German as the target language in a field in which L2 English is strongly dominant. It also does not focus on isolated speech acts, but on longer stretches of argumentative discourse.

Argumentative discourse and features particular to argumentative discourse have always been a prominent area of research in the field of pragmatics as a whole. Research has, for example, focused on organisational aspects of argumentative exchanges, resulting in an aboundance of different classifications of speaker moves and turns (e.g. Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998). From microanalytical perspetives (conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics), the expression of disagreement has been of particular interest (e.g. Pomerantz, 1984). In interlanguage pragmatics, argumentative discourse has also featured in a number of studies, including some with German as a target language (e.g. Kotthoff, 1988; Jahnel, 2000).

Argumentative discourse as an object of study is advantageous for a theoretical framework based on face because speakers engaged in argumentative discourse try to impress on their interlocutors through their arguments and through the manner in which they present these arguments a particular image of themselves in terms of their social

roles and personal qualities. To uncover the linguistic and psycholinguistic as well as the individual and social processes determining learners' use and acquisition of facework strategies, the argumentative data, gathered at three levels of proficiency from L2 learners of German at university, were complemented with data from retrospective interviews. The analysis of the data was then conducted under the overall framework of interactional sociolinguistics, allowing for a bottom-up approach to analysis.

The dissertation is divided into a theoretical and an analytical part. The theoretical part, consisting of three chapters, will start with chapter 1 by introducing important concepts (face, frames, lines), focusing in particular on different conceptualisations of face. This chapter will also discuss cultural variations of the concept of face and review earlier research on argumentative discourse. In chapter 2, the literature review will provide an overview of existing work on pragmatic development. Furthermore, it will critically evaluate notions of pragmatic norms and competence. In chapter 3, I will then discuss methodological aspects of data elicitation and analysis and provide reasons for the framework used in this dissertation, in which some frequency-based quantification is employed alongside a primarily qualitative analysis.

The analytical part consists of five chapters overall. In chapter 4, three of the argumentative discussions – one from each proficiency level subjected to analysis – will be employed for a detailed analysis focusing on the interplay of face, roles and identity in relation to linguistic and processing constraints. The results from these sample analyses will then be compared to and contextualised with the argumentative data overall from all three levels of proficiency. In chapter 5, the focus is on organisational aspects of argumentative discourse (sequential organisation, preference organisation), and chapter 6 focuses on issues of deontic and epistemic modality. Chapter 7 is dedicated to the second data source, the retrospective interviews, which provide insights into linguistic and psycholinguistic processes, but also speakers' individual decisions regarding the facework strategies used. The concluding chapter then provides an overall interpretation of the data from both the perspective of face and identity and the linguistic/psycholinguistic point of view.

To conclude: this study aims to provide a theoretical framework that moves the study of interlanguage pragmatics forward through both methodological and theoretical innovation. Moreover, the study of second language acquisition overall can also profit from a theoretical framework that sees language learning as an organic process. Most importantly however, it aims to uncover the processes that guide the acquisition of facework strategies as a representation of the self in a foreign language.

Chapter 1 Face, facework and argumentative discourse

1.1 Chapter outline

This chapter outlines the theoretical grounds for the empirical study of the development of facework strategies in L2 German. The chapter starts with a review of some basic concepts in the theory of social interaction, with particular emphasis on discussion of whether face is an individual or a social phenomenon. Furthermore, the terms facework, line and frame will be introduced and discussed.

The term argumentative discourse will then be introduced and the recent research on argumentative discourse summarized, in particular CA (Conversation Analysis)-based findings on the sequential and preference organisation of speech turns in argumentative discourse. The chapter closes with a summary of the theoretical framework employed in this study.

1.2 Some basic concepts

1.2.1 Face – projected or attributed?

In the discussion of face, one of the most disputed points is the question whether face is something that speakers project in interactional encounters or something that is attributed and assigned to them based on their behaviour. The face concept that most research, at least in the western world, is based on or refers to is Goffman's approach:

> The term *face* may be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes – albeit an image that others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself. (Goffman, 1967, p. 5)

In Goffman's approach, therefore, speakers play an active role in deciding what kind of self-image they want to present, as shown through Goffman's choice of terminology such as "claims for himself", "image of self" and "making a good showing for himself". However, Goffman also suggests that there is another side to face, namely what is projected to others, manifested in terms like "positive social value", "approved social attributes", "an image that others may share".

It is from non-western norms of behaviour that Goffman's face concept has received most criticism. For example, Mao (1994) argues that the basic premise of the Chinese concept of face is social, linking face directly to character, prestige and personal reputation. Similar interpretations however have also been made from

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western points of view. MacMartin, Wood & Koger (2001) for example see face to be intrinsically linked to norms, rules and conventions:

> Our own view is that face is so much an interactional notion that it is constituted not only by but also in the responses of others, somewhat akin to the concept of popularity [...] One can only experience face to the extent that one is recognized in particular ways by others and recognizes that one is so recognized. Like reputation [...], face cannot be a property of the individual. (MacMartin et al., 2001, p. 231)

The argument that face is not something people have and project, but which is attributed to them, is reflected in other definitions. In Holtgraves' (1992, 2001, 2005) view, face is a result of the interaction rather than its driver. Furthermore, face cannot be equated with particular situated identities:

> Although face-work involves self-presentation, face is not the same thing as a situated identity (e.g. intelligent, caring, witty) that may be presented (and negotiated) in an interaction [...]. Rather, face is a more basic and more abstract construct that is entailed in the successful projection of any identity or line. (Holtgraves, 1992, p. 142)

Holtgraves further perceives face to be a "public identity" that "can only be given by others" (Holtgraves, 2005, p. 74). This view is also reflected in Lerner's (1996) and Arundale's (2005) approaches. Both see face as something that emerges from interaction, something that can be subjected to judgment by others: "to maintain face is to fit in" (Lerner, 1996, p. 303). According to Arundale, face is a dyadic phenomenon, while identity is individual.

For Watts (2003) and Locher & Watts (2005), face is also a social phenomenon. Rather than projecting a certain face, face is attributed to people during interaction. However, Watts (2003) also suggests that the situational context contributes to the kind of face attributed to speakers:

> Face, then, is a socially attributed aspect of self that is temporarily on loan for the duration of the interaction in accordance with the line or lines that the individual has adopted. It is not our personal construction of the self, although the different faces we are required to adopt in different interactions do contribute towards that construction. In many cases face may coincide with our interpretation of the ritual role to be played in the ongoing interaction, but this is by no means always the case. (Watts, 2003, p. 125)

Watts sees the face projected to others as linked to the social situation in which the encounter takes place and to the behaviour expected of participants. Although face is something that is attributed by others, it may converge with speakers' own interpretation of face.

This now leads us to those approaches to face that see it as a more individual phenomenon, some of which do see identity aspects and speakers' active contribution as playing a role.

A dual approach to face that is very close to Goffman's definition is pursued by Ho (1994) and Tracy (1990). Ho distinguishes between "projection of his/her social self in the public domain" and "his/her social image publicly and collectively perceived by others" (p. 270). Tracy (1990) sees face as a social phenomenon that is "created through the communicative moves of interactions" (p. 210), but also equates face with particular socially situated identities that people bring into interactions, identities that can be enacted, supported or challenged.

Brown & Levinson's (1987) approach to face is one of the best known, and one of the most frequently employed frameworks for research in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics. They interpret face as a "public self-image every member wants to claim for himself consisting of two interrelated aspects": negative face as "the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction – i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from non-imposition" and positive face as "the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' [...] claimed by interactants" (p. 61). Based on this, they treat face as two interrelated wants (p. 62):

- negative face: the want that every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others

- positive face: the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others

This interpretation of face as wants clearly marks this theory as based on the individual. However, the strategies speakers are said to pursue fulfil the face wants of others rather than those of the original speaker. This will be discussed in more detail in 1.2.2.

Similar to Brown & Levinson, Lim (1994) and Lim & Bowers (1991) also stress that face can be described as wants. They distinguish autonomy face (similar to B & L's negative face), fellowship face (similar to B & L's positive face) and competence face, the image that one is a person of ability. Despite assuming this individual basis however, Lim (1994) claims that face must be ratified by interactants.

Ting-Toomey (1988) and Ting-Toomey & Kurogi (1998) bring face closer to identity. Ting-Toomey (1988) defines face as "the projected image of one's self in a relational situation" and "an identity that is conjointly defined by the participants in a setting" (p. 215) Although she therefore sees the speaker as an active agent in projecting the self, face is still intrinsically linked to the perceptions of an interlocutor. Face is seen as something speakers claim for themselves, although they also need to consider others' face: "Face and facework are about interpersonal self-worth issues and other-identity consideration issues" (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998, p. 188).

Focused on individuals' projection of self, with others' perceptions only secondary, is Cupach & Metts' (1994) definition:

> The conception of self that a person displays in particular interactions with others is called face. When a person interacts with another, he or she tacitly presents a conception of who he or she is in that encounter, and seeks confirmation for that conception. In other words, the individual offers an identity that he or she wants to assume and wants others to accept. (p. 3)

Not only do Cupach & Metts link up the face-concept explicitly with identity, they also suggest that the particular identity a speaker wants to present is associated with a specific incident or encounter. Furthermore, speakers can assume different identities in different situations.

This conception matches in important aspects the approach presented by Spencer-Oatey, who, in different articles and contributions (2000, 2002, 2005), laid down her framework for rapport management[1]. Within this framework, face has two reflexes (Spencer-Oatey, 2000, p. 14):

- quality face: we have a fundamental desire for people to evaluate us positively in terms of our personal qualities, e.g. our competence, abilities, appearance etc.

- identity face: we have a fundamental desire for people to acknowledge and uphold our social identities or roles, e.g. as group leader, valued customer, close friend

Thus, Spencer-Oatey acknowledges explicitly that face is linked to concrete aspects of self-hood, such as the social roles and the personal qualities speakers want to make relevant. While quality face is related to speakers' sense of self-esteem and therefore personal, identity face relates to "the value that we effectively claim for ourselves in terms of social or group roles, [...], closely associated with our sense of public worth." (2000, p. 14). Identity face is the social component of face, while quality face is purely individual.[2]

Spencer-Oatey also emphasizes that face management takes place in a specific interactional context. In these contexts, it is identity face (a situation-specific face) rather than respectability face (a pan-situational face, linked to honour and prestige) that is threatened (Spencer-Oatey, 2005).

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[1] Rapport management is "the management (or mismanagement) of relations between people (Spencer-Oatey, 2005, p. 96). Speakers can orient towards enhancing rapport, maintaining rapport, neglecting rapport (the latter due to, for example, lack of interest or focus on self) or even challenging rapport. Judgments with regard to whether rapport has been enhanced, maintained or damaged are made on the basis of behavioural expectations, face sensitivities and interactional wants.

[2] Spencer Oatey's (2000) theory of 'rapport management' also includes the management of sociality rights (personal and social entitlements). These include equity rights – the entitlement for personal consideration from others – and association rights – the entitlement to an association with others.

This review of different conceptualisations of face has shown the wide range of definitions, ranging from those that see face as a primarily social phenomenon, emerging from interaction, to those that see face as a primarily individual phenomenon, close to notions of identity. Theorists also accord the individual speaker more or less autonomy about which face is being conveyed. How face is enhanced, protected, and attacked will be the object of review in the next section (1.2.2), where I shall look at different concepts of the term facework, which is often used as a synonym to the term politeness.

1.2.2 Politeness and facework

The definitions of, and approaches to facework are just as numerous as those to face, and I will attempt to identify common trends within those approaches.

Goffman (1967) defines facework as "the actions taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face" (p. 12). Again, this implies that Goffman sees the speaker to be active not only when it comes to constructing face through facework, but also to defining what face is presented. Goffman further suggests that speakers need to carefully balance strategies that protect their own face and those that protect others' face, as protecting one's own face may at times be counterproductive to protecting others' face. He classifies facework strategies into the following categories:

- the avoidance process: includes strategies such as avoiding contacts in which face threats are likely to occur, keeping off topics or avoiding the disclosure of information that is not consistent with the line a person is maintaining.
- the corrective process: includes strategies used after "an event that is expressively incompatible with the judgments of social worth that are being maintained" (p. 19) has occurred.

Later on in his essay, however, Goffman also introduces the idea that facework can take an aggressive form at times when speakers try to "preserve everyone's line from an inexcusable contradiction" (p. 24). This means that speakers primarily try to make their own voice heard, and facework aims at "scoring points" (p. 24) for oneself. Therefore, Goffman's concept of facework goes beyond the strategies that are commonly described in the cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatic literature, in which face is described as being maintained through socially appropriate, polite behaviour.

Brown & Levinson (1987) do not actually use the term facework; instead, they talk of "FTA-minimizing strategies" or "politeness strategies" (p. 91). Although their approach does in fact present speakers as masters of their own self-presentation (face as wants), the facework strategies that they are proposing are solely directed at

minimizing the face threat to others, i.e. at protecting others' face. This means that although speakers are said to have face wants, the maintenance of their own face wants is intrinsically related to them maintaining the face of others.

According to Brown & Levinson, the choice of politeness strategy depends on an evaluation of the weightiness of the face-threatening act in terms of the social distance between speaker and hearer, the power of the speaker over the hearer and the degree to which the face-threatening act is rated an imposition in a particular culture. Speakers can then choose between not doing the FTA, doing the FTA off-record, doing the FTA without redressive action, and doing the FTA with redressive action, directed either towards satisfying interlocutors' positive face wants (positive politeness) or negative face wants (negative politeness).[3] This framework of strategies is therefore essentially other-oriented, which means that face is said to be maintained mainly through strategies close to a folk notion of politeness, at the exclusion of impolite and rude behaviour.

Most theories in general, whether they use the term *facework* or the term *politeness*, emphasize social harmony as a goal of engaging in facework / politeness practices. Holtgraves (1992) supports this idea based on the assumed cooperativeness of politeness:

> Acting with demeanor (supporting one's own face) entails acting with deference to the other (supporting the other's face); hence threats to another's face become threats to one's own face. Thus, although insults, challenges, and so on occur, face-work is (and must be) a cooperative venture (p. 142).

Rudeness and impoliteness have only recently made it onto the theoretical agenda (see Culpeper, 1996; Culpeper, Bousfield and Wichmann, 2003; Kienpointner, 1997; Austin, 1990; Lachenicht, 1990). These authors share a general agreement that impolite or rude behaviour can be rational and goal-oriented just like politeness, which means that it can be strategically implemented. Nevertheless, they describe rudeness and impoliteness in terms of attacking the face of others rather than maintaining one's own.

Some authors do include speakers' face in their description of the purpose of facework. If they do so, they generally also include, at least implicitly, impolite and rude behaviour. For example, Ting-Toomey & Kurogi (1998) define facework as "a set of communicative behaviours to regulate their social dignity and to support or challenge the other's social dignity" (p. 188). Ting-Toomey (1988) proposes that a distinction

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[3] The hierarchy of politeness strategies in Brown & Levinson's theory suggests that the more face-threatening an act is, the more indirectly it should be performed. This has been criticized by Blum-Kulka (1987), who proposes that indirectness may be perceived as impolite due to its lack of clarity.

should be made between self- and other- positive face and self- and other- negative face. In terms of strategies, Tracy (1990) suggests that facework has, in fact, many faces, so that "it can be respectful and deferential; it can be friendly and it can be forthright; it can be hostile. Facework may be oriented to enhancement of self and/or other; it may be oriented to self-defense and other attack" (p. 221).[4]

Meier (1995b) introduces the term *repair work* to account for strategies that are geared to saving the face or image of the speaker. However, that term accounts only for saving or maintaining face when violation of a social norm has occurred, but not with regard to any transactional goals a speaker may have: "Repair work is thus an attempt to show that the speaker is a 'good guy' (despite having violated a social norm) and can be relied upon in the future to act predictably in accordance with the social norms of a particular reference group" (p. 389).

Explicitly focused on the speaker is Chen's (2001) theory of self-politeness. Chen starts by acknowledging that Brown & Levinson have concentrated on speakers' efforts to save the face of the other, neglecting strategies geared at saving self-face. The lower the estimated threat to self is, the more likely a speaker will be choosing a bald strategy, the higher it is, the more likely the speaker will choose to perform a strategy with redress or go off-record.

Self-presentation is also the focus of Strauss' (2004) theory of *cultural standing*. Strauss focuses on the idea that the interlocutor in an encounter need not necessarily be a real person, but can also be the unwritten rules or societal expectations speakers may feel they need to fulfil when expressing their opinion. In other words, they need to present themselves in view of commonly held opinions in society:

> Marking cultural standing is important for the management of self-presentation. If the cultural standing of a view is different for speaker and hearer, or the same for speaker and hearer but different from the common opinion in the larger society, acknowledging this fact is necessary for positive or negative politeness. The way a speaker marks cultural standing for a particular addressee is a prime rhetorical means of creating a "subject position", that is, or representing self and other as certain kinds of people. (2004, p. 172)

Strauss emphasizes that speakers can at the same time express a high personal commitment to a proposition, but mark their utterance for low cultural standing as a form of self-protection.[5]

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[4] While Tracy therefore seems to suggest that aggressive behaviour can be employed for the enhancement of self-face, Cupach & Metts (1994) conclude that aggravating behaviours cannot be used to support face. Similar to Holtgraves (1992), they argue that aggravating behaviors imply contempt for or a lack of respect for face.

[5] This has important implications for my data: though the subjects involved in argumentative discourse may hold very similar views towards the points which they are asked to prioritise during the discussion task they are performing, their stance may still be different from the

The neglect of the speaker perspective and the exclusion of impoliteness and rudeness are just two of the criticisms brought forward against models of politeness. Recently, the term *politeness* itself has come under a great deal of scrutiny.

Arundale (2005) suggests that Brown & Levinson's approach to politeness is too narrow to account for human behaviour, as speakers routinely achieve face threat as well as face support. Others argue that politeness only arises from and through the interaction, and it is not utterances that are inherently polite or impolite. Rather, whether something is understood as polite or not lies in the eyes of the beholder. Spencer-Oatey (2005) and, similarly, Mills (2004, 2005), Meier (1995a) and Fukushima (2004) take politeness to be a subjective judgement made about the social appropriateness of a speaker's behaviour, an "evaluative label" (Spencer-Oatey, 2005, p. 97) that is attached to such behaviour. Meier (1995a) demands a focus on how "certain linguistic features (not called inherently polite or impolite) pattern and are perceived in particular contexts to fulfil certain functions" (p. 351).[6]

Similarly, politeness has come under scrutiny from the point of view of relevance theory and Gricean implicatures (Haugh, 2003; Escandell-Vidal, 1996; Kallia, 2004; Jary, 1998; Jucker, 1988; Turner, 1996). Those authors argue that utterances are not polite or impolite in their absolute form. Rather, whether they are interpreted as polite or impolite depends on the set of assumptions held by the addressee.

In other critical accounts, politeness is seen as a marked form of behaviour. This means that it is the absence of politeness that is noticed rather than its presence. For example, Watts (1989, 2003) as well as Locher & Watts (2005) suggest that polite behaviour must be distinguished from politic behaviour, which is the kind of behaviour that is constructed by participants as being appropriate to the situation at hand. Polite as well as impolite behaviour is marked, noticed and either positively or negatively perceived, depending on the context and the interactants (Locher & Watts, 2005). Therefore, Locher & Watts make an argument for an extension of the term facework to include all shades of behaviour under the term relational work:

> Looked at in this way, relational work compromises the entire continuum of verbal behavior from direct, impolite or aggressive interaction through to

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commonly accepted position within society, making necessary facework that balances both perspectives. The term cultural standing applies clearly to one incident within the data recorded in this study when, at the end of a discussion on binge-drinking, one of the learners (a British undergraduate student) looked into the camera, apologized for rejecting all of the suggestions made against binge-drinking on the task instruction cards, and emphasized that binge-drinking was part of English/student culture ("unsere Kultur"). That way, he asserted his identity as a member of that culture (student/national culture) against the suggestions made on the task instruction cards which he may have felt were contradicting the beliefs and preferences held within that culture.

[6] Meier (1995a), however, warns that this approach does not provide readily quantifiable categories for research.

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> polite interaction, encompassing both appropriate and inappropriate forms
> of social behavior [...]. Impolite behaviour is just as significant in defining
> relationships as appropriate/politic or polite behaviour. (p. 11)

Although I agree that it is important to include impolite and aggressive behaviour to account for face and facework, linguistic behaviour at the interpersonal level of communication cannot alone account for face. If face is not something that is attributed to speakers based on their behaviour, but related to the social roles personal qualities that they make relevant in an encounter, a comprehensive notion of facework needs to include all strategies that enable speakers to enact these roles and qualities. The term *line* is a step in this direction.

1.2.3 Lines

In his article on facework, Goffman also introduces the term *line*. Lines are closely associated with the kind of social activity the speaker is engaged in, and linked to both roles and face itself:

> In each of these contacts, he tends to act out what is sometimes called a
> line – that is, a pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he expresses
> his view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants,
> especially himself. [...] The line taken by each participant is usually allowed
> to prevail, and each participant is allowed to carry off the role he appears to
> have chosen for himself. (Goffman. 1967, p. 5, 11)

According to this definition, lines are something speakers actively bring forward. We need to note however, that earlier within Goffman's essay on facework, lines appeared to be a social construct ("the line others assume has been taken", p. 5). Just like face, lines are thus defined as a social as well as an individual concept, something attributed to people as well as something that is individually pursued.

The line concept has been defined and conceptualised in various ways in the research literature, although many theorists choose not to mention the concept at all. While Bargiela-Chiappini (2003) for instance sees lines merely as speakers' perceptions of the situation and its actors, for Watts (2003), lines are part of the politic (expected) behaviour associated with a certain discourse activity: "Falling out of line constitutes a break in the politic behaviour which is interpretable by the interactants as an offence and as damage to the face of one or more of the interactants including the interactant who has fallen out of line" (p. 117).

Goffman himself supports the view that the successful presentation of a line is linked to the maintenance of face:

> A person may be said to be *out of face* when he participates in a contact
> which others without having ready a line of the kind participants in such
> situations are expected to take [...]. When a person senses that he is in
> face, he typically responds with feelings of confidence and assurance. Firm

in the line he is taking he feels that he can hold his head up and openly present himself to others. He feels some security and some relief – as he also can when the others feel he is in wrong face but successfully hide these feelings from him. (Goffman, 1967, p. 8)

This definition implies that speakers maintain face by engaging in behaviour that is linked to particular situational contexts and participants' social roles in these situations. This link is further supported by Goffman suggesting that "the line taken by each participant is usually allowed to prevail, and each participant is allowed to carry off the role he appears to have chosen for himself" (Goffman, 1967, p. 11). By paralleling lines and roles, Goffman points out clearly that the lines that are presented relate to the social roles speakers want to make relevant in any one conversation. Furthermore, the quote makes it very clear that a comprehensive definition of facework needs to include the successful presentation of lines[7] and cannot be based on behaviour at the interpersonal level ("politeness") alone.

1.2.4 Frames

In addition to Goffman's theory of face and facework, this thesis will employ another concept introduced by Goffman. He proposes that frames govern speakers' social experience; they are the reference point for interaction in social encounters:

> I assume that definitions of a situation are built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern events – at least social ones – and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements as I am able to identify. That is my definition of frame. My phrase "frame analysis" is a slogan to refer to the examination in these terms of the organisation of experience. (Goffman, 1974, p. 10-11)

Tannen & Wallat (1993) suggest that without frames, no utterance interpretation would be possible. Speakers use frames in order to interpret what is going on around them and to plan their own actions; they give speakers a "sense of what activity is being engaged in" (p. 60). An example: Within the frame of a fight, a child may understand a push by another child as an offence and react accordingly by defending him/herself or becoming upset. When understood within the frame of play, the result might be a playful fight.

According to Schiffrin (1993) framing is of such central importance for the production and understanding of talk that it also influences the conversational coherence of actions, as "each frame provides a different basis for understanding how

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[7] With regard to argumentative discourse, Kline (1987) suggests that, in argumentative discourse, arguers are expected "to behave relatively consistently, matching our words with our actions, and not endorsing seemingly contradictory beliefs." This matches our observation that the successful and consistent presentation of an argumentative line is a constituting factor of facework in argumentative discourse.

one utterance follows another – a different resource for sequential coherence" (p. 256). Closely related to the notion of frames is Goffman's term *footing*:

> A change of footing implies a change in the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance. A change in our footing is another way of talking about a change in our frame of events. (Goffman, 1981, p. 128)

While the term *frame* refers to speakers' interpretations of events, footing relates to the actual practices speakers engage in based on their interpretation of what the frame of the event is:

> As people speak and act, they signal to each other what they believe they are doing [...] and in what way they want their words and gestures to be understood. The intricate ways in which framing is accomplished in verbal interaction is captured through Goffman's (1981) notion of footing, or the alignment that speakers and hearers take toward each other and toward the content of their talk. (Ribeiro, 2006, p. 48)

Frames and footing are of central importance for explaining interactional behaviour. House (2000), for example, includes discourse frames in her cognitive discourse processing model, aimed at explaining cross-cultural misunderstanding, arguing that differences in speakers' expectations of the discourse can lead to misunderstanding. For the field of second language acquisition, earlier research by Wildner-Bassett (1989, 1990) showed that students engaged in a role play task enacted roles based on different frames of experience or "discourse worlds" (e.g. role-play task vs. real world), which significantly influenced some of their discursive strategies.

It is therefore possible that speakers orient to a number of frames at the same time, e.g. the immediate context determined by the research situation, the real world context or the role play context in a research task or cultural frames of behaviour.

1.3 Face and facework across cultures

1.3.1 Face and facework/politeness – culture-bound or universal?

One question that naturally is of relevance for discussion on how face is enacted in interlanguage is the question whether face (and facework/politeness) can be considered to be concepts that have universal validity across cultures.

The claimed universality of face as defined by Brown & Levinson (1987) has been criticised for its Western bias, although all cultures seem to have some conceptualisation of face (Mao, 1994). There seems to be quite broad agreement therefore that, while face is a universal concept, how facework is done varies across

cultures. Brown & Levinson (1987) themselves narrow their claims to the universality of politeness as follows:

> The bare bones of a notion of face [...] is universal, but [...] in any particular society we would expect (it) to be the subject of much cultural elaboration. (1987, p. 13)

Although they entitle their book "Universals in language usage", Brown & Levinson (1987) do not, in fact, claim that all cultures apply politeness principles in the same way. They do, however, predict that their framework is a valid basis for cross-cultural comparisons, on the assumption that orientation to face is a universal principle and all humans are rational in that they choose means that satisfy their ends. On the basis of this framework, cultures and subcultures then create their individual systems for the way in which politeness is enacted (1987, p. 283).

In an attempt to account for facework/politeness strategies that are culture-specific, O'Driscoll (1996) argues for adding a third reflex of face to positive face and negative face, termed *culture-specific face*. Culture-specific face is the "foreground-conscious desire for a 'good' face, the constituents of 'good', because they are culturally determined, being variable" (1996, p. 4). This means that while, in all cultures, people do in some way want to show a good face, how this face is linguistically elaborated would be subject to culture-specific preferences.[8]

According to Cupach & Metts (1994) however, the differences between cultures go beyond just the mere strategies for politeness, and include expectations as to what strategies are perceived as face-threatening or face-supporting.

> People in all cultures presumably present identities through face and share the motive to maintain face [...]. However, cultural members differ from one another in the implementation and interpretation of facework. Cultures differ with respect to the relative value placed on different face needs, the behaviors that are seen as face-threatening, and face-supporting, and the behaviors that are preferred to minimize or repair face threats. (p. 103)

Generally, the existence of face across all cultures is uncontested, while facework or politeness is seen to be subject to cultural variation (see also Watts, 1992).

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[8] Bond, Zegarac & Spencer-Oatey (2000) illustrate the interplay of universal and culture-specific principles of politeness in different contexts with the example of disagreement in Chinese vs. Australian English. They cite a study in which, contrary to expectations, native speakers of Chinese disagreed strongly and more directly, because their cultural background favoured constructive participation in a meeting over respect for higher status of interlocutors. The Australians, on the other hand, oriented to status as the most important factor for their choice of linguistic strategy. However, speakers from both cultures showed concern for a wide range of social factors when planning their utterances. The authors of the study conclude that "how disagreement is communicated is determined by a range of factors: the universal norms of communicative behavior [...], the communicator's preferences which follow from culturally variable maxims [...] and the ways in which these maxims are conventionally associated with particular linguistic expressions" (p. 63).

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Escandell-Vidal (1996) suggests that politeness is a matter of the variable cultural baggage we acquire during childhood:

> The fact that we need to acquire politeness as part of the socialization process and the fact that we feel lost when faced with a different social and cultural system strongly suggests that it is indeed a matter of knowledge. (p. 648)

Janney & Arndt (1993) would subsume this point of view under the cultural-relativity hypothesis, which sees "variation [...] (as the) fundamental observable feature of human activity in all languages and cultures" (p. 33). There is, however, also a cultural-universality hypothesis which proposes the opposite. For example, Ochs (1996) argues against the cultural relativity of politeness with her universal culture principle:

> The Universal Culture Principle [...] proposes that there are certain commonalities across the world's language communities and communities of practice in the linguistic means used to constitute certain situational meanings. This principle suggests that human interlocutors use certain similar linguistic means to achieve certain similar social ends. In this sense, the Universal Culture Principle is a limited (linguistic) means-ends principle. (p. 425)

Ochs emphasizes that the principle does not imply that all practices are shared across all cultures. Instead, the principle provides for a "common ground of socialization experiences" that speakers can use as their common ground to discover "local ways of indexing and constituting social situations" – the local culture principle (p. 428). She suggests that candidate universals for argumentative discourse are a "stance of negative affect", as well as acts of disagreement and indexing through negative particles and increased and decreased loudness (p. 427). This position is supported by Kasper & Rose (2003), for whom politeness is one of many pragmatic universals.

1.3.2 German and English

A quite substantial amount of research has been dedicated to the question of how native speakers of both German and English do facework, some of it with a particular focus on argumentative discourse. Although the methodologies employed in this research range from elicited data (role plays, discourse completion tasks) to field notes, some common trends emerge quite clearly.

Early studies focusing on speech acts such as requests, suggestions and complaints (House, 1979; House-Edmondson, 1982; House & Kasper, 1981) found that native speakers of German performed those speech acts with greater levels of directness than native speakers of (British) English, with the English speakers using

more modality markers that were geared towards mitigation and the creation of harmony, and the German speakers using more modality markers with the function of emphasizing a proposition.

House (1996, 2000, 2003, 2005) suggests that those differences between German and English can be summarized in five parameters of difference, which should be seen as trends rather than clear-cut dichotomies (House, 2000, p. 162):

German		*English*
orientation towards self	vs.	orientation towards other
orientation towards content	vs.	orientation towards adressees
directness	vs.	indirectness
explicitness	vs.	implicitness
ad-hoc-formulae	vs.	verbal routines

House's "parameters of difference" are mirrored in the ways native speakers of English and German act linguistically in argumentative discourse and disagreement. Kotthoff (1988, 1989, 1991) for example undertook research on argumentative discourse in the university environment. Her corpus consists of staged talks between students and university teachers, in which students asked teachers to give their signature to a petition concerning new university policies or rules. The study compared native-native interactions (German teachers – German students and English teachers – English students), and its results reflect very well the above-mentioned tendencies in German and English linguistic behaviour.

Kotthoff found that facework oriented towards the other, as predicted by House, had a greater value for the native speakers of English. She found that the German speakers usually held tight to their position, connected their opposition to the preceding utterance and built their own turn on it. Following from this, the German conversations in general were characterised by a high level of cohesion. In the American conversations, disagreement concerned details of students' campaigns rather than the core issues. It was thus often conveyed through sequences of advice or justifications for one's own position rather than a direct attack on the interlocutor's position. Furthermore, there is evidence of substantive hedging and postponement of disagreement.

Concluding from her data, Kotthoff (1989) suggests that German style considers an argument as a game, in which relationships are formed and defined through a high degree of involvement. This matches the perceptions by Byrnes (1986), who states that

in German style, there is a greater emphasis on the information-conveying function of language, as compared with its social bonding function. Such an orientation is concerned more with facts and truth-values, and in their service seeks, or at least should not shy away from, overt disagreement and confrontation. In fact, disagreement and confrontation are valued, and

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have become ritualised, in that they are deemed to further the process of establishing truth. Perhaps in its own way, it becomes a form of social bonding for those who customarily engage in it. (p. 200-201)[9]

Working with a corpus of recorded political TV discussions, Fetzer (1994) identified a further difference between the behaviours of native speakers of English and native speakers of German. While native speakers of English would reject the validity of others' claims on the level of illocution, native speakers preferred to use the propositional level. In English, the propositional level was only reached after several more turns. This discovery fits well into claims about German conversationalists' general preference for directness, because a rejection on the level of propositions questions somebody's knowledge of facts and not the conclusion drawn from facts, which are by nature debatable.

In questionnaire studies (Oetzel et. al., 2001; Oetzel et. al., 2003; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003), subjects were asked about their face concerns during conflicts with family and friends. The German subjects were shown to focus more on protecting self-face, while the American subjects had more concern for other-face: "The German style is direct and confrontive. To German family members, it is important to discuss issues thoroughly and completely. Discussions in Germany focus on facts and sorting through facts. [...] The U.S. American style [...] focuses on talking about ideas in a calm manner to come to a mutually acceptable resolution." (Oetzel et al., 2003, p. 87).

The question of norms and standpoints from which such differences in linguistic behaviour are evaluated (i.e. the behaviour of speakers of one cultural group in comparison to another cultural group, or the behaviour of L2 learners in comparison to native speakers of the target language) is important in both cross-cultural pragmatic and interlanguage pragmatic research.

House & Kasper (1981) and House (2005) suggest that, to avoid any undue categorization and stigmatisation of one cultural group as compared to another one, linguistic behaviour should be studied "relative to context and function within a system of cultural meaning" (1981, p. 184), i.e. from an *emic*, not an *etic* perspective. According to House (2005),

> being 'polite' means behaving in a way that is adequate to the specific cognito-social context in which you and your interlocutor find yourselves. Showing such real-world politeness would also be in line with recent politeness theorizing. (p. 25)

This also suggests strongly again that there is no absolute norm for what constitutes expected or appropriate behaviour. Rather, discursive strategies need to be

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[9] This behaviour has led to mutual stigmatisation: Americans regard Germans as unfriendly and more critical and brusque, while Germans see Americans as insincere and uncommitted (DeCapua, 1998; Byrnes, 1986).

seen in relation to the context in which they occur, and we need to ask what particular strategies aim to achieve within that context. This is also important for the analysis of facework strategies in an interlanguage context.

1.4 Argumentative discourse

1.4.1 What is argumentative discourse?

For this review, I am not attempting to capture in any way the complete research literature, but will instead extrapolate some basic strands in definitions of and approaches to argumentative discourse, which is in itself only one of a wide number of terms used.

Jacobs (1987) suggests that there are two dominant definitions of the term *argument*. One of these sees argument as a reasoning process by means of which a single individual arrives at a conclusion, while the other position perceives of argument as social, collaborative action:

> Even a cursory inspection of ordinary conversational argument will show that argument involves more than a simple externalization of individual conclusions. [...] Conversational argument is always a collaborative production that reflects the contributions of various parties. (p. 237)

Within definitions that see argument as dialogic, some see it constituted through the potential for disagreement and quarrelling.[10] For example, Jackson & Jacobs (1980) treat arguments as "disagreement relevant speech events; they are characterized by the projection, avoidance, production or resolution of disagreement." (p. 254). Muntigl & Turnbull (1998) argue along similar lines: "Conversational arguing involves the conversational interactivity of making claims, disagreeing with claims, countering disagreements, and the processes by which such disagreements arise, are dealt with, and resolved" (p. 225). They suggest that an arguing exchange consist of a minimum of three turns:

> An arguing exchange [...] (consists of) Speaker A in Turn 1 (T1) making a claim that is disputed by speaker B in T2, following which speaker A in Turn 3 disagrees with Speaker B's T2 claim by either supporting the original T1 claim [...] or directly contesting the T2 disagreement [...]. An arguing exchange has a three turn structure [...]. Although the acts speakers perform in T2 and T3 of an arguing exchange are, by definition, acts of disagreement, there are many ways to disagree. (p. 227)

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[10] Schiffrin (1985) makes a distinction based on organizational principles. She suggests that while, in principle, both rhetorical argument and oppositional argument are dialogic, speakers in rhetorical argument orient to making their own points, speakers in oppositional argument also challenge each others' points.

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According to this definition, disagreement alone constitutes conversational argument. Research has shown, however, that arguments can be highly collaborative at least in phases. For example, Gruber (1998), using televised TV debates, showed that speakers move along a continuum between a low and a high degree of cooperativeness as well as a low and a high degree of involvement. In instances in which both cooperation and involvement are high, speakers were shown to explicitly display their shared views towards a topic by repetitions, cooperative overlaps and expansions of previous speakers' turns. Furthermore, Schiffrin (1984), in her analysis of a dinner argument, found that the argument was used by the speakers to display solidarity, even though speakers repeatedly disagreed[11], while Richards (2006) showed that an argumentative exchange among colleagues in a meeting within a university context was used to get everybody to agree on a certain proposal, or, in other words, to achieve collaboration.

For the purpose of this research, I shall adopt a definition similar to Jahnel (2000), for whom argumentation is a ritual way of holding a conflict as an alternative to non-verbal ways of conflict resolution, in which pro- and counter-arguments are exchanged, with the potential that arguers change their opinion.[12] This definition is wider in that it sees argumentation as more than a mere exchange of opinions, including the possibility that the interlocutors change their opinion during the course of the interaction.

Hence, I shall define argumentative discourse as

> a verbal exchange between two or more interlocutors in which all speakers want to impress on their interlocutors an image of themselves. They bring their opinions to that encounter and exchange, evaluate and negotiate them with the other speaker(s). It is a speech event to which both speakers come with the goal of presenting themselves and their opinions in the best possible light, although the potential for compromise and collaboration is available.

This view steers clear of any qualitative judgement regarding the degree of quarrelsomeness entailed in argumentative discourse, and instead focuses on the self-images, personal perceptions and arguments which speakers bring to and negotiate during the course of the interaction.

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[11] Billig (2000) suggests that distinctions between different types of arguments can be made based on the degree of confrontationality expressed, i.e. argument-as-quarrel, as-debate, as-reasoning and potentially many more.

[12] "Unter einer Argumentation verstehe ich eine ritualisierte Form des Konflikts als Alternative zu einer nonverbalen Austragung einer Auseinandersetzung. In ihr werden Pro- und Kontra-Argumente hinsichtlich eines Standpunktes ausgetauscht, Standpunkte der Gegnerinnen angegriffen und der eigene verteidigt. Dazu muß es prinzipiell für Personen möglich sein, ihre Meinung aufgrund eben dieses Disputs zu ändern." (Jahnel, 2000, p. 28)

1.4.2 Research on argumentative discourse

1.4.2.1 Disagreement

Research within the mainstream field of pragmatics has traditionally focused on just one of the different possible utterance types within argumentative discourse, namely disagreement. I do not know of any systematic treatment of agreement and of only one that deals with opinions and stories (Schiffrin, 1990), although my knowledge of the literature may not be complete.

The emphasis on disagreement is quite possibly due to the special status disagreement has in the frame of reference under which most studies operate, namely CA (conversation analysis) descriptions of disagreement as a dispreferred and marked turn (see 1.4.2.2). Moreover, Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness is often used to account for behaviour in argumentative discourse. They see disagreement as a threat to the positive face of the interlocutor, because it potentially indicates "that the speaker does not care about the addressee's feelings, wants etc. – that in some important aspect he doesn't want H's wants" (p. 66).[13]

I will now describe some of the perspectives from which disagreement has been described in the recent empirical literature. As these studies work with a wide range of data, most of which are very different from the data used in this study, this review does not aim to be complete, but just provides some insight into the work that has been done on argumentative discourse.

Using data from discussions between unacquainted research participants on subjects such as abortion, Holtgraves (1997) found the way in which dispreferred turns were described by CA research (see 1.4.2.2) confirmed. He identified seven strategies for conveying positive politeness in disagreement, which included token agreement, hedge opinion, personalize opinion, express distaste with one's position, displace agreement, self-deprecation, assert common ground.

On the basis of data gleaned from counselling sessions between pre-service teachers and their supervisors, Hayashi (1999) criticises Brown & Levinson's strategies for politeness and face-redress. She argues that many of the strategies used only emerged as politeness strategies in the context of the goals of the interlocutors in this counselling session, and proposes that there is a strong overlap between social and

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[13] Other speech actions that frequently feature in argumentative discourse are only sparsely mentioned, and their treatment is somewhat contradictory. For example, Brown & Levinson propose that suggestions are primarily a threat to the hearer's negative face, as they indicate that the speaker does not avoid impeding H's freedom of action (p. 65). On the other hand, raising a potentially controversial topic (which is, in my opinion, also a suggestion of sorts), is a threat to the addressee's positive face, because it indicates that the speaker does not care about his/her feelings.

affective processes with cognitive operations (strategies and plans). This result matches up with the earlier discussion on frames and on the way they guide conversational interpretation and planning (see 1.2.4).

Rees-Miller (2000) investigated the use of different forms of politeness in disagreement in an academic context. She found that, although the factors postulated by Brown & Levinson (power, severity, context) did influence the choice of markers, the educational context meant that students' actual behaviour diverged from what might have been expected as, for example, some students would disagree quite directly with their higher-status tutors and professors. She argues that his was due to the fact that argumentativeness is encouraged in educational contexts.

Locher (2004) investigated the relationship between disagreement and power in argumentative discourse in different settings. She found that power was a negotiable concept, meaning that those with a higher status were able to exercise power and restrict interlocutors' action environment to such an extent that they had to respond if they wanted to avoid face-loss. She also found speakers' exercise of power linked to the negotiation of status and identity. In terms of the way disagreement is done, she found that unmitigated disagreement occurred when an interactant wanted to make a point and protect his own face rather than the addressee's face, although generally disagreement was mitigated.

1.4.2.2 CA (Conversation analysis) perspectives

Most of the CA accounts of argumentative discourse also focus on the expression of disagreement, which has, from a CA perspective, traditionally been described as more complex than agreement.

Although Pomerantz (1984) does not technically deal with argumentative discourse, but bases her analysis on disagreements with assessments in everyday conversation, her account of the structure of agreement and disagreement has become seminal for the way in which disagreement is conventionally described as a marked and dispreferred turn. The term *dispreferred* describes two issues in this context. Firstly, dispreferred answer alternatives are actions not invited by an initial assessment, which is said to make alternative second actions relevant:

> The proffering of an initial assessment, though it provides for the relevance of a recipient's agreement *or* disagreement, may be so structured that it invites one next action over its alternative. A next action that is oriented to as invited will be called a *preferred next action;* its alternative, a *dispreferred next action.* (p. 63)

Secondly, the term also describes structural properties of the turn. Fetzer (1996) suggests that dispreferred turns are both cognitively and structurally more complex in

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terms of "mental effort, attention demands or processing time" (p. 86-87). Disagreement turns in dispreferred format have been shown to have the following characteristics (Fetzer, 1996; Pomerantz, 1984; Levinson, 1983):

- pauses
- insertions (partial / whole / more turns)
- signals of partial or token consensus
- discourse markers (e.g. 'well')
- accounts for why an action is done

Research has however also shown that disagreement is not always the dispreferred answer option. Pomerantz (1984) herself shows that after a first-turn self-depreciation, disagreement becomes the preferred option, as self-depreciation invites non-agreement as the preferred answer-alternative.

Moreover, disagreement can also become the preferred option in specific contexts within argumentative encounters, namely when arguments are particularly fiercely debated and it is particularly important for speakers to make their opinions heard:

> When the context of argumentation is established, it is no longer preferred to agree. On the contrary, it seems to be very important to contradict quickly and in a coherent manner. This holds more for some cultures than others. (Kotthoff, 1993, p. 203)

In his research on argumentative discourse in political TV debates, Gruber (1996, 1998) identified three different ways in which turns in arguments can be structurally organised. He argues that in an unmarked social situation, in which speakers are primarily interested in an exchange of information, the preference organisation of turns follows classical CA rules as described, for instance, by Pomerantz (1984). In contexts, however, when the interactions strive to maintain a positive social relationship, speakers' style is characterised by high involvement, frequent cooperative overlap and shared development of topics. In cases of extended divergence of opinions, speakers cooperate only on a formal level, which means that there is a preference for disagreement (see Kotthoff, 1993) and speakers focus on displaying their different views.

Much of the research on facework in argumentative discourse so far has focused on how argumentative exchanges are sequentially organised and how the turns within them are structurally organised. Markers of modality are usually only mentioned when they play a role in the organisation of turns. One exception is Locher's (2004) research on disagreement and power, in which she dedicates some space to the use and strategic function of various discourse markers (e.g. boosters, hedges) within argumentative encounters.

1.5 Theoretical framework for this study

1.5.1 Goffman revisited

Having reached the end of this chapter, I will now describe the theoretical framework for this research on the facework strategies of L2 learners of German in argumentative discourse. This framework is based on my interpretation of Goffman's conceptualisation of face and facework. I propose the following:

- Face should be conceptualised as an individual as well as a social construct: speakers present themselves as a certain kind of person; they project a face or self-image that may or may not be accepted by others as projected.

- Face is intrinsically related to different social roles and personal qualities that speakers try to make relevant.

- The protection and enhancement of self-face in addition to other-face needs to be more clearly accounted for.

- Politeness is not the only means to satisfy the speaker's and the hearer's face needs; there is the need for a more comprehensive notion of facework.

A reminder: According to Goffman (1967),

> The term face may be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes – albeit an image that others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself. (p. 5)

Goffman's definition clearly supports the idea that speakers are active agents and proponents of the self, making face an individual as well as a social phenomenon. Although he emphasizes the social interface of face ("positive social value"), he also suggests that a speaker "claims for himself" a certain self-image. Interpreting Goffman, Branaman (1997) describes the dichotomy between face-as-projected and face-as-attributed as follows: "The self is the mask the individual wears in social situations, but it is also the human being behind the mask who decides which mask to wear" (p. xlviii).

Later in his own essay on facework, Goffman stresses this dual approach:

> So far I have implicitly been using a double definition of self: the self as an image pieced together from the expressive implications of the full flow of events in an undertaking; and the self as a kind of player in a ritual game who copes honourably or dishonourably, diplomatically or undiplomatically, with the judgmental contingencies of the situation. A double mandate is involved. As sacred objects, men are subject to slights and profanation; hence as players of the ritual game they have to lead themselves into duels, and wait for a round of shots to go wide of the mark before embracing their opponents. (p. 31-32)

What further speaks for my contention that speakers are granted an active role in their efforts of proposing and constructing a particular self-image is Goffman's line concept and the fact that Goffman links face to particular social roles. Goffman uses religious affiliations and professional status as examples, but there are, of course, many more affiliations and social roles that can come into play. One can be a stamp collector, mother, teacher, tennis player, etc., with one – or possibly more than one – of those roles most relevant "during a particular contact" (p. 5).

When projecting a positive self-image associated to a particular social role, speakers must choose and maintain a line that is associated with it. Let us take the example of a woman who is a company executive as well as a mother. She is in a meeting at which the board wants to decide about whether to offer childcare vouchers to its employees. This woman can now choose between different roles and lines. She can present herself as a tough businesswoman who can keep strict control of a budget, or she can present herself as a caring mother who shares the problems and wishes of many of the employees of the company who have children. When opting for the first of these roles, she will speak in monetary and economic terms; when opting for the latter, she will emphasize the social benefits the scheme will carry for the employees. Even the kind of language she uses might be different in both scenarios.

In describing the strategies that speakers eventually pursue, lines are an important concept. I see the term *line* as the behaviour associated with particular social roles and encounters. Lines are the instruments for making these social roles relevant. This view has some repercussions for my concept of facework.

Goffman (1967) defines facework as verbal and non-verbal actions, which ensure that "whatever he is doing (is) consistent with face" (p. 12), thereby clearly not limiting facework strategies to politeness. Consequently, I argue that the transactional, goal-oriented use of language must be included in an approach to facework. Furthermore, Goffman's definition includes both the face of the speaker and the face of the interlocutor:

> A person will have two points of view – a defensive orientation toward saving his own face and a protective orientation toward saving the others' face. Some practices will be primarily defensive and others primarily protective, although in general one may expect these two perspectives to be taken at the same time. In trying to save the face of others, the person must choose a tack that will not lead to loss of its own, in trying to save his own face, he must consider the loss of face that his action may entail for others. (p. 14).

In other words, facework ensures that a consistent self-image is conveyed by speakers, and also protects the self-image of their interlocutors. Hence, this approach includes language by which speakers can present themselves as, for instance,

authoritative or persuasive, whilst not excluding politeness as a way of being seen as non-imposing. Moreover, facework goes beyond just the interpersonal dimension of language.

According to Halliday's model of the three metafunctions of language (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 29-30), an ideational, an interpersonal and a textual function of language can be distinguished. The term *ideational function* denotes the power of language to express human experience. In argumentative discourse, this level relates to how speakers position themselves through the arguments and ideas they express. In contrast, the *interpersonal* metafunction is concerned with the way speakers establish personal and social relationships through language, for example by indicating their level of commitment to opinions. Finally, the *textual* metafunction is the creation of a cohesive text or piece of discourse. Strategies at this level make a piece of discourse coherent with a certain speech event. Table 2 (3.8.6) matches facework strategies to these three functions and explains their relationship to face.[14]

As a consequence of this approach, identity needs to be seen as something that is co-constructed by speakers as a result of the encounter, rather than being a static construct. Identity is what speakers construct themselves to be and interlocutor(s) construct the speaker to be, with the potential of this identity changing during the encounter. Seen from this perspective, discourse participants "are not passive robots living out preprogrammed linguistic 'rules', discourse 'conventions' or cultural prescriptions' for social identity" (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995, p. 178-179), but instead (jointly) create identity through interaction. This approach to social identity supported by those working in interactional sociolinguistics, which is the analytical framework guiding my analysis (see 3.7.1). Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz (1982) for example see "social identity and ethnicity [...] in large part established and maintained through language" (p. 7)[15]

The theoretical position and approach to face advocated here is also supported by the concept of *ethos* as described by Riley (2006). Riley, criticising pragmatics and interlanguage pragmatics research for their focus on politeness, defines ethos as "communicative identity. [...] It is used [...] to refer to the self-image projected by a speaker in and through his or her discourse, but also as it is filtered through the hearer's perceptions, expectations and values, especially as constrained by social roles and genres: it is the rhetorical and social-psychological product of mutually influencing communicative behaviours" (p. 298). Riley further argues that, to establish a

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[14] These terms have been used in similar ways in research pertaining to *voice* as an expression of cultural and personal identity in second language writing (Ivanič & Camps, 2001).
[15] This view of identity contrasts with social identity theory advocated by Tajfel (1982), for whom social identity is derived from group membership.

trustworthy and convincing ethos, it is important to follow particular communicative virtues associated with the ethos. These include virtues such as authoritativeness, conviction, persuasiveness, but also politeness, respectfulness and tactfulness.

1.5.2 Definition of key terms

Important recurring concepts guiding this research are defined as follows:

- **face:**
  1) Individual perspective: Self-image that speakers claim, a self-image that is associated with how speakers wants to be seen, including both personal qualities and social roles.
  2) Social perspective: The image that is actually conveyed to interlocutor(s) during the course of the interaction, how speakers are seen by others.
- **identity:** The kind of person speakers construct themselves to be and interlocutor(s) construct the speaker to be as a result of the encounter, with the potential of this identity changing during the encounter.
- **facework:** All linguistic and non-linguistic actions that support the enactment and protection of one's own as well as interlocutors' face or self-image, helping speakers to present themselves in a particular way. This includes the presentation of lines as an expression of the social roles speakers are trying to make relevant (ideational level), strategies that emphasize or mitigate propositions (interpersonal level) and strategies that contribute to the general coherence of the encounter (textual level).
- **line:** The linguistic manifestation of the views speakers adopt and express during an encounter, views which are linked to the roles learners are trying to make relevant.
- **frame:** A cognitive filter that acts as a reference point for speakers in social encounters, influencing the interpretation and production of talk, with the potential of different frames overlapping (see 1.2.4).

1.6 Chapter summary and outlook

In this chapter, I defined some of the main concepts used throughout this study. The most important one of these, face, was introduced as a concept defined from two major perspectives: whilst from one perspective, face is seen as something that is attributed to people based on their behaviour, the other perspective relates face to social roles and personal qualities, making it something that is actively projected by speakers. I showed that the approach to face offered by Goffman supports both perspectives. Whilst speakers aim to make a certain face or self-image relevant in an encounter, this

face may not always be accepted as projected. Speaker identity is constructed through the way speakers present themselves and is not a static entity.

I further argued that the notion of facework needs to go beyond politeness to include all strategies used to project and maintain the desired face/self-image, and that all conversational encounters must be seen to take place within a certain frame which guides speakers' interpretation of events, their planning of linguistic strategies and their choices as to what kind of face they are projecting. Moreover, argumentative discourse was defined as a dialogic activity in which opinions are exchanged and evaluated.

In chapter 2, I will describe how face has been conceptualised so far within the field of interlanguage pragmatics, with particular attention given to the linguistic and cognitive constraints on the production of facework. This discussion will form a key part of the theoretical framework employed for the empirical study presented in this thesis.

Chapter 2 Face in L2 pragmatic development

2.1 Chapter Outline

Having defined the guiding principles of this research project from an individual/social perspective (face), the main goal of this chapter is to look at the linguistic and psycholinguistic constraints on the construction of face in an L2.

I shall begin by showing that in interlanguage pragmatics research, face has, in many cases, been used within a politeness and speech act framework. Furthermore, I will introduce other concepts and controversies, in particular the concept of pragmatic competence and the question of pragmatic norms.

The chapter will then move on to discuss theoretical approaches to and the results of research within various perspectives on pragmatic development. Particular emphasis will be given to psycholinguistic perspectives on pragmatic development, the relationship of pragmatics and grammar, the development of modality in L2 German and interlanguage perspectives on argumentative discourse.

The chapter ends with a discussion of new ways of thinking about interlanguage pragmatics, moving away from politeness and native speaker norms to a speaker-focused perspective.

2.2 Interlanguage pragmatics and pragmatic competence

Interlanguage pragmatics is a relatively new field within SLA, and Scarcella's (1979) investigation into the politeness patterns displayed by adult ESL learners is widely acknowledged as the first contribution to the field. Interlanguage pragmatics is concerned with two major aspects:

> As the study of second language *use*, interlanguage pragmatics examines how nonnative speakers comprehend and produce action in a target language. As the study of second language *learning*, interlanguage pragmatics investigates how L2 learners develop the ability to understand and perform action in a target language. (Kasper & Rose, 2003, p. 5)

Traditionally, however, the focus of research in the field lay on L2 use rather than development and acquisition (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a; Kasper, 1998b; Kasper & Rose, 1999; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996). This has lead to researchers' comments such as "not only was interlanguage pragmatics not fundamentally acquisitional, but it was [...] fundamentally not acquisitional" (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a, p. 679). Recently however, more research has emerged that asks questions relating to the development of pragmatic strategies in an L2, as demanded by Bardovi-Harlig (1999a) in her research agenda for interlanguage pragmatics, for example the L1 influence on L2 pragmatics,

the route of development, the effect of instruction, and the interplay of grammatical and pragmatic systems in development.

Most of the research in interlanguage pragmatics makes reference in some way to the term *pragmatic competence*. But what exactly is meant by that term?

Leech (1983) distinguishes two aspects of pragmatics: sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics. While he defines pragmalinguistics as "the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions" (p. 10), sociopragmatics is "the sociological interface of pragmatics" (p. 11). Hence, the term pragmalinguistics relates to the linguistic resources available to a speaker to convey the intended meaning, while sociopragmatics deals with how the use of those strategies relates to social, cultural and contextual expectations for behaviour.[16] Based on this distinction, Kasper & Roever (2005) define the two components of pragmatic competence as follows:

> Sociopragmatic competence encompasses knowledge of the relationships between communicative action and power, social distance, and the imposition associated with a past or future event (Brown & Levinson, 1987), knowledge of mutual rights and obligations, taboos, and conventional practices [...], or quite generally, the social conditions and consequences, of "what you do, when and to whom" [...]. Pragmalinguistic competence comprises the knowledge and ability for use of conventions of means (such as the strategies for realizing speech acts) and conventions of form (such as the linguistic forms implementing speech act strategies [...]. (p. 317-318)

These definitions are very inclusive in the sense that they see discourse as situated within a distinct social context which determines what is expected or allowed behaviourally (not excluding the possibility of being rude or impolite). The social context, however, is seen as something external to the speaker.

Research in interlanguage pragmatics generally seems to have re-interpreted sociopragmatic competence as the ability to act politely and to avoid face-threat and avoid causing offence. The use of the word "appropriately", which is used very often in definitions of pragmatic competence, is usually intrinsically connected to polite behaviour, and the language learner is assumed to acquire native speaker norms for such polite behaviour. The Brown & Levinson model of face and facework, including their use of the word *politeness*, seems to have had a great influence here, as it links linguistic behaviour to a given social context and externally determined norms.

This perspective is also mirrored in models of communicative competence. For instance, Canale & Swain (1980) distinguish grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic

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[16] Based on this distinction, Thomas (1983) introduced the terms pragmalinguistic failure and sociopragmatic failure: "While pragmalinguistic failure is basically a *linguistic* problem, caused by differences in the linguistic encoding of pragmatic force, sociopragmatic failure stems from cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behaviour." (p. 99)

competence. Sociolinguistic competence consists of rules of discourse (cohesion and coherence of groups of utterances) and of rules of use, i.e. "the ways in which utterances are produced and understood appropriately with respect to the components of communicative events outlined by Hymes (1967, 1968)" (p. 30).

Canale & Swain make reference to Hymes' model of SPEAKING, in which he relates discourse to a number of contextual factors (settings, participants, ends, act sequences, keys, instrumentalities, norms, genres) (e.g. Hymes, 1972). This model does not necessarily exclude particular kinds of behaviour from competence. However, communicative events are again seen as externally framed, and the speaker perspective is somewhat neglected. Although participants, including the speaker, are one of the key components of the model, Hymes discusses them in terms of behaviours expected from them rather than their internal states, wants and desires. When Canale & Swain therefore define sociolinguistic competence in terms of appropriateness, the term relates to external factors alone and does not include speakers' notions of what is appropriate or not.

In Bachman's (1990) model of communicative competence, pragmatic competence is described in slightly broader terms as a combination of illocutionary and sociocultural competence. One component of illocutionary competence ("the pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions", p. 90) is the ideational function, i.e. language as an expression of speakers' experience of the world. Though the model therefore includes language use as an expression of speakers' internal states, its second component – sociolinguistic competence – does not include such a personal interface, as it is defined as "sensitivity to, or control of the conventions of language use that are determined by the features of the specific language use context" (p. 94). It includes sensitivity to differences in dialect or variety, sensitivity to differences in register and sensitivity to naturalness. This means that, again, appropriateness is defined through the perspective of the addressee, with an externally defined context.

All of these observations also apply to a third model of communicative competence (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1995), in which sociocultural competence includes knowledge of social contextual factors (e.g. participant variables such as age, gender and status), stylistic appropriateness factors (politeness conventions and strategies, stylistic variation), cultural factors (e.g. sociocultural background, cross-cultural awareness) and non-verbal communicative factors. Appropriateness is, in this model, again discussed in terms of politeness. Furthermore, the model describes actional competence in terms of language functions (e.g. agreeing, leave-taking, etc.), thereby adopting a speech act perspective.

I suggest that it is one of the major problems and failings of interlanguage pragmatics to define pragmatic competence in terms of appropriateness as determined by external factors alone without taking the speaker perspective into account. Speakers are, in a way, at the mercy of external evaluation as to whether what they say is considered as appropriate. They are seen as pragmatically competent when they fit in and try not to impose, and their own perspective on strategy choice is seemingly unimportant. Secondly, appropriateness has, as a result of the addressee focus, been defined in terms of politeness and native speaker behavioural norms to the exclusion of impoliteness and deviance from such norms. Furthermore, the notion of *appropriateness* has rarely been scrutinized within empirical research.

Moreover, the focus on speech acts has severely narrowed down the scope of ILP research. While a speech act perspective can account for illocutionary acts (the force of an utterance) it does not convey "how one utterance relates to the other utterances in the discourse" (Flowerdew, 1990, p. 93). Furthermore, as Kasper (2004) suggests, the speech act perspective and the pre-imposition of an analytical framework[17] does little to show speakers' own perspective.

Recently, however, some attempts at relating pragmatic use and development to individual learner choices have been made. This, as well as the increasing unease with such a postulate of an L2 pragmatic norm will be discussed further in 2.4.

2.3 Perspectives on pragmatic development

2.3.1 Theoretical perspectives

Kasper (2001) distinguishes four distinct theoretical perspectives on pragmatic development: the information processing perspective (see 2.3.2), the relationship between pragmatics and grammar (see 2.3.3), sociocultural theory and language socialisation. She argues that both the information processing and sociocultural approaches do offer important frameworks for the study of pragmatic development, but deems it impossible to integrate the two perspectives.

In the following review, I will focus particularly on the first two of these perspectives, i.e. the development of facework strategies in relationship to processing constraints and linguistic constraints.[18]

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[17] One frequently used coding scheme is the scheme from the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project (CCSARP); see Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989).
[18] I will not employ sociocultural theory directly as a framework for the analysis, but will later (chapter 8) make brief reference to it, as there appear to be interesting interconnections with notions of face and identity.

2.3.2 Psycholinguistic perspectives on pragmatic development

According to Kasper & Rose (1999, 2003), adult L2 learners can build on a broad basis of prior pragmatic knowledge, a set of pragmatic universals. This includes, for example, communicative acts like greetings, suggestions, agreements, disagreements, etc., realization strategies for communicative acts, and routine formulae for recurring communicative acts (Kasper & Rose, 2003, p. 165).

Psycholinguistic perspectives on pragmatic development do, however, emphasize that there are obstacles to accessing this pragmatic knowledge base, with two processes distinguished: Faerch & Kasper (1984), for example, distinguish two types of pragmatic knowledge. Whilst *declarative pragmatic knowledge* is the knowledge of the rules and elements of a language, the *term procedural pragmatic* knowledge describes the ability to make choices based on an evaluation of the context, plan an utterance and monitor its execution.

In her two-dimensional model of pragmatic competence, Bialystok (1993) emphasizes that procedural pragmatic knowledge is most difficult to acquire for adults learning an L2. Adults who embark on the task of learning a second language have already "sorted out the nature of meaning" (p. 53), i.e. they have acquired formal pragmatic markers in their first language and can make use of this knowledge in the second language. In the L2, their main task is now to form new symbolic representations (form-function matches) – the process of *analysis*. In addition however, they have to achieve processing control over those forms, i.e. they have to select and retrieve them – the process of *control*:

> For adults, the problem to be solved for pragmatic competence is essentially to develop the control strategies to attend to the intended interpretations in contexts and to select the forms from the range of possibilities that satisfy the social and contextual needs of the communicative situation. (Bialystok, 1993, p. 54)

Control is required especially when learners need to engage in conversation with other speakers in real-time – as compared to the one-dimensional, non-dialogic interactions with a piece of paper (Discourse completion tasks) in some research methodologies regularly used in interlanguage pragmatics (see 3.3.2). Learners "must map their sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge onto each other, and be able to use their knowledge online under the constraints of a communicative situation" (Roever, 2004, p. 284).

Thus, learners have to acquire the semantic and the syntactic structures of pragmatic realization patterns, they have to map them to the situations in which they are adequate, and they have to acquire the processing control necessary to gain access to them.

According to Kasper & Rose (2003), Bialystok's two-dimensional model has never been tested with regard to its potential to predict L2 pragmatic learning. It has, however, been used to explain research findings. An example is Barron's study of the acquisition of pragmatic competence in L2 German during a year abroad (Barron, 2003). Barron investigated how English native speakers from Ireland on a year long exchange in Germany acquire sociopragmatic competence – such as, for example, not to make re-offers when an offer has been refused, as it is usually done in Ireland – and pragmalinguistic competence, specifically the use of pragmatic routines and internal modification of speech acts.

Barron found that over time, offer-exchanges became increasingly target-like, though they did not reach target norms. The longer the Irish exchange students spent in the target community, the less they transferred L1 pragmatic routines into the L2, e.g. 'ich wundere mich' as a request-introducer. While prior to the year abroad, the politeness marker 'bitte' was overused and learners had few other downtoners at their disposition, the year abroad resulted in an increase in the use of target-like lexical, phrasal and syntactical downtoners. In the case of syntactical downtoners, even an over-use could be noticed.

Although learners did not always succeed in matching their pragmalinguistic resources to the sociopragmatic context, the stay abroad did lead to the acquisition of more target-like pragmalinguistic strategies and implementation of sociopragmatic knowledge. However, Barron sees that the cognitive processes leading to L2 pragmatic competence have limits:

> Unfortunately, [...], although practice does improve the speed and efficiency with which pragmatic knowledge can be accessed, we cannot say that practice makes perfect. [...] It is not enough to gain control over pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge, if the knowledge itself is incorrect. (p. 243-244)

What the research also shows – and this is indeed a very consistent finding in ILP studies – is that learners use those strategies that are easiest to process. In this study, the fact that the marker 'bitte' was overused at the beginning of the year abroad is evidence of this pattern, as learners tried to mark utterances for politeness, yet ease their cognitive load. In Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig's (2000) research on ESL learners' acquisition of modality, learners showed their awareness of the need to protect others' face by very frequent use of lexical modality markers, especially 'think' and 'maybe', while modal auxiliaries were acquired later.

The authors of this research do however not attribute these acquisitional patterns to processing constraints, but suggest instead that pragmatic development depends on grammatical development. This shows that it can be difficult to decide whether

cognitive processing constraints or limits imposed by the level of grammatical development are responsible for observed patterns of development.

One way of easing the cognitive load in interlanguage message production is to prioritise the expression of certain linguistic functions. The ILP literature has consistently shown that, when learning to produce certain speech acts, learners tend to prioritise the message of the speech act over politeness, in particular at earlier stages of development – a style which has been described as *message oriented* (Ellis, 1992; Kotthoff, 1988). Over time, speech acts become more elaborated (e.g. they integrate accounts for why the speech act is done), less direct (Rose, 2000; Ellis, 1992; Achiba, 2003; Schauer, 2004) and less formulaic (Trosborg, 1995).

Research has also found that the lack of adequate input can offset the effects of increased processing control. For example, Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford (1990, 1993, 1996) conducted research on how international students learn the rules of the academic advising session during their stay in the USA. It was found that although, over time, students learned that they were expected to make their own suggestions for courses, and increasingly used politeness markers, these developments were offset by a nonnative-like and inadequate use of aggravators. Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford (1996) explain those results with the fact that an advising session is an "unequal status encounter" (p. 171) in which participants do not share equal opportunity for building the conversation. Hence, the students did not receive the kind of input needed for pragmalinguistic development in this context, as their interlocutors – professors of their programme of study and of a higher status – did not need to use such strategies.

Similar deficiencies in the sociopragmatic domain were also found in other research, e.g. the ability to vary speech act strategies according to context (e.g. Rose, 2000, Ellis, 1992).

2.3.3 Pragmatic development and grammatical development

In addition to overcoming processing constraints learners may also need to achieve a certain grammatical threshold before they are able to use certain pragmatic strategies. Two basic positions have been identified in the relationship of pragmatics and grammar (Kasper & Rose, 2003):

1) Pragmatics precedes grammar
2) Grammar precedes pragmatics

The first one of those options – pragmatics precedes grammar – is well illustrated by Schmidt's (1983) study of a Japanese immigrant to Hawaii. His subject, Wes, whom he observed during a four-year period, made hardly any progress grammatically, but showed significant pragmatic development, using pragmatic routines for everyday

tasks like requesting (for example, ordering something in a restaurant). To a limited extent, he was also able to adapt his behavior to different speech situations.

Most studies, however, support the second hypothesis. Beebe & Waring's (2005) research on pragmatic development in responding to rudeness suggests that a higher level of linguistic competence leads to pragmalinguistic growth. Via a DCT, learners of English were asked how they would react when somebody was rude to them and also how they would want to react if there were no social constraints. Their data show that the less proficient learners preferred to use sarcasm and a limited number of intensifiers. The more proficient learners used a wider range of strategies and adverbials that enabled them to make indirect claims with regards to their thoughts about the interlocutor (i.e. 'just'). More proficient learners also used more off-record messages, making them sound more assertive and aggressive.

Koike (1989) investigated the understanding and production of speech acts (requests, apologies, commands) by native English learners of L2 Spanish in the first semester of their language study. Her study revealed that, although students were able to draw on L1 pragmatic knowledge, they were often using a "speech act interlanguge" (p. 286), e.g. the combination of a direct comment and a politeness marker like 'please' rather than a mitigated request. She concluded from this that learners tried to communicate the basic proposition of the speech act first, with pragmatics having to take the back seat and being expressed "in ways conforming to the level of grammatical complexity acquired" (p. 286).

This phenomenon – students using the kind of forms that their current level of grammatical development allows them to use – is also illustrated in Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig's (2000; 2001) study on the acquisition of modality by learners of English (international students in the United States). They found that while learners disposed of a full repertoire of modal expressions (maybe, think, can, will, would, could), they were relying heavily on lexical (e.g. maybe) instead of grammatical expressions of modality (e.g. could, would) to mitigate disagreement. The authors conclude that low grammatical competence can constrain the production of pragmatically target-like features, because "the language [...] (needed) for these situations is far too unproductive in [...] interlanguage grammar" (Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig, 2000, p. 72).

Evidence for the "grammar precedes pragmatics" scenario comes also from the perspective of sociopragmatics. Hoffman-Hicks (1992) asked university learners of French at intermediate level to complete a multiple-choice questionnaire, a discourse completion task, and a linguistic competence task (the targeted speech acts were refusals). The answers that students ticked as being the most appropriate ones were

then compared to the answers given by native speakers of French. Scores were given for both linguistic and pragmatic competence. Results show that students who did well on the pragmatic competence task also did well on the linguistic task. Hoffman-Hicks concludes from her results that

> Linguistic competence is necessary for pragmatic competence, but [...] it is not sufficient for it. [...] learners need to have a basic control of grammatical structures and vocabulary to make their message understood. [...] Linguistic ability alone does not guarantee the appropriate use of language in real language contexts. (p. 77-78)

Linguistic competence may also be necessary for learners to be exposed to language providing the necessary input for development. Matsumura (2003) asked how L2 proficiency prior to a year abroad was interrelated with pragmatic development and exposure to L2. Following Japanese exchange students in an eight-month exchange program in Canada, the study revealed that the amount of exposure to the L2 makes a greater contribution for development of pragmatic competence than linguistic proficiency. However, the amount of exposure students enjoyed was partly determined by their proficiency.

2.3.4 Modality in L2 German

While there is, to my, knowledge, only one study that deals with the development of speech acts in L2 German (Barron, 2003), a number of studies have focused on the development of modality in L2 German. Modality is extremely important for the projection and maintenance of face as speakers use modality markers of various kinds to indicate their level of commitment to the proposition or their desire for an action by either upgrading or downgrading what they are saying, with the goal of making qualities such as politeness or authoritativeness relevant.

Both qualitative and quantitative differences to native speaker usage have been observed in the L2 use and acquisition of modality markers. In her study on learners of German (L1 English) engaged in argumentative conversations in German with native speakers of German, Kotthoff (1988) found that while some markers were used extremely rarely by learners (modal particles were particularly affected), some were used far more often, e.g. 'und so weiter', 'oder so'. Kotthoff concludes from that learners try to realise mitigation with any means they can.

This observation is very similar to Jahnel's results. Jahnel (2000) examined the use of markers of modality in TV discussions involving highly advanced non-native speakers of German (journalists working for foreign newspapers in Germany) and native speakers of German. She found modality markers that signal harmony are particularly overrepresented in the discourse of non-native speakers, while those that

signal aggression and upgrading are underrepresented. Furthermore, she also found modality to be expressed through a smaller range of markers. Jahnel suggests therefore that rather than a quantitative movement of markers of modality in comparison of native and non-native speakers, a qualitative movement can be observed.

An Italian immigrant to Germany was the object of study in two studies on the development of German as a second language in an immersion setting (Dittmar & Ahrenholz, 1995; Rost-Roth, 1999). While Dittmar & Ahrenholz focused on Franca's acquisition of means of expressing epistemic and deontic modality overall, Rost-Roth examined her acquisition of modal particles.

Dittmar & Ahrenholz (1995) found that in order to express epistemic meaning, Franca used what they call *verbi sentiendi* (denken, finden, glauben, hoffen, kennen, wissen) throughout the entire circle of data collection, many of them from the first data collection event on. Furthermore, she also employed 'vielleicht' as some kind of an "epistemic joker" (p. 206) from the sixth month of her stay onwards. Adverbials that upgrade propositions were, in contrast, acquired very late by Franca (e.g. bestimmt, unbedingt).

Rost-Roth (1999) found that Franca used particles in their function as a marker of epistemic modality only after she had acquired the primary function of the word. For example, 'ja' was first used as a marker of approval and agreement and then as a modal particle. When she did eventually use the particles in their modal function, she appeared to acquire them via formulaic expressions in which they appear (e.g. guck mal, ich glaube schon). 'Auch' was the earliest modal particle, with an initial appearance in the 11th month, although France had used 'auch' it in its primary function as early as the 4th month. The acquisition of other modal particles took considerably longer, e.g. 'mal' (18th month) and 'schon' (32nd month), and there were also some lexemes that Franca did not use at all as modal particles (e.g. halt, aber, doch, ruhig).

Drawing on data from the same longitudinal project, but with a different learner as their example (a Polish learner of German), Cheon-Kostrzewa & Kostrzewa (1997) report that 'doch' was acquired late, while 'aber' was acquired very early. The authors suggest that the reason for the early acquisition of 'aber' – which is somewhat contradictory to Rost-Roth's observations on Franca – by the Polish subject is the fact that 'aber' was also used very early in its coordinating function, and was a basic element for the establishment of coherence and the development of argumentative ability.[19]

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[19] Zimmermann (1981) suggests that learners' difficulties in acquiring and using modal particles is due to the fact that they are homonymous to other sentence adverbials and conjunctions; in

One last study on the development of modality – this time focusing on the development of deontic rather than epistemic modality[20] – in L2 German is Ahrenholz' (2000) research on the expression of modality in instructional discourse. Learners – adult immigrants to Germany - were asked to give instructions to an experimenter. The study found that learners moved from implicit means of modalization (e.g. verb ellipsis, verbs ending in –en, or nonverbal means) to explicit means. 'Müssen' and 'können' were used first, later supplemented by 'sollen' and other modal means, e.g. imperatives and subjunctives.

2.3.5 Interlanguage perspectives on argumentative discourse

A number of studies have so far been concerned with L2 learners' behaviour in argumentative discourse. Not all of them have a developmental focus, but I shall include studies on use in this review as well in order to provide a comprehensive overview of L2 argumentative discourse.

One particular study (Kotthoff, 1989, 1991) that has been mentioned previously (see 2.3.4) also looked at the sequential and preference organisation of arguments in the discourse produced by native English speaking learners of German. Those learners (university students in Germany) interacted with native speakers of German (lecturers and professors) on a wide range of campus issues in elicited conversations (though the issues discussed were real, the conversations were set-up for research purposes). The data produced were then compared to native speakers' conversations (again students interacting with lecturers and professors).

In her study, Kotthoff observed that, on occasions, learners did not supply answers to proposals made by the native speakers, thus implying that they were accepted. She suggests that this can reflect badly on the speaker, as a missing reaction is equal to admitting that one hasn't got anything to say: "Argumente, Begründungen oder Stützungen, die unwidersprochen bleiben, können als akzeptiert angesehen werden."[21] (1991, p. 385).

Furthermore, learners had problems marking the relevance of their turns to the preceding turns, and they used global rather than local strategies in connecting their disagreement to what had been said previously. Kotthoff suggests that those patterns, which are different from those used by native speakers of German, can be explained by an orientation to English norms of pragmatic behaviour (see 1.3.2), as well as a

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addition, they do not have meaning on their own, but only reveal it in the context in which they appear.

[20] Dittmar & Terborg (1991) distinguish a "necessity scale" (command – permission – ban) for deontic modality and a "probability scale" for epistemic modality (p. 350).

[21] Translation: "Arguments, justifications and statements of support may be regarded as being accepted when no contradiction follows."

preference for indirectness due to a higher status of the interlocutors (lecturers or professors). As a third possible reason, she proposes that introducing a new argument is linguistically easier than attacking the opponent's argument.

A further problem that Kotthoff identified relates to whether learners use a cooperative or a competitive style. Argumentative discourse can shift between cooperative phases when speakers aim at keeping their opposition to a minimum in order to accommodate other positions, and very heated and confrontational phases, in which the main aim is to present one's own position (see 1.4.2.2). However, in L2 learners' language, the borders between confrontational and cooperative style often appear blurred:

> Häufig wird aus dem Äußerungsdesign nicht erkennbar, ob der Lerner z.B. ein partielles Zugeständnis machen wollte, ob er dem Punkt des Gegners Relevanz absprechen wollte, oder ob er versuchte, ein Gegenargument aufzubauen. Im Deutschen wird z.B. durch Interjektionen wie „na ja" oder „ach nee" frühzeitig kontextualisiert, was der Hörer erwarten kann. Bei den Lernern kann man oft erst nachdem die ganze Äußerung abgeschlossen ist eine Interpretation anstellen. (Kotthoff, 1991, p. 388).[22]

Contextualisation clues are largely missing in learners' language. Together with the lack of mitigators and aggravators, an inability to react to opponents' turns and concede to the partner when it is necessary, required and appropriate, makes learners appear what Kotthoff calls "botschaftsfixiert" (=message-oriented) (p. 133). This means that learners' linguistic style in argumentative discourse is focused on content rather than on the manner of its conveyance.

Porter's (1986) study of the ways learners of English as a foreign language express opinions, agreement and disagreement was also focused on use. She found that the most striking differences between native speaker and learner strategies could be observed in the expression of disagreement. While learners would often express disagreement directly, native speakers were able to hedge and acknowledge the interlocutors' position. Although learners used almost the same range of strategies as native speakers overall, they did not do so with the same frequency.

One further study concerned with disagreement and rejections is Bardovi-Harlig's (1991) research on rejection strategies by both native speakers and non-native speakers in academic advising sessions. She analysed the rejection strategies used by students to react to course suggestions made by their academic advisors, and

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[22] Translation: Very often it remains unclear whether a learner intended to agree partially, whether s/he wanted say that the partners' argument has no relevance or whether s/he planned to construct a counter-argument. In German, interjections like 'na ja' or 'ach nee' contextualise early on what the hearer can expect. In learners' discourse, an interpretation usually cannot be attempted before an utterance is finished.

measured their success by the reactions of the advisors. She showed that learners often failed to make their rejection strategies congruent with their lower status. For example, they would use questioning strategies in the hope of avoiding direct rejections. They would also employ explanations for their rejections, but not offer alternatives and not always employ downgraders in their rejections.

I shall now move on to consider developmental accounts of learners' argumentative discourse ability. An experimental rather than a descriptive approach is used in Németh & Kormos' (2001) research on task performance in argumentation. They focused their research on the pragmalinguistic markers of argumentation, with the aim of determining what influence task repetition, short-term intervention and long-term linguistic development had on learners' argumentative skills in English. They also compared learners' performance to tasks performed by the same learners in their native tongue, Hungarian.

They found that, when arguing in their mother tongue, learners used a wider range of pragmalinguistic strategies than in English, including turn-level strategies (claim, support, counter-claim, counter-support) as well as lexical fillers and markers of opinion. The results of the experimental conditions varied. While repetition of the task resulted in learners providing more support for their claims the second time they were asked to perform a similar task – which is, according to the authors, due to the fact that their attentional resources were freed – long-term linguistic development had neither quantitative nor qualitative results. The teaching intervention resulted in a development of the range of pragmalinguistic fillers and markers, but not in a more frequent use of pragmatic strategies at turn-level.

Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig conducted a study on interlanguage pragmatic development in oppositional talk (Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig 2000, 2001; Bardovi-Harlig & Salsbury, 2004). For this study, interactions between ESL students at an American university and graduate students of Applied Linguistics were recorded over one year. In addition to tracing the development of modality (discussed in 2.3.3), the authors also studied learners' development in the expression of disagreement within a framework of CA terminology (preference / dispreference). They found that, in time, learners' turns became more elaborated, with the following stages to be distinguished (2004, p. 218):

1) strong disagreements, characterized chiefly by the occurrence of "no"
2) inclusion of agreement components with disagreement components
3) the postponement of disagreement components within a turn
4) the postponement of disagreement turns within a sequence of turns

Though learners' turns at the first developmental stage did not include agreement components, they did include downgraders, i.e. 'maybe' or 'well'. With further development, learners started to include agreement components in their turns,

for example 'yes' followed by 'but'. They later learned to elaborate on these agreement prefaces, leading to postponement of disagreement within the turn. The latest stage of development is marked by the ability to postpone disagreement turns even further into later turns.

Bardovi-Harlig & Salsbury (2004) emphasize that those developmental stages are by no means mutually exclusive, but rather cumulative; i.e. in time, learners acquire the same repertoire of turn organisation for disagreement that native speakers have, from very simple and direct to elaborated and hedged.

All these studies suggest that engaging in argumentative discourse is a very taxing task for L2 learners. Disagreement seems to be particularly difficult to handle, but little is known so far about the acquisition of strategies for expression of agreement.

2.4 New perspectives on Interlanguage Pragmatics

2.4.1 Rudeness as pragmatic competence

Recently, some attempts have been made in the field of interlanguage pragmatics to move away from politeness, appropriateness and the postulate of convergence to native speaker pragmatic norms (see the discussion in 2.2) towards emphasizing speaker's choices in discourse.

Riley (2006) criticises the notion of appropriateness on the premise that "investigation of that notion – trying to find just what it is that makes a given utterance or exchange 'appropriate' has been surprisingly limited", and "numerous aspects of discourse [...] remain untouched: friendliness, interest or trustworthiness" (p. 303). His criticism is based on the notion of *ethos*, suggesting that politeness is just one of a number of possible communicative virtues by means of which speakers try to convey a particular ethos (communicative identity; see 1.5.1).

Beebe (1995) argues that politeness alone is not enough for a comprehensive notion of communicative competence. Employing fieldnote data in which instances of rudeness were recorded, she shows that rudeness is used instrumentally to reach two major goals – getting power and conveying negative feelings. She concludes:

> In the linguistic literature, the emphasis has been on the intention of politeness and the accidental failure to convey politeness. What a beautiful world! But is it the world we live in? [...] It is high time we focused on rudeness. It is the language that ESL and native-speaking students have to deal with in the real world. They have to learn to get power/control and express negative feelings – but in appropriate ways. This is the neglected side of communicative competence. (p. 167)

Dewaele (2005), whose research centres on the interlanguage development of expressions of emotion[23] (e.g. Dewaele & Pavlenko, 2002) supports this position and concludes that it is necessary and possible to prepare learners for a certain extent for the way in which emotional language is used and perceived in the target culture. However, he warns against advocating convergence to L2 norms of when it comes to using emotionally charged language, as this might again infringe the presentation of self and face.

2.4.2 The native speaker norm

This leads us to the question of pragmatic norms. Unease with the postulate of such a norm as a goal for language learners is generally growing. Looking back, House & Kasper (2000) have come to criticise their own work of the early 1980s:

> We compared the Interlanguage (IL) conversations of German non-native speakers of English to parallel conversations by native speakers (NS) of German, representing the learners' native language (L1), and to conversations by NS of British English, the learners' foreign language (L2). [...] The observed IL-L2 differences were [...] classified as 'over'- and 'under-use', and labeled 'pragmatic errors, 'deficiencies', and the like [...]. Looking back to our work after a passage of two decades of SLA research, we are amazed at the naivety of the projects' underlying assumptions. Clearly, the NNS did differ from the NS of both German and English in their politeness style and in their conversational organization and management. But were we justified to regard these differences as deficits? (p. 101)

A debate on the validity of native speaker norms has also developed in the wider field of SLA. This debate is well reflected in Firth & Wagner's (1997) article "On discourse, communication and (some) fundamental concepts in SLA research" and a number of replies to the article (Rampton, 1997; Hall, 1997; Liddicoat, 1997; Kasper, 1997). In this article, Firth & Wagner claim that SLA research has so far seen research participants only in their persona as subjects and as non-native speakers of a language, and not in their other identities. Furthermore, researchers have neglected to acknowledge the effects of the setting in which data is collected. They also argue that learners' L2 use should be seen in its own right[24] rather than being subject to comparison to native speaker norms:

> NNs' marked or deviant forms are not of necessity fossilizations of interlanguage, nor can they on each end every occasion be accounted for by inference or a reduced L2 competence. Such forms may be deployed

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[23] In Dewaele & Pavlenko (2002), emotion vocabulary are „abstract and metaphorical words that refer to feelings, interests, desires and judgments which belong to various grammatical classes" (p. 281).
[24] With regard to this problem, Lakshmanan & Selinker (2001) argue that a comparison of learner to native speaker data can lead to a *comparative fallacy,* that may have "underestimation and/or overestimation of the learners' linguistic competence" (p. 396) as consequence.

resourcefully and strategically to accomplish social and interactional ends –
for example, to display empathy, or to accomplish mutual understanding.
(Firth & Wagner, 1997, p. 293)

In this view, L2 speakers are not at the mercy of their cognitive abilities, but
agents in determining their linguistic choices. Although some arguments have been for
maintenance of a cognitive stance, for example saying that Firth & Wagner merely call
for "socially situated studies of second language use" [...], while "none of these
approaches has anything to say about L2 learning" (Kasper, 1997, p. 310), the call for
acknowledging the social context of language learning and the agency of learners has
certainly found more adherents in recent research. An example of this trend is Block's
(2003) monograph entitled "The social turn in second language acquisition".

Generally, there is now an observable trend towards seeing the native speaker
perspective in a critical light. For example, Kasper (1995) and Leung (2005) call for
optimal convergence as pragmatic norm for L2 speakers, the conditions of which are
contextually rather than externally determined. Other authors aim to provide an L2 user
perspective (Cook, 1999; Cook, 2002; Belz, 2002), advocating an L2 standard based
on L2 learners' individual needs.

2.4.3 Individual choices and subjectivity

In line with the move towards an L2 user perspective is the acknowledgement that
learners' strategies are based on subjective choices. These issues are often only
alluded to.

When discussing the reasons for German L2 English learners' patterns of
pragmatic development in requests during a year abroad in England, Schauer (2004)
for example proposes that the discourse completion task might have been perceived as
an exam by students. However, she also says "I would argue that the personality of the
individual played a more decisive, but as yet uninvestigated, role" (p. 267). Barron
(2003) acknowledges that some of her year abroad learners of German provided
reasons which suggest that they resisted German behavioural norms due to reasons
relating to personality and identity.

A theoretical perspective of how individual factors lead to resistance to expected
behavioural norms is subjectivity, defined by Siegal (1996) as „the construction of self
and identity through a second language [...], specifically, learners are 'human subjects
with unique histories, goals, and voices, who actively create and recreate their world
and themselves' (Lantolf 1993 232)" (p. 357).

Siegal (1996) followed the pragmatic development of Mary, a woman from New
Zealand, on a trip to Japan during which she wanted to brush up her Japanese
language skills. Siegal found that Mary resisted certain sociocultural conventions (use

of honorific language, topic control) in order to present herself as a knowledgeable researcher who could communicate on equal grounds with a professor.

Also working from this theoretical perspective, LoCastro (2001) elicited comments by Japanese learners of English about their attitudes towards English and their willingness to conform to English norms of behaviour. She concludes from this that some learners deemed it as inappropriate for themselves to accommodate to L2 pragmatic norms for reasons of identity: "Individual differences, specifically attitudes, motivation, and learner self-identity may influence and constrain the willingness to adopt NS standards for linguistic action." (p. 83)

These critical voices are an important step in designing a more comprehensive framework for interlanguage pragmatic behaviour, both in terms of the kind of language learners produce and the reasons behind the strategies they use.

2.5 Chapter summary and outlook

In this chapter, I located the concept of face, introduced in chapter 1, within studies of and approaches to L2 pragmatic development. I demonstrated that face has, so far, been employed for research in interlanguage pragmatics primarily within a politeness framework. This has led to the reinterpretation of pragmatic competence as the ability to act within a foreign language without causing offence, thereby neglecting both the speaker perspective and impoliteness or rudeness as components of pragmatic competence. Only now is there a trend towards more speaker-centred views on pragmatic competence, moving away from politeness and social appropriateness.

Furthermore, the chapter included a review of studies on the use and development of pragmatic strategies. This review suggested that learners need to both acquire processing control and to reach a certain grammatical threshold, in order to be able to successfully apply certain pragmalinguistic strategies.

In chapter 3, I will describe the methodological approach to collecting data for the empirical study presented in this thesis and the analysis of these data within a framework that attempts to combine the perspective of face, introduced in chapter 1, with a linguistic/psycholinguistic perspective discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 3   Methodology

3.1 Chapter Outline

In the previous chapters I laid out the theoretical framework that is guiding this study, defining the concept of face as a both an individual and a social phenomenon and outlining the linguistic/psycholinguistic perspective. This chapter will locate the research questions for my own empirical study within this theoretical framework and the established knowledge base in interlanguage pragmatics.

Furthermore, I will justify my choice of methodology for data collection and provide an account of how the data were collected. The chapter ends with an outline of the framework employed in the analysis of the data.

3.2 Research questions

The research presented in this thesis fills many of the gaps in interlanguage pragmatics research identified in chapter 2. The target language used is German, which so far has received little attention in interlanguage pragmatics research. Furthermore, it addresses the often-lamented fact that the majority of research in ILP focuses on use rather than development (e.g. Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a), although of course this has been changing during the last few years. And last but not least, this research focuses on self-presentation in discourse rather than politeness, thereby bringing it closer to the study of subjectivity (see 2.4). The research questions are:

1) What strategies do L2 learners of German at different proficiency levels use to do facework in spoken argumentative discourse, and how do these strategies develop and change across levels? How can these changes best be accounted for?

2) What can learners express about their decision-making processes in argumentative discourse, and how far are these processes governed by learners' commitment to maintenance and expression of face and identity?

It follows from these research questions that two kinds of data will need to be collected for this study: production data that show in detail how learners' strategies for doing facework change across levels, and process data that provide an insight into learners' cognitive processes during the production of their discourse.

3.3 Research Instruments

3.3.1 Preliminary remarks

There is, according to Bardovi-Harlig (1999b) "no such thing as a perfect research design. [...] We should focus our attention primarily on the research questions that we want to ask" (p. 237). In other words, the choice of methodology has to be aligned with the research questions. In the following sections, I shall discuss different methodologies in detail and justify my choices.

3.3.2 Production data

Research within the field of interlanguage pragmatics has traditionally focused on language use rather than language development, comparing learners' and native speakers' strategies, in particular speech acts. Consequently, the field has traditionally derived its research methods from cross-cultural pragmatics rather than ethnographically oriented methodologies, such as CA, discourse analysis and conversation analysis (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a).

For research on language production, the following methods of data collection are available and commonly used (Kasper, 1998a, 2000):

- Multiple choice tests: Employed to find out what answer alternatives are possible in different contexts and what alternative(s) learners deem most appropriate in different situations.

- Discourse completion tasks (DCT) / production questionnaires: After a short description of the situation, subjects are asked to state in written form what they think they would have said in the situation.

- Closed role-plays: An oral discourse completion task in which subjects are given a description of the situation and asked to say what they think they would have said in the situation.

- Open role-plays: Subjects receive a role card with a description of the situation of their role and are asked to act out the situation and reach a goal specified on the card; how the situation is acted out and the goal achieved is up to subjects.

- Elicited conversation: Subjects do not adopt a role other than their own. They may be asked to discuss a certain topic or to work towards a certain goal (conversation task), or engage in an interview about their lives in order to elicit data, for example on turn-taking and repair (sociolinguistic interview).

- Authentic conversation: conversation not specifically arranged for the purpose of collecting data.

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Claims have been made that tasks that are specifically designed to elicit data modify at least partly the social constraints that participants would usually encounter. They have been said to make cognitive processing more difficult for subjects, thus possibly falsifying the outcome of the data. For example, Firth & Wagner (1997) warn that "participants may not behave at the behest of their native or nonnative competencies and identities, but as a result of the (quasi-experimental) setting, their unfamiliarity with each other, and the setting-imposed task they have agreed to undertake" (p. 294).

One of the most widely used research instruments in interlanguage pragmatics are production questionnaires or DCTs. Although DCTs have been shown to offer various advantages (easy administration and analysis, possibility to manipulate social variables freely, easy comparability, collection of large data sets), it is generally acknowledged that DCTs cannot elicit elaborated negotiations and are therefore not suited for the study of interaction (Yuan, 2001; Sasaki, 1998; Kasper & Dahl, 1991). In comparison to oral language production in similar contexts, speech turns elicited through DCTs are shorter, they do not contain the same range of formulas and strategies, and they are less elaborate (Beebe & Cummings, 1996; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992). Furthermore, the rate of occurrence of certain strategies is affected (Rintell & Mitchell, 1989).

There is therefore widespread agreement that DCTs are not appropriate as research instruments when research focuses on interaction and negotiation[25]:

> We would claim that the main reason the spoken data are different from the Discourse Completion Test data is that the Discourse Completion Test, a written hypothetical exercise, does not bring out the 'psycho-social' dynamics of an interaction between members of a group. (Beebe & Cummings, 1996, p. 77)

However, data elicitation methods that do allow negotiation and interaction also suffer from constraints. The use of authentic conversation, for example, has ethical implications with regard to speaker consent, and the variables involved in it are not as easily controllable as for elicited data. Furthermore, researchers may need to collect large amounts of data in order to have sufficient data available for their research focus. In role-plays, learners have been observed to behave in "unpredictable" and "unexpected" ways (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999b). For example, they may stray off-task by helping their interlocutor construct meaning.

Furthermore, role-plays, in which roles are assigned to speakers, do not necessarily elicit more authentic language than production questionnaires. Rather,

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[25] Edmondson & House (1991) found that the lack of negotiation in DCTs can be one cause for the "waffle phenomenon" that they observed in their data, where German learners of English used many more words than native speakers of English in request and apology situations.

"subjects (are) again providing their beliefs about interactions, here they may be providing beliefs about roles they have never played in real life" (Golato, 2003, p. 94). In addition to this, the roles that they are asked to play may overlap with social roles in real life – described by Wildner-Bassett (1989, 1990) as "two discourse worlds" – and this might influence their production in both form and content.

In light of the theoretical framework that I am using for this study, I decided to use elicited data in the form of an argumentative conversation task. Authentic, unelicited data had to be ruled out mainly because for the group of students my learner subjects stem from, there are very few occasions outside of formal classes in which they talk German, let alone engage in extended argumentative conversations. Although the task asked subjects to discuss an issue with the view of giving advice to university authorities, this role as advice-giver was rarely taken up explicitly, and it was not necessary for the subjects to adopt a persona other than their own. Hence, the task used is closer to the category of elicited conversation than role-play.

Furthermore, I decided to use learner dyads rather than pairing up learners with native speakers of German. Not only would it have been difficult to use learner – native speaker dyads for operational reasons, but it was also hoped that learners would feel more comfortable when speaking with peers and engage more willingly in argument. Their comments in the retrospective interviews show that if paired up with native speakers, learners would indeed have been likely to feel even more intimidated and worried about their language.

Finally, the study design also needed to account for the developmental nature of the research questions. Due to the usual constraints of PhD study, a longitudinal design following a few learners over a number of years had to be ruled out, and although I could have collected data from one or several groups at different times during one year, I felt that a cross-sectional approach with larger distances between the levels at which data collection takes place would be the best solution to draw up an overall developmental framework for facework in learner discourse. Consequently, I decided on a cross-sectional approach with learner subjects taken from three levels of study within the same language program at a large UK university (see 3.4.1), which will henceforth be referred to as the *University of Eggburton*.[26]

3.3.3 Process data

For this study, I am not only interested in learners' language production but also in their thought processes when making decisions with regard to their L2 production.

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[26] The name of the university was changed to ensure complete anonymity of research participants. Any resemblance to actual place names is unintended.

Therefore, production data alone are not sufficient for this study and need to be complemented by data from other sources.

The use of data from different sources has been called *triangulation*, and is a valuable approach to shed light from different angles or onto different aspects of a problem, thus reducing researchers' bias:

> Triangulierende Methodenkombinationen sind sowohl für explorative als auch für hypothesentestende Forschungszwecke verwendbar. Zum einen erhöhen sie potentiell die Objektivität einer Untersuchung, denn die Verzerrungen und Einseitigkeiten *(bias)*, die bei einer einzelnen Methode oft gar nicht zu vermeiden sind, werden deutlicher erkennbar und können daher besser aufgefangen werden. Zum anderen können konvergente Ergebnisse aus unterschiedlichen Datenerhebungsmethoden mit größerer Zuversicht als zuverlässig betrachtet werden, als dies bei Daten aus einem einzelnen Verfahren der Fall ist. (Kasper, 1998a, p. 105)[27]

While all methods discussed so far can give evidence of the product, the outcome of the language learning process, they cannot account for the cognitive processes involved in creating the output. To tap those processes, researchers can make use of various forms of verbal reports. Such a combination of product and process data has been successfully applied in a handful of earlier studies in interlanguage pragmatics (e.g. Cohen & Olshtain, 1993; Barron, 2003; Robinson, 1991), in particular in speech-act based research.[28]

Cohen and Olshtain (1994) propose that the use of verbal reports draws learners' attention to cognitive processes involved in the production of speech acts, which would otherwise not receive attention:

> In an effort to understand better the choices made by respondents when engaged in a speech act production task (naturalistic, role-play, or discourse completion) or a perception task (acceptability checks) we could make use of verbal report techniques. The cognitive processes that learners go through in order to produce or perceive speech acts are not available to outside observers and are usually not even attended to by the learners themselves. (p. 149)

The authors further suggest an investigation into the cognitive processes involved in producing speech acts that are successful in transactional terms and at the same time protective of face is necessitated by the observed "discrepancy between a learner's perceptive and productive abilities" (p. 147), i.e. learners may know the

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[27] Translation: "Triangulating methodologies is practicable for explorative purposes as well as for testing hypotheses. On the one hand, triangulation raises the objectivity of a study, because the biases that are unavoidable with a single method get more obvious and can be avoided. On the other hand, convergent results stemming from different sources of data can with more confidence be regarded as reliable as results stemming from a single source of data." Triangulation has, for the same reasons, also been suggested by DuFon (2001) as valuable for research into pragmatics.

[28] Pomerantz (2005) also advocates the use of process data for research on interactional practices in general.

linguistic forms and their appropriate usage, but yet be unable to make use of this knowledge.[29]

Faerch & Kasper (1987) support this argument based on their distinction between declarative (rule) knowledge and procedural knowledge, "the cognitive and interactional processes activated in reception, production and language acquisition" (p. 12) (see 2.3.1). Using some kind of verbal report to interpret findings from the production data is particularly important in view of the psycholinguistic framework for this study, Bialystok's (1993) distinction of the processes of analysis and control.

Furthermore, verbal reports can also help researchers identify the strategies which learners use when they have to overcome or compensate for problems in their language production (Poulisse, Bongaerts & Kellerman, 1987). Dörnyei & Kormos (1998) used verbal reports to uncover problem-solving mechanisms to deal with problems such as resource deficits, processing time pressure, perceived deficiency in one's own language output, and perceived deficiency in the interlocutors' performance.

Like any methodology however, verbal reports are said to suffer from numerous drawbacks and problems:

- The processes reported are different from those which actually took place (Ericsson & Simon, 1993, p. xii).

- Subjects can only recall what has been heeded in the task or experiment upon which the verbal report is based (Ericsson & Simon, 1993, p. 136).

- Reasons for one's thoughts cannot be reliably reported, while the thought process as such can (Ericsson & Simon, 1987, p. 45).

- Learners may be biased through the research situation to report certain behaviours which they think are of interest to researchers or through which they can present themselves as good learners (Jourdenais, 2001).

Verbal reports can be divided into different methods of elicitation. Cohen (1996b) distinguishes self-observation as "the inspection of specific [...] language behaviour" (p. 7) either during the actual event (introspectively) or after the event (retrospectively). Other categories are self-report, by which learners give general statements about their learning behaviour, and self-revelation, a "stream-of-consciousness disclosure of thought processes while the information is still attended to" (p. 7).

To ensure a high degree of convergence between the actual cognitive processes and the processes reported, it is advisable to use reports that are concurrent to the

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[29] Cohen & Olshtain (1994) - see also Cohen (1996a) – introduce the term sociocultural ability to refer to the selection of speech act strategies that are appropriate given various contextual factors. Sociolinguistic ability, on the other hand, is the ability to select appropriate linguistic forms to express the strategy and speakers' control over the language forms realised to execute the speech act.

task. However, Ericsson & Simon (1987) suggest that this may overstretch the human information processor in certain contexts:

> If the additional time required for verbalization in thinking aloud corresponds to maintenance of attention to the information being verbalized, it means that the attention cannot be diverted without interrupting the verbalization. Thinking aloud is, therefore, not well suited to the study of cognitive processes with real-time attentional demands involving motor skills, and tasks requiring intermittent rehearsal of information. (p. 35)

Confronting learners with the original task situation can successfully enhance the reliability of learners' reports. This approach is known as stimulated recall, and relies on a stimulus to guarantee "use of and access to memory structures" relating to a task recently completed (Gass & Mackey, 2000, p. 17). The stimulus can, for example, be provided by a written transcript of a task or a recording of it.

Stimulated recall methodology has been used for research into many aspects of second language production, from reading to writing and oral interaction. Within the field of interlanguage pragmatics, Cohen & Olshtain (1994) employed stimulated recall methodology to study what factors contributed to EFL learners' selection of pragmatic strategies in different speech acts.[30] Robinson (1991) found this methodology to be a rich source of insight into learners' pragmatic knowledge and the planning processes involved in their production of socially appropriate refusals in English. Stimulated recall methodology was also used by Barron (2003) in her research on the development of pragmatic strategies in requests by Irish learners of German during their year abroad in Germany.

3.4 Data collection procedures

3.4.1 Subjects

Data collection took place at the University of Eggburton, whose language programme is divided into seven levels (Stages).

Students who study German for a single honours or double honours degree start at either Stage 3 or Stage 4, depending on their A-level grade. From there on, students progress one stage each academic year if they pass their language course, jumping

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[30] Based on their research, Cohen & Olshtain (1994) came up with a broad classification of learners into three broad categories (p. 45-46).
- the metacognizer: individuals with a highly developed metacognitive awareness who use their awareness to the fullest
- the avoider: those who avoid linguistic strategies because of a range of possible problems (including phonetics)
- the pragmatist: those who adjust on-the-spot rather then engage in extensive metacognitive planning and aim at finding alternative solutions that approximate what is called for

Stage 5 or 6 respectively if they spend their year abroad in a German-speaking country.[31] For this cross-sectional study, students at stages 3, 5 and 7 were asked to take part. Their general profile is as follow:

- Stage 3: post A-level, grade C or D at A-level, first year at university
- Stage 5: second year at university, entered language programme at Stage 4
- Stage 7: final (4th) year at university, spent one year abroad in Austria/Germany

These three stages seemed most appropriate for the research questions asked in this study, as the learners ranged from those who had just started on a university degree in German to those who were in their final year and who had spent an extensive period of time in a German-speaking country. Students at lower levels would have been unlikely to be able to participate in any kind of extended, largely unscripted dialogue.

The stage descriptors published by the university provide some insight into the kind of teaching exposure students receive in this programme. These descriptors describe each stage in detail for its learning outcomes in the areas of listening, reading, speaking, writing and other skills. 'Speaking' is further subdivided into the areas of 'interaction' and 'production'.

Having successfully passed Stage 3, students are expected to "engage with a degree of grammatical correctness and some spontaneity in conversations relating to most everyday topics as well as in conversations on some specialised topics" and to "exchange information and support arguments on everyday topics a well as on some specialised ones" (p. 2)[32]. The expectation that students interact with a good degree of grammatical accuracy and know a wide range of vocabulary is even more strongly expressed in the Stage 5 descriptor.[33] Furthermore, fluency is emphasized at this stage, as students are expected to employ "communication strategies" such as "repair, paraphrase, vague language – to maintain fluency of communication" (p. 3).

At Stage 7[34], students are expected to "converse with ease in most formal and informal situations" and "employ mostly appropriate and effective strategies in managing linguistically and/or culturally complex interactions, including [...] presenting and defending arguments" (p. 2). Communication strategies are described in terms of

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[31] Some students were not enrolled in the Modern languages programme, but took the course as part of the university-wide language programme. While most students were native speakers of English, some had other mother tongues. This will be specifically marked in appendix C, where student names and task/interview titles are listed.
[32] Centre for Language Study, University of Eggburton. (2002). *Documentation for language stages: Descriptors. Stage 3 language units.*
[33] Centre for Language Study, University of Eggburton. (2002). *Documentation for language stages: Descriptors. Stage 5 language units.*
[34] Centre for Language Study, University of Eggburton. (2002). *Documentation for language stages: Descriptors. Stage 7 language units.*

acceptability and efficiency, i.e. "handle all situations [...] in an acceptable and effective manner" and "initiate, sustain and resolve negotiations and bring them to a satisfactory conclusion" (p. 3).

This suggests that the desired learning outcomes move from grammatical and lexical accuracy to fluency, appropriateness and goal-orientation. As a teacher in this programme, I can however say that grammar and accuracy are emphasized throughout all and not just the earlier stages. Furthermore, communication strategies such as those suggested at Stage 5 (repair, paraphrase, vague language) are rarely actually taught directly.

3.4.2 Recruitment

The subjects were recruited in the language classes and asked to take part in the data collection procedures as an extra opportunity for oral practice. As a consequence, all learners participating in the research knew each other well through their language classes, although for varying amounts of time depending on their year of study.

One week's oral class homework was waived to recognise participation in the study. Participation gave subjects the opportunity to practise their German and reflect on their experience in the retrospective interviews. In addition to this, the conversation tasks used for data collection were of the kind frequently used in the oral classes, which all language students attend once a week.

3.4.3 Instructions

Subjects were given a task instruction card (see Appendix A), presenting one out of six problems, as well as four possible solutions to the problem and a free line to write down a fifth solution of their own choosing. The cards were written in German in order to ease students into the conversations. The cards presented to learners also provided them with a set of potentially useful vocabulary items. Students of Stages 4 and 6 with whom different task designs were piloted deemed this the most practical format.

In addition, subjects also received a handout with general instructions, telling them in very general terms what the experiment was about, what would happen during the experiment and what they were meant to do with the task instruction cards.

3.4.4 Topics

There were six topics overall, all of which were given to learner subjects to make their own selection. The topics were (see Appendix A for task cards in German):

1) Which criteria should the University of Eggburton use to decide about who is being admitted to an undergraduate course?

2) What should the University of Eggburton do to take action against binge-drinking in the student population?

3) What should the University of Eggburton do to battle obesity in the student population?

4) How should the University of Eggburton use the funds raised through students' tuition fees?

5) What should first-year students of German at the University of Eggburton do to achieve the best possible results in their German classes?

6) What extra-curricular activities should the German section at the University of Eggburton offer to enhance students' language learning experience?

3.4.5 Procedures

The sessions took place in November and December 2004. In most cases, learners received the cards with their chosen topics as well as the general instructions a few days before the actual experiment took place, giving them time to read the question and the options and prepare, if necessary. This was, however, not always possible due to organisational problems.

During the actual data collection sessions, learner subjects were first asked to rank the four solutions to the respective problem presented on their cards (and possibly their own suggestions) in the order they found most appropriate. Many learners had already done this before the session. The sessions then usually proceeded as follows: Students started by recording one conversation. The researcher left the room during the recording to ensure students would not feel inhibited by her presence. When finished, the retrospective interview session took place immediately. If there was any time left in the 45-minute slot for which dyads had signed up, students were asked to do a second conversation.

The conversations were, in most cases, recorded in a multi-media lab at the university. Subjects were seated in front of computers with a camera on top and a microphone shared between interlocutors. The computers were connected to speakers so that the conversations could be replayed to subjects immediately after completion of the task. Four of the learner conversations had to be recorded in a different room due to the fact that the multimedia lab was not available. In those cases, a digital camcorder was used, which was then hooked up to a TV for the replay sessions.

To avoid the pitfalls of conducting any kind of stimulated recall tasks described above, detailed instructions pertaining to the retrospective interviews were only given when subjects had finished their conversation on which the interviews to be conducted were based. Learners were interviewed in pairs. They were asked to stop the recording

and verbalise their thoughts if they remembered anything about what they were thinking at one particular moment. I also told subjects that I would stop the recording when I found an utterance interesting. To reduce subjects' invention of thoughts, they were also told not to worry if they would not be able to remember them and not to make something up.

The possibility of there being a gap between the cognitive processes which were really going on at the time of the task and the processes reported in the interview was minimized by the scheduling of the interview immediately after the task and the stimulation of subjects' memory through the task replay.

The learner interviews were conducted in subjects' L1 English at all proficiency levels to ensure that their linguistic proficiency would not limit their ability to discuss their thoughts and decision-making processes. During the interviews, I tried to remain as neutral as possible to subjects' reports and provide acknowledging backchannel behaviour only in an effort not to influence what was reported (Gass & Mackey 2000, p. 60). In general, subjects proved to be quite talkative when asked questions, but rarely volunteered to stop the recording.

The second part of the retrospective interview took place immediately after the stimulated recall. In this part (self-observation), learners were asked to discuss their behaviours more generally. Questions aimed at eliciting comments regarding learners' evaluation of alternative utterances, linguistic difficulties, pragmatic awareness, knowledge and difficulty, the influence of the research situation, and their own evaluation of their performance. For a full list of the questions asked see appendix B.

All learners were asked to give, by signature, their consent for the data to be used for research purposes, under the premise that their names be anonymised.

3.5 Data collected

Table 1 summarizes the number of role-plays and tasks recorded and retrospective interviews conducted with each of the groups and the total number of minutes recorded:

	Number of Discussion Tasks	Number of Retrospective Interviews
Stage 3	10 (ca. 60 min. total)	6
Stage 5	9 (ca. 65 min. total)	5
Stage 7	9 (ca. 86 min. total)	4

Table 1: Summary of data collected

To allow for simplified referencing with regards to the main data when quoted in the analysis, appendix D provides details of task and interview title and subjects' names. Subjects were given new names to ensure anonymity. The table also indicates

whether or not learners have spent their year abroad in a German speaking country, learners' proficiency level (Stage), and the topic discussed.

No independent measure of proficiency was used in this study. Therefore, the term *levels of proficiency* will be employed in a rather crude manner, which allows for a great deal of variability in the proficiency between different learners at each level. Any claims will thus always be related to a Stage cohort as a whole as well as individual learners, with the main goal of establish routes of development in relationship to linguistic development and processing constraints within the overall framework of face.

3.6 Transcription

After data collection was completed, all conversations were transcribed. Transcription conventions are loosely based on the CA-system developed by Gail Jefferson (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). I decided on a word-level transcription where conventional punctuation markers stand for prosodic features. Pauses were indicated in the transcription, but their length not measured. The transcription system used is printed in appendix D.

The English translations to all examples are semi-literal, which means that an attempt was made to relate them as closely as possible to the German originals without compromising intelligibility.

3.7 The analytical framework

3.7.1 Interactional Sociolinguistics

The analysis will be conducted within the overall framework of interactional sociolinguistics, which is defined by Schiffrin (1995) as:

> the study of the linguistic and social construction of interaction. It provides a framework within which to analyze social context and to incorporate conversation participants' own understanding of context into the inferencing of meaning. (p. 316)

Interactional sociolinguistics shares with conversation analysis a microanalytical approach, and an interest in "naturally occurring spoken data, now with particular attention paid to the way in which syntax, lexis and prosody are used and their role in the conversational organization" (Aijmer & Stenström, 2005, p. 1745). However, while conversation analysis allows only contextual information that is overtly lexicalised to be taken into account, interactional sociolinguistics relates interactional structures to the wider sociocultural context of the interaction (Stubbe et al., 2003; Gumperz, 2001). Furthermore, as the quote above suggests, interactional sociolinguistics is also interested in what participants see to be the context of the interaction, which is

important considering that the notion of frames is one of the key theoretical concepts for this study (see 1.2.4).

My data are not naturally occurring data, but have been specifically collected for the purpose of this project. Although this goes against the ethos of interactional sociolinguistics, I feel that it is possible and necessary to locate my data within this framework, as I am interested in the interface of interactional strategies, facework, and learners' proficiency.

3.7.2 Development of an analytical framework

A further principle of interactional sociolinguistics is the development of analytical categories through a bottom-up process (starting from the data) rather than a top-down process (starting from pre-existing categories) (Selting & Couper-Kuhlen, 2001). This is the approach I used to a large extent in the analysis of my data, although I use some nomenclature taken from CA-based accounts of argumentative discourse, as well as names for markers of epistemic modality from the ILP literature. This bottom-up process is a further aspect that makes this research distinct from other, speech-act based research in Interlanguage Pragmatics

As discussed before (1.5), this research aims to extend the normally accepted notion of facework. If we accept that face is an image of self based on social roles and other qualities, we need to include all strategies designed to convey that image to the interlocutor and not only those that convey politeness. By doing facework, speakers not only pursue social goals, but also transactional goals, which is in this case making one's point in an argument based on the lines that are pursued.

The analysis[35] will primarily be qualitative in nature. I will explain what strategies are used by learners at the different levels order to achieve certain interactional goals. This analysis is, however, supported by some quantification. Due to the uneven distribution of topics across the levels, and the fact that some dyads delivered two conversations while others did only one, only very simple frequency counts will be used, and I will aim to relate quantitative to qualitative evidence whenever possible.

The overarching questions for the analysis of these data are the following: How do learners' strategies contribute to the overall coherence of the interactions or specific contributions? How do learners' make their contributions recognisable as representations of their roles and identities? What linguistic and psycholinguistic constraints do learners face in doing so? Is there a relationship between linguistic/psycholinguistic and individual/social factors? These questions aim to answer research question 1 by drawing up a developmental framework for facework.

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[35] Coding and analysis of the data was supported by the software package N-Vivo.

3.8 Analytical categories for the conversational data[36]

3.8.1 Sequential organisation

One of the basic concepts for an analysis of discourse within the framework of interactional sociolinguistics is the term *adjacency pair*, defined as "pairs of utterances which are *ordered*, that is, there is a recognizable difference between first pair parts and second parts of the pair: and in which given first pair parts require particular second parts (or a particular range of seconds)" (Hutchby & Wooffit, 2003, p. 39). In argumentative discourse, a typical adjacency pair is opinion/assessment (first pair part) – agreement/disagreement (second pair part). In an adjacency pair, a first pair part always makes a second pair part immediately relevant, and the absence of a relevant second pair part is both noticeable and accountable (principle of conditional relevance; Schegloff, 1968)[37].

In argumentative discourse, this principle applies beyond an initial adjacency pair. Jackson & Jacobs (1980) suggest that "either or both parts in an adjacency pair may become the arguable, which prompts an argument expansion [...] An adjacency pair may be expanded through adjuncts to either pair part, thereby creating a multiunit turn." (p. 257). Possible expansions are within-turn expansions, pre-sequences, insertion sequences and post-sequences.

While within-turn expansions are produced individually as "adjuncts which provide support for doing that pair part" (p. 253), pre-sequences are collaboratively produced to forestall the forthcoming action and potentially avoid doing it at all. Insertion sequences stand between first pair parts. Their function is "to get a backdown from a disagreeable FPP without supplying the dispreferred SPP or to get modification or support for the FPP so that the preferred SPP can be supplied" (p. 259). It can also be used to postpone a dispreferred second pair part across turns.

Postsequences fulfil one of many possible functions: they may be designed to get a backdown from a disagreeable pair part (see also Davidson, 1984), and they may be designed to mitigate the force of a pair part that has already been uttered. They can also be used to provide new evidence for or against claims. By doing this, longer topically related sequences evolve:

> The conversation-analytic approach seems to show interactants using a three-part sequence of claim and counter-claim as a ladder for the argumentative exchange, each step depending on the previous one and

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[36] The analytical principles for the retrospective interview data will be discussed in Chapter 7.
[37] The principle of conditional relevance applies in particular when disagreement arises. According to Kotthoff (1989, 1991) it is a proof of argumentative discourse ability when speakers are responsive to the arguments of the interlocutor. A missing reaction is equal to admitting that one hasn't got anything to say.

constructing it either as another rung up the dispute or as an opportunity to jump off by continually arbitrating on the acceptability of each other's claims, mark out the direction and the scale of the quarrel. (Antaki, 1994, p. 185-186).

For the sequential analysis, these sequences will be forming primary analytical unit, and I will use the term argumentative sequences to refer to them, defined as follows:

An argumentative sequence is a sequence of turns that are topically related, consisting minimally of a core adjacency pair in which speaker A brings forward an opinion or assessment and in which speaker B reacts to that opinion or assessment. Such an adjacency pair can, but does not necessarily need to be extended with more turns, relating to the same (sub-topic).

I am aware that this definition suffers from the rather fuzzy term "topically related". At most times in my data however, the boundaries between different argumentative sequences are quite clear, as speakers move along the topics on the task instruction cards. Only occasionally, new argumentative sequences are introduced that do not coincide with the suggestions from the task instruction cards, for example when disagreement ignites based on examples or evidence delivered by subjects.[38]

The main questions asked from this perspective are:

- How are argumentative sequences organised?
- Do argumentative sequences consist of turns beyond a 'core' adjacency pair (opinion/assessment – agreement/disagreement)?
- If insertion-sequences and post-sequences do occur, what functions do they have?

3.8.2 Preference Organisation

The above definition of an adjacency pair suggests that a first pair part, once given, requires particular second pair parts (Hutchby & Wooffit, 2003, p. 39). The different range of possible second pair parts is usually described with the term *preference*:

The proffering of an initial assessment, though it provides for the relevance of a recipient's agreement *or* disagreement, may be so structured that it invites one next action over its alternative. A next action that is oriented to as invited will be called a *preferred next action;* its alternative, a *dispreferred next action.* (Pomerantz, 1984, p. 63).

In most CA-based accounts of social interaction, the term preference is applied specifically and exclusively to second pair parts (see also Levinson, 1983). This view of preference relates strongly to a psychological approach to the term. For example, both

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[38] According to Spranz-Fogasy (2003), serialisation of topics in form of closed argumentative sequences is a regular occurrence in argumentative events.

Sacks (1987) and Jacobs (1987) argue that there is "a general presumption of agreement in the absence of a good reason to do otherwise" (Jacobs, 1987, p. 232). And this, in turn, determines the structure of turns.

This is, however, not the whole story on preference organization. Another view suggests that the term preference includes initial actions. This is in keeping with the view outlined by Sacks (1987), who proposes that first pair parts can be designed to prefer particular second pair parts:

> Note [...] that questioners are not passive [...]. Given evidence that a disagreement is 'in the works' for some initial version of a question, they reformulate it in the direction of possible agreement, with the consequence that a) a disagreeing response is avoided, and b) the agreement that ensues makes, with the question, an contiguous pair. So the linkage of contiguity and agreement is oriented to by *both* questioners and answerers, can operate to avoid disagreement, and is an aspect of a formal and anonymous apparatus for agreement/disagreement, rather than being than being the matter of individual preferences. (p. 65)

The view that preference does, in fact, relate to all turns, and not just to second pair parts, is also advocated by Boyle (2000). He suggests that a preferred action is "seen but unnoticed", while a dispreferred action is "noticeable", "accountable" and potentially "sanctionable" (p. 590). Hence, these terms apply to both to the sequential organization of conversation and the preference organization of turns; when an expected action is not forthcoming, it becomes sanctionable and accountable.

The main questions asked in this part of the analytical framework are:

- How are turns internally organised (e.g. within-turn expansion in the form of accounts and evidence, markers of modality, hesitation markers)?
- How do they relate to other turns?
- What can the organisation of turns tell us about speakers' goals and attempts at projecting a self-image in the context of the interaction?

While this analysis is primarily qualitative, I will support the qualitative analysis with a quantitative account of the development of disagreement strategies across levels, with four different ways of introducing disagreement distinguished (token agreement, partial agreement, asserted agreement, no agreement). An example for each of these categories can be found in appendix E.

3.8.3 Deontic modality

There are many possible perspectives on modality, but the two categories that are of relevance for this thesis are epistemic modality (see 3.7.3.4) and deontic modality.

The definition of *deontic modality* that I will use for this analysis is Dittmar & Torborg's (1991), for whom deontic modality refers to the degree of necessity of

actions and states. At the same time, however, the learners in my study also express their degree of desire for certain actions to happen or measures to be implemented. For example, learners may mark how necessary or desirable they perceive a closure of campus bars to be in a discussion on binge-drinking.

All instances in which learners made their stance towards suggestions relating to the issues under discussion explicit were coded for the analysis. Four different ways of marking deontic modality emerged from this process, the first one of which is an explicit means of modalisation, while the second two are implicit means. Some instances in which learners avoided marking deontic modality also appeared (an example for each of these categories can be found in appendix F):

- **Modal verbs:** Modal verbs that, depending on which verb is chosen, can express different degrees of desire or necessity (e.g. *die universität sollte...*).[39]

- **Evaluative phrases:** Phrases in which speakers explicitly evaluate certain actions (e.g. *...ist eine gute idee*).

- **Reference to ranking:** Reference to ranking of the suggestions made on the task instruction cards (e.g. *meine erste wahl ist...*).

- **Other:** Strategies that belong to none of the three categories above (e.g. infinitive verbs).

3.8.4 Epistemic Modality

Epistemic modality is concerned with "(the linguistic expression of) an evaluation of the chances that a certain hypothetical state of affairs under consideration (or some aspect of it) will occur, is occurring, or has occurred in a possible world which serves as the universe of interpretation for the evaluation process [...]." (Nuyts, 2000, p. 21). Another definition sees the term as referring to speakers' manipulation of the degree of confidence they attach to a proposition (Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig, 2000, p. 58).

Speakers have various means available to express epistemic modality. For this analysis, I am distinguishing nine different markers. While eight of these markers work on a lexical level, one (conditional) is considered a syntactical marker of epistemic modality.[40] An example for each of these categories can be found in appendix G[41]:

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[39] Bergmann, Pauly and Moulin-Fankhänel (1992), 'wollen' expresses volition, 'sollen' demand, 'dürfen' permission, 'müssen' necessity and 'können' possibility. Different degrees of necessity and desirability can therefore be distinguished.

[40] The terms used in the following list of categories are mostly derived from earlier research in interlanguage pragmatics. The definitions relating to those categories however differ considerably between different studies, and so may mine as compared to these earlier studies.

[41] I will, throughout this thesis, on occasion use the terms ‚downgrader' and ‚upgrader' Considered to be downgaders are those markers of modality that mitigate and downplay what is being said (epistemic verbs, downtoners, hedges), while upgraders are those markers which render emphasis (uptoners, intensifiers).

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- **Cajoler:** Speech items whose semantic content is of little transparent relevance to their discourse meaning, their discourse function being the establishment, restoration, or extension of harmony between the hearer and speaker (e.g. *weißt du, ich mein*).

- **Downtoner:** Sentence modifiers used to moderate the impact an utterance is likely to have on the interlocutor *(e.g. vielleicht, hoffentlich)*.

- **Uptoner:** Sentence modifiers used to increase the impact an utterance is likely to have on the interlocutor (e.g. *natürlich*).

- **Hedge:** Adverbials and longer formulae which render vagueness to their referent; scope smaller than for downtoners *(e.g. ich weiß nicht, ein bißchen)*.

- **Intensifier:** Adverbials and longer formulae which render definiteness and force to their referent; scope smaller than for uptoners (e.g. *sehr, höchst*).

- **Modal particle:** Particles which unfold their meaning only in the context of the turn in which it occurs or in its relationship to the interlocutors' turn and expresses the attitude of a speaker towards what is being said (e.g. *doch, eigentlich*).[42]

- **Subjectiviser:** Fixed formulas and other expressions by means of which an utterance is marked as being a person's personal opinion (excludes epistemic verbs) (e.g. *ich bin der meinung, ich würde*).

- **Epistemic verb:** Verbs that describe the mental attitude of a speaker towards an issue, e.g. denken, glauben. For the purpose of this research, we are only counting epistemic verbs in the 1st person (e.g. *ich denke, ich glaube*).[43]

- **Conditional:** Verbs in the conditional that mitigate propositions at the syntactical level; often used in directives / suggestions or to mark a proposition as hypothetical (e.g. *wir könnten, er würde*).

The above categories are, for the most part, functional categories. This means that expressions are assigned to certain categories based on the function they fulfil as described above. However, some of the categories do include formal criteria. For example, the term *conditional* stems of course from a grammatical category in the first instance. Sometimes, markers of epistemic modality fulfil a double function as a pause filler or time gainer, but this will be specifically mentioned in the analysis.

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[42] Modal particles have been defined as uni-syllabic and non-declinable particles that have homonyms in other word-classes, are non-elicitable as answer to a question and precedes the rheme of the sentence (Wauchope, 1992). Those criteria are, however, not always strictly applied, so that two-syllabic words have also been included in the class of modal particles. This is also the case in my analysis, in which I am counting 'eigentlich' as a member of the class of modal particles.

[43] While some have generally described epistemic verbs as minus committers (e.g. House & Kasper, 1981), i.e. as means of lowering one's commitment, others (Aijmer, 1997; Holmes, 1990) have suggested that they can also be used in a "deliberative function", thus increasing the degree of commitment that a speaker attaches to a proposition. It is, however, not my goal to describe these verbs with all their hidden meanings.

3.8.5 Evidence, perspective and identity markers

This part of the analysis was only pursued in chapter 4 (sample analyses), as it proved to be extremely difficult to draw up an exact empirical framework for the analysis of these issues. Here, we are concerned with how speakers provide evidence for their claims. Four different categories are distinguished:

- **Personal experience**: Evidence that stems from personal experience of the speaker.
- **Shared experience:** Evidence that draws from shared experience in which both speakers are included explicitly or implicitly, for example by reference to interlocutors' knowledge of people, events or settings.
- **Assumed shared knowledge:** Evidence based on (assumed) shared knowledge, e.g. commonly known facts such as "alcohol is bad".
- **Hard facts:** Evidence based on hard facts, such as statistics or research.

Furthermore, it is also interesting how learners refer to themselves and others in the discourse, i.e. what identity markers and perspective they use. A distinction is made between two perspectives:

- **First person perspective,** marked through markers such as 'ich' or 'wir'.
- **Third person perspective,** e.g. 'die studenten'.

3.8.6 Connection to face and identity

Having introduced the analytical framework, the connection of this framework and these categories to face and identity yet remains to be explained. In chapter 1, face was defined as a (self)-image that is associated with social roles and personal qualities. This image is constructed at the ideational level through different ways of expressing and positioning themselves towards arguments and ideas. At the interpersonal level, that image is constructed through the establishment of a relationship with interlocutor(s), for example by displaying different degrees of certainty and commitment to propositions. At the textual level, the image is constructed by creation of a piece of discourse with particular characteristics. Table 2 aims to relate the facework strategies that are being distinguished in the analytical categories to these three levels of discourse and clarify their relationship to face:
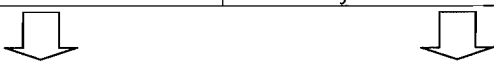
levels of discourse	facework strategies	relationship to face (self-image associated with social roles and personal qualities)
ideational level: expression of ideas	▪ sequential organisation: organisation of argumentative sequences	▪ expression of speakers' stances towards issues and willingness/ability to defend them
	▪ deontic modality: degrees of necessity and desire	▪ expression of importance and relevance of the proposals discussed for the speaker
	▪ markers of identity	▪ expression of degree of association with opinions and ideas and the roles and qualities associated with these ideas
interpersonal level: relationship to interlocutor(s)	▪ markers of epistemic modality: indicator of speaker commitment	▪ expression of authority, certainty, politeness, respect, etc.
	▪ preference organisation: structural organisation of turns	▪ expression of speakers' preference for particular opinions and their degree of involvement in the discourse
	▪ evidence	▪ expression of support for claims of opinions and expression of speaker authority
⬇ ⬇		
textual level: kinds of text/discourse constructed		

Table 2: Facework strategies at three levels of discourse

What needs to be mentioned at this point is that the different strategies do not necessarily work exclusively on one of these levels. Table 2 is mainly a summary of what I consider to be the most important strategies for each level. No strategies have been exclusively matched to the textual level, as the kind of discourse that is constructed through the strategies used by learners depends on the way all strategies act together.

3.9 Formulaic Language

Earlier research suggests strongly that formulaic language is a major part of both first and second language production, in that it helps speakers to avoid overstretching their language processor by employing prefabricated chunks of language. Wray (2002) defines the term formulaic sequence as follows:

> a sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated: that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar. (p. 9)

As well as easing processing, formulaic sequences also fulfil various interactional and pragmatic functions. They may (Wray, 2000)

- manipulate information
- buy time for processing and provides textual bulk

- create a shorter processing route
- organize, and signal the organisation of discourse
- get the hearer to do things: manipulation of the speaker's world
- indicate the speaker's individual identity
- indicate the speaker's group identity.

However, identifying formulaic sequences is not easy, and almost all of the suggested methods (intuition, frequency, structure, fluency, stress and articulation) have their drawbacks. For the purpose of this project, I am going to use a combined approach at identifying formulaic sequences:

- **frequency based:** Counted as formulaic are strings of words that a particular speaker uses more than once in any particular discussion. This includes non-target-like and idiosyncratic constructions, and also allows for "errors" and interlanguage-based variation between otherwise identical sequences used by the same speaker.

- **idioms and classroom-learned phrases:** Expressions that are either idiomatic (e.g. 'man muss auch bedenken') or appear to be rote-learned in the classroom, e.g. features frequently taught for the expression of opinion ('meiner meinung nach').

Although formulaic language will not be a separate category of analysis, I will make reference to the function of formulaic language in the speech of particular learners when I deem it necessary for the purpose of answering my research questions.

3.10 Chapter summary and outlook

After specifying the main research questions that are guiding this study, I introduced and justified the validity of the data by which I aim to answer them. Data from two sources were collected: production data were elicited from learner dyads at three levels of proficiency by means of an argumentative conversation task. Those data were complemented with retrospective interviews conducted with altogether fifteen of the learner dyads. It is hoped that this triangulated approach will allow insight into the facework strategies used by learners from different perspectives.

I also used this chapter to introduce my framework of analysis and sketch the analytical categories that are guiding the analysis of both the conversational and the interview data. Five areas of analysis were identified for the conversational data: sequential organisation, preference organisation, epistemic modality, the provision of evidence and the use of identity markers, and the expression / modalisation of the

desirability of actions. The analysis will be conducted within the framework of interactional sociolinguistics.

The following chapter will present an in-depth, holistic analysis of three selected discussions about the issue of binge-drinking, one from each level of proficiency. Qualitative analysis is undertaken to illustrate the analytical framework and provide some initial evidence for an answer to research question 1: What strategies do L2 learners of German at different proficiency levels use to do facework in spoken argumentative discourse? How do these strategies develop and change across levels? The analysis will then, in chapters 4 and 5, focus in more depth on the organisation of argumentative discourse and issues of modality.

Chapter 4   Taking action against binge-drinking: A sample analysis at three levels of proficiency

4.1 Chapter Outline

In the first three chapters of this thesis, the theoretical framework for this study was introduced. Based on Goffman's theory of social interaction, face was defined as the self-image that speakers claim, a self-image that is associated with social roles and personal qualities. From a social perspective however, face is also the image that is actually conveyed to and perceived by the addressee. The strategies employed by speakers for this purpose are referred to as facework, and these strategies relate to the three main functions of language: they express their view of the world (ideational level), they establish a relationship to the addressee (interpersonal level), and they create a coherent piece of discourse (textual level).

In this chapter, we shall look at how face is constructed by dyads of speakers at three levels of proficiency, all of whom are discussing the topic of binge-drinking. Using a holistic approach with six speakers' strategies being looked at in an in-depth fashion[44], it aims to provide evidence for an answer to research question 1):

- What strategies do L2 learners of German at different proficiency levels use to do facework in spoken argumentative discourse, and how do these strategies develop and change across levels? How can these changes best be accounted for?

To ensure a high degree of comparability, the three selected discussions all relate to the topic of binge-drinking, which was one of the topics that was most controversially discussed and in which speakers seemed to be highly emotionally invested.

4.2 Sample analysis I: Ashley and Brooke from Stage 3

Ashley and Brooke are both first year students of German. Together, they chose the topics of obesity and binge-drinking for their discussions. Their discussion on binge-drinking, which is presented here, was also followed up by a retrospective interview.

Brooke's and Ashley's discussion consists of seven distinct argumentative sequences: one beginning and one closing sequence and five sequences that start with either Brooke or Ashley introducing the topic that is going to be discussed next. Firstly however, they establish common ground (1):

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[44] In this chapter, the lines within each conversation will be numbered continuously. In chapters 5 and 6, numbering will start with line number '1' in each example for practical reasons.

```
(1) Stage3.2Binge

1  ASHLEY:  alkoho:l ja em:
              alcoho:l yeah em:
2  BROOKE:  schmeckt gut ja?
              tastes good doesn't it?
3  ASHLEY:  ja?
              yeah?
4  ((beide lachen))
   ((both laugh))
```

Ashley's short introductory turn (l. 1), features little more than the key word for the discussion – 'alkohol' (l. 1). Brooke takes up this cue and completes the sentence (l. 2), the rising intonation and the question tag indicating preference for agreement. After Ashley eventually asserts her agreement (l. 3), it is ratified by shared laughter (l. 4). Hence, in this short extract, both Ashley and Brooke not only orient themselves to the topic of the task, but also establish and define themselves as members of a student culture in which alcohol has an important role to play. This sequence can now serve as a backdrop for the discussion as a whole.

It is now Ashley who now initiates the next topic (2):

```
(2)  Stage3.2Binge

5  ASHLEY: ja aber ich denke dass es (.) gefährlich ist wenn man (.)
             yeah but I think that it (.) is dangerous when one (.)
6  zu viel alkohol getrunken hat?
   has drunk too much alcohol?
```

Ashley starts her turn with 'ja aber' (l. 5), which is a typical marker for token agreement, but is used by her here, as well as a number of other times during this discussion, to introduce turns in which no disagreement is expressed. The topic that is initiated does not relate to one of the suggestions from the task instruction card. Instead, Ashley makes a general assessment that is as such barely contestable: drinking too much alcohol is dangerous. In her answer, Brooke takes up the topic by relating her own turn to the issue of the dangers of alcohol, but gives it a slight twist (3):

```
(3)  Stage3.2Binge

7   BROOKE: ja: mich auch em (.) ich denke dass wenn man zuviel
              yeah: me too em (.) I think that when one (.) drink- has
8   alkohol em (.) trink- getrunken hat em dann (.) sie sind mehr hm:
    drunk too much alcohol em then (.) they are not friendly hm:
9   (.) nicht freundlich
    (.) any more
10  ASHLEY: ja: aber nur (.) ba: nur manche personen nicht ALLE die
              yeah: but only (.) ba: only some people not ALL the
11  personen nicht freundlich sind sind bösen=
    people are not friendly are nasty=
12  BROOKE: =ehrlich=
              =really=
```

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Although Brooke takes up Ashley's general assessment on the dangers of alcohol, she makes it more specific by suggesting that people misbehave when they have drunk too much (l. 7-9). This assessment meets objections by Ashley, who disagrees on grounds that by no means everyone behaves badly when drunk (l. 10-11). Brooke's disagreement is postponed and mitigated through the epistemic verb 'ich denke' (l. 7), the token agreement 'ja aber' (l. 10) and 'nur manche personen' (l. 10) as a concession to Brooke. With an opposition established on this point, we would now expect a further turn by Brooke relating to this issue. However, such a turn is not forthcoming, and Brooke only comes up with a recipient signal (l. 12).

In this sequence as a whole, Ashley and Brooke both completely remove themselves from the claims they make by using very generic reference (e. g. the impersonal pronoun 'man' and 'die menschen'). Furthermore, the sequence establishes a thread that from now on is going to run through almost the entire discussion: while Brooke generally presents herself as a conscientious young adult with a cautious stance towards alcohol, Ashley's position is slightly more relaxed and tends to favour the maintenance of the current status quo on campus. This attitude shows to some extent in Ashley's suggestion that being drunk does not necessarily lead to misbehavior (l. 10-11).

With Brooke not coming up with an answer to Ashley's earlier claim that not everybody misbehaves when drunk, Ashley uses the chance to take the initiative in the next argumentative sequence (4):

```
(4)  Stage3.2Binge

13   ASHLEY: ja (.) ja ich denke dass alkohol ein grosses teil eh [des
                 yeah (.) yeah I think that alcohol is a big part eh [of
14   studentleben ist
     student life
15   BROOKE:                                                    [ja (.)
                                                                [yeah
16   ja das stimmt (.) aber ich denke dass em (.) in eh campusbars
     (.) yeah that's right (.) but I think that em (.) in eh
17   em sie verkaufen alkohol wenn jemand em schon zu viel getrunken
     campusbars em they sell alcohol when people em have already
18   hat=
     drunk too much=
19   ASHLEY: =[ja
             =[yes
20   BROOKE:   [ich glaube und dann ich denke dass das nicht gut ist
                [I believe and then I think that this is not good
```

Again, Ashley starts the sequence with an assessment on which there is little room for doubt: that alcohol is a big part of student life (l. 12-14) is a commonly held belief. Again, it is Brooke who leads the discussion back to the actual task at hand and to the problem of binge-drinking in campus bars. After asserting agreement with

Ashley's statement, she suggests that campus bars sell too much alcohol even when it is visible that people have already drunk too much (l. 18-21, 22). As this is a potentially controversial statement, it is not surprising that Brooke mitigates it with no less than three epistemic verbs in an effort to lower her commitment to what she is saying (l. 16, 2x l. 20). The evaluative phrase 'dass das nicht gut ist' (l. 20) is also interesting. Not only does it allow Brooke to express her general discontent with the actions of campus bars, but it is also an implicit means of expressing a desire for these practices to stop without saying explicitly who should be responsible for stopping them.

```
(5) Stage3.2Binge

21   ASHLEY: ja aber (.) wie können man das (sagen) wenn man [zu viel
                yeah but (.) how can one (say) that when one [too much
22   BROOKE:                                                  [ja (.) ja
                                                              [yeah (.) yeah
23   ASHLEY: alkohol getrunken hat man hm: (.) man muss nicht man muss
              alcohol has drunk one hm: (.) one must not one must
24   man sollen ich weiß es nicht (.) nein ich denke es war hm es würde
        one shall I don't know (.) no I think it was hm it would be
25   zu hart sein=
        too hard=
26   BROOKE: =hm=
              =hm=
27   ASHLEY: =em=
              =em=
28   BROOKE: =hm=
              =hm=
```

This sequence continues in (5), with Ashley objecting on grounds that it is impossible to say exactly when somebody has drunk too much (l. 21, 23). Again, Ashley uses 'ja aber' as a way of softening and postponing disagreement. In the second part of this turn, Ashley tries to employ explicit means of modalization (the modal verbs 'müssen' and 'sollen') to construct her argument, but struggles and eventually uses the evaluative phrase 'es würde zu hart sein' (l. 23-25).

Again, one would now expect an expansion of the argumentative sequence. Ashley's suggestion that it is hard to decide when one has drunk too much alone is arguable, and a reply by Brooke becomes relevant (principle of conditional relevance). What follows instead is a substantial pause, only interrupted by some hesitation markers (l. 26-28). Eventually, Ashley ends this pause by introducing a new topic, now based on an issue from the task instruction cards (6).

```
(6) Stage3.2Binge

29   ASHLEY: =man (.) ich weiß es nicht aber ich werde es ich denke
              =one (.) I don't know but I will I think that
30   dass es auch nicht eine gute idee ist em (.) e:h (.) dass
        it is also not a good idea is em (.) e:h (.) that alcoholic
```

```
31    alkoholische getränke in den campus bars teurer machen
      drinks in campus bars are made more expensive
32    BROOKE: ja: ich denke dass ich em (.) persönlich könnte nicht em
              yeah: I think that I em (.) personally would not be able
33    mehr bezahlen für [getränke aber vielleicht das ist gut weil em=
      to em pay more for [drinks but perhaps this is good because em=
34    ASHLEY:            [ja
                         [yeah
35    BROOKE: =manchmal trinke ich zu viele und dann an die nächs- die
              =sometimes I drink too much and then on the nex- the
36    nächste tag bin ich (        ) bin ich em e:h (.) schuldig?
      next day I am (        ) I am em e:h (.) guilty?
```

In this argumentative sequence, whose beginning is represented in (6), we can actually observe linguistic problems being exploited for the purpose of turning a potential disagreement relevant turn into a sequence of agreement. The sequence overall starts with Ashley's rejection of a potential price rise for alcoholic drinks in campus bars. However, the main proposition of this turn is postponed due to editing and the use of a downtoner ('ich weiß nicht', l. 29) and an epistemic verb (l. 29). It is modalised by means of an evaluative phrase that Ashley employs a number of times throughout this discussion ('das es auch nicht eine gute idee ist', l. 29-30). Brooke answers with an initial full agreement on personal grounds – she would not be able to pay any more for drinks – paired with an objection – such a measure might actually make her drink less (l. 32-33, 35-36).

With disagreement on the issue of higher prices on alcohol now being established, further argument can now be expected. What happens instead is that linguistic resource deficits are exploited to avoid further disagreement and argument and establish agreement. It is Brooke who faces obstacles due to apparent problems in retrieving vocabulary (7):

(7) **Stage3.2Binge**

```
35    BROOKE: =manchmal trinke ich zu viele und dann an die nächs- die
              =sometimes I drink too much and then on the nex- the
36    nächste tag bin ich (        ) bin ich em e:h (.) schuldig?
      next day I am (        ) I am em e:h (.) guilty?
37    ((sieht Ashley an))
      ((looks at Ashley))
38    ASHLEY: ja? ((zögerlich))
              yeah? ((hesitantly))
39    BROOKE: weil ich habe=
              because I have=
40    ASHLEY: =du hast kopfschmerzen=
              =you have a headache=
41    BROOKE: =ja=
              =yeah=
42    ASHLEY: =und magenschmerzen
              =and a tummy-ache
43    BROOKE: und ich em habe menschen (.) insultieren ((nickt, rollt
              and I em have insulted (.) people (nods, rolls her
```

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```
44    mit den Augen))
      eyes))
45    ASHLEY: ja ((laughs)) em ja nein eh wir sind studenten wir möchten
              yeah ((lacht)) em yeah no eh we are students we don't
46    nicht so viel geld beza-=
      want so much money pa-=
47    BROOKE: =ja:
              =yeah:
48    ASHLEY: zahlen
              pay
49    BROOKE: nein
              no
```

When trying to say how a night spent drinking makes her feel, Brooke seems unable to retrieve the appropriate word (l. 37-39). At this point, Ashley not only comes up with vocabulary appropriate to what Brooke is likely to try saying, but also completes Brooke's turn by referring to commonly known effects of alcohol (l. 40, 42), not without attributing these effects to Brooke rather than herself with the 2nd person pronoun 'du'. From then onwards, this sequence moves into a highly collaborative phase, characterised mainly by both speakers' collaborative completions of each others' turns (l. 40-41, 42-43).

At this point, the neutral 3rd person perspective shifts to a 1st/2nd person point of view, and as a result of this sequence, Ashley is able to affirm her original position that prices of alcoholic drinks should not be changed, by alluding, with the 1st person plural pronoun 'wir', to the shared student experience and status (l. 45, 46). This pronoun contrasts starkly with Brooke's earlier use of 'ich' in her attempt to support rising prices for alcohol with her personal, negative experiences with alcohol. Brooke herself, rather than continuing to present herself as a person who takes a more cautious stance towards alcohol, now affirms herself as a member of student culture who knows that alcohol is a big part of student life as well as the effects of drinking too much of it. By rolling her eyes, Brooke gives Ashley a signal that can be understood as 'you know what I am speaking about' (l. 48, 49).

The collaborative phase continues into the next argumentative sequence (8):

(8) **Stage3.2Binge**

```
50    ASHLEY: ja em und wir sind auch ACHTzehn jahre alt=
              yeah em and we also are EIGHTeen years old=
51    BROOKE: =ja=
              =yeah=
52    ASHLEY: =wir werden nicht einundzwanzig jahre [alt
              =we will not be twenty-one years [old
53    BROOKE:                                          [es gibt nicht viel
                                                       [there aren't many
54    einundzwanzig jahre alt em menschen in em den halle em oder
      twenty-one year old em people in em halls are there
55    ASHLEY: in halle ja ja ich weiß
              in halls yeah yeah I know
```

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```
56   BROOKE: es soll
               there shall
57   ASHLEY: ja es ist normalerweise in der mehrheit e:h achtzehn bis
              yeah it is usually in the majority e:h eighteen to
58   (.) [zwanzig
     (.) [twenty
```

In this sequence, the personal pronoun 'wir' (l. 50, 52) is powerful enough to make explicit both speakers' stance towards the suggestion from the task instruction cards of making alcohol available only to people who are more than twenty-one years old. At no time does either speaker evaluate or assess the suggestion from the task cards explicitly, namely that alcohol should only be sold to students over twenty-one years of age. By using 'wir', Ashley is able to immediately include Brooke in the rejection of age restrictions. Furthermore, there is repeated emphasis on the typical student age (l. 50, 52, 54, 57, 58), which is also a strong marker of personal and group identity. This sequence is furthermore characterised by cooperative overlap, repetition, and rephrasing of each other's turns.

Brooke and Ashley now move on to discussing shorter opening hours for campus bars in the next argumentative sequence (9):

(9) **Stage3.2Binge**

```
59   BROOKE: [vielleicht em sollten eh sollen die campusbar nur am
              [perhaps em should eh should the campusbar only at the
60   wochenende öffnet sein=
     weekend be open=
61   ASHLEY: =ja!=
             =yeah!=
62   BROOKE: =und dann weil em oft menschen em jede nacht [trinken und=
             =and then because em often people em every night [drink=
63   ASHLEY:                                              [ja
                                                          [yeah
64   BROOKE: =dann das ist nicht gut für ihre gesunde und es nicht
             =and then this is not good for their health and it is not
65   nicht gut wenn (.) sie em (.) dürfe dinge machen und
     not good if (.) they em (.) can do things and
```

The start of this sequence is different from the previous ones in a number of aspects. Firstly, it is now Brooke who takes the first step in introducing a new topic, and she uses explicit means of modalization to express her desire for shorter opening hours in campus bars ('sollen' in l. 59-60) when doing so. The downtoner 'vielleicht' (l. 59) downplays the suggestion, as does the fact that the modal verb 'sollen' (l. 59) is used in its conditional form. Furthermore, Brooke provides immediate evidence for her claim, evidence from which she excludes herself by employing 3rd person, generic forms of reference ('die menschen', l. 62, 64-65).

The argumentative sequence continues with Ashley's answer to Brooke's suggestion (10):

(10) **Stage3.2Binge**

66   ASHLEY: ja: ((laughs)) nein ich denke der em dass es ein gute idee
             yes: ((laughs)) no I think the em that it is a good idea
67   ist e:h für die öffnungszeiten die kneipen e:h kürzer machen=
     e:h for the opening hours of bars e:h to be shortened=
68   BROOKE: =ja=
             =yes=
69   ASHLEY: =weil (.) zum beispiel crowns am freitag hat ein happy
             =because (.) for example crowns on fridays has a happy
70   hour von eins bis sieben
     hour from one to seven
71   BROOKE: und dann man am ((räuspert sich)) kann (nein) (.) und
             and then one on ((clears her throat)) can (no) (.) and
72   dann man von eins uhr nacht em zum beispiel zwei uhr die nächsten
     then one can drink from one o'clock at night for example two
73   morgen
     o'clock the
74   ASHLEY: [ja
             [yes
75   BROOKE: [trinken kann und das ist zu lange (.)
             [next morning and this is too long (.)
76   ASHLEY: ja
             yes
77   BROOKE: zu viel viel alkohol
             too much much alcohol
78   ASHLEY: ja: ja: zu viel alkohol ich weiß em (.) wir werden (.)
             yes: yes: too much alcohol I know em (.) we will
79   verantwortung für unsere einiges handel [übernehmen
     take responsibility for our own [actions

Although Ashley agrees with Brooke, she does so with a slight modification, as she does not explicitly refer to opening hours at the weekend as Brooke had done but to opening hours generally. Her agreement involves again the evaluative phrase 'das ist eine gute idee' (l. 66-67) as an implicit means of modalisation. She then contributes her own experiences as evidence for her argument, mentioning a bar both speakers seem to know. Brooke takes up Ashley's turn, eventually ending it with a double evaluation relating long opening hours to the culture of binge-drinking ('das ist zu lange', l. 71-73, 75; 'zu viel viel alcohol', l. 77).

Ashley affirms her agreement with this by repeating the last evaluation, before closing this argumentative sequence with one of the phrases from the list of useful vocabulary on the task instruction card relating to students' responsibility for their drinking. (l. 78-79). This allows her to take a stance against binge-drinking and present herself as a conscientious adult. By use of the inclusive pronoun 'wir' (l. 78), she can even include the student population at large. This change in self-presentation can be read within the framework of *cultural standing* presented by Strauss (2004) (see 1.2.2) as well as the notion of *frames* (see 1.2.4), as Brooke and Ashley appear to be orienting themselves on the frame of the academic environment in which data are collected and in which binge-drinking is not encouraged. In earlier parts of the

conversation, their self-presentation (especially Brooke's) had often been rather different. The final part of the discussion can be interpreted in similar ways (11):

(11) Stage3.2Binge

```
80   BROOKE:                              [ja: i- ich denke auch
                                          [yes I- I also think
81   dass em trinke die cocktails und alcopops sind nicht immer gut
     that em drinking cocktails and alcopops is not always good
82   weil man kann nicht weil man nicht die alkohol em sch- schmecken
     because one cannot because one can not em ta- taste the alcohol
83   kann und dann man denkt denke o:h ich kann viele trinken weil es
     and then one thinks think o:h I can drink a lot because it
84   nicht (.) em nicht viel alkohol=
     isn't (.) em not much alcohol=
85   ASHLEY: =ja=
             =yes=
86   BROOKE: =in dieser trinken ist aber getränk ist
             =in this drink but drink is=
87   ASHLEY: ja em: kampf- (.) kampftrinken ist NATÜRLICH nicht eine
             yeah em: binge- (.) binge drinking is OF COURSE not a
88   gute idee aber hm: jede studenten=
     good idea but hm: every students=
89   BROOKE: =sind immer (trunken)=
             =are always (drunk)=
90   ASHLEY: em [ja:
             em [yes:
91   BROOKE:    [immer zuviel getrunken=
                [always drunk too much=
92   ASHLEY: =ja:
             =yes:
93   BROOKE: und
             and
94   ASHLEY: ja: (.) aber nicht zuviel
             yeah: (.) but not too much
95   BROOKE: nicht zuviel weil em man muß über
             not too much because em one must about
96   ASHLEY: nicht jede nacht ((lacht))
             not every night ((laughs))
97   BROOKE: man (.) man muß über (.) seine gesund denken weil es
             one (.) one has to about (.) think about one's health
98   ASHLEY: ja:
             yeah:
99   BROOKE: nicht gut für dein [(.) ist
             because it is not good for [(.) your
100  ASHLEY:                       [ja: aber ich denke dass universiTÄT
                                    [yes: but I think that
101  nicht gut für deine gesundheit ist
     universiTY is not good for your health
102  BROOKE: nei:n nei:n gen- eh das stimmt!
             no: no: exa- eh that's right!
```

In this closing section, Brooke and Ashley bring up a number of general ideas about drinking alcohol and the problems associated with it. The sequence starts with another commonplace by Brooke that is barely contestable ('drinking alcopops and cocktails is not a good idea', l. 80-84, 86). Ashley initially appears to agree, but then

comes up with what could be seen as the beginning of a disagreement, emphasized by 'aber' and the only uptoner ('natürlich', l. 87) within this discussion (l. 87-89).

Brooke now takes the turn from Ashley, stating clearly what the reality actually is (students always drink too much, l. 89, 91). From there on, Ashley and Brooke again collaborate strongly by completing each other's turns and repeating parts of them. The discussion ends with a humorous episode – university life itself is not good for one's health – and consensus, just as it began.

The analysis of Ashley and Brooke's conversation has shown that they use very effective facework strategies at some levels of discourse, while they have not yet developed efficient strategies on other levels, with obvious repercussions for the maintenance of face and identity.

At the ideational level, most of their argumentative sequences are fairly short. At times, they also fail to react to turns that are potentially disagreeable. The fact that evaluative formulaic phrases feature most prominently as a way of introducing ideas and expressing how desirable or necessary an action further adds to this, conveying a general feeling of detachment. However, Ashley and Brooke employ markers of individual and student identity very efficiently to express to associate themselves with or disassociate themselves from social groups.

At the interpersonal level, politeness is expressed through a small range of devices, mostly epistemic verbs and some downtoners. Other markers are extremely rare – in particular upgraders – making it difficult for Ashley and Brooke to express their opinions with authority and conviction. Moreover, the organisation of their turns does generally not allow them to use the interlocutors' turn for their own purposes, e.g. by using partial agreement to upgrade own disagreement. As a consequence, Ashley and Brooke's discussion has the character of an exchange of opinions rather than an argument.

4.3 Sample analysis II: Emily and Catherine from Stage 5

Emily and Catherine are both second year students. They performed two discussions, one of which is the discussion on binge-drinking.

Emily starts the discussion by nominating the topic and asking Catherine for her opinion (12):

```
(12)  Stage5.6Binge

1    EMILY: ok eh (.) wir diskutieren em was die universität
            ok eh (.) we are discussing em what the university of
2    eggburton sol- tun sollten eh sollte um den trend des
     eggburton shou- do should eh should in order to fight
3    kampftrinkens unter studenten zu bekämpfen (.) eh was was glaub-
     binge-drinking among students (.) eh what what
```

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```
4    glauben sie dazu
     do you think about that
```

In (12), Emily's introduction to the topic of the discussion makes reference to the task that needs to be completed ('wir diskutieren', l. 1). She then asks Catherine to come up with a suggestion. That way, she is able to avoid making a proposal of her own, along with the possible imposition this could pose on the interlocutor. Catherine takes up this invitation (13):

```
(13)  Stage5.6Binge

5     CATHERINE: em ich glaube dass in england eh besonders in die
                 em I believe that in england eh especially at the
6     universität em haben wir ein schwieriges problem mit alkohol
      university em we have a difficult problem with alcohol
7     EMILY: ah[a
             ah[a
8     CATHERINE: [junge leute trinken sehr viel alkohol und es ist em:
                 [young people drink a lot of alcohol and it is em:
9     gefährlich für eh seine gesundheit
      dangerous for eh their health
10    EMILY: aha
             aha
11    CATHERINE: em: (.) persönlich trinke ich nicht sehr viel aber ich
                 em: (.) personally I don't drink very much but I
12    kenne leute die (.) trinken jedes tag und jedes abend (.) em
      know people who (.) drink every day and every night (.) em
13    vielleicht sollen alkohol ein bisschen teurer sein?
      maybe alcohol should be a bit more expensive?
14    EMILY: ja
             yeah
15    CATHERINE: em: (.) oder vielleicht em (.) kneipen und campusbars
                 em: (.) or maybe em (.) pubs and campus bars
16    sollten mehrere getränke mit keine alkohol anbieten
      should offer more drinks without alcohol
17    EMILY: ja!=
             yes!=
18    CATHERINE: =zum beispiel em (.) (coke)
                 =for example em (.) (coke)
19    EMILY: aha
             aha
20    CATHERINE: und (.) andere getränke mit keine alkohol em: jetzt
                 and (.) other drinks with no alcohol em: no there is
21    gibt es em (.) nicht so viel
      em (.) not as much
```

In (13), Catherine starts her answer to Emily's question with a very general summary of a well-known fact (there is a serious problem with binge-drinking in England, associated with potentially serious health risks, l. 5-6, 8-9). This statement postpones her actual suggestion with regard to possible solutions to the problem of binge-drinking (l. 13, 15-16) to a position much further within the turn and therefore represents a significant case of within-turn expansion.

Furthermore, Catherine's use of personal pronouns of reference is interesting in this turn, because they allow her to include herself in and exclude herself from certain groups in an effort to maintain a positive self-image of somebody who is not personally interested in binge-drinking. When starting her turn, Catherine uses the inclusive 'wir' to describe the situation in England with regard to binge-drinking (l. 5-6). However, when she describes more concretely the fact that young people drink too much alcohol, the agent is in the 3rd person ('die leute', l. 8). She then contrasts these habits with her own, excluding herself from binge-drinking activities, but emphasizing at the same time that she personally knows people who do binge-drink (l. 11-13). After this long expansion to the turn, Catherine finally comes forward with the suggestion that alcohol should be made more expensive. This suggestion is mitigated by the downtoner 'vielleicht' (l. 13) and the hedge 'ein bisschen' (l. 16).

This suggestion makes an answer by Emily sequentially expected and relevant. As this answer is not immediately forthcoming as expected, Catherine makes a second suggestion, namely that campus bars should offer more beverages without alcohol. This now gives Emily options as to what to build an answer on. Emily, however, still does not use the chance to take her turn, which forces Catherine to specify her suggestion further with more detail (l. 18-20). It is only then that Emily uses the chance to take the turn (14):

```
(14)   Stage5.6Binge

22   EMILY: vielleicht em (.) eh cocktails mit fruchtsäfte
              maybe em (.) eh cocktails with fruit juices
23   CATHERINE: [ja
              [yeah
24   EMILY:     [und em: (.) ja (.) aber (.) vielleicht em: ist das e:m
              [and em: (.) yeah (.) but (.) maybe em: this is e:m
25   (.) schwierig (.) weil leute em: die auswirkungen des alkohols eh
     (.) difficult (.) because people em: like the effects of
26   mögen?
     alcohol?
27   CATHERINE: ja
              yes
28   EMILY: eh und dann wenn sie nur cola oder limonade oder
              eh amd then when drink only coke and lemonade or fruit
29   fruchtsäfte eh nur trinken dann werden sie nicht betrunken?
     juices then they are not getting drunk?
```

In the first part of her answer, Emily provides an example for the kind of non-alcoholic beverages that could be sold in campus bars (l. 22). Rather than leading to agreement, however, this example only postpones what actually is a disagreement with Catherine's suggestion of offering more non-alcoholic drinks. Emily objects on grounds that limiting the amount of alcoholic drinks sold would be difficult because it is precisely

the effects of alcohol that make people drink, and non-alcoholic drinks do not achieve these effects.

Not only is Emily's disagreement postponed within the turn (and, if one reads the fact that she had not taken the turn earlier when she would have been able to, over turns), it is also further mitigated and softened through the preceding partial agreement, further markers of hesitation, filled or unfilled (l. 24, 25), a turn-internal token agreement (l. 24) and the downtoner 'vielleicht' (l. 25). Moreover, the rising intonation invites Catherine to agree. Emily now continues this argumentative sequence by focusing on the reasons why people drink and on cultural differences in drinking habits (15):

(15) Stage5.6Binge

```
30   CATHERINE: ja: ja aber (.) em (.) vielleicht eh (.) wir (.) wir
                 yeah: yes but (.) em (.) maybe eh (.) we (.) we
31   brauchen alkohol nur für eh die atmosphäre? [und em (.) das ist=
     only need alcohol for eh the atmosphere? [and em (.) this is=
32   EMILY:                                               [ja
                                                          [yes
33   CATHERINE: =nicht wichtig em (.) andere leute in andere länder wie
                 =not important em (.) other people in other countries
34   deutschland em brauchen nicht sehr viel alkohol em warum müssen
     like germany em do not need very much alcohol em why do we have to
35   wir soviel alkohol trinken um spaß zu machen
     drink so much alcohol in order to have fun
36   EMILY: aha
            aha
37   CATHERINE: em:
               em:
38   EMILY: glau- ich glaube dass die: (.) kul- kultur von trinken hier
            bel - I believe that the: (.) cul- culture of drinking here
39   in england ist etwas anderes von anderen eur- europäischen ländern
     in england is different from other eur- european countries
40   (.) zum beispiel deutschland und frankreich (.) em: ja (.)
     (.) for example germany and france (.) em: yeah (.)
41   vielleicht sie sind gut- gute beispiel für für england
     maybe they are goo- good example for for england
```

In her answer, rather than expressing agreement or disagreement with Emily's suggestion that it is the effects of alcohol that entice people to drink, Catherine challenges the way of life that endorses binge-drinking in more general terms. By doing this, she uses the inclusive 'wir' (l. 30, 35), relating to a nation-wide habit of binge-drinking in contrast to the drinking habits of people in other countries.

Emily's answer in the closing turn to this sequence endorses this perspective by emphasizing that Germany and France are good examples for England. This allows her to assert agreement with Catherine by emphasizing again the differences between the drinking cultures of Germany and England. Furthermore, the statement also enables her to distance herself from the culture of binge-drinking in England and to

present herself as a conscientious young adult with a responsible stance towards alcohol (l. 38-41).

In the next sequence, Catherine now moves the discussion back to possible measures against binge-drinking (16):

(16) Stage5.6Binge

```
42  CATHERINE: ja (.) also em: wie kann die universität eggburton em
                  yes (.) well em: how can the university of eggburton
43  (.) gegen kampftrinken zu kämpfen
    em (.) fight against binge-drinking
44  EMILY: eh:
             eh:
45  CATHERINE: was sollen sie machen
                  what shall they do
46  EMILY: ich würde (.) erschreckende posters machen (.) mit die em:
             I would (.) make scary posters (.) with the em:
47  auswirkungen em die passieren kann können wenn man zuviel trinkt
    effects em that can can happen when one drinks too much
48  em (.) und ich glaube auch dass (.) wie sie haben gesagt dass
    em (.) and I also believe that (.) as you have said that
49  campusbars eh sollten die getränke teurer machen?
    campusbars eh should make drinks more expensive?
```

Emily reacts to Catherine's request for suggestions of action against binge-drinking by providing a variety of options. Firstly, she proposes that the university should start an advertising campaign with dramatic pictures that warn against the dangers of binge-drinking (l. 46-47), but then she returns to Catherine's earlier suggestion of making alcoholic drinks more expensive, a suggestion which had not been discussed at the time. Emily's turn contains a number of markers and features that mark it as a personal opinion: 'ich würde', at the beginning of the turn (l. 46) is a subjectiviser through which Emily can mark the suggestions that she is about to make as her own. A similar function is also fulfilled by the epistemic verb 'ich glaube' (l. 48). Moreover, she mentions that Catherine herself had earlier proposed the same line of action, which signals respect for and appreciation of Catherine's opinion and is therefore a face-protecting strategy.

What is also interesting is the fact that at least one of her suggestions is explicitly modalised. While in the suggestion of the poster campaign, any marker that would indicate Catherine's degree of desire for such a campaign is missing, her second suggestion features the modal verb 'sollen' as an expression of demand for campusbars to take action ('campusbars eh sollten', l. 49), which upgrades and emphasizes what is being said.

Catherine takes up the price issue in her next turn (17):

(17) Stage5.6Binge

```
50   CATHERINE: ja (.) weil wenn es sehr billig ist man kann zum
                 yes (.) because if it is very cheap one can for
51   beispiel fünf oder sechs [getränke trinken aber wenn wenn sie em=
     example drink five or six [drinks but if if they em=
52   EMILY:                    [ja (.) ja
                               [yeah (.) yeah
53   CATHERINE: =teurer würden em würde man nur vielleicht zwei oder
                 =were more expensive em one would maybe only two or
54   drei
     three
55   EMILY: ja das ist richtig und em billigere getränke em sind eine
            yes that's right and em cheaper drinks em are a
56   große einflüsse für em das kampftri- kampftrinken
     big influence for em binge dri- binge drinking
57   CATHERINE: ja=
                 yes=
58   EMILY: =glaube ich em:
            =I believe em:
```

Perhaps not surprisingly, given the fact that higher prices on alcoholic drinks had also been her own choice, Catherine reacts to Emily's suggestions with agreement, illustrating mainly the reasons why higher prices would have a positive effect (l. 50-51, 53-54). Nevertheless, she employs the hedge 'vielleicht' as a fuzzy-maker to the phrase 'zwei oder drei (getränke')', thereby avoiding to give an exact account of the effects cheaper alcoholic drinks might have in terms of the amount of alcohol people would then drink.

Similarly, Emily employs a postponed epistemic verb ('ich glaube', l. 58) when she subsequently illustrates the assumed positive effects of higher prices at a more general level (l. 55-56, 58). This behaviour is surprising given Emily's and Catherine's agreement on the issue, but might signal that Emily is aware that their discussion has a potential audience beyond the actual interlocutor, an audience that may disagree with the proposals made (see concept of *cultural standing*, 1.2.2).

After her agreement, Emily immediately leads into the next topic (18):

(18) Stage5.6Binge

```
58   EMILY: =glaube ich em: (.) ich denke dass (.) die universität (.)
            =I believe em: (.) I think that(.) the university (.)
59   nicht alkoholische getränke in den campusbars nur noch an
     cannot sell alcoholic drinks in campusbars only to
60   studenten über einundzwanzig jahren verkaufen kann weil (.) das
     students over twenty-one years of age because (.) that
61   ist (.) in england kann man mit achtzehn jahre alt eh (.) trinken
     is (.) in england one can drink at eighteen years of (.) age
62   em und das (.) das würde (.) das ist ein sehr strenge [idee
     em and that (.) that would (.) that is a very strict [idea
63   glaube ich
     I believe
64   CATHERINE:                                            [leute
                                                           [people
```

```
65   würden em in ins in der stadt gehen?
     would em go to to the to town?
66   EMILY: ja
            yes
67   CATHERINE: statt in campusbars
                instead of campus bars
68   EMILY: ja (.) und die uni kann eh könnte geld verlieren?
            yes (.) and the uni can eh could lose money?
69   ((Catherine nickt)) em
     ((Catherine nods)) em
```

In (18), Emily starts the sequence with a negative evaluation of the proposal of selling alcoholic drinks in campus bars only to students aged over twenty-one. The modal verb 'können' (l. 60) is not only an expression of Emily's opinion that the desirability for this suggestion is low, but it also suggests that the university would not be able to implement such a measure. In contrast, as Emily emphasizes, young people 'can' – i.e. are allowed to – drink alcohol from the age of eighteen (l. 61-62). Emily thus puts the rights of students over the rights of the university to limit these. An evaluative phrase (l. 62), further upgraded with the intensifier 'sehr', emphasizes this negative stance. The turn however ends with an epistemic verb, limiting commitment to and responsibility for this point of view (l. 63).

In the remaining part of this sequence, both speakers' turns show close cohesive links. Firstly, Catherine adds another argument as support for age restrictions in partial overlap with Emily's turn (l. 64-65, 67). Emily then links her turn syntactically to it (l. 68-69).

The discussion moves on from here to the idea of a ban on alcohol in campus bars and in halls of residence (19):

```
(19) Stage5.6Binge

70   CATHERINE: und em (.) ich glaube dass (.) em sie könnten nie (.)
                and em (.) I believe that (.) em they would never (.)
71   alkoholische getränke in den studentenwohnheimen verbieten es es
     be able to forbid alcoholic drinks in halls it it
72   (.) es würde sehr sehr schwierig sein [weil (.) em wie kann man=
     (.) it would be very very difficult [because (.) em how can one=
73   EMILY:                                [hm hm
                                           [hm hm
74   CATHERINE: =(.) em jedes studenten in jedes (       ) o jedes
                =(.) em see every student in every (      ) o every
75   zimmer em (.) sehen I mean
     room em (.)I mean
76   EMILY: ja!
            yes
77   CATHERINE: em es ist sehr sehr schwierig und das (.) das würde em
                em it is very very difficult and that (.) that would em
78   (.) nicht sehr populär mit [den studenten sein
     (.) not be very popular with [the students
79   EMILY:                     [aha
                                 [aha
```

In (19), Catherine, just as Emily before, uses the modal verb 'können' (l. 70) in its negated form to express her objection to a ban on alcoholic drinks in university halls. Catherine then tries to account for this argument by adding facts, namely that it would be impossible to check whether students actually have alcohol in their rooms. This is formulated as a rhetorical question, aimed at giving Emily little choice but to agree (l. 72, 74-75). In addition, the inclusion of evaluative phrases, both of which are upgraded by a double intensifier ('es würde sehr sehr schwierig sein, l. 72; es ist sehr sehr schwierig', l. 77) adds further emphasis and authority to this opinion.

In the next argumentative sequence, Emily takes the initiative in introducing a new idea (20):

(20) Stage5.6Binge

```
80   EMILY: ja (.) em: (.) wenn die uni em alkohol aus allen campusbar
             yeah (.) em: (:) when the uni em forbids eh bans alcohol
81   eh verbietet eh verbannt em das glaube ich dass es ein blödes ein
     from all campus em I believe this is a stupid a
82   blöde idee ist weil (.) die studenten (.) nicht in die die bars
     stupid idea because (.) the students (.) would not go
83   gehen würden
     to the bars
```

Here, Emily employs an evaluative phrase to signal objection to a ban of alcohol from campus bars, arguing that students would not go to campus bars if a ban was introduced. Although the evaluative phrase 'blöde idee' (l. 81-82) constitutes implicit means of modalisation and responsibility for the action remains unassigned, 'blöd' is an emotionally laden word that allows Emily to make her stance explicit and implies emotional investment. A further reason against the ban is then added by Catherine, introducing a long sequence of agreement (21):

(21) Stage5.6Binge

```
84   CATHERINE: es ist ein em (.) die campusbars besonders in
                it is a em (.) the campusbars especially in
85   eggburton em (.) sind zentral
     eggburton em (.) are central
86   EMILY:     [ja
                [yeah
87   CATHERINE: [em der student (.) die studentenlebens hier in
                [em for student (.) the student life here in
88   eggburton und ohne alkohol em glaube ich dass viele leute würden
     eggburton and without alcohol em I believe that many people
89   weniger freunden haben
     would have fewer friends
90   EMILY: aha=
          aha=
91   CATHERINE: =und weniger spass haben
                =and less fun
92   EMILY: ja
          yes
```

```
93   CATHERINE: em weil es ist (.) ein sehr gutes em ((scheint weiter-
                em because it is (.) a very good em ((seems to want
94   sprechen zu wollen, lange pause))
     to continue, long pause))
95   EMILY: es ist ein treffs- treffort?
            it is a meeting place?
96   CATHERINE: treffsort ja es ist ein sehr gutes treffsort für em
                meeting place yes it is a very good meeting place for
97   junge leute besonders em studenten in den ersten jahr em die keine
     em young people in particular em first year students em who don't
98   leute hier kennen em sie müssen andere leuten kennenlernen
     know any people here em they have to get to know other people
99   EMILY: ja
            yes
100  CATHERINE: und (.) ohne alkohol
                and (.) without alcohol
101  EMILY: aha
            aha
102  CATHERINE: würde es sehr schwierig sein
                it would be very difficult
103  EMILY: aha das (.) zum beispiel das freshers ba:ll und
            aha that (.) for example the freshers ba:ll and
104  CATHERINE: ja
                yes
105  EMILY: andere nach
            the other one
106  CATHERINE: freshers woche
                freshers week
107  EMILY: ja ja das ist wich[tig
            yeah yeah that's impor[tant
```

Catherine starts by discussing the meaning of campus bars in general, suggesting that they are central to student life (l. 84-85, 87-88). Only then does she mention alcohol, saying that it helps students have fun and make friends (l. 88-89, 91). Although she essentially agrees with Emily as far as far as the rejection of a ban on alcohol in campus bars is concerned, this is nevertheless a potentially controversial suggestion, and it could cause Catherine to be seen in a bad light. The introduction to the turn relating to the importance of campus bars for student life can therefore be considered a means of postponing this controversial issue. In addition, the conditional 'würde' (l. 88) implies that what is being discussed is hypothetical.

The end of the sequence is co-constructed by Emily and Catherine, building on linguistic difficulties experienced by Catherine when she attempts to summarize the meaning of campus bars for students in one single word (l. 93-95). This is the beginning of a very collaborative phase, in which both speakers elaborate on the way campus bars are meaningful for student life. This phase is characterised by close cohesion between Emily's and Catherine's turns, i.e. the two speakers build on each other's turns, repeat parts of them and add to them. Some key words are again emphasized with intensifiers ('sehr gutes treffsort, l. 96; 'sehr schwierig', l. 102).

This brings us to the end of the discussion, in which Catherine and Emily summarize their position(s) (22):

(22) **Stage5.6Binge**

```
108  CATHERINE:            [also die beste em: methode alkohol zu em
                           [well the best em: method of fighting
109  (.) bekämpfen ist vielleicht (.) getränke teurer machen?
     alcohol (.) is maybe (.) making alcoholic drinks more expensive?
110  EMILY: ja (.) ja ich stimme total zu
            yeah (.) yeah I absolutely agree
111  CATHERINE: u- und vielleicht auch eh anbieten mehrere getränke mit
                a- and maybe also eh offering more drinks without
112  keine alcohol
     alcohol
113  EMILY: aha aha
            aha aha
114  CATHERINE: zum beispiel [(.) vielleicht
                for example [(.) maybe
115  EMILY:                   [alternative ja
                              [alternative yeah
116  CATHERINE: und total nicht ((macht Handbewegung, die Ablehnung
                and absolutely not ((makes hand movement as if to
117  anzeigt)) em (.) alkohol verbannen
     do away with something)) em (.) ban alcohol
118  EMILY: nein (.) das eh (.) das würde nicht funktionieren glaub-
            no (.) that eh (.) that would not work belie-
119  glaube ich
     I believe
```

Although Catherine and Emily appear to generally agree on the potential effects the suggested actions might have, they have not yet established a rank order. Therefore, Catherine brings forward her suggestion of a rank order very cautiously. For example, the turn-initial 'also' postpones the main proposition in the first suggestion (l. 108). Furthermore, the downtoner 'vielleicht' makes a number of appearances (l. 109, 111, 114), and Catherine employs rising intonation as markers of limited commitment and insecurity (l. 108-109).

Emily however agrees to all these proposals, indicating enthusiastic support through uptoners ('total', l. 110) and overlap (l. 115). It is possible that, as a result of this, Catherine makes her last suggestion with more confidence, using the uptoner 'total' (l. 116) and hand movement to emphasize her objection. In the end, Emily agrees by repeating her contention that a total ban would not work, although the postponed epistemic verb 'glaube ich' and the conditional indicate a sense of limited commitment l. 118-119) at the same time.

Both here and in many other places during the discussion it appears therefore as if Emily and Catherine are trying to juggle two contradicting demands. They are trying to make their student role and identity relevant at one time, whilst at the same time presenting themselves as conscientious and responsible. As a consequence, the discussion is again an exchange of opinions rather than an argument, and extended sequences of disagreement, challenge and counter-challenge are absent. Expansions to core adjacency pairs within argumentative sequences serve the creation of common

ground rather than trying to make the interlocutor back down from a disagreeable point. Nevertheless, argumentative sequences in this discussion are always expanded beyond a core adjacency pair, which means that adjacency pairs are usually complete, and challenges are not left unanswered. This allows Emily and Catherine to present a positive self-image by not immediately giving in. In addition, suggestions are sometimes made by means of explicit modalisation, making it possible for them to point out their importance and relevance.

At the interpersonal level, Emily and Catherine use lexical as well as turn-organisational facework strategies that allow them to convey politeness and respect for other opinions. For example, postponing the main proposition of a turn makes it possible for them to distance themselves from the opinions they express. In addition, the range of markers of epistemic modality used in this discussion goes beyond epistemic verbs and downtoners. In particular, it includes many intensifiers that emphasize key adjectives in assessments and opinions. Through this, Catherine and Emily have also acquired the means of expressing themselves with some degree of authoritativeness.

4.4 Sample analysis III: Shirley and Tina from Stage 7

Tina and Shirley are both final year students who have spent a year abroad in either Austria or Germany prior to their final year. They have therefore enjoyed a large amount of exposure to spoken German. Binge-drinking is the only topic they discussed. The following extract represents the beginning of their conversation:

(23) **Stage7.9Binge**

```
1    SHIRLEY: ok cool
               ok cool
2    TINA: em: (.) aha ((beide lachen)) ok was sollte die universität
           em: (.) aha (both laugh)) ok what should the university of
3    eggburton tun um den trend des kampftrinkens un- unter studenten
     eggburton do to fight binge-drinking am- among students
4    zu bekämpfen was meinst du
     what do you think
5    SHIRLEY: ja ich eh mein gott (.) es es ist eh ein bisschen
              yes I eh my god (.) it it is eh a bit
6    schwierig für mich weil ich eh ich normalerweise trinke ich keinen
     difficult for me because I eh I normally I don't drink
7    alkohol
     alcohol
8    TINA: ah!
           ah!
9    SHIRLEY: also es ist keine kein besondere wichtiges thema für
              well it is not not a very important topic for
10   mich [em (.) aber (.) ich denke diese (.) em: ((lacht))=
     me [em (.) but (.) I think this (.) em: ((laughs))=
11   TINA: [=wow
           [=wow
```

```
12   SHIRLEY: =diesem eh vorschlag? ist das richtig?
                =this eh suggestion? is that correct?
13   TINA: aha
              aha
14   SHIRLEY: hier diese alkoholische getränke in den campusbars nur
                here this selling alcoholic drinks in campus bars only
15   noch an studenten eh über einundzwanzig jahre verkaufen? ich
     to students eh over twenty one years of age? I personally find
16   persönlich finde das ein bisschen blöd ich [ich denke ich denke=
     that a bit stupid I [I think I think=
17   TINA:                                    [ich auch
                                             [me too
18   SHIRLEY: =die die meiste studenten in an der uni sind sie sind
                =the the most students in at the university they they
19   achtze:hn BIS einundzwanzig vielleicht ein bisschen älter aber es
     are eighte:en to twenty one years old maybe a bit older but it
20   ist eh es ist ein bisschen (.) unfair?=
     is eh it is a bit (.) unfair?=
21   TINA: =hm=
            =hm=
22   SHIRLEY: em (.) wenn nur die ältere studenten em alkohol trinken
                em (.) if only the older students em can drink
23   können
     alcohol
24   TINA: aha
            aha
25   SHIRLEY: was (.) was meinst du?
                what (.) what do you think?
```

Tina jump-starts this conversation by reading aloud the discussion question from the task instruction card, thereby giving the responsibility to take the initiative to Shirley (l. 2-4). Shirley's answer stretches over many lines, which is mainly due to the fact that before actually coming up with an answer, she initially spends a considerable amount of time to position herself as somebody who is, by personal experience at least, ignorant about the problem of binge-drinking (l. 5-7, 9-10). This long expansion of the turn postpones the negative assessment of an age limit for alcohol in campus bars within the turn (l. 14-16, 18-20, 22).

The turn is also mitigated by a number of downgraders, e.g. hedges relating to the evaluative adjectives 'blöd' and 'unfair' (l. 16, 20), the downtoner 'vielleicht' (l. 19) and epistemic verbs (l. 16). In addition, rising intonation (l. 15, 20) indicates that Shirley is aware of the fact that her suggestion might be objected to. She does, in fact, have reason to believe that this is the case, as Tina lets two possible opportunities to take the turn pass (l. 21, 24). Shirley eventually invites Tina's answer explicitly (l. 25), but Tina does not come up with an answer immediately (24):

(24) Stage7.9Binge

```
26   TINA: ist das was du für nummer nummer fünf hast?
              is that what you have for number five?
27   SHIRLEY: ja ich hab diese für nummer fünf
                yes I have that for number five
```

```
28   TINA: ok ich hab für nummer fünf alkohol aus allen campusb- bars
                ok I have for number five banning alcohol from all campusb-
29   verbannen
     bars
30   SHIRLEY: ja ok das war mein nummer vi- nummer vier
                yes ok that was my number fo- number four
31   TINA: ok für num- nummer vier hab ich auch das mit den
                ok for num- number four I also have that with the
32   einundzwanzig jahren
     twenty-one years
33   SHIRLEY: ok
                ok
34   TINA: ok
                ok
```

As we can see in (24), Tina instead orients to the task of ranking the suggested options and asks Shirley how she had ranked age restrictions. Tina only comes up with an actual answer (l. 31) after an insertion sequence of multiple turns in which rankings are negotiated (l. 26-30). When she responds to the issue of an age restriction, the fact that she ranked it on fourth position suggests that a low degree of desire is attached to it. Although this could lead to argument expansion and trigger more talk related to this issue, the conversation moves on to a new topic. A possible reason for this is the fact that Shirley and Tina do not see the rankings as very important and therefore disputable.

The following argumentative sequence is very short. Shirley's initial assessment relates to Tina's earlier mentioned ranking of a ban of alcohol as her least desirable option (25):

(25) **Stage7.9Binge**

```
35   SHIRLEY: ja ich eh (.) ich finde ((tiefer Atemzug)) ich weiß nicht
                yes I eh (.) I find ((deep breath)) I don't know
36   ich denke man könnte alkohol nicht verbannen das ist eh das ist
     I think one would not be able to ban alcohol that is eh that is
37   ((abwertende handbewegung)) [ja
     ((derogatory hand movement)) [yes
38   TINA:                       [ich glaube das ist blöd (.) es es
                                 [I believe that is stupid (.) it it
39   wird nie funktionieren (.) dann werden einfach leute mit ihrer
     will never work (.) then people will simply go to a bar with their
40   vodkaflasche in die bar gehen
     vodka bottle
41   SHIRLEY: ja! jajaja [ja
                yes! yes yesyes [yes
```

In this argumentative sequence, Shirley manages to position herself against a ban on alcohol without ever actually saying so. Her main means of doing this is a derogatory hand movement (l. 37) at the end of the turn that replaces an evaluative adjective or phrase. The turn is further mitigated by an epistemic verb ('ich finde', l. 35)

and a downtoner ('ich weiß nicht', l. 35), both of which appear in the beginning of the turn.

Tina indicates strong agreement through overlap (l. 38), a strong and colloquial evaluative adjective ('blöd', l. 38) and a reason for why a ban would not work. The sequence ends with Shirley again signalling agreement enthusiastically (l. 41). Tina then moves on to discussing higher prices for alcohol in campus bars (26):

(26) Stage7.9Binge

```
42   TINA:                    [ok (.) und für nummer drei da habe ich hm (.)
                              [ok (.) and for number three there I have hm
43   alkoholische getränke in den campusbars teurer machen?
     (.) making alcoholic drinks in campus bars more expensive?
44   SHIRLEY: ok?
              ok?
45   TINA: ok das können sie machen aber studenten haben kein geld ok
            ok they can do that but students don't have money ok but
46   vielleicht hilft das aber
     maybe that helps
```

Tina initiates this topic by reference to the ranking of this option (l. 42-43). This implicit way of modalising and expressing the desirability and necessity of higher prices on alcohol allow her to remain fairly uncommitted. When an answer, invited through rising intonation (l. 43), is not forthcoming, Tina elaborates further on the reasons for her ranking (l. 45-46). Having initially emphasized that higher prices are a possibility, she now however takes the perspective of students, saying that they would not have the money to pay for more expensive drinks (l. 45-46), only to shift back and suggest that higher prices might help to tackle the problem (l. 46). This suggests that Tina tries to align herself with students on one side, but at the same time to present herself as a responsible young adult who takes a stance against binge-drinking.

Shirley's answer is similarly ambiguous (27):

(27) Stage7.9Binge

```
47   SHIRLEY: ja sie haben (.) ich weiß- sie haben kein geld ich hab
              yeah they have (.) I know- they have no money I have
48   das für für nummer zwei gewählt
     chosen that as as number two
49   TINA: [hm
           [hm
50   SHIRLEY: [em ich (.) ich denke es wäre keine keine SCHLECHTE idee
              [em I (.) I think it would not not be a BAD idea if such
51   wenn es so eine (.) wenn alkohol ein bisschen teurer em wäre ich
     a (.) if alcohol was a bit more expensive em I would
52   ich weiß nicht (.) aber ich denke sie em sie würden das eh
     I don't know (.) but I think they em they would that eh
53   trotzdem kaufen [(.) sie würden (.) ich weiß nicht vielleicht=
     buy that anyway [(.) they would (.) I don't know maybe=
54   TINA:           [ich glaube auch
                     [I believe that as well
```

```
55   SHIRLEY: =nicht so viel und (.) deshalb (.) ja das das wäre besser
                =not as much and (.) therefore (.) yeah that that would
56   wenn (.) weil dann dann gibt es nicht so viel em kampftrinken
     be better when (.) because then then there is not as much em binge
57   vielleicht? aber es ist keine (.) man man könnte nicht eh (.)
     drinking maybe? but it is no (.) one one would not be able to eh
58   sicher sein dass dass es es eh (.) ja
     (.) be sure that that it it eh (.) yes
```

Shirley's entire turn is strongly hedged (conditionals, epistemic verbs, hedges, downtoners), and she is trying not to commit to any position. She initially suggests that higher prices might not be a bad idea, but then says that students would buy alcohol anyway (l. 50-53). After that, a retraction follows: students might not buy as much alcohol, and there would not be as much binge drinking (l. 55-56). Shirley eventually abandons her turn, and it is not entirely clear what position she is actually taking. At this point, Tina takes the turn with a reason that would go against higher prices (28):

(28) Stage7.9Binge

```
59   TINA: oder werden sie vielleicht einfach ihr geld sparen? und dann
               or would they maybe simply save their money? and then
60   wenn sie genug haben noch immer kampftrinken
     when they have got enough still go binge-drinking
61   SHIRLEY: ja genau (.) ja vielleicht werden (.) werden sie im- (.)
               yeah exactly (.) yes maybe they will (.) they will al-
62   nicht eh jede woche oder nicht jeden tag trinken alkohol trinken
     (.) drink alcohol not eh every week or not every day
63   aber wenn sie alkohol trinken vielleicht jede zweite woche? oder
     but when they drink alcohol maybe every second week? or something
64   was dann werden sie werden sie eh sehr sehr viel trinken
     what then they will they will eh drink really really much
```

Tina's and Shirley's efforts in working towards two different goals – expressing an allegiance to the cause of students, but taking a responsible stance towards alcohol as well – continue to be reflected here. Tina first elaborates on Shirley's suggestion that students would drink even if higher prices were introduced (l. 59-60). Again, however, her suggestion that students might just save their money is hedged (e.g. downtoner 'vielleicht' and rising intonation in l. 55). Downtoners and hedges also feature heavily in Shirley's reply with regard to the effects higher prices might have on students' drinking habits, which again makes it difficult to decide what position she is actually taking.

In the following sequence, the topic of discussion is forbidding alcoholic drinks in halls altogether (29):

(29) Stage7.9Binge

```
65   TINA: ok ich hab für nummer zwei alkoholische getränke in den
               ok I have for number two forbidding alcoholic drinks in
66   studentenwohnheimen ganz verbieten
     residence halls completely
```

```
67   SHIRLEY: aha ja? das war mein num- mein nummer drei
                 aha yeah? that was my num- my number three
68   TINA: hm ((räuspert sich)) [hm
            hm ((clears her throat)) [hm
69   SHIRLEY:                     [ja ich denke das das wäre sehr
                                  [yes I think that that would be
70   sehr schwierig zu eh (.) zu zu machen?
     very very difficult to to do?
```

The sequence starts with both Tina and Shirley stating their ranking of a ban of alcohol in student halls (l. 65-67). While Tina does not provide any reason for why she ranked a ban on alcoholic drinks as her second best option, Shirley immediately supports her own ranking by suggesting that a ban would be difficult to implement (l. 68-70). This point puts Tina in a very difficult position. She needs to balance the fact that she has ranked a ban of alcohol in halls highly, but yet try to establish alignment and agreement with Shirley (30):

(30) Stage7.9Binge

```
71   TINA: hm (.) es ist zwar eine idee aber (.) ich glaub ich glaub
            hm (.) it is a good idea but (.) I believe I believe
72   das macht nicht wirklich so einen großen unterschied wenn weil
     that does not really make a big difference when because
73   wenn du zu hause nicht trinken kannst dann gehst du einfach aus
     when you cannot drink at home than you simply go out
74   und trinkst noch einmal genauso viel [aber in (.) in der bar oder
     and you drink the same amount again [but in (.) in the bar or
75   so
     so
76   SHIRLEY:                             [ja
                                          [yeah
```

Tina tackles those contradictory goals with asserted agreement, acknowledging that a ban is a potential option ('eine idee', l. 71). This however contrasts with her forthcoming assessment that students probably would just go out rather than staying in halls, a contrast which is emphasized by use of the modal particle 'zwar' (l. 71). In addition, the use of the 2nd person pronoun 'du' (l. 73) appeals for Shirley's agreement based on shared experiences and knowledge of student culture (31):

(31) Stage7.9Binge

```
77   SHIRLEY: ja und ab- aber auch (.) ich denke wie KÖNNEN sie das
                yes and bu- but also (.) I think how CAN they do
78   machen also als also wie wie funktioniert das wie em wie können
     that well so well how how does that work how em how can
79   sie em ich weiß nicht wenn: ((sieht genervt aus, sucht
     they em I don't know when: ((looks annoyed, obviously looking
80   offensichtlich nach wörtern)) ((beide lachen)) em: müssen müssen
     for words)) ((both laugh)) em: must must
81   es eh muss es leute in dieser eh studentenwohnheimen em sein em
     it eh must the people in this eh halls of residence em be em
82   die die diese ich weiß nicht die die taschen [von studenten
     the the these I don't know the the bags [of students
```

```
83    TINA:                                            [durchgucken=
                                                        [look through=
84    SHIRLEY: =ja durchgucken oder oder was? (.) wie wie könnten wie
               =yes look through or or what? how how could they
85    TINA:        [hm keine ahnung
                   [hm no idea
86    SHIRLEY: =[können sie das machen ich weiß nicht ich ich finde es
               =[can they do that I don't know I I find it
87    ziemlich blöd
      quite stupid
```

Shirley concludes this sequence by positioning herself very clearly against a ban (l. 77-92, 84, 86-87): She emphasizes prosodically the modal verb 'können' and denies in the form of a rhetorical question the right and the ability of the university to implement such a ban. Her commitment to this opinion is strongly indicated through her annoyance when linguistic problems keep her from conveying what she is trying to say (l. 78-80) as well as the fact that she appears to be constructing most of her turn in rhetorical questions, thereby inviting agreement. Furthermore, she clearly emphasizes the fact that it is an external force that wants to take that measure ('sie', 'die universität'). The turn closes with the assessment 'das ist ziemlich blöd', again upgrading and stressing what she had said before (l. 86-87).

The discussion now moves on to Shirley's own suggestion on the issue of binge-drinking. She proposes that campus bars introduce a limit on the amount of drinks any student can have at a time. This sequence needs to be represented as a whole, in order to make the connections between turns sufficiently clear (32):

(32) **Stage7.9Binge**

```
88    SHIRLEY: für nummer eins habe ich em eine (.) eine erSCHRÄNKUNG
               for number one I have em to in- em introduce a (.) a
89    der getränke ein- em einzuführen
      LIMIT on drinks
90    TINA: wie meinst du ((beide lachen)) sorry
            how do you mean that ((both laugh)) sorry
91    SHIRLEY: e:h ((lacht)) ich meine vielleicht es ist es ist nicht
               e:h ((laughs)) I mean maybe it is it is not bad
92    schlecht wenn sie alkohol trinken können aber em (.) sie sie
      when they can drink alcohol but em (.) they they
93    müssen nur em (.) vielleicht DREI getränke haben=
      must only em (.) have maybe THREE drinks=
94    TINA: =aha
            =aha
95    SHIRLEY: sie dürfen nur nur (.) eine ein nummer
               they are allowed only only (.) one one number
96    TINA: und wie wie we- wie weiß man dann ob man (.) wie weiß ICH
            and how how kn- how do you know then if one (.) how do I
97    zum beispiel ob du nur drei getränke getrunken [hast
      know for example whether you have only had three [drinks
98    SHIRLEY:                                        [ja ich ich denke
                                                      [yes I I think
99    vielleicht em: wenn man in e- in einem BAR ich ich ich eh ich
      maybe em: when one in a- in a BAR I I I eh I
```

94

```
100  meine nur wenn man in diese campusbars ist em (.) und wenn man in
     mean only when one is in this campusbar em (.) and when one is in
101  ein- in einem bar ist? und man eine geträ- getränke kauft dann
     a- in a bar? and one buys a drink
102  dann bekommt man eine sch- stem= ((macht Handbewegung die
     then then one gets a s- stam- ((makes handmovement indicating
103  andeutet, dass jemand jemandem einen Stempel gibt))
     that someone gives somebody a stamp))
104  TINA: =stem[pel
            =sta[mp
105  SHIRLEY:    [stempel?
                 [stamp?
106  TINA: a:h ja:=
            a:h yeah:=
107  SHIRLEY: =auf den hand und dann ich weiß nicht wie wie es
              =onto the hand and then I don't know how how it
108  funktioniert wie- ich weiß nicht ob es (.) ja ob es eine gute idee
     works how I don't know if it (.) yeah if it is a good idea
109  ist oder nicht aber (.) hm hier könnte könnte man eh alkohol noch
     or not but (.) hm here one could could eh still drink alcohol
110  trinken aber (.) man ja (.) man darf nicht so viel trinken und
     but (.) one yeah (.) one must not drink as much and
111  deshalb (.) hoffentlich gibt es kein kampftrinken
     therefore (.) there is hopefully no binge-drinking
```

After hearing Shirley's suggestion of a limit in the amount of alcohol sold to individual students, Tina does not come forward with an answer immediately, Instead, an insertion sequence follows in which Tina repeatedly forces Shirley to clarify her suggestion (l. 90, 96-97). It is not entirely clear whether these questions are down to an actual need for clarification or whether they are just there to postpone objection.

When Shirley makes the requested clarifications, she again tries to serve two masters. On the one hand, she aligns herself with the student position, suggesting that drinking must not necessarily be bad (l. 91-92), but on the other hand she also explains in more detail how she would see a limit on alcohol sales working (l. 92-93, 95, 100-102). What is most interesting is that she appears to become increasingly insecure and hesitant when providing these answers, as indicated through an accumulation of downgraders, e.g. the downtoner 'vielleicht' (l. 91, 93, 99), the epistemic verb 'ich meine' (l. 91) and the epistemic verbs 'ich denke' (l. 98), in addition to repetitions and a number of filled and unfilled pauses. Shirley also emphasizes quite clearly that she herself is not clear about how that scheme would work (l. 109, 110). These are clear markers of dispreference, indicating that Shirley knows that the opinion expressed in her turn is potentially accountable and sanctionable. Nevertheless, she tries to hold true to her beliefs when ending her turn by expressing the hope that this scheme might help against binge-drinking (l. 111).

Having said earlier that Tina's repeated requests for details of a scheme that would limit alcohol sales in campus bars constitute an insertion sequence, we can now see that Tina actually manages to escape an answer altogether. Rather, she goes

ahead and introduces her own suggestion at this point – one should be allowed to drink alcohol from the age of sixteen (33):

(33) Stage7.9Binge

```
112  TINA: ja (.) also ich hab für nummer eins ((Shirley räuspert
             yes (.) so I have for my mumber one ((Shirley clears her
113  sich)) ich hab gesagt man soll ab sechzehn schon alkohol trinken
     throat)) I said one should be able to drink alcohol from the age
114  können!
     of sixteen!
115  SHIRLEY: ok! ((lacht))=
              ok! ((laughs))=
116  TINA: =dürfen (.) warum weil (.) in österreich da ist es so?
            =(.) why (.) it is like this in austria?
117  SHIRLEY: aha
              aha
118  TINA: und (.) es gibt keine probleme mit jungen leuten mit em
            and (.) there are no problems with young people with em
119  unter jungen leuten weil die trinken einfach nicht so viel weil es
     among young people because they simply don't drink a much because
120  ERLAUBT ist
     it is ALLOWED
121  SHIRLEY: ja? ((nickt))
              yeah? ((nods))
122  TINA: aber wenn irgendwas verboten ist dann dann machen es junge
            but when something is forbidden then then young people
123  leute
     do it
```

Tina' suggestion is strongly marked as being her own position ('ich hab', 'ich hab gesagt', l. 112, 113). This is not surprising given the fact that it runs contrary to all the other, rather strict proposals against binge-drinking from the task instruction cards. Accordingly, Shirley reacts with surprise (l. 115), forcing Tina to account for her suggestion. Tina uses her personal experience during the year she spent in Austria as evidence, emphasizing in the end the key word 'erlaubt' (l. 116, 118-120). She then suggests that forbidding something might actually have a reverse effect (l. 122-123). It is on that basis that Tina and Shirley now start building common ground (34):

(34) Stage7.9Binge

```
124  SHIRLEY: ja sie sie sie denken dass es eh wow das es COOL ist
              yeah they they they think that it eh wow that it=
125           [und sie müssen das eh das machen ich [versteh das
              [is COOL and they have to eh do that I [understand that
126  TINA: [ja                                      [genau ja (.) ich war
           [yes                                     [exactly yeah (.) I
127  auch zum beispiel mit fünfzehn schon mit vierzehn fünfzehn in den
     also was for example with fifteen already with fourteen fifteen
128  bars und=
     in the bars and=
129  SHIRLEY: =ja=
              =yes=
130  TINA: =da da das macht keinen unterschied dann sind keine leute so
            =there there that does not make a difference then there are
```

```
131  etwas da gibt's solche bouncerns nicht die em die nachchecken wie
     no people something there aren't such bouncers who em who check
132  alt du bist und so?
     how old you are and all that?
133  SHIRLEY: aha
              aha
134  TINA: und em da hab ich vielleicht ein oder zwei getränke geno-
           and em there I maybe to- drank one or two drinks
135  getrunken und dann dann einfach mit meinen freunden geredet und
     and then then simply talked to my friends and
136          [dann bin ich nach hause gegangen
             [then I went home
137  SHIRLEY: [ja (.) das war genug (.) nur nur ein paar getränke zu
              [yes (.) that was enough (.) to have only only a few
138  haben=
     drinks=
139  TINA: =hm=
           =hm
```

Shirley agrees with Tina's proposal by essentially elaborating on Tina's suggestion that, if restrictions were in place, young people would be even more inclined to drink alcohol. Up to now, both speakers had used the 3rd person to provide their evidence, thus distancing themselves from the drinking habits of young people. With the agreement established, Tina now extends the sequence further, but switches to using the 1st person perspective and personal experience. Consequently, Tina personally represents the validity and feasibility of her suggestion, as she cites her own drinking habits as evidence for the fact that a relaxation of rules would lead to youngsters dealing responsibly with alcohol (l. 126-128, 130-132, 133-136).

Tina appears to be very confident about this example, as she offers it with little hesitation and mitigation. Shirley extends the agreement, also using evidence based on personal experience (35):

(35) Stage7.9Binge

```
140  SHIRLEY: =ja ich (.) ich versteh dass ich eh (.) ja ich ich habe
              =yes I (.) I understand that I eh (.) yes I I have
141  ich hab freunde die die alkohol zi- em auch ziemlich jung em
     I have got friends who who have drunk alcohol qu- em also at a
142  getrunken haben haben em ihre familie sie em sie glauben dass es
     quite young age em their families they em they believe that it
143  eine gute idee ist sie sie sagen eh du kannst das in in dem haus
     is a good idea they they say eh you can drink that in in the house
144  trinken em nur nur wenn ich hier bin? und dann (.) dann
     em only only when I am here? and then (.) then hopefully
145  hoffentlich wenn wenn du alt (.) o- oder älter bist dann wirst du
     when when you are old (.) o- or you are older then you will
146  das nicht so eh ich weiß nicht nicht so=
     not eh I don't know not
147  TINA: =übertreiben
           =exaggerate
148  SHIRLEY: ja
              yes
149  TINA: mit dem trinken
           with drinking
```
```
97
```

```
150  SHIRLEY: ich denke WEIL es verboten ist dann
                I think BECAUSE it is forbidden then
151  TINA: ja weil in england zum beispiel da gehen die ganzen teenager
              yes because in england for example there all the teenagers
152  so in in den park und da trinken [sie ganz ganz viel
      they go to the part and there they drink [a lot
153  SHIRLEY:                              [ja genau ja! (.) ja! viele
                                           [yeah exactly yeah! (.)
154  freunde von mir haben (.) haben das gemacht ((lacht))
      yeah many friends of mine (.) have done that ((laughs))
```

Shirley now supports Tina's suggestion of a liberalisation of drinking rules by making reference to own personal experience, namely some friends who were allowed to drink from an early age (l. 141-142, 143-149). At the end, she personalises what she is saying by employing the 2nd personal pronoun 'du' (l. 145), thereby including her interlocutor and a wider, undefined audience in the evidence (l. 145-146, 149).

Following from this, Shirley only hints to the fact that, when something is forbidden, people do it nevertheless, with the word 'weil' prosodically emphasized to point out cause and effect (l. 150). Taking up from the word 'weil', Tina continues Shirley's turn with the example of teenagers who go to parks in order to drink. Shirley again agrees enthusiastically and in cooperative overlap (l. 153). Altogether, this is a very cooperative sequence with close cohesive ties that enable both learners to display agreement.

The following sequence closes the discussion (36):

(36) **Stage7.9Binge**

```
155  TINA: warum trinkst du nicht?
              why do you not drink?
156  SHIRLEY: ich MAG alkohol nicht einfach das ist
                I simply don't LIKE alcohol this is
157  TINA: überhaupt keinen alkohol?
              no alcohol at all?
158  SHIRLEY: fast keinen alkohol hm: was trinke ich (.) ich trinke
                almost no alcohol hm: what do I drink (.) I drink
159  manchmal trinke ich eh vodka?
      sometimes I drink eh vodka?
160  TINA: ah! ich [hasse vodka
              ah! I [hate vodka
161  SHIRLEY:       [aber (.) nur mit limonade oder em (.) ja ich ich
                    [but (.) only with lemonade or em (.) yeah I I
162  könnte das nicht (.) nur nur vodka nur allein eh nein ((Tina macht
      would not be able to do that (.) only only vodka only alone eh no
163  misbilligende Laute)) ich könnte das nicht trinken aber ich ich ja
      ((Tina makes sounds of disgust)) I would not be able to drink that
164  ich MAG ich mag das nicht ich mag diese geschme- geschmeck?
      vut I I yes I LIKE I don't like that I don't like that ta- taste?
165  TINA: geschmack=
              taste=
166  SHIRLEY: =geschmack nicht und em (.) ja ich denke auch ich brauche
                =taste and em (.) yeah I also think I don't
167  das nicht
      need that
```

98

```
168  TINA:     das ist gut
               that's good
169  SHIRLEY:  danke! ((beide lachen))
               thanks! ((both laugh))
170  TINA:     gu:t
               goo:d
171  SHIRLEY:  ich glaub das war's
               I think that was it
172  TINA:     ja ich glaube auch
               yes I think that as well
```

The closing section relates back to where the discussion began: Tina asks Shirley her reasons for not drinking any alcohol (l. 155), and, after these have been provided, inquires further by asking Shirley whether she actually drinks no alcohol at all (l. 157). This successfully forces Shirley to reassess (l. 160-161) and admit that she occasionally drinks alcohol, but Shirley then goes to great lengths to make sure she is not being seen as somebody who enjoys alcohol, repeating a number of times that she dislikes alcohol and that she would not be able to drink strong drinks. Furthermore, she also uses the personal pronoun 'ich' to position herself personally as a subject against alcohol (l. 161-164, 166-167). This sequence, as well as the discussion as a whole, then end after a number of closing turns (l. 168-172).

Similar to the discussions from Stage 3 and Stage 5, we can see Shirley and Tina juggling two contrasting demands: the will to align themselves with student culture and therefore the status quo with regard to the sale of alcohol on campus, and the will to present a positive self-image in regard to beliefs widely held in society about the dangers of binge-drinking. One way Tina and Shirley handle these demands is the use of concessions within turns, which allow them to acknowledge different positions. They also flexibly change between different markers of reference in order to associate themselves with or disassociate themselves from social groups. Moreover, Tina and Shirley have also mastered a wide range of ways of organising turns and sequences. For example, they successfully use insertion sequence in order to force the interlocutor to reassess to provide reasons for a claim and to postpone answers to an opinion or assessment.

As a consequence, Tina and Shirley appear to be orienting more than some of the other speakers to arguing their points, and their conversation as a whole moves from representing merely an exchange of opinion to an actual argument. However, uptoners and intensifiers as a way of upgrading propositions and expressing authoritativeness and conviction are still very rare, although there is generally a wide range of markers of epistemic modality used. This even includes modal particles as a way of expressing subtle nuances of meaning.

4.5 Chapter summary and outlook

This chapter has examined in detail three discussions on the topic of binge-drinking. It found that each of the conversations has its distinct qualities with regard to the sequential organisation of turns, the way in which ideas are presented and supported, the preference organisation of turns and the range and use of markers of epistemic modality. It also showed, however, that there is a lot of overlap between the strategies used by learners at different levels of proficiency and a high degree of variability within the performance of particular learners, suggesting that there are no easily distinguishable developmental stages. Rather, learners' performance is unstable, and different strategies coexist rather than being abandoned completely at one level.

From the perspective of an external evaluator, some learners appear to be struggling to present and defend their opinions, showing, for example, in a lack of responsiveness when being attacked and a low range and frequency of markers of epistemic modality. However, the question as to what extent this has an impact on their presentation of face and identity related to social roles and personal qualities cannot be answered conclusively without taking learners' own opinions into account. From their perspective, presenting a positive self-image based on the task topics may actually not be their main goal.

In chapters 5 and 6, I will now outline the development of facework strategies in a more systematic fashion, with more detail and drawing on a broader scope of data. In chapter 5, I will focus on the sequential organisation of argumentative discourse and the preference organisation of turns within it. In chapter 6, I will analyse the data from the perspective of modality. This will also allow claims to be made regarding the linguistic and psycholinguistic limitations on learners' use of facework strategies. Chapter 7 will then use the interview data to explain these findings within a framework of face and identity and a psycholinguistic processing approach.

Chapter 5   The organisation of argumentative discourse

5.1 Chapter outline

Chapter 4 presented an analysis of three selected conversations within a theory of face, providing in-depth insight into individual speakers' strategies. Chapters 4 and 5 aim to provide an overall framework for the development of facework in L2 argumentative discourse. The research question is still the following:

- What strategies do L2 learners of German at different proficiency levels use to do facework in spoken argumentative discourse, and how do these strategies develop and change across levels? How can these changes best be accounted for?

In this chapter, the focus lies on the organisation of argumentative discourse. Firstly, we will look at how speakers from the different levels organise an argumentative sequence related to a particular topic. Secondly, the organisation of turns within these sequences will be scrutinized. We will focus on three different kinds of turns – (initial) opinion/assessment turns, agreement turns and disagreement turns.

5.2 Preliminary remarks

One of the basic premises for the analysis presented in this chapter – and this premise is supported by the data – is that the discussions proceed in distinctive argumentative sequences (see full definition in 3.8.1), that is, sequences which are topically related and which consist minimally of one core adjacency pair.

As we will see in the forthcoming analysis, this initial adjacency pair consists of one speaker making a suggestion/assessment or expressing an opinion, to which the second speaker replies with either agreement or disagreement. And, as Jackson & Jacobs (1980) suggest, "a pair part of the adjacency pair (may) become subject to repeated expansions; any expansion unit may itself become arguable, thereby providing for the possibility of an indefinite regression of criticism and for a refocusing on topics of argument far removed from the original claim" (p. 158). To what extent this expansion applies for the three different levels of proficiency will be discussed in the actual analysis, as well as the implications for facework in argumentative discourse.

The second important concept is *preference organisation*. This term can, as suggested in 3.8.2, be applied to first pair parts as well as second pair parts. The way in which turns are organised can provide insights into how speakers are interpreting and conceptualising the task. However, turn organisation can be constrained by linguistic proficiency and processing constraints (see 2.3.5)

Providing a developmental account of the organisation of argumentative discourse across three levels of proficiency is not an easy task due to a number of factors. Firstly, as discussed before, the three language 'Stages' from which subjects were recruited do not constitute objective levels of proficiency in the sense that students were first tested and then assigned to one of three levels. Rather, they are formed through students' progression through the language programme at the University of Eggburton. As a consequence of this, learners' behaviours at any of the three stages often diverge greatly, although some common trends exist. At each Stage, some students tend to gravitate upwards in terms of their strategies (e.g. students at Stage 3 use behaviour seen as typical for Stage 5), while some gravitate downwards, even to the extent that, for example, Stage 7 students occasionally display behaviours typical of Stage 3. Furthermore, individual students may at one point in their conversations employ very sophisticated facework, while at other times, they seem to struggle with the task.

What I will therefore aim to describe are the clearly identifiable and shared commonalities in the facework of learners of one particular stage. However, I will also point out particular behaviours that seem to constitute a significant departure from behaviours typically displayed at earlier stages. This way of proceeding will allow me to identify developmental stages and make claims about the way facework is done, what frame of reference it orients to, and the way it is constrained by linguistic and processing problems.

5.3 The organisation of argumentative sequences

Developments with regard to the organisation of argumentative sequences concern primarily the length of these sequences, the responsiveness of speakers to the turns of the interlocutor and the degree of argumentativeness displayed by learners.

At Stage 3, learners usually deal with issues and problems in a two- or three-turn structure. This means that learners introduce a problem and their opinion/assessment of the problem, and the interlocutor replies.[45] The following is an example of this pattern (37):

```
(37) Stage3.4Binge

1    ELENA: ich finde dass eh seminar über die wirkung des alkohols eh
                I find that eh seminar about the effect of alcohol eh
2    in i- in leuten in leutes gesundheit ist das wich- das wichtigs
     on o- on people on people's health is the imp- the most important
3    und beste lösung weil (.) weil die studenten können alleine: eh
     and best solution because (.) because the students can eh
```

---

[45] In some cases, one of the speaker introduces a topic by asking the other explicitly what s/he thinks about it, which means that the 'core' adjacency pair is preceded by a question.

```
4       verstanden weil (.) warum alkohol ist eh (.) ist
        understand: by themselves because (.) why alcohol is eh (.) is
5       gefährlich für für seine gesundheit
        dangerous for for their health
6   ANNA: sie sollen das (.) früh verstehen
        they shall understand (.) that very early
7   ELENA: ja
        yes
8   ANNA: ich glaube das auch (.) ich glaube das auch
        I believe that as well (.) I believe that as well
```

In this example, Elena suggests offering seminars about the effects of alcohol in order to discourage students from drinking too much of it (l. 1-5). Anna agrees with this suggestion by repeating a key word from Elena's turn ('verstehen', l. 6) and with an affirmative agreement formula (l. 8). After this episode, a new topic is immediately introduced (not represented in this transcript).

When sequences are elaborated beyond a core adjacency pair, this often includes the provision of reasons for assessments or opinions not included in the initial adjacency pair (38):

(38) Stage3.4Binge

```
1   ANNA: ich glaube das auch (.) ich glaube das auch (.) hm: was
            I believe that as well (.) I believe that as well (.)
2       findest du über alkoholische getränke in dem campus teurer (.)
        hm: what do you think about making alcoholic drinks on campus
3       machen
        (.) more expensive
4   ELENA: ja:=
            yes:=
5   ANNA: =ich glaube das ist nicht ein gute lösung
            =I believe this is not a good solution
6   ELENA: [ja
            [yes
7   ANNA:   [nicht (.) die beste lösung
            [not (.) the best solution
8   ELENA: ja nicht die beste ich [eh
            yes not the best I [eh
9   ANNA:                         [sie sie willen al- if sie will ob
                                  [they they want al- if they want if
10      sie willen wenn sie willen die alkohol trinken [dann
        they want if they want to drink the alcohol [then
11  ELENA:                                              [ja (.) sie
                                                        [yes (.) they
12      bezahlen mehr (.) aber (.) aber ein hoch preis reduziert immer
        will pay more (.) but (.) but a high price reduces always
13      immer die die förderung von die getränke aber nicht so (.) viel
        always the the sales of the drinks but not as (.) much
```

In (38), Anna argues against the suggestion of making alcoholic drinks on campus more expensive, using evaluative phrases ('nicht eine gute lösung', 'nicht die beste lösung', l. 5, 7) when doing so. This is the first pair part of the argumentative sequence, and no reasons for why alcoholic drinks should not be made more

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expensive are given at this point. In her answer, Elena simply takes up and repeats the evaluative phrase, but again without providing reasons/evidence for her agreement (l. 8). Whether she indeed agrees or disagrees is not absolutely clear at this point.

It is only after the topic is established in the core adjacency pair that both Anna and Elena, each in their respective turn, provide reasons for their initial assessments, and a difference in position emerges. While Anna seems to suggest that students will drink alcohol when they want to anyway (l. 9-10), Elena thinks that rising prices will have a positive effect (l. 12-13). Although the issue of higher prices is therefore clearly established as arguable, Anna and Elena make no attempt to negotiate their positions further. Elena's opinion therefore stands as accepted, and an argument in the sense of extensive negotiation of opinions does not emerge.

Occasionally, conditionally relevant turns are also missing due to the fact that learners seem to be having difficulties in establishing topical coherence (39):

(39)   Stage3.9Obese

```
1     SCARLETT: [...] aber eh persönlich mehr gesund eh (.) essen mit
                [...] but eh personally more healthy eh (.) making food
2     viel fett zucker und oder salz teurer machen ist eh vielleicht
      with lots of fat sugar and or salt making more expensive is eh
3     eine schlechte ideen eh (.) glaube ich gesundere mahlzeiten
      maybe a bad idea eh (.) I believe healthy meals have to be made
4     billiger machen müssen weil studenten haben kein geld und eh das
      cheaper because students have no money and eh that
5     wird eh nur unsere probleme eh sch- schlechter machen
      will eh only make our problems eh w- worse
6     WAYNE: hm (.) und und auch jeder sagt dass wir müssen die
             hm (.) and and also everybody says that we have to
7     fettsucht bekämpfen aber: em niemand em macht gute maßnahmen und
      fight obesity but: em nobody em makes good measures and
8     (.) das das hilft die situation em nicht em wenn wir wirklich die
      (.) that that does not help the situation em when we can really
9     fettsucht bekämpfen können dann es es würde kosten sehr viel em
      fight obesity then it it would cost a lot em
10    (.) zu die junge leute em besser informieren und em sie müssen em
      (.) to em inform the young people better and em they have to em
11    em (.) die (.) also sie müssen billigere em eh essen haben em die
      em (.) the (.) well they have to have cheaper em eh food em that
12    gesund ist
      is healthy
13    SCARLETT: ja eh das ist (.) nur nur eh warum kaufe ich schokolade
              yeah eh that is (.) only only eh why do I buy
14    weil eh ein salat salat in eh mcdonalds ist eh teurer als ein
      chocolate eh a salad a salad in mcdonalds is eh more expensive
15    ham- hamburger in mc[donalds
      than a ham- hamburger in mc[donalds
16    WAYNE:                    [hm
                                [hm
17  SCARLETT: und das ist nicht gut für eh (.) eh junge leute
              and this is not good for eh (.) eh young people
```

In example (39), Scarlett gives a slight edge to one of the suggestions made in the task instruction cards by proposing that, rather than making unhealthy food more expensive, the prices on healthy food should be lowered in an effort to fight obesity (l. 1-5). Wayne however does not take up this suggestion at all, but instead discusses the issue of obesity in a more global manner (l. 6-10). It is only at the end of this long turn that Wayne returns to Scarlett's suggestion, seemingly judging it favourably (l. 11-12), but without providing any reasons for this favourable judgment.

Although topical coherence is eventually established, this is nevertheless a case in which, according to the principle of conditional relevance, an expected and relevant turn is missing. It is possible that the late uptake of the original topic is due to Wayne trying to gain time to think about how to make his point. Nevertheless, the absence of a relevant second pair part or the delay in which it is uttered marks Wayne's turn as potentially accountable and sanctionable, although Scarlett does not treat it as such. Rather, Scarlett uses the cheap prices in fast food restaurants and their resulting success as evidence for her own claim that healthy food should be made less expensive (l. 13-17).

One clearly observable trend at Stage 5 is that argumentative sequences are commonly negotiated over more than just the core adjacency pair, i.e. each argumentative sequence consist of a number of turns, as example (40) shows:

(40) **Stage5.3Binge**

```
1    GIANNA: ja (.) und ja vielleicht hm (.) ich denke auch dass die:
                yeah (.) and yeah maybe hm (.) I also think that the:
2    die beste maßnahme ist in den campus getränke teurer machen
     the best measure is making drinks on campus more expensive
3    ROBERTA: hm ja (.) ich glaube ich bin total einverstanden mit eh
                hm yeah (.) I believe I totally agree with eh
4    du mit dir aber: ich glaube dass wenn eh jemand trinken will em
     you with you but: I believe that when eh somebody wants to drink
5    wenn trinkt em: (.) ich weiß nicht es es ist ein eine gute lösung
     em when he drinks em: (.) I don't know it it is a a good solution
6    aber wenn wenn man trinken will dann trinkt
     but when when one wants to drink then one drinks
7    GIANNA: (in:)
                (in:)
8    ROBERTA: ja (.) em sie können eh weniger trinken wenn es sehr
                yes (.) em they can eh drink less when it is very
9    teuer ist aber (.) wenn sie wollen in in parties oder so
     expensive but (.) when they want in in parties or so
10   GIANNA: ja ja
             yes yes
11   ROBERTA: sie [kaufen mit einem groß gruppe eh gruppe und sie und=
                they [buy with a large group eh group and they and=
12   GIANNA:        [(hart) getränke
                    [(hard) drinks
13   ROBERTA: =wo viele eh mit viele leute und sie bezahlen ein
                =where many eh with many people and they pay a
14             bisschen [jeder und
               bit [everybody and
```

```
15   GIANNA:    [ja (.) ich kenne viele leute dass (.) sie kaufen die
                [yes (.) I know many people that (.) they buy the
16   getränke in supermarkt
     drinks in the supermarket
17   ROBERTA:  ja (.) das
               yeah (.) that
18   GIANNA:  und (.) sie sind billiger
              and (.) they are cheaper
19   ROBERTA:  das [was wir machen in spanien
               that [what we do in spain
20   GIANNA:        [sie sind billig und ja (.) weswegen hm:  (.)
                    [they are cheap and yeah (.) for that reason hm:
21   vielleicht auch eh getränke in den supermarkt teurer machen
     (.) maybe also making drinks in the supermarket more expensive
22   ROBERTA:  ja das wäre eine eine andere lösung aber ((sch))
               yeah that would be a a different solution but ((sch))
23   GIANNA:  ja die junge
              yeah the young
24   ROBERTA:  jugend (.) trinken
               youth (.) drinks
25   GIANNA:  sie finden
              they find
26   ROBERTA:  ja sie finden viele eh mehr lösungen wie als ah als wir
               yeah they find many eh more solutions than us ah than us
27             [(          )
               [(          )
28   GIANNA:  [(        ) etwas von den (            )
              [(        ) something of the (            )
29   ROBERTA:  ja ein andere we:g
               yes another wa:y
30   GIANNA:  [jaja
              [yeahyeah
31   ROBERTA:  [oder so um um trinken zu können ja (.)
               [or so in order in order to be able to drink (.)
```

The discussion in (40) centers on the feasibility of higher prices for alcoholic drinks in campus bars. Having heard Gianna's proposal and very high ranking of this measure (l. 1-2), Roberta, although initially signaling enthusiastic agreement (l. 3-4), objects to the proposal, suggesting that when students want to drink, they find a way to do it (l. 3-6). The remaining part of the discussion then builds on the reasons and the evidence given in this second pair part. Roberta elaborates on these reasons fairly extensively (l. 8-9, 11, 13-14), while Gianna signals agreement throughout (l. 7, 10, 12, 15-16), including an account based on personal experience. From there on, Roberta and Gianna start closely relating their own turns to those of the other speaker, i.e. by repeating parts and completing each others' turns. The high degree of cohesion and collaboration also shows through the fact that there are a number of cooperative overlaps throughout the sequence.

While Gianna could have focused on the fact that Roberta disagreed with her high ranking of a higher price on alcoholic price, she chose instead to elaborate on the evidence provided by Roberta in this disagreement, namely that students would just go to the shops and drink there. This means that she concedes to Roberta rather than

defending her original proposal. These sorts of concessions are very frequent at all stages, and elaborating on agreement remains the main purpose of postsequences throughout.

Only two speakers from Stage 5, Courtney and Clifford, show a more competitive edge in their discussions, which leads to them employing both insertion sequences and postsequences to try and get the interlocutor to back down from a disagreeable point, provide more evidence for opinions or assessments, or to re-evaluate proposals (41):

(41) Stage5.8Binge

```
1    COURTNEY: aber die es sagt ja auch dass die alkoholische getränke
                   but it it also says that alcoholic drinks could be made
2    könnten in den campusbars teurer gemacht werden
     more expansive in campus bars
3    CLIFFORD: aber wie teuer (.) weil jetzt in den bars im
                   but how expensive (.) because now in the bars in
4    studentenwohnheim (.) ist es ein pfund pro pint oder [sowas
     halls (.) it is one pound per pint or [something
5    COURTNEY:                                            [ja ja ich
                                                         [yeah yeah I
6    weiß es wenn man em limonade mit em archers kaufen will oder mit
     know it because when one em wants to buy lemonade or with
7    wodka dann kostet es nur einen pfund fünfzig
     wodka then it costs only one pound fifty
8    CLIFFORD: ja
                   yes
9    COURTNEY: aber wenn man zum eine normale em (.) eh pub geht dann
                   but when one goes to a em (.) eh normal pub then
10   ist es nur ist es (.) doppelt so viel
     it is only it is (.) twice as much
11   CLIFFORD: ja ja
                   yeah yeah
12   COURTNEY: und das vielleicht bringt das em hm eh studenten in
                   and then maybe this has as a result that em hm eh
13   diesen campusbars gehen und mehr trinken weil sie es leisten
     students go to these campus bars and drink more because they can
14   können
     afford it
15   CLIFFORD: ja (.) aber (.) ich weiß auch dass es studenten gibt wie
                   yes (.) but (.) I also know that there are students like
16   meine freunde letztes jahr die zwei minuten von der campusbar
     my friends last year who lived two minutes from the campusbar
17   wohnen und wir haben jedes nacht zum zu der campusbar ge- gegangen
     and we we- went to the campusbar every night
18   aber wir haben nicht jedes nacht zehn zehn pints gehabt (.) wir
     but we didn't have ten pints every night (.) we
19   haben vielleicht eine oder zwei wodka oder vielleicht cola em: (.)
     have maybe one or two wodka or maybe cola em: (.)
20   es ist (.) in den campusbars em kann man em freunde treffen und
     it is (.) in the campusbars em one can em meet friends and
21   auch reden em und man muss nicht zehn pints haben um eine gute
     also talk em and one does not have to have ten pints in order
22   zeit zu haben
     to have a good time
23   COURTNEY: ja klar
                   yeah sure
24   CLIFFORD: a- aber und (.) ja (         ) em und ich denke dass
                   b- but and (.) yeah (         ) em and I think that
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25   durch diese gründe würde es (.) ein bisschen unfair sein um ein
     due to these reasons it would be (.) a bit unfair in order to be
26   pint eh drei pfund sein
     eh three pounds a pint
27   COURTNEY: ja ja (.) ok aber em es ist nicht gut dass in en
               yeah yeah (.) ok but em it is not good that in en
28   campusbars zum beispiel in den champerleign campusbars gibt es
     campusbars for example in the champerleign campusbars there is
29   ein ein board?
     a a board?
```

In (41), a disagreement emerges between Clifford and Courtney with regard to the introduction of higher prices on drinks in campus bars, suggested as a possibility by Courtney (l. 1-2). Although Clifford's reply (l. 3-4) implies that he is not happy with this suggestion, he does not voice this directly at this point. Rather, his turn introduces some discussion on the current pricing structure for alcoholic drinks in campus bars and beyond (l. 3-14). This constitutes an insertion sequence, by means of which Clifford cannot only postpone further disagreement, but also try to make Courtney rethink and modify her opinion. However, at the end of this sequence, Courtney uses the example of pricing to reaffirm her original opinion that higher prices are beneficial (l. 12-14). From this point on, the argument develops further, with both speakers providing evidence for their respective positions. As this sequence is very long, it cannot be represented here entirely. It ends as follows (42):

(42) Stage5.8Binge

```
1    CLIFFORD: [stimmt (.) ja alkohol ist (.) ist ist teuer em
               [right (.) yes alcohol is (.) is is more expensive em
2    COURTNEY: und sollte teuer sein
               and should be more expensive
3    CLIFFORD: ja vielleicht (.) zum beispiel letztes nacht habe ich
               yeah maybe (.) for example last night I spent
4    zwanzig pfund em ausgegeben für eh für alkohol und das war so (.)
     twenty pounds em for eh for alcohol and that was so (.)
5    zu viel
     too much
6    COURTNEY: zu viel
               too much
7    CLIFFORD: ja
               yeah
8    COURTNEY: war es zwanzig pfund für nur dich? Oder
               was it twenty pounds only for you? or
9    CLIFFORD: ja für für mich (.) well nicht vielleicht fünfzehn pfund
               yeah for for me (.) well not maybe fifteen pounds
10   aber es war zu viel alkohol und vielleicht soll es teurer sein
     but is was too much alcohol and maybe it should be more expensive
```

This shows that by the end of a very long argumentative sequence, Clifford indeed comes round to the idea of higher prices on alcoholic drinks in campus bars, although his agreement is somewhat hedged and downgraded with downtoners. ('vielleicht' in l. 3, l. 10). Hence, what has been achieved here is a back-down from an

earlier position through further elaboration on a topic after an initial core adjacency pair. This is a use of post-sequences that was not observed at all at Stage 3. Furthermore, an insertion sequence not only allowed Clifford and Courtney to establish on a factual level the current price level in campus bars, but also enabled Clifford to postpone his disagreement over turns.

Although this extract (41, 42) is typical for Stage 5 in one aspect, showing that speakers tend to answer coherently and use expansions to core adjacency pairs as a means of dealing with disagreement or expanding agreement, it is still rather untypical as far as the length and degree of competitiveness are concerned. As I shall show in the remaining part of this analysis, competing over opinions is generally not very high on the agenda for learners.

Generally, the development of argumentative sequencing between Stage 5 and Stage 7 do not appear to be as pronounced as between Stage 3 and 5. Just as at Stage 5, argumentative sequences at Stage 7 generally stretch over a number of turns. By means of expansions of argumentative sequences beyond a core adjacency pair in the form of postsequences, speakers can achieve a number of things. They can back up their claims with evidence – this happens fairly often as the core adjacency pair often establishes merely the ranking of items – build on existing agreement and, very rarely, negotiate an issue extensively and try to make the interlocutor concede. In some cases however, postsequences take the form of a negotiation of pros and cons rather than being truly controversial (43):

(43) Stage7.7Advice

```
1    JENNY: eh: was sollten deutschstudenten (.) des ersten (.) ok
              eh: what should students of german (.) of the first (.) ok
2    HEATHER: das ist ziemlich schwierig weil (.) im ersten jahre also
              this is quite difficult because (.) in the first year
3    (.) meiner meinung nach man kann deutsch lernen in deutschland
     well (.) according to my opinion one can learn german in germany
4    oder österreich das ist (.) normal also (.) aber im ersten
     or austria this is (.) normal (.) but in the first year of study
5    studienjahr geht es nicht man hat nicht genug zeit (.) [in
     that does not work one does not have enough time (.) [to to
6    deutschland zu zu fahren
     go to germany
7    JENNY:                                                  [ja ich
                                                             [yes I
8    hatte (              ) ja ja das ist nicht so praktisch das ist
     had (                ) yeah yeah this is not that practical this is
9    nicht so praktisch (.) und ich hatte auch probleme mit (.) diese
     not that practical (.) and I also had problems with (.) these
10   grammatikübung (.) weil
     grammar exercises (.) because
11   HEATHER: das hilft nicht so viel ((beide lachen))
              that does not help that much ((both laugh))
12   JENNY: es es hilft nicht so viel also ich hab gedacht es hilft
            it it does not help as much but I have thought it doesn't
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13   nicht so viel beim so reden und so aber be- vielleicht machen (.)
     help as much with like talking and so but be- maybe it makes (.)
14   sie eh (.) selbst (.) confident
     one eh (.) self (.) confident
15   HEATHER: ja (.) selbstsicher
              yeah (.) self confident
16   JENNY: selbstsicher
            self confident
17   HEATHER: ja also man fühlt [sich ja ja
              yeah well one [feels yeah yeah
18   JENNY:                     [man fühlt sich was (.) sich am besten
                               [one feels what (.) best
19   ein bisschen [besser kann oder so
     a bit [better can or so
20   HEATHER:    [ja: aber zum beispiel wir haben zum im im ersten
                [yes: but for example we did in in the
21   studienjahr und im zweiten viel grammatik gemacht
     first year and in the second one a lot of grammar
22   JENNY: aha
            aha
23   HEATHER: und es hat mir nicht doch es hat mir geholfen aber nicht
              and it did not help well it did help but not
24   so viel
     that much
25   JENNY: das erste [jahr
            the first [year
26   HEATHER:         [als ich in in ausland war
                     [when I was abroad
27   JENNY: ja
            yes
28   HEATHER: weil ich habe gedacht (.) ok ich kenne alle diese
              because I thought (.) ok I know all these grammatical
29   grammatische regeln (.) aber ich kann nicht so gut sprechen
     rules (.) but I can't talk all that well
30   JENNY: ja das stimmt (.) und (.) auch das erste jahr weil diese
            yes that's right (.) and also the first year because this
31   man soll wirklich so viele grammatikübungen machen [hab ich nur=
     one really has to do really that many grammar exercises [I just=
32   HEATHER:                                           [das war zu
                                                       [that was
33   viel (zu schnell)
     too much (too fast)
34   JENNY: =angst gekriegt ja und dann war ich so oh NO ich kann gar
            =became afraid yes and then I was like NO I cannot speak
35   keine deutsch sprechen [plötzlich
     german at all [suddenly
36   HEATHER:               [ja (.) ja und wir haben so viele also in
                           [yeah (.) yeah and we have done that many well in
37   der schule gemacht [also zuhause haben wir keine chance
     school [at home we don't have a chance
38   JENNY:            [ja dann
                      [yes then
39   JENNY: ja
            yeah
```

In (43), two different issues are discussed: Heather initially suggests that going abroad to German-speaking countries would be beneficial for first year students of German; however, she immediately provides practical reasons against this suggestion within the same turn (l. 2-6). The second suggestion is then introduced by Jenny, who

initially agrees to the non-practicality of going abroad for first year students (l. 7-9), and immediately latches on to this a second proposal she found problematic – the suggestion of doing many grammar exercises (l. 9-10).

After Heather's agreement on the limited use of grammar exercises and the ratification of agreement on the issue (l. 11) the sequence is expanded. In this expansion, there is an, at times, strange mixture of turns and parts of turns that support this initially agreed position and those that do not. For example, Jenny suggests that doing a lot of grammar does not help a lot when it comes to conversational fluency (l. 12-13), but offers a counter-argument within the same turn, namely that better grammar might contribute to students' confidence (l. 13-14). In the following turns, both Jenny and Heather collaboratively build agreement on the confidence argument. However, Heather then offers another objection by saying that, rather than developing her confidence, doing a lot of grammar also made her very conscious of her linguistic output and was, at times, detrimental to gaining confidence (l. 20-21, 23-24, 28-29). This, in turn, causes Jenny to agree, proposing that doing lots of grammar exercises made her afraid to speak (l. 30-31, 34-35).

Both Jenny's and Heather's arguments are therefore contradictory in themselves, and the entire sequence has the character of an exchange of pros and cons rather than discourse in which speakers mutually try to convince each other of their opinions. Moreover, there is also evidence of the two learners trying to please an audience beyond the immediate conversational context. In this case, it is likely that Jenny and Heather feel they need to say positive things about grammar, given the fact that the conversation takes place in an educational context.

While postsequences are therefore still quite rarely featuring any real argument, insertion sequences are more common at this level, and they can serve to force the interlocutor to come up with reasons for a claim or a re-assessment (44):

```
(44)  Stage7.3Obese

1     EMMA: ich habe es auf em (.) vier gemacht
                I have put it on em (.) four
2     DONALD: auf vier? wieso [das denn?
                on four? why [that?
3     EMMA:                   [JA? (.) weil ich denke dass man freie
                              [YES? (.) because I think that one should
4     wille haben soll [(        )
      be free to chose [(        )
5     DONALD:          [ja aber man kann leute so ein bisschen erMUTIGEN
                       [yes but one can ENCOURAGE people a bit
6     so [man kann sagen ja
      so [one can say
7     EMMA: [ja aber man soll nicht zwingen (.) und ich denke studenten
            [yes but one shall not force (.) and I think students
8     haben kein kein geld [und und deswegen das ist nicht eine gute=
      have no no money [and and therefore this is not a good
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9    DONALD:              [hm (.) hm
                    [hm (.) hm
10   EMMA:  =idee
              =idea
```

In (44), we meet Emma and Donald discussing the question of whether unhealthy food should be made more expensive. We are joining the discussion at the point when Emma suggests that this proposal should be ranked fourth, following up on an earlier ranking by Donald of the same proposal on third position. Although Emma's and Donald's ranking positions are therefore not very different, one of the most adversarial argumentative sequences within the learner data emerges. Rather than providing a direct disagreement to Emma's ranking, Donald forces Emma to come up with a reason for her suggestion (l. 2), and at a same time, avoids and postpones his own disagreement.

The reason which Emma then provides – freedom of choice should be valued (l. 3-4) – is essentially what ignites the long sequence of disagreement that follows after this rather than the actual initial assessment or ranking. While Donald argues that a change of the pricing structure will encourage students to eat more healthily (l. 5-6), Emma insists on giving students free choice (l. 7-9). Due to the length of the sequence that is about to follow, it cannot be represented here fully, but the issue essentially remains unresolved.

The ability to make one's arguments heard is intrinsically related to making particular social roles relevant and therefore to present the desired face / identity. This analysis has shown that, along with their progression through the Stages, learners increasingly learn to use the organisation of argumentative sequences for arguing their points. Although extended sequences consisting of challenge and counter-challenge are still rare, learners learn to defend their opinions and challenge the interlocutor. These developments are generally mirrored in the preference organisation of turns as well.

5.4 Preference Organisation

5.4.1 Initial opinions/assessments

When discussing first pair parts, I will focus my attention on those turns that introduce argumentative sequences by providing a first opinion/assessment of the validity of suggestions. Turns that are a reaction to what has been said before will be included in the analysis of agreement / disagreement turns.

At Stage 3, the trend towards brevity and communicative efficiency is not only evident in the overall organisation of argumentative sequences, but also in the

organisation of the turns themselves. Furthermore, many of these contain sequences that are of a formulaic character (45):

(45) Stage3.3Admission

```
1   GOPAL: ich ich em (.) ich glaube em auch dass em die persönliche
               I I em (.) I believe em too that em the personal
2   eindruck em vom kandidaten ist eh ist wichtig em (.) weil em em (.
    impression from the candidate is eh is important em (.) because em
3   (.) weil man em (.) weil man em (.) was f- em em was für ein
    em (.) because one em (.) because one em (.) what s- em em what
4   person em die bewerber em em die hat
    sort of person em the applicant em em the has
5   JOHN: ja=
          yeah
6   GOPAL: =und sehen em em
          =and see em em
```

In (45), Gopal evaluates positively the suggestion that personal impressions should be one criterion on which to decide over university admission. This extract is exemplary in a number of aspects: The only downgrader employed by Gopal is an epistemic verb ('ich glaube', l. 1), and he uses an evaluative phrase ('es ist wichtig', l. 2) to clarify his stance. Although, due to space constraints, I am unable at this point to provide further examples, 'es ist wichtig' is – with some variation – a reoccurring string of words in Gopal's contributions to this discussion, i.e. it is a formulaic phrase that he seems to have easy access to. However, the repeated use of such formulaic evaluative phrases, many of which are generic adjectives such as 'gut' or 'schlecht' or 'wichtig' do not allow him and other learners to mark variation in the degree of desire they attach to what they are saying.[46]

From Stage 5 onwards, speakers' initial suggestions and opinion turns become increasingly more elaborated (46):

(46) Stage5.9Tuition

```
1   CLIFFORD: em (.) ich habe vielleicht eine andere meinung von die
               em (.) maybe I have a different opinion from
2   meisten (.) aber nicht von (.) vielleicht jetzt nicht von von den
    most people (.) but not from (.) maybe not from from most people
3   meisten aber weil ich präsident des american football club sein
    but because I am president of the american football club (.)
4   denke ich dass mehr geld zum sport gehen soll
    I think that more money should go to fund sports
```

In (46), which is an extract from a discussion on the use of tuition fees, Clifford proposes that more of the money raised through tuition fees should go towards sports (l. 4). However, this proposal, which is the main proposition of the turn, is postponed

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[46] What is however not typical about Gopal's turn when compared to the organisation of similar turns at this level is the fact that he immediately provides a reason for this opinion.

within the turn. Clifford first prepares his interlocutor Emma for the fact that what he says might be controversial (l. 1-3). Furthermore, he brings his identity as president of the American football club into play in order to account for the validity of his forthcoming suggestion (l. 3-4).

This extract also reveals further trends observed very regularly at Stage 5. In his actual suggestion, Clifford employs 'sollen' as an explicit means of modalisation rather than using an evaluative phrase (see 6.3). Furthermore, his suggestion features a number of downtoners ('vielleicht'; l. 1, 2) that were not encountered with the same regularity at Stage 3.

Furthermore, any claims or suggestions speakers make are now more regularly supported by evidence within the initial turn rather than expansion turns (47):

(47) Stage5.1Activities

```
1    ELISA: ja ich (.) ich glaube auch das ist (.) gut wäre wenn man
             yes I (.) I also believe that it (.) would be good if one
2    deutschen in der freizeit sprechen könnte
     could talk to germans in one's free time
3    JOY: ja
          yes
4    ELISA: also viele VIELE deutsche studenten hier also englische
             well many MANY german students here I mean english
5    studenten die deutsch studieren (.) sie kommen aus aus die
     students who study german (.) they leave the the classroom
6    klassenzimmer und sie sprechen plötzlich englisch (.) KEIN wort
     and they suddenly speak english (.) NOT a word of german
7    deutsch und es wäre besser glaube ich wenn sie vielleicht ein
     and it would be better I believe if they maybe spoke
8    bisschen deutsch zusammen sprechen
     some german with each other
9    JOY: ja (.) ja das ist (gut) ((nickt mit dem kopf))
          yeah (.) this is (good) ((nods her head))
10   ELISA: das das wäre nützlich glaube ich es (.) weil sie dann üben
             that that would be useful I believe it (.) because they
11   könnten und ALLE machen fehler das das macht nichts=
     would then be able to practice and EVERYBODY makes errors that=
12   JOY: =ja
          =yes
13   ELISA: =und sie LERNEN dass das nichts ausmacht das (.) und es
             =that doesn't matter and they LEARN that this doesn't
14   hilf- es hilft (.) man kann so mehr fließend lernen
     matter that (.) and it hel- it helps (.) one can learn more
     fluently
```

In (47), Elisa links her suggestion that students of German should take the chance to talk to native speakers of German and to each other more often (l. 1-2, l. 7-8) to her own experience as a language student at the university, in particular the observation that after classes are over, students do not tend to use their foreign language skills any more (l. 4-6). She also suggests that, if students did that, it would teach students not to focus on their errors so much (l. 10-12, 14).

What is also interesting about Elisa's turn is the fact that she repairs parts of it in an effort to heighten its effectiveness ('sie sprechen plötzlich englisch (.) kein wort deutsch', l. 6-7). Moreover, a number of markers of epistemic modality appear in this turn. Elisa employs conditional forms (l. 1, 7) that allow her to present what she is saying as hypothetical and therefore distance herself from her proposals if necessary. Secondly, although there are no lexical intensifiers or uptoners, she prosodically emphasizes key elements of her proposal.

At Stage 7, speakers generally dispose of a variety of ways of making suggestions and expressing opinions. Turns that introduce a topic with reference to the ranking position of suggestions are usually quite straightforward and unmitigated, with more elaborate evidence provided later. When however suggestions are made in other ways, turns are often very elaborate, with long accounts for why an action is done or proposed (48):

```
(48) Stage7.4Advice

1    DONALD: =also das für mich wär so viele grammatikübungen wie
             =well that for me would be to do as many grammar exercises
2    möglich machen und so weiter [das wär so (.) was auch WICHTIG ist=
     as possible and so on [that would be so (.) what is IMPORTANT=
3    EMMA:                                 [ah (.) ok
                                 [ah (.) ok
4    DONALD: =aber (.) das find ich auch schade eigentlich also (.) ich
             =as well (.) I find that a pity actually (.) I find there
5    finde es gibt leute die nie wirklich grammatik gelernt haben in
     are people who have never really learned grammar in school in
6    der schule in england heutzutage gibt's immer weniger lehrer die
     england nowadays there are fewer and fewer teachers who really
7    wirklich grammatik beibringen also ich hab glück gehabt mein
     teach grammar I have been lucky my teacher in school
8    lehrer in der schule hat VIEL grammatik gemacht und das ich finde
     taught A LOT OF grammar and that I find (.) I am finding it very
9    (.) also ich finde es sehr wichtig in deutschland zu sein und so
     important to be in Germany and to speak as much
10   viel wie möglich auf deutsch zu reden [(.) aber muss irgendwann=
     German as possible [(.) but has to at some time=
11   EMMA:                                 [(              )
                                           [(              )
12   DONALD: =diese grammatik genau (.) man muss das irgendwann lernen
             =this grammar exactly (.) one has to learn that at some
13   (.) und man WIRD das nicht in [deutschland lernen man muss
     time (.) and one WILL not learn that in Germany one has to
```

In this conversation, which centres around the question of what first year students should do to improve their language skills, Donald suggests that students should do as many grammar exercises as possible (l. 1-2). While this suggestion is hardly postponed and relatively straightforward, it is mitigated through a subjectivisier (l. 1), conditional verb forms (l. 1, 2), and a hedge (l. 2). Furthermore, the evidence that he provides to support his opinion stretches over many lines (l. 4-13).

One further trend pertaining to the structural organisation of initial turns (and agreement/disagreement turns as well) is the inclusion of concessive elements within a turn as well as elements that indicate to the interlocutor that the opinion expressed may not be to their taste (49):

(49) Stage7.5Obese

```
1    ESTHER: ja ((nickt)) aber ich find (.) em ich weiß nicht ob du das
                yes ((nods)) but I think (.) em I don't know whether you
2    auch so fühlst aber ich hab gefunden dass es mehr gesünderes gibt
     also feel that way but I have found that there are more healthy
3    wenn man jetzt mal von diesem jahr ausgeht (.) also im zweiten
     things if one considers this year (.) I mean in our second year
4    jahr denke ich mal nicht so viel (.) die auswahl an so g m free
     I think not as much (.) the choice of like g m free not
5    nicht genetisch modifiziert
     genetically modified
6    HOLLY: ohne
                without
7    ESTHER: ohne das (.) ich glaube also es gibt jetzt mehr auswahl
                without that (.) I believe that there is more choice now
8    HOLLY: ja ja
                yeah yeah
9    ESTHER: vielleicht haben sie schon überlegt wie man das jetzt
                maybe they have already thought about how one can do that
10   machen kann ich weiß nicht ich weiß nicht ob du das auch so (.)
     now I don't know I don't know whether you also (.)
11   ich hab das nur so von mir aus gemerkt
     I just realised that on my part
```

In this example (49), Esther claims that, according to her observations, the university has already implemented changes with regard to the food they offer, i.e. there is a better choice of healthy food and of genetically unmodified food. Within this turn, a number of elements appear that enable her to distance herself from her claims. For example, the downtoner 'ich weiß nicht' appears a number of times (l. 1, l. 10), in addition to epistemic verbs (l. 1, 2, 4, 7), some of which are further mitigated through modal particles (e.g. 'denk ich mal', l. 4). Moreover, she indicates directly that Holly may not agree with this observation (l. 1, 10), and that this is her personal opinion (l. 10-11). By doing this, Esther is able to postpone the main proposition of her turn as a means of distancing and protect herself from further disagreement.

5.4.2 Disagreement

5.4.2.1 Quantitative evidence

Fur the purpose of this thesis, turns were counted as disagreement turns when they expressed a speaker's discontent with a ranking, an assessment, an opinion or evidence brought forward by the interlocutor. In the CA literature, disagreement turns

have mostly been described as a dispreferred and therefore more complex turn than agreement.

One feature of such dispreferred turns is the inclusion of an element of agreement. According to Kotthoff (1993), speakers can use these elements for two different purposes. Agreement elements can soften disagreement, but also undermine the interlocutors' arguments in order to sharpen one's own arguments and make them heard. A condition for this to happen is a local connection to the preceding contribution. Furthermore, Kotthoff suggests that when an argument becomes established, disagreement is a preferred turn, in which case "upgraded agreement may be considered to foreshadow strong disagreement" (p. 204).

For the quantitative analysis, the number of disagreements at each of the three levels were counted in which disagreement was not preceded by an element of agreement as well as the instances of token agreement (e.g. 'ja aber'), partial agreement (full agreement to a partial aspect) and asserted agreement (repetition of all or parts of interlocutors' turn or an agreement formula) at each Stage.[47] The overall picture emerging from this analysis is as follows (figure 1):
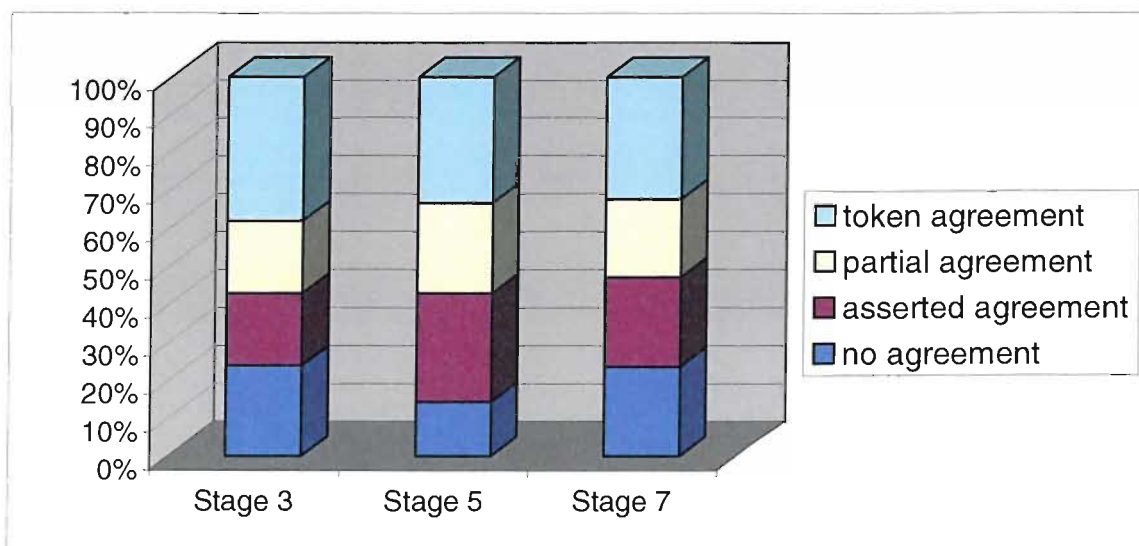
Figure 1: Disagreement across levels

Figure 1 suggests that, perhaps surprisingly, disagreement is mitigated and postponed through an agreement element very regularly at all levels. Less than a quarter of all disagreements at Stage 3 and Stage 7 are brought forward without a preceding element of agreement, and only 14% at Stage 5 have no such preceding element of agreement.

The figure also shows that the use of token agreement declines slowly, but steadily, between Stage 3 and Stage 7. While it precedes 38% of all disagreements at

[47] For a full definition and an example of each of these categories, please see Appendix E.

Stage 3, it is used in 33% of cases at Stage 5 and 31% at Stage 7. More elaborated agreement components (partial and asserted agreement) are, in contrast, on the rise, in particular at Stage 5, but also at Stage 7 as compared to Stage 3.

This figure however shows only part of the picture as further qualitative differences, which are not captured within the four categories described here, contribute to the general organisation of disagreement. Unfortunately, the occurrences of disagreement are low overall and within individual conversations, so that claims with regard to the individual variation of disagreement strategies are difficult to make.

5.4.2.2 Qualitative evidence

As we have already seen in the quantitative data, token agreement is the most frequently employed strategy for introducing disagreement at Stage 3. Although both fully elaborated partial agreement and asserted agreement is relatively rare, so is disagreement that is not preceded by means of an agreement element.

The following example shows that when no agreement element is added, a speakers' turn can indeed be perceived as offensive (50):

(50) **Stage3.4Binge**

```
1    ANNA: ich glaub- ich ich ich glaube dass em eh die wichtigste
              I belie- I I I believe that em eh the most important
2    lösung hier ist eh alkoholische getränke in den campusbars NUR
      solution here is eh to sell alcoholic drinks in campus bars ONLY
3    noch am an studenten über eh einundzwanzig jahre verkaufen ich
      to students who are more than twenty-one years old I
4    glaube dass die eh jüngere studente sind hm: sind nicht hm: (.)
      believe that the eh younger students are hm: are not hm: (.)
5    eh si- sind sind zu jung zu alk- zu dem sie trinken zu viel
      eh th- are are too young to alc- to they drink too much
6    alkohol eh und eh und da ich glaube dass hm dass sie soll (.)
      alcohol eh and eh and there I believe that hm that they shall (.)
7    älter (.) zu alkohol [trinken
      older (.) to drink [alcohol
8    ELENA:                 [ja: ich finde dass (.) dass alkoholische
                            [yes: I find that (.) that selling alcoholic
9    getränke in dem campus eh nur noch an studenten über einundzwanzig
      drinks on campus eh only to students over twenty-one years of age
10   jahre verkaufen ist nicht die beste lösung weil=
      is not the best solution because=
11   ANNA: =wa aber est eh=
            =wa but it is eh=
12   ELENA: =ja es ist ein gute lösung but nicht die beste weil eh die
             =yes it is a good solution but not the best one because eh
13   die jüngere studenten können können außer der campus trinken
      the the younger students can can drink outside of campus
14          [trinken zu=
            [drink at=
15   ANNA: [zu hause (.) ja
            [at home (.) yeah
16   ELENA: =kaufen und (.) wenn etwas ist verboten ich glaube em
             =buy and (.) when something is forbidden I believe em
```

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Example (50) centres on the idea of making alcoholic drinks in campus bars more expensive in order to take action against binge-drinking. The proposal is brought forward by Anna, marked as the best available option (l. 1-7). Elena's disagreement starts with 'ja' (l. 8), a marker that usually marks agreement, but she then recycles parts of Anna's previous turn and negates Anna's exact words ('nicht die beste lösung', l. 10) thereby expressing disagreement very directly. At this point, Anna tries to take the turn, indicating the desire to refute Elena's disagreement (l. 11), Although she is not successful in producing a full turn, this forces Elena to come up with an agreement preface (asserted agreement 'ja es ist eine gute lösung', l. 12) before elaborating on her reasons for the objections/disagreement (l. 12-13, 15-16).

This section suggests that, what would commonly be perceived as a marker of agreement ('ja'), is actually not enough to mitigate forthcoming disagreement. Instead, a combination with the contrastive marker 'aber' is necessary to fulfil this function, suggesting that 'ja aber' is lexicalised to a great extent as a means of prefacing disagreement and introducing turns more generally. Further evidence for this is the fact that not only Ashley and Brooke, as shown in the sample analysis of chapter 4 (see 4.2), but also some of the other learners at Stage 3 and some at Stage 5 use 'ja aber' in that way.

One problem that many of the learners at Stage 3 face is establishing cohesion with the interlocutors' turns and lines of argument. This means that there is little evidence of speakers trying to undermine each other's points of view (51):

(51) Stage3.10bese

```
1    BROOKE: em (.) es gibt viele fastfood eh restauranten von em em
                 em (.) there are many fastfood restaurants from em em
2    zwischen em meine wohnheiten und campus=
     between em my halls and campus=
3    ASHLEY: =ja=
                 =yes=
4    BROOKE: =also es gibt zu viele in der nähe vom campus ja
                 =I means there are too many near campus yes
5    ASHLEY: ja (.) ja aber hm ich denke nein ich (.) ich MAG fastfood
                 yes (.) yes but hm I think no I (.) I LIKE fastfood
6    und ich denke dass es eine gute idee ist weil es billig ist
     and I think that it is a good idea because it is cheap
7    ((sieht zu Brooke))
     ((looks at Brooke))
8    BROOKE: ja? ((räuspert sich)) aber (.) em ich denke auch em
                 yeah? ((clears her throat)) but (.) em I also think em
9    (.) es sollten wie sub- subway und [das ist (.) mehr gesund
     (.) there should be like sub- subway and [this is (.) healthier
```

There are two disagreements in (51). We are joining the discussion at a point where Brooke, replying to an earlier question by Ashley, proposes that there are too many fastfood outlets on or near campus and halls (l. 1-2, 4). Ashley's subsequent

disagreement is only very globally connected to this proposal. She starts her turn with a personal statement, saying that she herself likes fast-food (l. 5-6). This does not in any way take up the issue discussed by Brooke earlier, namely the number of fast-food outlets. She then suggests that fast-food is 'eine gute idee' on grounds that it is cheap' (l. 6). At no times does she make clear whether she in fact disagrees with Brooke's earlier evaluation that there are too many ('zu viele', l. 4) fast-food restaurants on or near campus, although such an interpretation is likely given her statement that she likes fastfood.

After Ashley's turn, Brooke comes up with another disagreement, relating to Ashley's positive evaluation of fast-food outlets on campus. She proposes that there should be more outlets like Subway on grounds that these offer healthier food choices (l. 8-9). This is again only globally connected to what Ashley has earlier said, and although Brooke and Ashley generally disagree on the question of the overall value of fastfood, they do not try to undermine each other's arguments as such.

It is not only the prevalent use of token agreement, however, that makes it difficult for learners to relate their strategies to each other. Even more elaborated elements of agreement are not used to sharpen disagreement (52):

(52) Stage3.3Admisison

```
1    GOPAL: em die em em ja eh nummer vier eh von mir em ist em die
                em the em em yeah eh number four eh by my em is em the
2    arbeitserfahrung? ((John nickt)) em
     work experience? ((John nods)) em
3    JOHN: ja (.) bei mir auch ja ja
                yeah (.) for me as well yeah yeah
4    GOPAL: em ich ich em (.) em (.) man bekommt ein idee eine idee em
                em I I em (.) em (.) one gets an idea an idea em about
5    über em em em (.) über em wieviel aktiv em der die bewerber em ist
     em em em (.) about em how active em the applicant em is
6    em ((nods))
     em ((nickt))
7    JOHN: ja
                yes
8    GOPAL: eh
                eh
9    JOHN: ja (.) und sie (.) sie kann sehen eh was typisch leute ist
                yes (.) and they (.) they can see eh what is typical for
10   (        ) was du sagst ist er aktiv ist er eh (.) ja schläft er
     people (        ) what you say is he active is he eh (.) yeah does
11   immer alle tage ((beide lachen)) und so weiter und und ja em (.)
     he always sleep all day ((both laugh))
12   ja ist es es ist sehr wichtig auch em (.) aber ein bisschen zu eh
     yes is it it is very important as well (.) but a bit to eh
13   ein für m- meisten oder nicht meisten subjekten man man kann (.)
     a for m- most or not most subjects one one can (.)
14   arbeitsfahrung haben NICHT em (.) und so weiter (.) mein subjekt
     NOT have work experience em (.) and so on (.) my subject
15   geschichte [eh ist nicht eh ein arbeits normalerweise und
     history [eh is not eh a work usually and
```

The argumentative sequence presented in (52) relates to the issue of work experience as a criterion for deciding about undergraduate admissions. John and Gopal initially agree on the ranking for this item as the fourth best option (l. 1-3), after which Gopal comes up with a reason for this ranking, which presents this way of selecting candidates in quite a favourable light (l. 4-6). John starts his turn with a long sequence of agreement, in which he elaborates on the reason provided earlier by Gopal, namely that work experience helps admission tutors to see how active and committed people are (l. 9), a position which he then stresses with the evaluative phrase 'es ist wichtig' (l. 12). The disagreement that now follows relates to the fact that in some subjects, it is very difficult to find related work experience (l. 12-15). Hence, the disagreement that John raises is based on practicalities, rather than an attempt to undermine the issue of work experience as a criterion for admissions. Furthermore, although the agreement component preceding disagreement is upgraded − it lists a number of things that admission tutors will be able to pick up on, and features the intensifier 'sehr' in the evaluative phrase (l. 9-12) − it is not used to sharpen the disagreement ahead with a contrast.

Altogether, markers of epistemic modality like 'sehr' are extremely rare at this level, in particular upgraders (see chapter 6). The only marker that features regularly is epistemic verbs. At no time do speakers seem to be entering a phase in their argument in which, as suggested by Kotthoff (1993), it is more important to disagree, going along with a change in the preference structures for disagreement. Instead, argumentative sequences end before they have really started.

At Stage 5, there are some changes in the way disagreement is marked and expressed, although still, most of the learners are not truly competing and undermining each other's arguments. In fact, as I have shown in the sequential analysis, there is a tendency to concede or establish agreement based on a minor issue, even if disagreement has arisen. However, some learners make attempts at upgrading the agreement component in an effort to sharpen disagreement (53):

(53) **Stage5.1Activities**

```
1    JOY: e:m zweiten habe ich deutsche vorlesung von deutschen
             e:m second I have german lecture by german
2    professoren?
     professors?
3    ELISA: ah ich auch em: wöchentliche deutsche filme
             ah me too em: weekly german films
4    JOY: ja [das
         yeah [that
5    ELISA:  [(ich habe) zwei (.) gemacht weil (.) eigentlich deutsche
              [(I have) said (.) two because (.) actually german
6    vorlesungen (.) naja das (.) das hilft doch aber (.) es ist ein
     lectures (.) well that (.) that does help but (.) it is a
```

7   bisschen (.) unrealistisch (.) ich weiß nicht ob das das richtiges
     bit (.) unrealistic (.) I don't know if this is the right
8   wort ist aber (.) mit deutsche filme kann man? noch mal deutsch em
     word but (.) with weekly german films one can? em get german
9   bekommen wenn man nur hört und sieht und es ist ganz natural
     once again if one hears and sees only and it is totally natural

In (53), the discussion centres on the question of the effectiveness of weekly lectures in German for first year students of German. After Joy has said that she put weekly German lectures as her second option, Elisa initially seems to agree ('ich auch', l. 3), but then says that she ranked weekly German films at second position (l. 5). In the remaining part of her turn (l. 5-9), she then objects to lectures on grounds that they are unrealistic. Before this objection however and her evaluation of lectures as unrealistic, she does assert agreement with the lecture idea ('das hilft doch', l. 6). This asserted agreement includes one of the few examples of modal particles at this stage, contributing to upgrading the agreement in an effort to sharpen the contrast with the forthcoming objection.

Furthermore, turns are generally more locally connected with those by the interlocutor. This makes it possible, at least for some of the learners, to use their interlocutors' turn to build their own argument. To illustrate this, I will use parts of a sequence quoted earlier in this chapter (54):

(54) Stage5.8Binge

1   COURTNEY: aber die es sagt ja auch dass die alkoholische getränke
               but it it also says that alcoholic drinks could be made
2   könnten in den campusbars teurer gemacht werden
     more expensive in campus bars
3   CLIFFORD: aber wie teuer (.) weil jetzt in den bars im
             but how expensive (.) because now in the bars in
4   studentenwohnheim (.) ist es ein pfund pro pint oder [sowas
     halls (.) it is one pound per pint or [something
5   COURTNEY: [ja ja ich
                                       [yeah yeah I
6   weiß es wenn man em limonade mit em archers kaufen will oder mit
     know it because when one em wants to buy lemonade or with
7   wodka dann kostet es nur einen pfund fünfzig
     wodka then it costs only one pound fifty
8   CLIFFORD: ja
             yes
9   COURTNEY: aber wenn man zum eine normale em (.) eh pub geht dann
             but when one goes to a em (.) eh normal pub then
10   ist es nur ist es (.) doppelt so viel
     it is only it is (.) twice as much
11   CLIFFORD: ja ja
             yeah yeah
12   COURTNEY: und das vielleicht bringt das em hm eh studenten in
             and then maybe this has as a result that em hm eh
13   diesen campusbars gehen und mehr trinken weil sie es leisten
     students go to these campus bars and drink more because they can
14   können
     afford it

In the course of this discussion on the pricing structure pertaining to alcoholic drinks and the effects that changes might have on students' drinking habits, it is Clifford who brings up the example of the actual price of a pint of beer in campus bars (l. 3-4). Courtney takes up the issue of prices, mentioning another example (l. 5-7) and contrasting these prices with the prices in regular pubs (l. 9-10). She then uses this contrast between the low prices in campus bars and the higher prices in other bars to highlight her contention that, because of these low prices, students go to campus bars and drink a lot (l. 12-14). Courtney therefore manages to connect her turn locally to her interlocutors' turn, but also to use it for her own argument and, to a certain extent, undermine Clifford's argument.

It has to be said, however, that few speakers, even those of the highest level of proficiency (Stage 7), are successful in using the interlocutors' turns to undermine their arguments and support their own ones. Nevertheless, learners at this level are generally quite successful in forging local connections between their own and their interlocutors' turns. This is reflected in the decline of token agreement and the more frequent use of partial and asserted agreement. Asserted and partial agreement are, by definition, techniques that require speakers to either take up parts of the interlocutors' turn and repeat it in their own turn, agree to it with a formula or agree partly to the interlocutors' turn.

Stage 7 sees some further developments in the organisation of disagreement turns. One of these developments concerns the way disagreement is prefaced, marked and announced to the interlocutor. At Stage 7, in the same way in which 'ja genau' prefaces and announces agreement, 'also' is being used by some Stage 7 learners to preface, announce and postpone disagreement (55):

(55) **Stage7.4Advice**

```
1    HEATHER: eh: ok (.) ich habe (.) als schlechten (.) schlichte
                    eh: ok (.) I have (.) as the worst (.) worst
2    vortra- em (.) punkt habe ich em also alkohol aus allen campusbars
     lectu- em (.) point I have em well banning alcohol from all campus
3    verbannen (.) das habe ich als nummer fünf (.) weil ich glaube
     bars (.) I have that as number five (.) because I believe
4    dass (.) die studenten werden sagen HAH ((lebhafte handbewegung))
     that (.) the students are going to say HAH ((vivid hand movement))
5    wir können das nicht machen total alle [getränke verbannen und=
     we cannot do that banning [totally all drinks and=
6    JENNY:                                  [EH: (.) ja das stimmt ja
                                             [EH: (.) that's right yes
7    HEATHER: =und (.) das halte ich für keine gute idee weil (.) dann
                =and (.) I don't think that this is a good idea because
8    gehen sie in der stadt? und dann trinken sie dort (.) und dann
     then they go to town? and then they drink there (.) and then
9    gibt es [(         )
     there is [(         )
```

```
10   JENNY:    [vielleicht also ich habe gedacht in der stadt ist es
                [maybe well I thought in town it is
11   teurer
     more expensive
12   HEATHER:  das [stimmt
                    that's [right
13   JENNY:         [und dann (.) vielleicht gehen sie nicht in die stadt
                     [and then (.) maybe they don't go to town
```

Example (55) is, yet again, taken from a discussion on binge-drinking. In it, Heather establishes herself against a ban of alcohol from campus bars on the grounds that students would go to town instead to have their drinks (l. 1-5, 7-9). This reason is what Jenny builds her turn on, disagreeing directly – i.e. without a preceding element of agreement – by proposing that students would, in fact, not necessarily go to town if alcohol was banned from campus bars (l. 10, 12-13). Although this is a case in which no agreement element mitigates and postpones the disagreement, a number of elements nevertheless achieve mitigation. Firstly, there are a number of makers of epistemic modality (e.g. 'vielleicht' in l. 10, l. 13 and 'ich habe gedacht' in l. 14). Most significantly however, the token 'also' (l. 10) pre-empts and postpones the disagreement slightly. While this token is employed at Stage 5 as well in similar functions, this applies to only very few cases and speakers, while almost all Stage 7 speakers use 'also' fairly regularly as a marker of dispreference.

A further strategy that emerges at this level as a way of organising disagreement, is use of challenging and opposing questions (56):

(56) Stage7.3Obese

```
1    DONALD:              [hm hm (.) ja also (.) also ich finde es ist
                           [hm hm (.) yeah well (.) well I find that it
2    eine frage der prioritäten also ich treibe SCHON sport und aber
     is a question of priorities well I DO do sports and but
3    kostenlos also ich hab diese karte nicht gekauft weil ich dachte
     for free well I didn't buy this card because I thought
4    das war viel zu teuer (als ich so geld) (          ) so weil das
     it was far too expensive (when I so money) (          ) so because
5    kostenlos ist aber: (.) ich denke es ist eine frage der
     this is free but: (.) I think it is a question of
6    prioritäten also du hast RECHT wir sind im vierten jahr wir haben
     priorities well you are RIGHT we are in our fourth year we do
7    ganz viel arbeit jetzt [im vergleich mit anderen jahren ABER (.)=
     have a lot of work now [compared to other years BUT (.)
8    EMMA:                  [hm:
                             [hm:
9    DONALD: =ich glaube man kann immer zeit dafür finden wenn man will
             =I believe one can always find time if one wants to
10   (.) vielleicht ist es eine frage [d- der motivation
     {.} maybe it is a question [o- of motivation
11   EMMA:                              [aber (.) wollen die studenten
                                        [but (.) do the students
12   eigentlich sport treiben? sie gehen gern in den pub
     actually want to do sports? they like going to the pub
```

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Example (56) is an extract from the discussion between Donald and Emma that, as I have already said, is the longest sequence with the most confrontational argument in the dataset. Throughout this sequence, Donald argues for exercise as the most effective measure against obesity while Emma defends her position that healthier food should be made available to students.

After a long turn by Donald, in which he argues strongly for his point of view on the grounds that there is always time for exercise if one sets one's mind to it (l. 1-7, 9-10), Emma objects on the grounds that, although there may be the time to engage in exercise, student may have rather different plans in their free time. She makes this objection in the form of a challenging question (l. 11-12), followed by an account of what she thinks students would rather do, namely going to a pub.

This sequence is interesting in a number of further aspects. In this part of Donald's and Emma's discussion, we see a trend towards the state in which, according to Kotthoff (1993), it is more important for speakers to disagree than to agree, and in which disagreement becomes the preferred option. Although downgraders still occur throughout the sequence, both speakers do not show any signs of giving in, and all disagreements are brought forward either with no agreement element or token agreement. Both speakers also connect their own turn locally to the interlocutors' turn and try to use the interlocutors' turn for their own purposes. Furthermore, Emma's and Donald's turns overlap in a competitive fashion.

What is also interesting is that Donald uses an issue that Emma had brought up earlier – time constraints and the costs of membership in the university recreation centre – to construct his own argument ('wir sind im vierten jahr wir haben ganz viel arbeit jetzt im vergleich mit anderen jahren ABER (.) ich glaube man kann immer zeit dafür finden (.) vielleicht ist es eine frage d- der motivation' (l. 7, 9-10). This instance was not counted for the quantitative analysis of disagreement strategies due to the fact that disagreement had already been expressed at the beginning of the turn, but nevertheless it is an interesting example of one speaker using the interlocutors' turn for his own purposes in a skilled fashion. It must be said, however, that generally, even at Stage 7 as the highest level of proficiency, this degree of competitiveness is not the rule or replicated in any of the other conversations.

5.4.3 Agreement

Little has been said so far about the organisation of agreement turns, possibly because they are, in the CA literature, traditionally counted as the preferred and therefore unmarked answer option. However, agreeing fulfils an important function at the interpersonal level, as this action supports and endorses the interlocutors' self-image or identity and can, when extended over turns, build common ground between speakers.

The structural properties of agreement turns at Stage 3 are often closely linked to the first pair parts they relate to, in particular within the first core adjacency pair. Agreement is often achieved by uptake and repetition of the evaluative phrase from the first pair part, or by use of a same-strength evaluation (57):

(57) Stage3.6Activities

```
1    WENDY: ja (.) em ich glaube dass exkursionen nach deutschland oder
             yeah (.) em I believe that excursions to germany or
2    österreich eine gute idee ist em zum beispiel eh weihnachtsmarkt (
     Austria are a good idea em for example eh christmas market (
3            [   )
             [   )
4    JIM: [ja (.) das ist em ein gute idee eh die eh (.) um die kurse
           [yes (.) this is em a good idea eh the eh (.) to improve the
5    verbessern
     courses
```

In (57), both Wendy, who makes the initial proposal (l. 1-3), and Jim in his answer (l. 4-5) employ the evaluative phrase 'eine gute idee' to express their contentment with trips to Germany and Austria as a beneficial activity for first year students of German. This take-up of a phrase used by the other speaker means, however, that speakers have little room to vary and upgrade the strength of their evaluation.

Another way of agreeing with the interlocutor at this level is the use of an agreement formula such as 'das denke ich auch'. This often means that agreement is not expanded through any further elaboration, i.e. no evidence is provided for the agreement (58):

(58) Stage3.8Binge

```
1    WAYNE: [...] aber em (.) ich bin total da- dagegen em die kunde em
             [...] but em (.) I am totally a- against em the message em
2    dass eh alkoholische getränke in den campusbars nur noch em
     that eh alcoholic drinks in the campusbars shall be sold only to
3    studenten über einundzwanzig jahre verkaufen=
     em students over twenty-one years of age=
4    SCARLETT: =ja=
               =yes=
5    WAYNE: =sollen weil das das eh macht keinen sinn
            =because that that eh makes no sense
6    SCARLETT: ja mir auch (.) aber alkoholische getränke in den
               yes me too (.) but alcoholic drinks in the
7    campusbars [...]
     campusbars [...]
```

In (58), Wayne positions himself clearly against a ban on alcohol sales to students under twenty-one years of age, suggesting that such an undertaking doesn't make sense (l. 1-3, 5). Scarlett reacts to this only with a very brief response ('ja mir auch', l. 6) and moves on to the next topic.

There are however, some exceptions to these patterns of expressing agreement even at Stage 3. The sample analysis in chapter 4 for example has shown that Ashley and Brooke do indeed sometimes skilfully build on what their interlocutor is saying by taking up parts of each other's turns or even completing each other's turns.

At Stage 5, cases in which agreement consists of merely the repetition of an evaluative phrase made by the interlocutor or a short agreement formula without any extension are now quite rare. Instead, agreement is commonly achieved by adding new evidence or ideas to support a claim made earlier by the interlocutor (59):

(59) Stage5.4Tuition

```
1    ROBERTA:  [vielleicht können die gebühren em (.) die computer
                [maybe the fees em can buy (.) the
2    kaufen
     computers
3    GIANNA: das wäre sehr sehr gut und dann die printer [sie sie
                that would be very very good and then the printers [they
4    printen nicht
     they don't print
5    ROBERTA:                                                    [ja ja das
                                                                 [yes
6    (          )
     yes that (          )
7    GIANNA: viele probleme mit printer
                many problems with the printer
8    ROBERTA: immer immer immer es immer gibt es ein- einige probleme
                always always always there is always so- some problems
9    mit dem printer und dem computer
     with the printer and the computer
10   GIANNA: und der computer ist wirklich (.) wichtig um (.) I think
                and the computer is really (.) important to (.) I think
11   ich denke alle studenten sie brauchen computer
     I think all students they need computers
12   ROBERTA: ja weil alle lehrerin [und lehrer eh wollen eh arbeiten
                yes because all teachers [and teachers eh want to eh
13   mit computer (.) ja
     work with the computer (.) yeah
```

In (59), Roberta's suggestion of buying computers with the money raised through tuition fees introduces the argumentative sequence (l. 1-6). Gianna agrees, using an evaluative phrase with intensifiers ('das wäre sehr sehr gut'), after which she extends Roberta's original suggestion to include printers (l. 3-4). After a partly unintelligible turn by Roberta, Gianna repeats her assessment that there are always a lot of problems with the printer (l. 7). Roberta then uses almost the same words in her turn; however, she starts it by upgrading the assessment with a repetition of the adverb 'immer' (l. 8-9). Gianna then agrees by providing a reason for prioritising new computing equipment (l. 10-11), which is specified in more detail by Roberta (l. 12-13).

From Stage 5 onwards, many speakers succeed in expressing subtle nuances in their degree of agreement, for example by using upgraders such as 'sehr' or 'natürlich' as in (60):

(60) Stage5.2Advice

```
1    GORDON: also em (.) ich finde es eh auch wichtig eh so oft wie
                well em (.) I also find it eh important eh to talk
2    möglich mit deutschen muttersprachlern zu sprechen
     as often as possible with native speakers of german
3    HARRY: hm
            hm
4    GORDON: weil em natürlich kann e:m diese person dich eh deine
                because em of course can e:m this person correct eh
5    fehler korrigieren
     your errors
6    HARRY: ja
            yes
7    GORDON: wenn sie zusammen sprechen natürlich sprechen sie em (.)
                when they talk to each other of course they speak em (.)
8    richtig richtiges deutsch und em sie verstehen eh (.) sie kann sie
     correct correct german and em they understand eh (.) they can
9    etwas eh erklären wenn es nicht richtig ist
     explain eh something when it is not correct
10   HARRY: hm (.) em (.) ja ich glaube das ist sehr wichtig em (.) und
                hm (.) em (.) yes I believe this is very important em (.)
11   es ist sehr einfacher e:m mit einer deutsche em (.) eine deutsche
     and it is a lot easier e:m to talk to a german em (.) a german
12   person eine deutsche eh mit sprechen eh in der universität weil
     person a german eh with speaking eh at the university because
13   (.) es viele em internationales eh studenten studenten gibt und
     (.) there are em many international eh students and
14   eh=
     eh=
15   GORDON: =aber=
                =but=
16   HARRY: =man muss die eh (.) gelegenheit eh (.) eh nehmen es ist
                =one has to take eh (.) the opportunity eh (.) it is very
17   sehr sehr wichtig
     very important
```

In example (60), Harry and Gordon are discussing useful activities for the linguistic development of first year university students of German. Gordon starts the sequence by proposing that talking regularly to native speakers is extremely important (l. 1-2, 4-5, 7-9). His turn features a number of uptoners and intensifiers by which certain elements are stressed ('natürlich', l. 4, l. 7). Although Gordon agrees with this by using the same evaluative phrase ('es ist wichtig'), he upgrades it with the intensifier 'sehr' (l. 10). The evaluative phrase is repeated at the end of the turn ('sehr sehr wichtig', l. 17). Furthermore, Harry also upgrades an element within the reason he provides for his agreement ('sehr einfacher', l. 11).

Although in this case, the sequence is not extended any further and the agreement not elaborated on, efforts by speakers to build on each others' turns are the

rule rather than the exception at Stage 5, which can be observed in the sample analysis pertaining to this level of proficiency (see 4.3). This also goes hand in hand with more frequent overlaps between speakers' turns.

When signalling agreement, some speakers at Stage 5 start integrating the lexical marker of agreement '(ja) genau', which may appear at the start, within or sometimes even at the end of a turn to affirm agreement. While this is a strategy employed by a small number of speakers at Stage 5, it is more widespread at Stage 7. When used at the beginning of a turn, '(ja) genau' often overlaps with the interlocutors' turn (61):

(61) **Stage7.7Advice**

```
1    HEATHER: und dann hat man nur eine schlechte (.) schlechtes
                and then one just has got a bad (.) bad feeling
2    gefühl und ich kann kein (.) [kein deutsch
     and I cannot speak (.) [german
3    JENNY:                        [ja genau bei diese bei diese
                                   [yeah exactly with those with those
4    grammatikübungen es macht nur angst dass man (.) das nicht kann
     grammar exercises one is just afraid (.) to be unable to do it
```

In (61), 'ja genau' contextualises right at the beginning of the turn that Jenny will indeed agree (l. 3-4). Furthermore, 'ja genau' overlaps with Heather's turn, conveying a sense of enthusiastic support for Heathers' suggestion.

One further peculiarity of some agreement turns at Stage 7 is the fact that they are, in some cases, open to misinterpretation as disagreement due to their internal organisation (62):

(62) **Stage5.2Binge**

```
1    MATTHEW: ja und dann als viertes
                yes and as the fourth option
2    DARREN: ja ich habe alkoholische getränke in den campusbars nur
               yes I have selling alcoholic drinks in campus bars
3    noch an studenten über einundzwanzig jahre verkaufen
     only to students over twenty one years of age
4    MATTHEW: aber die meisten studenten hier (.) also sie sie sind
                but most of the students here (.) well they they are
5    zwischen achtzehn [und einundzwanzig (.) also die meisten also=
     between eighteen [and twenty-one (.) well most of them
6    DARREN:           [aha ((pause)) ja
                       [aha ((pause)) yes
7    MATTHEW: =werden diese getränke also [verkaufen können
                =will be able to [sell these drinks
8    DARREN:                              [ja also (.) das ist
                                          [yeah well (.) this is
9    vielleicht dann (.) eine eine lösung aber (.) noch einmal können
     maybe then (.) a a solution but (.) once again students can
10   die studenten in der stadt gehen [um zu trinken (.) man muss auch=
     go to town [in order to drink and (.) maybe one also has to think=
11   MATTHEW:                         [ja
             [yes
```

```
12   DARREN:  =vielleicht über das geld denken (.) ich ich würde sagen
              =think about the money (.) I I would say
13   dass em alkoholische getränke e:m eh sind wichtig für die für die
     that em alcoholic drinks e:m eh are important for the for the
14   uni um (.) das geld zu bekommen
     university in order (.) to get the money
```

In example (62), Darren and Matthew discuss their fourth option pertaining to the problem of binge-drinking. The sequence is initiated by Matthew asking what Darren had ranked fourth (l. 1). Darren then proposes age restrictions on the sale of alcohol without, however, providing a reason or saying explicitly what degree of desire he attaches to this suggestion (l. 2-3). We can only infer that such restrictions were an unattractive option for Darren due to the low ranking position.

What is, however, most interesting is the way Darren organises his next turn (l. 8-11, 12-13). It follows up on a reply by Matthew, which is interpretable as a rejection of a ban based on the fact that few students would still be able to buy alcohol were such a ban introduced (l. 4-5, 7). Darren's turn is organised similarly to disagreement turns in which an agreement element precedes the disagreement. He starts by asserting that a ban could be a solution (l. 8-9), but then positions himself against a ban on the grounds that students would still be able to go to town and have alcohol and that the university needs the money raised through alcohol sales (l. 9-11, 12-13). Hence, the element of agreement with a ban on alcohol is not a strategy directed at protecting the face of his interlocutor, who seems to generally share his position, or his own face by achieving mitigation. Instead, Darren protects his self-image against what he thinks he is expected to say.

I have already shown earlier in the analysis that concessive elements become a frequent feature in the turns of speakers at Stage 7, which suggests that they are trying to interact with the world beyond the audience represented by their interlocutor by trying not to diverge too much from opinions they think they should express. Moreover, this also makes it possible for them to make different social roles relevant.

The analysis of the preference organisation of initial opinion/assessment turns, agreement turns and disagreement turns has shown that there is much communality in the way these three kinds of turns develop. Generally, we find that turns become more complex and more elaborate. What this means within a framework of face and identity will be discussed in the next section.

5.5 Chapter summary and outlook

In this chapter, I have attempted to present not only what appear to be shared characteristics across one level of proficiency, but also what appear to be significant

differences in strategy use between one and the next higher proficiency level. Table 3 summarise these shared characteristics and significant advances in development:

	sequential organisation	organisation of initial opinion/ assessment turns	organisation of disagreement turns	organisation of agreement turns
Stage 3	• two/three turn structure • sequentially expected turns missing • postsequences: reasons/evidence	• unmitigated • formulaic evaluative phrases (implicit modalisation) • little evidence provided	• dominance of token agreement preface • lack of cohesion with interlocutors' turns • few markers of epistemic modality	• uptake and repetition of evaluative phrases from FPP • agreement formulas with little evidence
Stage 5	• multi-turn structure • postsequences: establishment of common ground	• evidence provided • modal verbs (explicit modalisation) • more markers of epistemic modality	• upgrading agreement element to sharpen disagreement • more frequent use of partial and asserted agreement	• 'ja genau' to affirm and pre-empt agreement • adding new evidence to earlier claim • degrees of agreement marked (up-/downgraders)
Stage 7	• multi-turn structure • postsequences and insertion sequences: establishing common ground, forcing interlocutor to provide evidence or to back down	• long accounts • inclusion of concessive elements	• upgrading agreement element to sharpen disagreement • 'also' to postpone and pre-empt disagreement • attempts to use interlocutors' turn for own argument • challenging/ opposing questions	• 'ja genau' to affirm and pre-empt agreement • inclusion of concessive elements

Table 3: Facework strategies in the organisation of argumentative discourse

The above summary of facework strategies employed by learners in the organisation of argumentative discourse suggests that, with the groups seen as a whole, learners do move towards better skills in both supporting their own and challenging their interlocutors' positions. This does not apply to each individual speaker, and there is variation within the performance of individual speakers as well. Nevertheless, there are clear developments as far as the ability to maintain and present face and identity are concerned.

At the ideational level of discourse, relating to the expression of ideas and arguments, developments in the sequential organisation of argumentative sequences mean that, over time, learners acquire the ability to defend their opinions when challenged and to make challenges themselves. Although extended sequences of challenge and counter-challenge are still rare, learners learn to react to disagreements and organise their turns in a way that allows them to challenge their interlocutors' turns.

With regard to the way speakers relate to their interlocutors (interpersonal level), learners acquire strategies that allow them to postpone potential controversial issues within a turn. This enables them to present themselves as polite and non-imposing to their interlocutors. On the other hand, there is also a trend towards increased levels of involvement in both sequences of agreement and sequences of disagreement, which means that learners learn to convey an image of conviction. This applies particularly to the few instances in which the preference structure of turns appears to be changing towards a preference for disagreement, which means that learners prioritise protection of their own face and identity rather than the face of the interlocutor.

This brings us to the textual level, where we are asking what kind of text is actually constructed by learners during the course of the interaction. Different kinds of texts appear to be constructed as proficiency progresses. While learners at lower levels appear to conceptualise the task as an exchange of opinion, there is development towards conceptualising it as an argument. This shows through the increasing levels of cohesion between turns as well as the increasing degree of argumentativeness.

The question of how these developments and patterns come about cannot be answered conclusively at this point, and I will use chapter 8 for these purposes. Before that, I will employ the data from the retrospective interviews to get more insight into learners' cognitive processes as well as the individual decisions behind their choice of facework strategies. In the next chapter however, I will conduct an in-depth analysis of the data under the overall framework of modality.

Chapter 6   Issues of modality

6.1 Chapter outline

In chapter 5, I conducted an analysis of the conversational data with concepts from conversation analysis, focusing on the sequential structure of argumentative sequences and the organisation of turns within these sequences. In this chapter, I will look at the data from the perspective of modality. The chapter addresses the same research question as chapters 4 and 5:

- What strategies do L2 learners of German at different proficiency levels use to do facework in spoken argumentative discourse, and how do these strategies develop and change across levels? How can these changes best be accounted for?

Modality will be explored from two different perspectives: deontic modality, or the way degrees of necessity and desire are expressed, and epistemic modality, or the expression of probability and speaker commitment, with both quantitative and qualitative evidence being used.

6.2 Preliminary remarks

While epistemic modality is concerned with the degree of confidence attached to a proposition, deontic modality relates to degrees of necessity and desire. Dittmar & Terborg (1991, p. 350) describe deontic modality with a "necessity scale" (command – permission – ban) and epistemic modality with a "probability scale".

Epistemic modality can be manipulated and modulated through a number of strategies: The preference organisation of turns plays a role, as through the postponement of the main proposition within a turn a lack of certainty and of speaker commitment can be signalled. Furthermore, key elements within a turn can be prosodically either emphasized or downgraded. In this chapter however, I shall occupy myself with the lexical and grammatical markers of epistemic modality expressing authoritativeness, conviction and persuasiveness on one side and politeness, respectfulness and tactfulness on the other side. As for deontic modality, I will be looking at how speakers mark actions that are directly related to the main topic of the discussion for their necessity and desirability.

Although epistemic and deontic modality are two different perspectives, they nevertheless converge to some extent when face and identity are concerned. As both relate to the perspective and stance speakers are taking towards what is being said, learners are able to attach themselves to or detach themselves from the actions and proposals that are expressed and convey the self-image which they want to uphold.

6.3 Deontic modality or degrees of necessity and desire

6.3.1 A quantitative approach

Our first look at the data is from a quantitative perspective. How frequently do each of the three main superstrategies for expression of deontic modality – modal verbs, evaluative phrases, ranking (see Appendix F) – occur within each Stage? Figure 2 shows how these superstrategies are distributed:
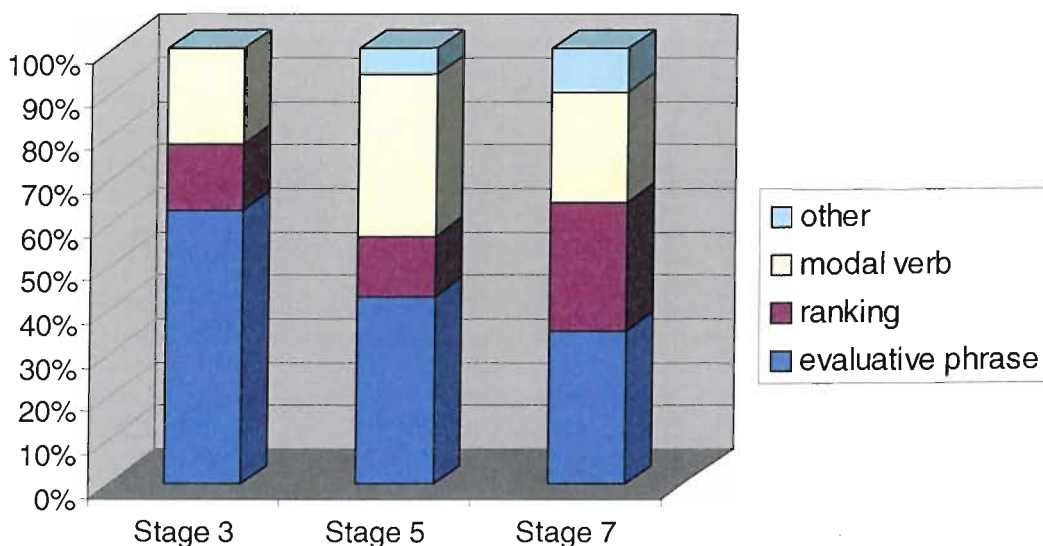
Figure 2: Expressing necessity/desirability (deontic modality)[48]

Figure 2 shows that learners' preferences for expressing necessity and desire for measures and actions changes considerably across the three stages: While at Stage 3, implicit modalisation through evaluative phrases is most prevalent (over 60% of all suggestions were coded as evaluative phrase), evaluative phrases fall below 40% at Stage 5 and settles at just above 30% at Stage 7.

At Stage 5, explicit modalisation with the use of modal verbs is most prevalent, being employed almost twice as frequently as at Stage 3. The frequency of explicit modalisation however falls again at Stage 7, where reference to the ranking position as another way of modalising suggestions implicitly accounts for about 30% of all strategies used, as compared to less than 20% at both Stages 3 and Stage 7. Instances of strategies coded as "other", in which neither implicit nor explicit modalisation occurred, were used only at the two highest proficiency levels.

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[48] The three primary categories for modalising opinions and expressing desire for an action were arrived at through a bottom-up approach. Although on occasions, combinations of strategies would be used (e.g. modal verb and evaluative phrase), each instance in which a speaker expressed his stance towards a suggestion or proposal was counted only once for the table above, using the strategy occurring first.

Although these patterns do provide an insight into learners' preferences at each level of proficiency, they cannot by themselves explain the conversational effects achieved and the linguistic and cognitive effort involved in their use. Hence, qualitative data are required to supplement the frequency count above.

6.3.2 A qualitative approach

6.3.2.1 Implicit modalisation

Example (63) presents a typical example for the use of implicit modalisation through evaluative phrases at Stage 3:

```
(63)  Stage3.10Activities

1     LEE: hm (.) (ich verstehe) ((geflüstert)) em auch denke ich dass
           hm (.) (I understand) ((whispered)) em I also think that
2     wöchentliche deutsche filme gut sind (.) weil em ich eh ich habe
      weekly german movies are good (.) because em I eh I have I em
3     ich em ein deutsche film gesehen habe und es war eh sehr gut wenn
      have seen a german movie and it was eh very good when one
4     man eine arbeitsblatt em machen
      em completes a worksheet
5     ROSAMOND: ehem
                ehem
6     LEE:      [(.) und neue vokabeln lernen
                [(.) and learns new vocabulary
7     ROSAMOND: [ja ((lange pause)) ja ich denke das auch em (.) aber
                [yes ((long pause)) yes I think that as well em (.) but
8     am wochenende ich denke dass eh em der filme em obs obe ob er ist
      at the weekend I think that eh em the movie em if if if it is
9     eh em em vielleicht eh sechs uhr em die abend em das ist gut mais
      eh em em maybe eh six o' clock em the evening em that is good but
10    aber eh ob es ist eh später das ist nicht gut [weil weil=
      but eh if it is eh later this is not good [because because=
11    LEE:                                                       [hm
                                                                 [hm
12    ROSAMOND: =studenten eh em seinen eh seinen freunden treffen und
                =students eh em meet his eh his friends and later
13    später und so fort
      and so on
```

In (63), Lee employs the adjective 'gut' to evaluate positively the possibility of introducing weekly German movies in an effort to improve first year students' German language skills (l. 2). She repeats the same adjective when providing a reason for this assessment (l. 3). Rosamond then takes the turn, also employing 'gut', first to express a positive evaluation of film showings as such (l. 5) and then to suggest that films should not start too late at night (l. 9). As I have shown in Chapter 5, such recycling and uptake of evaluative phrases used by the interlocutor is a very frequent occurrence at this level.

This extract also exemplifies a further important trend in the way necessity of and desire for something is expressed at Stage 3. The variety of evaluative markers is very low overall as well as in the discourse of individual speakers, who usually have a preference for one particular evaluative phrase that they use over and over again (see, in the sample analysis from chapter 4, Ashley's reliance on the phrase 'das ist eine gute idee'. In the extract quoted above, Rosamond uses the word 'gut' first to positively evaluate German films generally, but then to evaluate negatively a late start of these films. This makes it difficult for learners to express shades of meaning. For many learners however, the repetition of one particular evaluative phrase appears to be an easy, or indeed the only way, to mark degrees of desire.[49]

At Stage 5, despite an overall decreasing use of implicit means of modalisation in favour of explicit means, implicit means are still the easier option and something to fall back on when learners hit difficulties (64):

(64) Stage5.9Tuition

```
1   CLIFFORD: um fit zu sein oder was (.) das ist wichtig aber
                in order to be fit or something (.) this is important
2   vielleicht sollen (.) ich (.) mein ersten wahl war verbesserung in
    but maybe should (.) I (.) my first choice was improvements in
3   dem service der bibliotheken mehr bücher längere öffnungszeiten
    the library services more books longer opening hours
4   AUCH werde ich da sagen em eine gute em online system eh und em
    ALSO I will say there em a good em online system eh and em
5   (.) online kursinformation (.) [für den universität
    (.) online course information (.) [for the university
```

In (64), Clifford attempts to bring forward his suggestion that the service of the university libraries needs to improve. He first starts his proposal with the modal verb 'sollen' (l. 2), but apparently has difficulties in continuing the sentence, as indicated by the two pauses. He then settles for the term 'mein ersten wahl' (l. 2), which indicates the position at which he had ranked the suggestion.

When implicit means of modalisation, in particular evaluative phrases, are employed, there is some development in their internal constitution and range from this level onwards. Firstly, evaluative phrases tend to be less formulaic in the sense that they are broken up by intensifiers or hedges (65):

---

[49] Some learners' use of a particular phrase shows some variation between different occurrences (e.g. ein schlechtes idee – schlechte idee; Jim in Stage3.5Binge) within one particular conversation. This throws up the question whether it is still justifiable to identify these strings of words as formulaic expressions, given that grammatical accuracy and lack of variation are among the frequently mentioned criteria for the indentification of a string of words as formulaic. Due to the fact that many learners continuously use the same evaluative phrase and seem to be struggeling without them, I feel that these phrases are clearly formulas, formulas that learners have easy access to and that are cognitively easy to process.

(65) Stage5.1Activities

```
1    JOY: ja ich glaube das ist sehr sehr wichtig (.) so: (.) solche
          yes I believe this is very very important (.) so: (.) such
2    (        ) so deutsch zu reden [damit man es entspannen machen kann
     {        } to speak german [so that one can do it in a relaxed way
3    ELISA:                                [ja
                                           [yes
4    JOY: und auch em (.) es ist nützlich?=
          and also em (.) it is useful?=
5    ELISA: =ja
            =yes
6    JOY: es ist nicht nur grammar aus ein grammatikbuch aber=
          it is not only grammar from a grammar book but=
7    ELISA: =ja=
            =yes=
8    JOY: =es ist wirklich nützlich
          =it is really useful
```

In (65), Joy and Elisa discuss activities that could help first year students of German improve their language proficiency. Joy starts by suggesting that first year students of German should speak German as much as possible. She uses a number of evaluative phrases in this short extract ('sehr sehr wichtig', l. 1; 'nützlich', l. 4; 'wirklich nützlich', l. 8). Two of these phrases are upgraded with intensifiers, which is a strategy regularly employed by speakers at this level (see 6.4.1.7). It is also is interesting that there are three evaluative phrases overall in this short extract, all of which essentially relate to the same issue of speaking more German, hence reinforcing the suggestion once more.

Furthermore, the range of adjectives employed by learners expands, albeit not dramatically, from Stage 5 onwards. Joy's employment of 'nützlich' is an indication of this. Many of the new words are emotionally charged. Example (66) is from Stage 7 learners:

(66) Stage7.7Advice

```
1    JENNY: aber ich glaube so (.) reisen in deutschsprachige länder
            but I believe so (.) trips to german speaking countries
2    (.) wäre super aber für also wieviel zeit hat man für eine woche
     (.) would be great but for well how much time has one for a
3    oder so bringt es nicht so viel
     week or so it is not that effective
```

In (66), Jenny discusses the effectiveness of a stay abroad for the linguistic development of first year students of German. In this short extract, she employs two evaluative elements – 'super' in the initial agreement (l. 2) and 'es bringt nicht so viel' in an objection on grounds that students would not have enough time to make such a stay truly effective (l. 3). 'Super' is an emotionally laden adjective that allows Jenny to ad subtler shades of meaning and convey enthusiasm and support for the measure more

clearly than the more generic evaluations usually employed by learners from Stage 3. Similarly, the phrase 'es bringt nicht so viel' alludes explicitly to the fact that travelling to Germany would have little effect on language proficiency and therefore also conveys meaning more precisely than more generic adjectives such as 'gut', 'schlecht' or 'schwierig'.

As the quantitative analysis above suggests, the trend towards explicit modalisation for marking linguistically degrees of desire for an action at Stage 5 is slightly reversed at Stage 7. At this level, reference to ranking is employed by many learners. Learners essentially work through the proposals from the task instruction cards by negotiating ranking positions. Often, however, ranking positions are combined with other strategies (67):

(67) Stage7.6Binge

```
1    HEATHER: eh: ok (.) ich habe (.) als schlechten (.) schlichte
              eh: ok (.) I have (.) as the worst (.) as the worst
2    vortra- em (.) punkt habe ich em also alkohol aus allen campusbars
     sugge- em (.) point I have em well banning alcohol from all
3    verbannen (.) das habe ich als nummer fünf (.) weil ich glaube
     campus bars (.) I have that as number five (.) because I believe
4    dass (.) die studenten werden sagen HAH ((lebhafte Handbewegung))
     that (.) the students will say HAH (vivid hand movements))
5    wir können das nicht machen total alle getränke verbannen und
     we can not do that banning completely all of them and
6    und (.) das halte ich für keine gute idee
     and (.) I don't think this is a good idea
```

In (67), Heather first suggests that alcohol should not be banned, by mentioning that she had only ranked this suggestion at the fifth and last position (l. 1). She repeats this ranking in l. 3, but after providing a reason ends her turn with the evaluative phrase 'keine gute idee' (l. 6). The evaluative phrase therefore plays a supportive and upgrading role after the ranking position has already indicated that Heather does not hold a ban on alcohol from all campus bars in high esteem. Different to Stage 3 students, it is not used as the only marker of deontic modality and an entry-device into the turn at the same time.

6.3.2.2 Explicit modalisation

The quantitative account (figure 2) shows quite clearly that explicit modalisation through modal verbs really emerges at Stage 5. A count which takes account not only of whether learners use modal verbs for marking deontic modality (tokens) and how many, but also how many different subject verb combinations (types) they use, can reveal even more about learners' confidence and proficiency in their use of modal verbs (table 4):

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Speaker	modal verbs: tokens	modal verbs: types (subject – verb combinations)
Stage 3		
Rosamond Stage3.10Activities	0	0
Lee Stage3.10Activities	0	0
Brooke Stage3.1Obese	3	3 es sollten, ich möchte, es soll
Ashley Stage3.1Obese	0	0
Brooke Stage3.2Obese	4	4 man muss, man sollen, die campusbar sollten, die campusbar sollen
Ashley Stage3.2Obese	0	0
Anna Stage3.4Binge	1	1 sie soll
Elena Stage3.4binge	0	0
Wendy Stage3.5Binge	1	1 man könnte
Jim Stage3.5Binge	0	0
Wendy Stage3.6Activities	0	0
Jim Stage3.6Activities	3	2 man muss, man könnten (x 2)
Scarlett Stage3.8Binge	4	4 sollen wir, universität muss, soll (no subject), sollen (no subject)
Wayne Stage3.8Binge	0	0
Scarlett Stage3.9Obese	3	3 sollen (no subject), man muss, müssen (no subject)
Wayne Stage3.9Obese	2	2 sie müssen, wir müssen
Stage 5		
Joy Stage5.1Activities	0	0
Elisa Stage5.1Activities	1	1 man muss
Gordon Stage5.2Advice	4	1 man muss (x 4)
Harry Stage5.2Advice	5	2 man muss (x 4), man sollte
Gianna Stage5.3Binge	1	1 eggburton sollte
Roberta Stage5.3Binge	3	2 die universität könnte (x 2), wir könnten
Gianna Stage5.4Tuition	1	1 lehrer müssen
Roberta Stage5.4Tuition	3	3 die universität sollte, sie könnten, die bibliothek müsste,
Sara Stage5.5Obese	2	2 die universität muss, wir sollten
Abigail Stage5.5Obese	1	1 wir sollten
Catherine Stage5.6Binge	4	4 alkohol sollen, campusbars sollten (x 2), sie könnten

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Emily Stage5.6Binge	1	1 die universität kann
Catherine Stage5.7Advice	0	0
Emily Stage5.7Advice	4	1 man muss (x 5)
Courtney Stage5.8Binge	2	2 man kann, (alkohol) sollte,
Clifford Stage5.8Binge	3	3 man kann, es sollte, es soll
Courtney Stage5.9Tuition	3	3 sie könnten, man kann, alles muss
Clifford Stage5.9Tuition	4	3 es soll, vielleicht sollen (no subject), vielleicht sollen es, vielleicht können (no subject)
Stage 7		
Darren Stage7.1Advice	4	3 man muss (x 2), wir sollten, man sollte
Matthew Stage7.1Advice	0	0
Darren Stage7.2Binge	3	2 man muss (x 2), sie können
Matthew Stage7.2Binge	0	0
Donald Stage7.3Obese	4	4 man kann, man muss, es soll, man könnte
Emma Stage7.3Obese	5	3 man soll (x 3), die leute sollten, es soll
Donald Stage7.4Advice	3	2 man sollte, man muss (x 2)
Emma Stage7.4Advice	0	0
Esther Stage7.5Obese	3	3 mahlzeiten angeboten werden sollen, die cafeteria sollte, man muss
Holly Stage7.5Obese	6	5 essen teurer gemacht werden soll, können sie, man kann, man können, man muss, man muss
Heather Stage7.6Binge	1	1 könnte machen (no subject)
Jenny Stage7.6Binge	0	0
Heather Stage7.7Advice	1	1 man kann
Jenny Stage7.7Advice	1	1 man soll
Esther Stage7.8Binge	0	0
Holly Stage7.8Binge	3	3 die regierung soll, es kann, die studenten sollen
Shirley Stage7.9Binge	3	3 man könnte, sie dürfen, man darf
Tina Stage7.9Binge	3	3 können sie, man soll

Table 4: Expressing desire – type-token count[50]

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[50] For this count, all instances of modal verbs in a deontic meaning were counted.

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The type-token count shows that there are only a handful of speakers at Stage 3 who use modal verbs as a way of marking deontic modality explicitly (Brooke, Anna, Wendy, Jim, Scarlett, Wayne). What is furthermore striking is the fact that the degree of grammatical accuracy with which these forms are employed is low. Moreover, when modal verbs are used, they generally do not allow learners to assign responsibility for an action to a person or institution, as the subject is either missing or represented by an impersonal 3rd person subject (68):

(68) **Stage3.1Obese**

```
1    BROOKE: und ich denke dass em em (.) in halle es gibt nur es soll
                and I think that em em (.) in halls there is only there
2    es em mehr (.) em wasser
     shall be em em more (.) em water
3    ASHLEY: ja
            yes
4    BROOKE: trinken sein (.) also man kann frei wasser
            to drink (.) I mean one can have free water
```

In (68), Brooke suggests that free water be offered to students in halls of residence. She employs the modal verb 'sollen' in combination with the 3rd person singular pronoun 'es' (l. 1), which does not allow her to specify who should be offering such services.

As the type-token count above shows, there are few speakers at Stage 5 who do not contribute any explicit marking for modality. Some speakers, however, although their token count is fairly high, use the same types over and over again. Harry, for example, employs the combination 'man muss' to the exclusion of any other combination (69):

(69) **Stage5.2Advice**

```
1    HARRY: ja vielleicht aber ich habe man eine em (.) man muss em
            yes maybe but (.) I have one a em (.) one has to em
2    eh: probieren (.) man muss die em ((long pause)) man muss nach
     eh: try (.) one has to the em ((long pause)) one has to go to
3    deutschland gehen weil es so wichtig für die vokabel und em [(.)
     germany because it is so important for vocabulary and em [(.)
4    lernen
     to learn
```

In example (69), Harry uses 'man muss' three times to suggest that students go to Germany in order to improve their knowledge of vocabulary. Although these occurrences of 'man muss' (l. 1, 2x l. 2) constitute repair in repeated attempts to start the turn and therefore all relate to the same suggestion or proposal, Harry uses 'man muss' in other instances during the same conversation. 'Man muss' is, in fact, his only means of explicit modalisation.

This suggests that modal verbs, when used in a deontic function, can also be employed in a formulaic fashion, i.e. students use the same phrase a number of times in one particular function and do not possess knowledge of or control over any other ways of expression. Based on the data available, i.e. the fact that data were collected through a cross-sectional rather than a longitudinal design, it is impossible to say whether modal verbs in this function are acquired through the route of formulaic expressions, although it is likely that this is the case.

Generally, however, from Stage 5 onwards, learners are increasingly confident about the use of modal verbs, as betrayed by the overall frequency and flexibility of their use. The type-token count of many learners equals the frequency count of modal verb usage, as for example Roberta's (70):

```
(70) Stage5.4Tuition

1    ROBERTA: ok e:h ich glaube dass die universität eggburton die
                  ok e:h I believe that the university of eggburton the
2    s- sollte die studiengebühren der studenten verwenden für die
     s- should use students' tuition fees for the
3    verbesserung der sport und freizeiteinrichtungen eh (.)
     imporovement of sport and leisure facilities eh (.)
4    (verbessern)
     (improve)
```

In (70), Roberta employs the modal verb 'sollen' (l. 2) to suggest that the University of Eggburton use tuition fees to improve sport and leisure facilities. Furthermore, she combines the modal verb with an institutional subject ('die universität eggburton'), allowing her to attach authority to her claim, as she is able to pinpoint those she deems responsible for implementing change. In addition, Roberta employs a number of other modal verbs combined with other subjects throughout the conversation, resulting in a high number of different type-token combinations.

No example from Stage 7 will be given at this point as learners' use of modal verbs generally mirrors what was discussed for Stage 5. Most learners now employ modal verbs for marking deontic modality but less often as the only means. Rather, as I have shown in example (67), combinations of different strategies become more important at this level.

6.3.2.3 Other strategies

Occasionally, suggestions and proposals are not modalised at all as far as the three main strategies discussed earlier are concerned, which means that there is no indication of the necessity and desirability of particular actions and measures (71):

(71) Stage7.6Binge

```
1    HEATHER: ja vielleicht dass sie nicht so viele werbungen für
                yes maybe that they don't advertise as much for
2  ` alkoholische getränke machen also man sieht immer (.) man kann zum
     alcoholic drinks one always sees (.) one can for
3    beispiel em (.) zwei getränke kaufen für [nur
     example em (.) buy drinks for [only
```

In (71), Heather suggests that 'they' ('sie', l. 1) – referring to the university – must not advertise so much for alcoholic drinks as they currently do. Although an agent that is to perform the suggested action is mentioned in this case, Heather fails to say how high on her own agenda this proposal is for her, as the infinitive of the verb 'machen' (l. 2) does not allow for any conclusions to be drawn regarding this question.

It is difficult to decide whether non-modalisation is a planned, deliberate strategy to avoid assigning responsibility and limit commitment, or whether it is down to speakers' linguistic difficulties. The evidence seems to point in the direction of it being a deliberate strategy, as one otherwise would expect Stage 3 learners to use strategies falling into this category more often, given the fact that infinitive verbs are easy to process and produce. This is however clearly not the case (see figure 2, 6.3.1). Furthermore, some of the suggestions and opinions that appear unmarked for deontic modality include a subjectiviser (see 6.4.1.3) (72):

(72) Stage7.5Obese

```
1    HOLLY: ja (.) das würd ich (.) plakaten auf den wän- wän- auf die
              yes (.) I would that (.) sticking posters to wal- wal- to
2    wände aufkleben und ja überall damit man nicht es nicht eh
     walls and yeah everywhere so that one cannot eh
3    ignorieren kann
     ignore it
```

In (72), Holly personalises her suggestion of starting an advertising campaign against obesity with the subjectiviser 'ich würde' (l. 1). By doing this, she can avoid any claims to the generalizability of her proposal as well as indication of her degree of desire for this proposal, which is possibly an effect of what in chapter 5 I showed to be an aim of speakers at this level to compromise and concede when coming forward with suggestions. The non-inclusion of explicit or implicit deontic marking at Stages 5 and 7 can probably be interpreted in the same way and is therefore more likely to be a deliberate strategy rather than being due to constraints in linguistic knowledge and processing capacities.

In summary, the analysis of the conversational data under the umbrella term *deontic modality* shows that strategies for implicit modalisation are acquired earlier as those for explicit modalisation. The ladder generally allow learners to make their

arguments more strongly and therefore enhance self-face in the process, while implicit strategies, in particular evaluative phrases, may make learners appear removed from the discourse and are therefore a way of distancing oneself. In addition, there appears to be a general preference for formulaic and reoccurring strategies that are easy to process and produce.

6.4 Markers of epistemic modality

6.4.1 Lexical markers of epistemic modality

6.4.1.1 Preliminary remarks and a quantitative perspective

In this section I will analyse in detail the development of lexical markers of epistemic modality across the three levels of proficiency. I will first look at the markers overall from a quantitative perspective.

Figure 3 shows how many of the eight different markers[51] are used per 10000 characters at the three levels. The numbers need to be interpreted with some caution, as the tasks on which discussions are based are not evenly distributed across the different levels, and some dyads performed two tasks. However, a frequency count based on discussion about the topic of binge-drinking alone revealed that most of the general trends are very similar, while differences can often be explained by examining the qualitative data.

ev = epistemic verb
su = subjectiviser
dt = downtoner
up = uptoner
he = hedge
in = intensifier
ca = cajoler
mp = modal particle
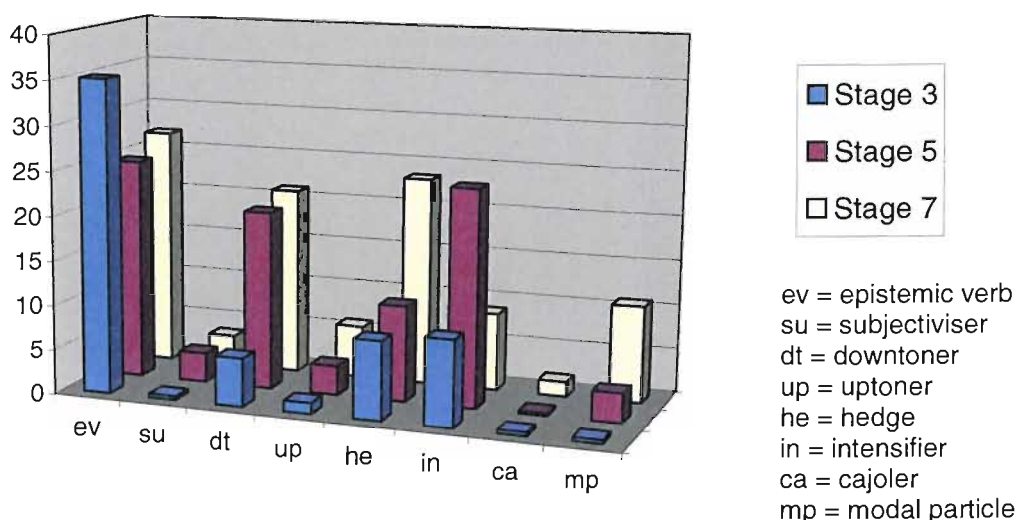
Figure 3: Lexical markers of epistemic modality[52]

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[51] See Appendix G for definitions and examples for each of these categories.
[52] To allow for a frequency count as exact as possible, the characters within transcripts were counted – without spaces – with the word count function in MS Word. The number of occurrences of each marker in each proficiency group was then divided by the overall number of characters in the transcripts from this group and multiplied by 10000.

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Figure 3 also shows that the use of markers of epistemic modality does not necessarily move from low levels to higher levels of frequency. The five markers to develop in this way are subjectivisers, downtowners, uptoners, hedges and modal particles, although there are often big leaps from one Stage to the next. Epistemic verbs are used with the highest frequency at the lowest level of proficiency, while intensifiers appear with the highest frequency at Stage 5. Cajolers only emerge with a sizeable frequency at Stage 7.

These irregularities in the quantitative development of markers require a more detailed look at what is achieved by their use. The analysis will therefore combine a quantitative and a qualitative perspective, looking at the development of the frequency of use of individual markers, the development of their range and, above all, the functions they fulfil in the discourse across the three levels of proficiency.

6.4.1.2 Epistemic verbs

The discourse functions of phrases like 'ich denke' or 'ich glaube' (English: I think, I believe) have been described in a number of different ways in the research literature. Some writers describe these terms as elements that generally limit and downgrade a speaker's commitment to a proposition. House & Kasper (1981) for example describe epistemic verbs as minus committers with a mitigating function. Others, however, have identified a deliberative and upgrading function of English 'I think' (Aijmer, 1997; Holmes, 1990), suggesting that prosodic, grammatical and positional criteria need to be applied to distinguish between functions.

It would go beyond the scope of this thesis to identify what the function of epistemic verbs is in each case. As these phrases can bring a proposition to a personal level and remove an air of generalisability[53], I shall treat them as downgraders rather than upgraders.

Figure 3 in 6.4.1 shows that epistemic verbs are employed with the highest frequency by Stage 3 learners (35.14 per 10000 characters of transcript), with the frequency then dropping to 24.76 per 10000 characters of transcript at Stage 5 and a small rise at Stage 7 to 26.88 per 10000 characters of transcript.

The high frequency of epistemic verbs at Stage 3 is immediately apparent when looking at the transcript from one of the conversations (73):

(73) Stage3.4Binge

```
1    ANNA: ich glaub- ich ich ich glaube dass em eh die wichtigste
            I belie- I I I believe that em eh the most important
```

---

[53] As a consequence, the phrase 'ich weiß', which denotes confidence in a proposition and is also often counted in the class of epistemic verbs, was excluded from the analysis.

```
2    lösung hier ist eh alkoholische getränke in den campusbars NUR
     solution here is eh to sell alcoholic drinks in campus bars ONLY
3    noch am an studenten über eh einundzwanzig jahre verkaufen ich
     to students who are more than twenty-one years old I
4    glaube dass die eh jüngere studente sind hm: sind nicht hm: (.)
     believe that the eh younger students are hm: are not hm: (.)
5    eh si- sind sind zu jung zu alk- zu dem sie trinken zu viel
     eh th- are are too young to alc- to they drink too much
6    alkohol eh und eh und da ich glaube dass hm dass sie soll (.)
     alcohol eh and eh and there I believe that hm that they shall (.)
7    älter (.) zu alkohol [trinken
     older (.) to drink [alcohol
```

In (73), Anna uses 'ich glaube' four times (2x l. 1, l. 3/4 and l. 5), and the epistemic verb is in fact the only lexical marker of epistemic modality that Anna uses in this extract. A closer look at the contexts of occurrence of these epistemic verbs shows that 'ich glaube' (l. 1) is first employed as an epistemic modifier to Anna's opinion and an introduction to the turn. It is then repeated after an unsuccessful start to the turn and some hesitation. The third and the fourth instances (l. 3-4 and l. 6) also occur at transition points within the discourse, namely between a claim and the reason that supports this claim (l. 3-4) and between the reason and the conclusions drawn from this claim (l. 6). In these two instances, 'ich glaube' could, in fact, easily be replaced by a causal conjunction like 'weil' or a causal adverb like 'deshalb' respectively.

This suggests that epistemic verbs are used to mark transitions between different parts of a turn as well as launching the speaker into his or her turn. Epistemic verbs continue to be used in this way throughout all, although to a lesser degree at higher levels, where other lexical markers of epistemic modality are introduced.

From Stage 5 onwards however, the epistemic meaning of epistemic verbs is foregrounded, and they are therefore increasingly often postponed until after the turn they refer to. According to Aijmer (1997), this way of using epistemic verbs signals a downgrading, mitigating function (74):

(74) **Stage5.6Binge**

```
1    EMILY: ja das ist richtig und em billigere getränke em sind eine
               yes this is correct and em cheaper drinks em are a
2    große einflüsse für em das kampftri- kampftrinken
     large influence on em the binge- binge drinking
3    CATHERINE: ja=
               yes=
4    EMILY: =glaube ich em: (.) ich denke dass (.) die universität (.)
           =I believe em: (.) I think that (.) the university (.)
5    nicht alkoholische getränke in den campusbars nur noch an
     cannot sell alcoholic drinks in campus bars only to students
6    studenten über einundzwanzig jahren verkaufen kann weil (.) das
     over twenty-one years of age because (.) this is (.)
7    ist (.) in england kann man mit achtzehn jahre alt eh (.) trinken
     in england (.) one can drink when one is eighteen
```

```
8    em und das (.) das würde (.) das ist ein sehr strenge [idee
     em and that (.) that would (.) that is a very strict [idea
9    glaube ich
     I believe
```

In example (74), Emily first argues that cheap drinks have a big influence on binge-drinking, closing with 'glaube ich' (l. 4). She then proposes that the university cannot restrict alcohol sales to students over twenty-one years of age, again closing with 'glaube ich' (line 9). In this case therefore, the epistemic verbs are not 'springboards' into the turn or markers of transition between different parts of the turn, but fulfil a marked epistemic meaning. By using them, Emily suggests that her opinion is not generalisable and limits her commitment to it retrospectively before Catherine can come up with a reply.

The range of epistemic verbs remains almost the same across all levels (ich meine, ich denke, ich glaube, ich finde), although individual learners have preferences for particular forms. The only movement in terms of the range of expression is that at Stage 5 and Stage 7, past tense epistemic verbs appear, as 'ich dachte' in example (75):

(75) Stage7.3Obese

```
1    EMMA:   [ICH dachte dass em man soll em autos auf dem campus
             [I thought that em one should em ban cars on
2    verbieten=
     campus=
```

Both House & Kasper (1981) and Barron (2003) suggest that past tense instead of present tense forms can be used to achieve enhanced downgrading effects. In (75), 'ICH dachte' (l. 1) introduces a turn in which a suggestion for future action is made, mitigating it by a) presenting the suggested action as the personal opinion of the speaker, b) prosodically emphasizing the personal pronoun 'ich', and c) creating more distance between the speaker and what is being said through the past tense.

Overall, the analysis of the contexts of use and the frequency of epistemic verb use suggests that the function of epistemic verbs goes beyond the mere expression of epistemic meaning, as they often mark the beginning of turns as well as transitions between different parts of a turn, resulting in the high frequency of use in particular at Stage 3 as well as in comparison to other markers. The possible reasons for this will be discussed in chapter 8. However, the epistemic function must not be underestimated, in particular when other lexical markers of modality are rare.

6.4.1.3 Subjectivisers

Subjectivisiers fulfil functions similar to epistemic verbs in that they suggest that the opinion expressed is not generalisable. In most contexts, they are therefore downgraders of propositions, but they can be used as upgraders as well. An example of this use will be given.

Quantitatively, subjectivisers do not play a very important role. Only one subjectiviser is used at Stage 3, 11 at Stage 5 and 19 at Stage 7 (0.42 / 3.28 / 3.36 occurrences per 10000 characters). Furthermore, they are not distributed evenly across all speakers. There is however some development in the range of subjectivisers[54] used:

- **Stage 3:** ich bin auch der meinung

- **Stage 5:** ich teile deine meinung, meiner meinung nach, ich würde sagen, meine meinung...ist, ich bin der meinung, ich habe vielleicht eine eigene meinung

- **Stage 7:** für mich (persönlich), ich würde sagen, ich bin der meinung, ... halte ich für keine gute idee, aus meiner erfahrung

Generally, learners at Stage 7 engage in a more creative use of subjectivisers than learners at Stage 5. While at Stage 5, subjectivisers involving the lexeme 'meinung' are clearly dominant, Stage 7 learners primarily use subjectivisers without that lexeme. This suggests that learners move from textbook-learned formulaic expressions to a more creative treatment.

Furthermore, an upgrading function can be identified more clearly for subjectivisers than for epistemic verbs. One example for this is (76):

```
(76) Stage7.3Obese

1    EMMA:           [ja ich w- (.) ja ich WEIß schon aber ich hab zu
                      [yeah I k- (.) yeah I DO know but I have too
2    viel arbeit und dann
     much work and then
3    DONALD: ok
            ok
4    EMMA: ich mache viel musik und trotz de- dass ich diese karte
            I make a lot of music and despite th- that I have this
5    habe und es ist ist em eh kostenlos JETZT für mich in die
     card and it is is em eh free NOW for me to go to the
6    sporthalle zu gehen gehe ich nicht
     gymn I am not going
7    DONALD: genau
            exactly
8    EMMA: ich würde sagen dass (.) mehr gesunde mahlzeiten wichtiger
            I would say that (.) more healthy meals is more important
9    ist als (.) ((Donald atmet scharf ein)) weil man isst
     than ((sharp inbreath by Donald)) because one eats
```

---

[54] Instances in which slight deviations from the 'regular' form of a subjectiviser occurred were not included in this account as a separate form, e.g. 'meine meinung nach' instead of 'meiner meinung nach'.

10   dreimal pro tag
      three times a day

Example (76) is taken from the most argumentative piece of discourse in all of the learner discussions, Emma's and Donald's argument over exercise vs. healthy meals as a measure against obesity. In this extract, Emma argues for healthy meals based on the fact that exercising is time-consuming, and people eat three times a day. She starts with a personal account that makes reference to the fact that she does not have a lot of time (l. 1-2, 4-6). It is then that she employs the subjectiviser 'ich würde sagen'.

In this instance, 'ich würde sagen' (l. 8) introduces Emma's statement of opinion ('mehr gesunde mahlzeiten wichtiger ist', l. 8-9) regarding meals, contrasting it with her earlier rejection of free sports classes on grounds that students would not go anyway (l. 4-6). The subjectivisier therefore emphasizes what Emma states as being her opinion. In other instances in which subjectivisers seem to be upgraders rather than downgraders they are employed as introductions to disagreement, thereby sharpening the contrast between the speaker's opinion and opinions represented by the interlocutor.

6.4.1.4 Downtoners

While downtoners develop quantitatively, leaping from a low frequency of use at Stage 3 (5.44 per 10000 characters of transcript) to much higher frequency at Stages 5 and 7 (19.99 per 10000 characters of transcript / 21.05 per 10000 characters of transcript), they develop little in range across the three levels. The core repertoire consists of only two forms ('vielleicht', 'ich weiß (es) nicht'). Other forms, namely 'hoffentlich' and 'wahrscheinlich', make very rare appearances.

The following analysis will show that the two core downtoners fulfil very different functions. While 'vielleicht' (as well as 'hoffentlich' and 'wahrscheinlich') has only epistemic meaning, 'ich weiß (es) nicht' goes beyond this primary function.

Learners from Stage 3 primarily use 'vielleicht' to mitigate suggestions and opinions (77):

(77) **Stage3.9Obese**

```
1    SCARLETT: [...] aber eh persönlich mehr gesund eh (.) essen mit
               [...] but eh personally more healthy eh (.) making food
2    viel fett zucker und oder salz teurer machen ist eh vielleicht
     with lots of fat sugar and or salt making more expensive is eh
3    eine schlechte ideen eh (.) glaube ich gesundere mahlzeiten
     maybe a bad idea eh (.) I believe healthy meals
```

In (77), 'vielleicht' (l. 2) refers to the evaluative phrase 'es ist eine schlechte idee' (l. 3) by which Scarlett expresses her lack of desire for a 'tax' on unhealthy food.

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'Vielleicht' makes it possible for her to downscale the possible effect of her suggestion on her interlocutor by limiting the commitment to this suggestion.

A wider range of contexts for downtoners can be distinguished at Stage 5. For example, 'vielleicht' mitigates challenging questions, but also agreement (78):

```
(78) Stage5.4Tuition

1    ROBERTA: =ja vielleicht du hast recht ((räuspert sich)) ja am
                =yes maybe you are right ((clears her throat)) yes am
2    erstens glaubte glaubte ich dass die bessere eh war die sport und
     first I thought I thought that the better eh was the improvement
3    freizeiteinrichtungen verbessern aber jetzt hast du mir über die
     of sport and leisure facilities but now you have told me
4    bibliothek erzählt hast
     about the library
```

The marker 'vielleicht' in example (78) appears in the context of a turn in which Roberta comes round to an earlier suggestion by her interloctutor Gianna that students' tuition fees should be used to fund improvements in the library. Having earlier represented the position that tuition fees be used to improve sport and leisure facilities, Roberta backs down and admits that Gianna's idea is the better option. However, 'vielleicht', which precedes the agreement formula 'du hast recht' (l. 1), limits this concession to a certain extent and thus makes it possible for Gianna to maintain face in what must be seen as a change in the image projected.

From Stage 5 onwards, but primarily at Stage 7, downtoners also appear in the context of evidence brought forward for or against a claim (79):

```
(79) Stage7.2Binge

1    DARREN: =ja (.) und (.) ich glaube dass e:m alle die universität
                =yes (.) and (.) I believe that e:m all the universities
2    denen in england muss eh zusammenarbeiten weil wenn (.) nur
     who in england have to eh work together eh because if (.) only
3    eggburton eh alkohol aus allen campusbars verbannt dann
     eggburton eh bans alcohol from all campus bars then
4    MATTHEW: ja
              yes
5    DARREN: eh wür- würde kein studenten hier kommen wahrscheinlich!
     eh no students woul- would come here probably!
```

The part of Darren's utterance represented here (79) is concerned with the impact on the number of applicants if universities banned alcohol from campus bars. The turn ends with the downtoner 'wahrscheinlich' (l. 5), allowing Darren to retrospectively downgrade the commitment to his own assessment of what the consequences of a ban would be.

Although the marker 'ich weiß (es) nicht' is also used in all of the contexts described above, it has functions beyond epistemic meaning. In contrast to 'vielleicht',

'wahrscheinlich' and 'hoffentlich', which are generally integrated within a turn, 'ich weiß nicht' usually precedes a turn or its main proposition, marks the transition between different parts of a turn or even appears in postponed position (80):

(80) Stage5.3Binge

```
1    GIANNA: denkst du dass nur eh über einundzwanzig nicht eh: nieder
                do you think that only eh over twenty-one years of age not
             eh: lower
2    ROBERTA: oh (.) ich weiß nicht aber: (.) puh em: eh eh eh eh
                oh (.) I don't know but: (.) puh em: eh eh eh eh
3    GIANNA: em:
             em:
4    ROBERTA: vielleicht wäre ein andere lösung aber wenn auch die
                maybe it would be a different solution but if the
5    junge wäre eh trinken würden aber ich weiß nicht (.) ja aber ich
     young were eh yould drink as well but I don't know (.) yeah but I
6    de- meine meinung in diesem thema ist dass die bessere lösung ist
     th- my opinion in this topic is that the better solution is
7    die getränke teurer machen
     making the drinks more expensive
```

In (80), there are two occurrences of 'ich weiß nicht'. The first one of these (l. 2) precedes Roberta's answer to Gianna's question regarding the fine points of age restrictions. Taken literally, it suggests that Roberta's knowledge of the issue is not sufficient to make a valid judgment. Furthermore, however, it allows Roberta to postpone the main proposition of her turn, thereby gaining her valuable time to think of what exactly she is going to say, both in terms of content and in structuring her answer linguistically. The second occurrence of 'ich weiß nicht' postpones the 'meat' of her opinion, the possibly face-threatening issue of age restrictions, even further (l. 5).

No general trends can be discerned with regard to the question of which one of these functions of downtoners is prioritised at either level. Rather, it appears as if individual speakers have a preference for a particular marker. In fact, only one or two speakers at either level (Ashley at Stage 3, Roberta at Stage 5 and Shirley and Esther at Stage 7) are responsible for the overwhelming majority of all instances of 'ich weiß (es) nicht'. The main development in downtoner use is therefore in frequency, not in function.

6.4.1.5 Hedges

The development of hedges is different from the development of downtoners in both frequency and range. While downtoners make the biggest leap in frequency between Stage 3 and Stage 5, in the case of hedges this leap occurs between Stage 5 and

Stage 7. Hedges occur at a rate of 8.78 per 10000 characters at Stage 3, 10.71 per 10000 characters at Stage 5, and 23.35 per 10000 characters at Stage 7.[55]

The range of hedges also expands steadily across levels:

- Stage 3: ein bisschen, und so weiter, und so fort, vielleicht
- Stage 5: ein bisschen, und so weiter, oder so, ich weiß nicht, vielleicht, relative, oder etwas, oder sowas, so, ziemlich
- Stage 7: oder etwas, ein bisschen, sozusagen, ganz, und sowas, so, vielleicht, irgend(-X), ziemlich, und so weiter, was weiß ich, und so, eingermaßen, oder so, oder sowas, ich weiß nicht, sagen wir mal, oder sonstwas, und so, etwas, vielleicht, in der Art, so etwas, sozusagen

This suggests that some of the same items that had earlier been classified as downtoners, can also be hedges (e.g. 'vielleicht', 'ich weiß nicht'). A distinction between the two functions can be made based on the scope achieved by an individual marker in its function as downgrader. And, similarly to downtoners, some hedges also go beyond merely expressing epistemic meaning.

Learners from Stage 3 primarily use the marker 'ein bisschen' to hedge single adjectives or verbs, as Rosamond in (81):

(81) **Stage3.10Activities**

```
1   ROSAMOND:    [ja: aber ich denke dass eh ich denke auch das ist eh
                 [yes: but I think that eh I also think that is eh
2   eine gut eine gute idee mi- aber em eh (.) ich denke auch eh dass
    a good a good idea wi- but em eh (.) I also think eh that
3   es ist em eh vielleicht eh ein bisschen eh schwer für em mit mit
    it is em eh maybe eh a bit eh difficult for em with with
4   e:h (.) alles die arbeiten für die studenten
    e:h (.) all the work for the students
```

In (81), Rosamond uses the hedge 'ein bisschen' (l. 3) to mitigate her objection to Lee's suggestion that students of German should go to Germany often to improve their German, on the grounds that this would be difficult to achieve. The hedge precedes the adjective 'schwer' that marks the reason for Rosamond's objection.

At Stage 5, hedges that are multi-word sequences starting with either 'und' or 'aber' start being used more frequently. It is at this stage that the secondary function of hedges as time-gainers and aids to processing, which has also been identified for downtoners, becomes more apparent (82):

---

[55] The quantitative results need to be read with some caution, as much of the leap in frequency of hedges between Stage 5 and Stage 7 appears to be down to only one speaker – Esther – who, in her two conversations with Holly, uses combinations with 'irgend–' with an extremely high rate. In addition, the fact that Esther and Holly performed two conversations may have slightly distorted the overall picture in terms of frequency.

```
(82) Stage5.9Tuition

1   CLIFFORD: nein aber ich denke das es wichtig ist em weil es gebt e
                 no but I think that it is important em because there is
2       es es es gebe em viele möglichkeiten für em menschen die (.) bevor
        i there there are em many opportunities for em people who (.)
3       universität keine sport gemacht habe um (.) etwas zu machen
        before university haven't done any exercise to (.) do something
4   COURTNEY: ja ja
                 yes yes
5   CLIFFORD: um fit zu sein oder was (.) das ist wichtig aber
                 in order to be fit or something (.) this is important
6       vielleicht sollen (.) ich (.) mein ersten wahl war [...]
        but maybe shall (.) I (.) my first choice was [...]
```

In (82), Clifford elaborates on his idea that the university should use money raised through tuition fees to improve sport and leisure facilities at the university, so that students who may not have engaged in regular exercise before coming to university may become fit. It is the word 'fit' that is accompanied by the hedge 'oder was', followed by a pause (l. 5). While 'oder was' adds fuzziness to the word 'fit' and allows Clifford to avoid an exact specification of what being fit means, it also gives him time before launching into the next part of his turn. The hedge marks the transition between different content-bearing parts of the turn.

Multi-unit hedges ('ich weiß nicht' as well as other markers starting with 'und' or 'aber') are used in this way in the overwhelming majority of cases and followed by a pause, resembling use of the downtoner 'ich weiß (es) nicht' and many epistemic verbs. Unlike the pattern shown by downtoners, however, the use of hedges in this function is quite evenly distributed across all levels and speakers.

The most major development at Stage 7 is the integration of combinations with 'irgend-' into speakers' lexicon (83):

```
(83) Stage7.5Obese

1   ESTHER: ich hab ich weiß nicht ich komme jetzt wahrscheinlich vom
                 I have I don't know I am probably straying off topic
2       thema ab entschuldigung wenn ich das jetzt mach aber (.) ich hab
        sorry that I am doing this now but (.) I somehow heard
3       irgendwie gehört dass die em damit em ich denke jetzt alle leute
        that they em so that em I think now all people in general
4       im allgemeinen irgendwie weniger schokolade essen dass sie jetzt
        somehow eat less chocolate that they now want to
5       die große kingsize em irgendwie abschaffen wollen [und nur noch=
        em somehow abandon the large kingsize [and only the=
6   HOLLY:                                              [ah ja!
                                                        [oh yes!
7   ESTHER: =kleinere (.) denkst du dass das gut ist meinst du dass
                 =smaller ones (.) do you think that this is good do you
8       das viel helfen würde
        think that this would help a lot
```

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Example (83) is from a conversation about obesity in which Esther reports that she has heard that king-size chocolate bars are going to be abolished (l. 1-5, 7), before asking her interlocutor Holly her opinion on the issue (l. 7-8). The hedge 'irgendwie' (l. 3, 5), which is used twice, contributes fuzziness to the circumstances in which Esther has claimed to have heard about the issue and allows her to claim ignorance when challenged on the issue.[56]

Possible reasons for the fact that some hedges and downtoners, in a marked contrast to uptoners and intensifiers, are used as aids to processing, will be discussed in more detail later (chapter 8). Learners' retrospective reports in the interviews also give some cues to an answer.

6.4.1.6 Uptoners

Together with intensifiers, uptoners have epistemic meanings that contrast with downtoners, hedges and epistemic verbs. Uptoners and intensifiers upgrade propositions, add emphasis and therefore allow speakers to present themselves as committed to their opinions, authoritative and convincing.

From a quantitative point of view, the frequency of uptoners increases steadily rather than in big leaps, but remains low overall as compared to downtoners (1.25 per 10000 characters at Stage 3, 3.28 per 10000 characters at Stage 5, 5.84 per 10000 characters at Stage 7).

The overall range shows some real expansion only at Stage 7, while at Stage 3, there is some evidence of code-switching:

- Stage 3: natürlich, indeed, wirklich
- Stage 5: natürlich, wirklich, total
- Stage 7: jedenfalls, echt, sogar, auf jeden fall, wirklich, natürlich, im allgemeinen

No stable base of uptoners that learners could draw from seems to have developed at Stage 3, as there are only three uptoners overall used by three different speakers. It is therefore difficult to make any generalisation as to the use of uptoners at this Stage. In one case, the uptoner accompanies an adjective within an agreement and therefore stresses the agreement ('streng indeed'), in another it upgrades agreement before forthcoming disagreement, and in the third instance it is an upgrader to an opinion expressed at the beginning of an argumentative sequence (84):

---

[56] The scope of 'irgendwie' appears to be relatively wide, as, although it accompanies single verbs and adjectives, it sometimes appears to refer to entire propositions. When 'irgend-' occurs in combination with adverbs of time or place (irgendwann, irgendwo), its scope is smaller.

(84) Stage3.9Obese

```
1    WAYNE: hm (.) und und auch jeder sagt dass wir müssen die
                 hm (.) and and also everybody says that we have to
2    fettsucht bekämpfen aber: em niemand em macht gute maßnahmen und
     fight obesity but: em nobody em makes good measures and
3    (.) das das hilft die situation em nicht em wenn wir wirklich die
     (.) that that does not help the situation em when we can really
4    fettsucht bekämpfen können dann es es würde kosten sehr viel em
     fight obesity then it it would cost a lot em
5    (.) zu die junge leute em besser informieren und em sie müssen em
     (.) to em inform the young people better and em they have to em
6    em (.) die (.) also sie müssen billigere em eh essen haben em die
     em (.) the (.) well they have to have cheaper em eh food em that
7    gesund ist
     is healthy
```

The uptoner concerned in (84) is 'wirklich' (l. 3). It follows a complaint by Wayne that, although everybody complains about obesity, nobody actually takes action against it. He then uses 'wirklich' to stress his point that, if one takes the fight against obesity seriously, better information would have to be distributed and cheaper and better food be made available.

At Stage 5, the majority of all speakers still do not use any uptoners at all. In two cases, uptoners are used to emphasize a contrast (85):

(85) Stage5.9Tuition

```
1    COURTNEY: aber ich denke dass sie noch billiger sein könnten
                    but I think that they could be even cheaper
2    CLIFFORD: natürlich würde alles besser wenn es billiger wäre wäre
                    of course everything would be better if it was was
3    em aber (.) bücher zum beispiel (.) sie sind sehr teuer
     cheaper em but (.) books for example (.) they are very expensive
```

Example (85) stems from a discussion on the use of money raised from tuition fees. Courtney had earlier suggested that tuition fees should be used to subsidize books for students. Clifford then employs the uptoner 'natürlich' (l. 2) to emphasize his agreement with this suggestion, but also points out that, in fact, books are still quite expensive today. It is for this purpose – emphasizing a contrast by upgrading agreement before forthcoming disagreement – that uptoners are increasingly used from Stage 5 onwards.

At Stage 7, uptoners also emphasize the evidence provided to support assessments and opinions (86):

(86) Stage7.2Advice

```
1    GORDON: also em (.) ich finde es eh auch wichtig eh so oft wie
                 well em (.) I also eh find it important eh to speak
2    möglich mit deutschen muttersprachlern zu sprechen
     as often as possible with native speakers of german
```

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```
3    HARRY: hm
            hm
4    GORDON: weil em natürlich kann e:m diese person dich eh deine
            because em of course can e:m this person correct you eh
5    fehler korrigieren
     your errors
6    HARRY: ja
           yes
7    GORDON: wenn sie zusammen sprechen natürlich sprechen sie em (.)
            when they are speaking together of course they speak em
8    richtig
     (.) correctly
```

The uptoner 'natürlich' appears in this case (86) in the context of the reason Gordon provides for his suggestion that learners should talk as often as possible to native speakers of German. By using 'natürlich' (l. 4, l. 7), Gordon emphasizes his belief that native speakers will be able to correct the errors learners make and that they provide adequate input for learners.

It must be said, however, that even at Stage 7 not all speakers use uptoners, and those who do differ widely in the frequency and proficiency of their use. There is therefore a marked contrast to the use of downtoners, which will be explored further at a later point (chapter 8).

6.4.1.7 Intensifiers

Intensifiers develop in a different way from uptoners. Their frequency is overall more on a par with that of hedges, although the highest rate of occurrence is reached at Stage 5 (24.17 per 10000 characters), which constitutes a very sizeable increase from Stage 3 (9.62 per 10000 characters), but then leads to a drop at Stage 7 (8.67 per 10000 characters). Furthermore, intensifiers are generally more evenly distributed across the learners of each Stage.

In terms of the range of markers used as intensifiers, the highest range is reached at Stage 7:

- Stage 3: sehr, viel, total

- Stage 5: sehr, viel, ganz, total, absolut

- Stage 7: sehr, ganz, super, viel, völlig, total, höchst, gar, voll, überhaupt

At Stage 3, intensifiers are mostly used as qualifiers and upgraders of adjectives that express an evaluation of the state of affairs (87):

```
(87) Stage3.7Obese

1    ANNA: em (.) ich denke dass die beste lösung die fettsucht unter
           em (.) I think that the best solution to fight obesity
2    studenten zu bekämpfen äh em ist kosten sind kostenlose
     among students eh em is free is offering free
```

```
3      sportkurse in allen teilen hm der universität anbieten ich finde
       sports classes in all parts of the university I find
4      das ist das eh eh sehr gute lösung
       that this is eh eh a very good solution
```

In (87), Anna suggests that free sports classes are the best solution to binge-drinking. This evaluation is repeated at the end of the turn, further stressed with the intensifier 'sehr' (l. 4).

Intensifiers continue to be used in the same way at Stage 5. However, there is a very pronounced tendency by some speakers to regularly reduplicate intensifiers as qualifiers of evaluative adjectives (88):

(88) **Stage5.7Advice**

```
1      CATHERINE: em (.) dieses jahr ist es em (.) ein bisschen mehr
                  em (.) this year it is em (.) a bit more active
2      aktiv und das ist sehr gut für em (.) studenten in dem ersten jahr
       and this is very good for em (.) students in the first year em
3      em weil sie deutsch sprechen miteinander und sie machen eh sie
       because they speak German to each other and they do eh they see
4      sehen deutsche filme und sie sie üben eh ihre deutsch
       german films and they they practice eh their German
5      EMILY: aha
              aha
6      CATHERINE: und das ist (.) finde ich das ist sehr sehr gut sehr
                  and this is (.) I find this is very very good very
7      sehr schön
       very nice
```

In (88), Catherine comments on the fact that the German Club at the university has been relaunched. She first assesses this as 'sehr gut' (l. 2), but later repairs to 'sehr sehr gut' and 'sehr sehr schön' (l. 6-7). Through this parallelism and the reduplication of the intensifier 'sehr', Catherine emphasizes her assessment.

It is the frequent reduplication of intensifiers at this level which is responsible for much of the steep rise in frequency of intensifiers as compared to Stage 3, and the absence of such reduplication at Stage 7 that causes the decline in frequency. The reduplication of intensifiers before evaluative adjectives and phrases is in fact the main use of intensifiers at this level, although in some rare cases intensifiers also reinforce agreement. It is possible that intensifiers are used in this way because learners feel that they need to compensate for what they see as a lack of authoritativeness, but we cannot say this for sure with the information available.

From Stage 7 onwards, intensifiers start being used as complements to verbs and nouns as well (89):

```
(89)  Stage7.5Obese

1    HOLLY: ja ich hab gemerkt eh dass es ((räuspert sich)) für
                yes I have realised eh that it ((clears her throat)) for
2    vegetarier viel (.) em eine viel größere wahl von belegten
      vegetarians a lot (.) a much bigger choice of
3    brötchen
      sandwiches
```

In (89), the second occurrence of 'viel' (l. 2) stresses Holly's observation that the choice of sandwiches available in university cafeterias has improved. 'Viel' is therefore a complement to the noun complex 'größere wahl', pointing out what Holly claims to have observed, in order to increase the effect the observation might have on her interlocutor Esther.

6.4.1.8 Cajolers

Cajolers have very minor relevance for the learner discussions at all levels, as the frequency count in figure 3 suggests. Only one cajoler appears at Stage 3 and Stage 5, while there are nine at Stage 7 (0.42 / 0.3 / 1.59 per 10000 characters of transcript). Even more revealing for the limited productivity of cajolers is the range of cajolers used. The one cajoler at each of Stages 3 and 5 is an instance of code-switching to speakers' native language ('I mean'). At Stage 7, students use 'ich meine' and 'weißt du'.

Although the cajolers encountered in the learner discourse conform to the conditions suggested in the definitions for markers of epistemic modality (3.7.3.4) in that they are of little transparent meaning to the discourse, they achieve more than establishing harmony between speakers. Cajolers also provide the speaker with thinking time and focus the interlocutors' attention on important parts of a particular turn (90):

```
(90)  Stage7.2Binge

1    DARREN: ja (.) also vielleicht sie können etwas wie eh zigaretten
                yeah (.) well maybe they could do something like eh
2    machen mit e:m etwas auf die flasche geschrieben? ((lebhafte
      cigarettes with e:m writing something on the bottle? ((vivid
3    handbewegungen während dieser äußerung))
      hand movements during this utterance))
4    MATTHEW: ja? (.) aja aha
                yeah? (.) aja aha
5    DARREN: weißt du wie eh zigarette
                you know like eh cigarette
```

In (90), Darren suggests that health warnings should be written on the labels of bottles of alcoholic drink (l. 1-2) just as they already are written on cigarette packets. He then repeats his comparison with cigarettes, using the cajoler 'weißt du'. This

focuses Matthew's attention on the comparison and on the suggestion as a whole, with the aim of eliciting agreement from him. Moreover, the cajoler also marks the transition to the repeated comparison with cigarettes, enabling Darren to upgrade his suggestion with this repetition.

In other occurrences of cajolers at this level, they are employed when speakers move from a general statement to the more concrete, again focusing the interlocutor's attention and seeking his or her agreement.

6.4.1.9 Modal particles

Modal particles are, by their very nature, very difficult to describe with regard to the meaning that they express. As suggested in chapter 3, modal particles unfold their meaning only in the context of the interaction, and contribute subtle shades of meaning to the turns in which they occur. It is for that reason that Zimmermann (1981) dubs them a "Lernproblem" (problem for learning).

The frequency count in figure 3 shows that modal particles only start playing a role at Stage 5, where they are used with a frequency of 3.28 per 10000 characters. Only one modal particle was used at Stage 3 overall, resulting in a frequency of 0.42 per 10000 characters. At Stage 7, the frequency rises to 10.79 per 10000 characters of transcript. At Stage 5, modal particles are in the repertoire of only three speakers, while all Stage 7 speakers bar one use a modal particle at some point.

The range of modal particles also develops in a linear fashion, from one at Stage 4 to four at Stage 5, and twelve at Stage 7:

- **Stage 3:** doch
- **Stage 5:** eigentlich, doch, schon, ja
- **Stage 7:** eigentlich, denn, schon, mal, einfach, wohl, jetzt, ja, eben, halt, doch, zwar

It would go beyond the scope of this thesis to explain the function of each of the modal particles used on the basis of selected examples. Hence I will focus on those that are most frequently used or appear to fulfil interesting functions with regard to facework as the projection of a self-image associated with social roles and personal qualities.

The modal particles 'doch' and 'schon' are the particles that are most frequently used by speakers from Stage 5. They are generally used for persuasiveness as well as to upgrade propositions (91):

(91) Stage5.9Tuition

1   COURTNEY: sport und freizeitdingen sind doch auch wichtig [aber
                  sport and leisure things are also important [but

```
2    CLIFFORD:                                                    [ja
                                                                  [yes
3    COURTNEY: =[wichtiger für mich ist die erziehung
               =[more important to me is education
```

In (91), Courtney argues against Clifford's suggestion of using students' tuition fees for improving sport and leisure facilities. She uses the modal particle 'doch' to sharpen the contrast between Clifford's suggestion and her own proposal of using tuition fees for educational purposes, emphasizing in this way that it is the latter which should be prioritised.

In contrast, 'eigentlich' generally downgrades what is being said (92):

(92) Stage5.1Activities

```
1    ELISA: ah ich auch em: wöchentliche deutsche filme
              ah me to em: weekly German films
2    JOY: ja [das
            yeah [that
3    ELISA:  [(ich habe) zwei (.) gemacht weil (.) eigentlich deutsche
                [(I have) said (.) two because (.) actually German
4    vorlesungen (.) naja das (.) das hilft doch aber (.) es ist ein
     lectures (.) well that (.) that does help but (.) it is a
5    bisschen (.) unrealistisch (.) ich weiß nicht ob das das richtiges
     bit (.) unrealistic (.) I don't know if this is the right
```

The extract featured in (92) centres on the usefulness of German films and lectures in German for students' acquisition of German. Elisa objects to the proposed usefulness of lectures in German by saying that they are unrealistic. The modal particle 'eigentlich' precedes this disagreement or objection and downgrades it (l. 1). In addition, the modal particle 'doch' (l. 4) is also used in this extract, and yet again it upgrades agreement and therefore sharpens the contrast with the objection ahead.

As shown earlier, Stage 7 sees the biggest expansion of the range of modal particles. 'Eigentlich' is supplemented at this level by 'einfach' and 'mal' as modal particles with primarily downgrading functions. Other modal particles focus the interlocutor's attention on a particular point and help them select the appropriate context for the interpretation and understanding of an utterance or turn (93):

(93) Stage7.Obese

```
1    ESTHER: und dann ist es nicht so der sinn der sache (.) es soll ja
              and then it is not what this is about (.) the goal is
2    em gesundes essen irgendwie schmackhaft gemacht werden
     em to make healthy food more tasty somehow
```

In example (93), which is the end of a longer turn, Esther's use of the modal particle 'ja' (l. 1) aims to direct her partner Holly's attention to the conclusion that

offering meals that are healthy and tasty is what any initiatives should focus on. It could be paraphrased 'as you know' or 'obviously' / 'evidently'.

The two particles 'eben' and 'halt' also present a proposition as evident, as the following example shows (94):

```
(94) Stage7.5Obese

1    HOLLY: also man kann sich nicht eh langweilen [(.) ja man
              one can not be eh bored [(.) yeah one
2    ESTHER:                                        [nein das ist nicht
                                        [no this is not good
3    gut weil dann (.) es gibt immer sehr viel also immer so viel em
     because then (.) there are always a lot well always that much em
4    (          ) ((Holly lacht)) em (.) ja man will eben immer (.)
     (          ) ((Holly laughs)) em (.) yes one always wants (.)
5    man hat halt den drang woanders hingehen zu wollen (.) aber ne:
     one always feels inclined to go somewhere else (.) but no:
6    man muss gesund essen diese woche
     one has to eat healthily this week
```

In the above extract (94), Esther suggests that if a larger variety of meals were not offered, people would be even more inclined to go somewhere else for their meal. With the pragmatic particles 'eben' (l. 4) and 'halt' (l. 5), Esther can present this opinion as a fact hard to contradict.

Nevertheless, the quantitative account and the examples show that it is mainly at the highest proficiency level where learners employ a wide variety of modal particles in a variety of functions, while otherwise their use is quite limited. What could, however, not be shown with the data available is the way in which these modal particles are acquired. As some learners, in particular at Stage 5, use only a low range of modal particles, but within very similar contexts (e.g. epistemic verb + doch/schon, form of verb 'sein' + doch/schon), it is possible that, again, some modal verbs are acquired by the route of formulaic expressions. However, in order to prove this hypothesis, longitudinal data would be needed that would allow the occurrence of a particle in the discourse of a learner to be traced during the course of their linguistic development; hence I can only speculate at this point.

6.4.2 The conditional as syntactical marker of epistemic modality

6.4.2.1 A quantitative perspective

In addition to the above mentioned markers of epistemic modality that are operating at the lexical level of discourse, the employment of conditional forms[57] is a further means

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[57] See Appendix G for a definition and an example.

of modifying and, in particular, mitigating turns at the syntactical level. Quantitatively, use of the conditional develops as follows (figure 4):

Figure 4: The conditional as syntactical marker of epistemic modality

Figure 4 shows that at Stage 3, the density of conditional forms as a syntactical marker of epistemic modality is at its lowest (10.88 per 10000 characters), with a steep rise at Stage 5 (21.48 per 10000 characters) and a slight drop at Stage 7 (18.04 per 10000 characters). At Stage 3, only three learners – Jim, Wendy and Scarlett – contribute the overwhelming number of conditional forms, while at the two higher levels, all learners use conditional forms.

6.4.2.2 A qualitative perspective

From a qualitative point of view, two major uses of conditional forms can be distinguished. Firstly, the conditional can mitigate suggestions and directions ('they should/could do X'). In this case, it is usually used with modal verbs that express deontic meaning (see 6.3). Secondly, it can also be employed to present actions and effects as hypothetical, in which case würde-constructions dominate the agenda.

Generally, the data show that Stage 3 learners in general do not seem to possess a high degree of control over the production of past conditional forms. This applies in particular to conditional forms of modal verbs, like 'können', 'sollen', 'dürfen' or 'mögen', and is evident in numerous false starts and repairs (95):

(95) **Stage3.6Activities**

```
1    JIM:    [ja (.) das ist em ein gute idee eh die eh (.) um die kurse
              [yeah (.) this is em a good idea eh the eh (.) to improve
2    verbessern man kann em man könnten eh kö- eh ja eh man könnten
     the course one can em one could eh coul- eh yea eh one could
```

```
3    regelmäßige treffen mit deutsche austauschstudent eh vom
     regular meetings with german exchange students eh from
4    deutschland eh das würde em ein BISSCHEN eh deutsch eh (.) die
     germany eh that would em a BIT eh germen eh (.) the
5    DEUTSCH deutsch sprechen und die englisch deutsch sprechen
     GERMAN speak german and the english speak german
```

In (95), Jim argues that the German section at the university could organise regular meetings with exchange students in order to give their students the opportunity to speak more German. When he makes this suggestion, he uses the conditional form of 'können', but has to stop and restart twice to monitor his output (l. 2).

Expressing hypothetical meaning with forms of the conditional generally involves fewer linguistic difficulties, even at the lowest level of proficiency (96):

```
(96) Stage3.9Obese

1    WAYNE: vielleicht aber (.) ich eh (.) es es würde mir sorgen dass
                maybe but (.) I eh (.) it it would worry me that
2    es eh ein ein frisch war em weil es in die automaten war em (.)
     it eh was a a fresh em because it was in the vending machine em
3    persönlich denke ich dass em: wir müssen täglich em sport machen
     (.) personally I think that em: we have to exercise em daily
4    SCARLETT: ja
                yes
5    WAYNE: und dann würde diese em (.) schlechtes essen weniger der
                and then this em (.) bad food would be less of a
6    ein problem sein weil es eh em (.) es würde em wie energie sein
     problem because it eh em (.) it would be em like energy
7    und em es würde nicht so schlecht sein
     and em it would not be that bad
```

Wayne, in (96), employs 'würde' no less than three times. First, in a reply to a question by Scarlett about whether he would buy apples from a vending machine, in which case 'würde' expresses hypothetical meaning ('es würde mir sorgen dass es eh ein ein frisch war', l. 1-2). Similarly, hypothetical meaning is expressed later when Wayne suggests daily exercise would mitigate the effect of unhealthy food on people's health (l. 3, 5-7), with two instances of 'würde' (l. 5, 7). Here, the würde-construction does not appear to cause any problems linguistically.

At Stage 3, the use of the conditional to express hypothetical meaning versus its use to mitigate suggestions is fairly balanced. At Stage 5, a trend towards mitigating suggestions can be observed. This coincides with higher degrees of control over the production of modal verbs in general (see 6.3) and of the conditional of modal verbs in particular (97):

```
(97) Stage5.3Binge

1    GIANNA: em: ich denke dass um den trend des kampftrinkens unter
                em: I think that to fight the trend of binge-drinking
```

```
2     studenten zu bekämpfen? (.) eh sollte eggburton e:h erstmal
      among students? (.) eh eggburton should e:h primairly
3     alkoholische getränke in den campus bars teurer machen was denkst
      make alcoholic drinks in the campus bars more expensive what do
4     du
      you think
```

In example (97), Gianna starts the conversation on binge-drinking by proposing that the university make alcoholic drinks in campus bars more expensive. Her suggestion is explicitly modalised with a modal verb, which appears in its conditional form (l. 2). Gianna uses the conditional form of 'sollen' with confidence, which is a trend that is fairly generalisable across as far as this proficiency level, Stage 5, as a whole is concerned.[58] Nevertheless, individual learners continue to struggle with linguistic problems regarding the production of accurate conditional forms, even at Stage 7 (98):

(98) **Stage7.2Binge**

```
1     DARREN: =und (.) ich glaube (.) das wäre (.) das würde nicht ein
              =and (.) I believe (.) that would (.) that would not be
2     (.) nicht ein großes problem für die studenten sein also sie
      (.) a huge problem for the students well they
3     können eh in der studenten union? union (.) sie können
      could eh in the student union? union (.) they can
```

In (98), Darren suggests that banning alcohol from halls would not constitute a big problem for students, as they could go to the Students' Union to drink. He uses a conditional form to project what, in his opinion, would happen if alcohol were banned from campus bars. Darren initially uses the single-word conditional construction for 'sein' ('wäre', l. 1), but then changes his mind and after a pause, uses the würde-construction. This suggests that, although he does know the single-word construction, he is not absolutely confident about its use.

I have mentioned this example because it shows that the würde-construction is for many learners an easier alternative, going along with a priority for the expression of hypothetical meaning. Some learners lean very heavily towards this use of conditional forms. Again, I will discuss possible reasons for this later (chapter 8).

6.5 Chapter summary and outlook

This chapter has shown that the expression of modality at the deontic and the epistemic level, expressed through lexical, syntactical and phrasal markers, changes considerably across the three levels of proficiency. I will now try to summarize the most important trends, again by making reference to the ideational, the interpersonal and the

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[58] Also emerging at Stage 5 is the conditional of 'werden' in the context of the subjectiviser 'ich würde'.

textual level of discourse. Just as for organisational aspects of argumentative discourse, these trends do not apply to all speakers to the same degree.

As far as the ideational level (expression of arguments) is concerned, the analysis has shown that learners move towards explicit rather than implicit modalisation and towards integrating more upgraders. Moreover, they are increasingly able to express shades of meaning by relying less on formulaic expressions (e.g. repetition of evaluative phrases, same type-token combinations of modal verbs). This allows them to argue their points with increasing vigour by expressing how relevant they consider particular proposals, and by making explicit who can be held responsible for the implementation of particular actions.

At the interpersonal level, learners develop an increasingly larger repertoire of different markers of epistemic modality, as well as the processing control necessary to use these markers in context. This allows them to mark and vary their degree of commitment to what is being said and present themselves as considerate and respectful of other ideas and arguments, but also to make their own points in increasingly authoritative ways. However, a marked contrast persists between the way upgraders (intensifiers, uptoners) and downgraders (epistemic verbs, downtoners, hedges) develop in frequency. It appears to be linked to the fact that downtoners fulfil a secondary function as aids to processing.

Little can be said about the textual level from the perspective of epistemic and deontic modality discussed in this chapter, except for the fact that the relative lack of upgraders as compared to downgraders at all levels of proficiency, as well as the reliance on formulaic evaluative phrases at the lowest proficiency level, contribute yet again to a general picture of learners as scarcely argumentative. Only at the highest level of proficiency there is some orientation towards conceptualising the task as an argument over ranking positions and the feasibility of different options.

The reasons for these developments are located at the interface of cognitive processing constraints, linguistic limitations, and individual and social considerations relating to the projection of face and identity, and they will be explored in more detail in chapter 8. Before that, chapter 7 aims to illuminate some of these developments and trends with the data from the retrospective interviews.

Chapter 7   Retrospective interviews

7.1 Chapter Outline

After an in-depth analysis of one conversation from each level of proficiency in chapter 4, chapter 5 was dedicated to organisational aspects of argumentative discourse, revealing that learners move from two- or three-turn argumentative sequences to multi-turn argumentative sequences, and that the turns within these argumentative sequences are becoming increasingly elaborate. In chapter 6, on issues of modality, it was revealed that learners generally move from implicit to explicit means of modalisation in the area of deontic modality, and that some markers of epistemic modality are used as aids to processing as well.

This chapter now aims to use the second data source, the retrospective interviews, to uncover aspects of learners' thoughts and decision-making processes during the conversations. It addresses the following research question:

- What can learners express about their decision-making processes in argumentative discourse, and how far are those processes governed by learners' commitment to maintenance and expression of face and identity?

In addition, the chapter will also address issues relating to accessibility of cognitive processes to retrospective report and the validity of retrospective data.

7.2 Methodological framework

7.2.1 Conducting and analysing the stimulated recall interview

7.2.1.1 Interview questions[59]

In the first part of the retrospective interview[60], students were asked to stop the recording when they felt able to report their thoughts and decision-making processes during their discussions. I stopped the recording about once per minute (less often when it exceeded five minutes). I chose moments at which subjects disagreed very strongly or showed clearly cooperative behaviour, but also moments at which it seemed to me that there were clear signs of linguistic or processing problems, resulting

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[59] The interview schedule for both the stimulated recall and the self-observation part interview was modelled after Barron's (2003) interview schedule for her project on the development of requests in L2 German. See Appendix B for the full interview grid.

[60] A word-level transcription was applied to the retrospective interviews. Round brackets, when left blank, indicate that an utterance was not intelligible and transcribable. When filled, it indicates the transcribers' best guess as to what was being said.

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in stuttering, repetition and word-search. I then asked one of the following two questions[61]:

- What went through your mind while you were saying this?
- How did you decide what to say at this point and how to say it?

While the first question aimed at eliciting from learners what aspect of L2 use they were primarily attending to, the second question probed learners' decision-making processes in utterance planning and choice.[62]

7.2.1.2 Themes in stimulated recall

As a first step in the analysis, the data from the stimulated recall section of the interviews were coded according to the main themes discussed by learners. No distinction was made at this point as to which of the two questions (see above) students' answers related to or whether they were comments given with or without a prompt by the researcher. The themes were identified in a bottom-up process (starting from the data), which resulted in the following categories (see Appendix G for examples relating to each of these definitions):

- **Comprehension:** Comments relating to the comprehension and understanding of arguments brought forward by the interlocutor.
- **Vocabulary:** Comments relating to problems, strategies and other issues relating to the retrieval and use of vocabulary to express ideas.
- **Grammar:** Comments relating to problems, strategies and other issues relating to grammar and word-order.
- **Arguments:** Comments relating to problems, strategies and other issues relating to the expression of ideas and the production of arguments.
- **Presentation:** Comments relating to problems, strategies and other issues regarding the manner in which these arguments are presented (modality, organisation of discourse).
- **Retelling:** Comments which are merely a repetition of what had originally been said during the discussion.
- **Other:** Comments not classifiable under any of these categories.

As double-coding of stretches of discourse[63] within the retrospective interviews was allowed, a number of combinations of themes emerged:

- retelling-vocabulary
- comprehension-retelling
- arguments-presentation
- retelling-arguments
- retelling-grammar
- arguments-vocabulary
- grammar-presentation
- comprehension-vocabulary
- vocabulary-presentation
- vocabulary-grammar

While some of these combinations are of little relevance, others provide important insights into the social and cognitive processes relating to the maintenance of face and identity due to a strong link between two apparently unrelated issues.

7.2.1.3 Decision-making and planning processes

As a second step in the analysis of the retrospective data, I focused explicitly on learners' decision-making and planning processes, the factors that played a role in these decisions, and how problems were overcome, as elicited through question 2 (How did you decide what to say and how to say it?).

The answer patterns emerging from this question prompted me to make a distinction between two different kinds of strategies reported by learners: communication strategies and communicative strategies. Cognitive processing theory can help explain this distinction.

Defined by Faerch & Kasper (1983) as "potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal" (p. 212), the term *communication strategies* is associated with learners' strategies in dealing with and overcoming problems in communication. But are these strategies accessible to introspection?

In Chapter 3, I have already discussed the issues surrounding the validity of retrospective data. Ericsson & Simon (1987, 1993) for example, claim that it is possible to accurately report thought processes, but not the reasons for behaviours. Ericsson & Simon do however also suggest that mental processes that are heeded during the task or experiment are accessible via introspection. Faerch & Kasper (1987) use the distinction of declarative knowledge (rule knowledge) and procedural knowledge (planning an utterance and monitoring its execution) to describe which processes in

would be coded individually. In some cases, when a learner had already given an answer and the researcher would then inquire in more detail, these answers would be taken as one unit.

second language production can be reported in stimulated recall. They suggest that declarative linguistic knowledge is analysed knowledge and therefore available to introspection, while procedural linguistic knowledge is mostly automatised, does not enter short-term memory and is therefore not accessible through stimulated recall. There are, however, exceptions to this rule:

> Sudden breakdowns of automatic processing, such as when the learner is faced with a problem in reception or production due to a lack of relevant (declarative) linguistic or other knowledge, often initiate attended processing, e.g. the use of communicative strategies. These attended processes are then available to introspective reports. (Faerch & Kasper, 1987, p. 12)

When learners are dealing with problems in language production, their cognitive processes are therefore accessible to report[64], and the term *communication strategies* relates explicitly to strategies learners claim to have used when dealing with such problems. In contrast, *communicative strategies* (my own term) are strategies that learners claim to have used in order to reach communicative goals without having to compensate for problems in communication.[65]

The analysis will focus on both kinds of strategies. In addition, it will also include instances in which learners seemed to have problems accessing their decision-making processes in reports of communication strategies, as this allows for important insights into the accessibility of cognitive processes.[66]

7.2.2 Conducting and analysing the self-observation interview

In the self-observation interview, learners were asked questions regarding their evaluation of alternative utterances, linguistic difficulties, pragmatic awareness, knowledge and difficulty, the influence of the research situation, and their own evaluation of their performance (for a full list of the question asked see appendix B). Usually, not all of the questions were asked in each individual interview, in order to keep the interviews short.

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[64] Based on Nisbett & Nilson (1977), Gass & Mackey (2000) further suggest that *plans*, the mental structures used when making conscious, deliberate decisions, can, in fact, be reported, while *scripts* guide automatic and routinized processing.

[65] What needs to be added at this point is that the distinction of communicative strategies and communication strategies is often difficult to make in practice, i.e. the boundaries that make these two kinds of reports distinct from each other are fluid. Nevertheless, a clear trend persists that reports on grammatical and lexical issues are reported in terms of problems and strategies for overcoming these problems, while other issues are discussed without a focus on problems at the same time.

[66] Instances in which this question was asked in combination with question 1 ("What went through your mind while you were saying this") were also coded under "strategies", as were free, unprompted comments by learners in which they clearly communication strategies and communicative strategies for the particular aspects of L2 production.

Responses to each individual complex of questions in the self-observation part of the interview were analysed regarding trends in answer patterns at each level of proficiency and across the three levels. While the stimulated recall data were analysed using a combination of a quantitative and a qualitative perspective, we will be looking at the self-observation data from a qualitative point of view only.

7.2.3 The language of the retrospective interviews

This analysis of the language within the retrospective interviews was conducted by coding all instances of vague language and then comparing comments on different themes with regard to the use of vague language within them. The following items were coded as vague: *like, just, I guess, I think, you know, sort of, probably, maybe, kind of, perhaps, I don't know, I thought, I found, quite, I don't think, a little, a bit, pretty much, pretty, possibly.*

The analysis also focuses on whether learners' answers were concrete and tangible and appeared to relate to actual incidents during the conversations or whether they were generalised statements.

7.3 Stimulated recall

7.3.1 Themes – a quantitative and a qualitative perspective

The aim of this section is to explore the stimulated recall data with respect to the themes of learners' reports. Figure 5 allows both for an insight into the main themes at each Stage, and for a comparison of the three Stages:
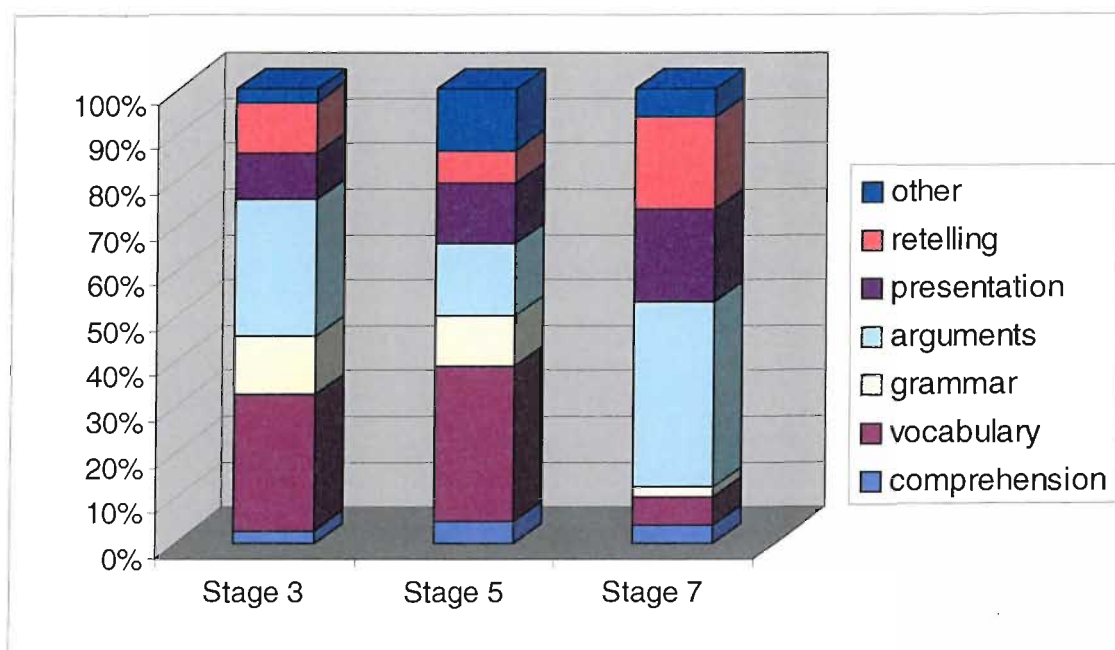
Figure 5: Themes in stimulated recall

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Figure 5 shows that issues relating to vocabulary / range of expressions are very important at both Stages 3 and 5, but are hardly ever discussed at Stage 7 (99):

(99) InterviewStage3.2

Interviewer: What went through your mind while you were saying this?
Ashley: Probably that I didn't know how to say it in Engl- in German. I wanted to say something in German but I didn't know what it was so I had to sort of change it switch it around so I (could get away with it).
Brooke: I couldn't find the right adjective in German so I spent the whole time saying 'nicht gut' because I couldn't think of anything else to say I think that's wrong something like that so I kept saying that's not good.

This example stems from a stimulated recall interview relating to the Stage 3 sample analysis presented in chapter 4. In it, Ashley reports knowing what she wanted to say, but having to change her original plan due to not knowing how to say it in German. Similarly, Brooke also suggests that she was trying to come up with an adjective other than 'gut', but eventually had to fall back on the tried formula 'das ist gut'. The fact that she claims having used evaluative phrases including 'gut' "the whole time" is an issue that will be discussed further at a later point (7.5).

Similarly, grammatical aspects are of little relevance at Stage 7 as compared to both Stage 3 and Stage 5. At these lower levels, grammatical issues are often reported in terms of resource deficits, as in the following example from Stage 5 (100):

(100) InterviewStage5.3

Interviewer: How did you decide to say what you said? What went through your mind?
Rosamond: My Satz was that only the ones over the age of twenty-one can buy drinks. But then I didn't know how to say it in German because I was thinking where do I have to put the verb and then the modal verb and then I got mixed up.

In this example, Rosamond reports of her problems positioning the verbs in her sentence. It is interesting that she links her discussion of resource deficits with an indication of what her argument was supposed to be. This is a link that was often made, as I will show and explore further at a later point.

While issues relating to grammar and vocabulary are of little importance at Stage 7 as compared to lower levels, the manner of presentation of arguments and ideas (presentation) is of rising importance as proficiency progresses, although figure 5 shows that the increase is small overall. When discussing the "presentation" of ideas, learners refer to issues such as how to organise their arguments and, very rarely, how to modalise ideas. Example (101) refers to what would conventionally be labelled politeness, i.e. language to avoid face-threat and imposition:

(101) InterviewStage5.6

((Emily stops the recording))
Emily: I think I should have perhaps rather than 'Aha aha aha' I should have tried to say something like 'Ich stimme zu' oder 'Ich stimme nicht zu'.
Interviewer: What did you think at the time when you said this? How did you decide how to say it?
Catherine: Were you thinking about what you were going to say and respond?
Emily: I think yeah I was concentrating on what she was saying thinking ahead and also I was thinking do I interrupt her? How forceful can I be with my views?

Here, Emily initially stops the recording to comment retrospectively on how she could have improved her performance from a lexical point of view. It is only after the researcher probes her decision-making strategies and a rephrase of this probe by Catherine that Emily discusses issues of politeness, in particular the force and potential imposition of her argument. Only repeated prompts, therefore, make Emily edit and change the original theme of her comment, which suggests that although the concern for politeness may have been a real issue for Emily at the time of the conversation, it was nevertheless not so much at the forefront of her mind as to prompt her to stop the recording and discuss it.

Overall, comments relating to the manner in which ideas are presented, in particular those relating to issues of politeness, were rare. Those about facework at the ideational level (expressing ideas) were more frequent overall, in particular at Stage 3 and Stage 7, though with differences in the quality of these comments when these two stages are compared. At Stage 7, learners talk primarily about their perceptions of the interlocutors' points of view and how they saw their own arguments relate to these (102):

(102) InterviewStage7.3

Interviewer: What went through your mind while you were saying this?
Donald: I don't know I was just trying to force my point out.
Interviewer: And what went through your mind?
Emma: I don't know I said I could see his point of view but I could also see (realistically that this wouldn't happen) and there isn't enough cheap food at the moment so I was trying to say it is not going to work at the moment by just making it more expensive.

Both Donald and Emma answer the interviewer's question with a comment relating to the expression of ideas. While Donald discusses his intentions, Emma merely repeats what she had earlier said in the conversations. Interestingly, both Donald and Emma start their answer with the downtoner 'I don't know', thereby limiting the validity of what they are saying.

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In contrast to this, Stage 3 learners' discussion of ideas is often linked to lexical and grammatical resource deficits restricting the ability to express ideas. Roberta's comment (103) is a good example:

(103) InterviewStage3.10

Interviewer: What went through your mind while you were saying this?
Roberta: Like – where is the word-order? Where do I put 'nicht'? – I don't know. I was just trying to get the right words to say that I wanted to say.

This shift in the way learners make reference to arguments and ideas in the stimulated recall interviews indicates that the processing of grammar and vocabulary becomes more automated at more advanced levels of proficiency, which means not only that learners had increasingly more of their cognitive resources available for other aspects of language production, but also that they found it increasingly difficult to access their cognitive processes relating to issues of grammar and vocabulary.[67]

As I have said earlier, I allowed double-coding of the stimulated recall data, resulting in some interesting co-occurrences of themes. It must however be said that a co-occurrence does not necessarily always imply a link between themes, making it necessary to check qualitatively to uncover such links (table 5):

	Stage 3	Stage 5	Stage 7
retelling-vocabulary	1	1	0
comprehension-retelling	0	0	1
arguments-presentation	1	3	2
retelling-arguments	4	1	2
retelling-grammar	1	1	0
arguments-vocabulary	8	2	1
grammar-presentation	0	1	0
comprehension-vocabulary	2	0	0
grammar-arguments	2	1	1
vocabulary-presentation	0	3	0
vocabulary-grammar	0	1	0

Table 5: Co-occurrence of themes

Table 5 suggests a strong link between issues of vocabulary use and expression and presenting an idea or argument. This applies in particular to, but is not limited to Stage 3, a link exemplified in example (103).

Strongly linked also are arguments and retelling at both Stages 3 and 7, although there are differences concerning the quality of these links between these two levels. At

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[67] I must however stress at this point that, although Stage 3 learners generally give fairly concrete answers related to issues of vocabulary and grammar, there is nevertheless a good degree of hedging involved in their comments as well. In (103) for example, Roberta uses 'like' and 'I don't know', both of which are instances of vague language use.

Stage 3, learners often retell what they had earlier said in an effort to make sure retrospectively that they are being understood appropriately, an activity that is accompanied by phrases such as "This is what I wanted to say". At Stage 7, it appears as if learners are unable to access their thoughts and decision-making processes relating to vocabulary and grammar, leading to the arguments being the aspect primarily attended to and therefore retold in the stimulated recall interview.

At Stage 5, Emily links presentation to grammar as well as vocabulary (104):

(104) InterviewStage5.6

Interviewer: What went through your mind while you were saying this? How did you decide what to say and how to say it?
Emily: I wasn't entirely happy with the way I had said it actually because I was conscious of the fact that I was pausing quite a while. I thought 'Oh I have got to say something quickly' and I just came out with something like 'es ist schwierig' and that was not the way I was looking for but I had a mental block and I just couldn't think of many other ways of saying it. And then I think rather than just coming out and saying something I was too worried about concentrated on getting my word order right and getting the grammar right rather than just flowing.

Emily reports having tried to avoid a pause in the discourse by coming up with the evaluative phrase 'es ist schwierig'. Hence, Emily's concerns are, in this case, not primarily directed towards how her interlocutor might perceive her by what she says and the manner in which she presents the argument. Instead, she appears more concerned with how she presents herself as a speaker of the foreign language. In Emily's case, this led to the use of an evaluative phrase to avoid a pause, which, according to her report, did not reflect exactly what she actually wanted to say. Furthermore, Emily reports worrying about word-order and grammar rather than about presenting her ideas.

Other combinations of themes do not play a great role overall in the stimulated recall interviews and will not be discussed in more detail.

7.3.2 Communicative strategies and communication strategies

I have earlier (see 7.2.1.3) introduced a distinction of communicative strategies vs. communication strategies based on whether learners discuss their strategies of dealing with problems in L2 use (communication strategies) or whether they discuss strategies without an explicit focus on problems (communicative strategies). There are three main trends emerging from the data, all of which I will explore in some detail.

Firstly, learners at Stage 3 generally report communication strategies in more detail and less vague terms than learners at Stages 5 and 7. Example (105) is from Stage 3:

(105) InterviewStage3.10

Lee: I think I got mixed up in this sentence. There were just too many verbs in this sentence and I was just trying to say a really long sentence and I just didn't know where to put all of the verbs so I put them all in the end. It sounded ok.

In this example, Lee discusses her strategy of dealing with the problem of word-order and verb position by taking a gamble and placing all of her verbs at the end of the sentence. She is able to use grammatical terminology when discussing her strategy and describing the source of the problem ('too many verbs').

There is a tendency at Stages 5 and 7 for learners' comments to become less concrete and more vague. Learners discuss problems of L2 production in very general terms, say what they usually do in situations similar to the one encountered, or simply retell what they had earlier said in the conversations (106):

(106) InterviewStage5.3

Interviewer: How did you decide to say what you said?
Roberta: (   ) It sounded very bad. (   ). The time goes by so quickly – when you are speaking time goes by so fast you don't have time to think about it. I have to say that and that about the sentence and something – you just more or less say what comes to your mind. You don't have time to think if it's correct.

Although some of Roberta's comment is lost due to sound problems, two things are quite clear. Firstly, the first part of her comment reflects her thoughts about her utterance at the time of the interview rather than during the original discussion task, as indicated through the use of the past tense ('it sounded'). Secondly, her comment is confirmation that she is conscious of trouble, but is unable to report the decision-making processes leading to the actual end product. Attended processing (see Faerch & Kasper, 1987) - the use of communication strategies – is therefore not documented.

The second trend emerging from the data is that issues related to vocabulary and grammar are mostly reported in terms of communication strategies, while those relating to arguments and their presentation are almost exclusively reported in terms of communicative strategies, i.e. the positive strategies used to reach particular communicative goals without focusing on problems at the same time. Example (107), from Stage 7, exemplifies this:

(107) InterviewStage7.3

Donald: And I tried to express that I disagree by saying 'Wieso das denn?' rather than going 'that's wrong' just going 'Why did you think that?'
Interviewer: And how did you decide what to say and how to say it?
Donald: I don't know – it just came out like that.

Donald, in (107), reports on his strategy of asking a question to elicit a revised version or account by his interlocutor Emma rather than disagreeing directly. This is, however, not linked to a linguistic resource problem or problem in processing. It is also possible that Donald only became aware of having used this strategy through the recall-procedure, and did not actually express his decision-making processes at the time of task completion.

This means that the manner of presentation of an argument, which is of course an important feature of facework within argumentative discourse, did not initiate attended processing in the same way as grammatical and lexical problems. This is likely to be due to a lack of declarative – 'rule' – knowledge. This is no different even at lower levels of proficiency (108):

(108) InterviewStage3.2

Interviewer: How did you decide what to say and how to say it?
Brooke: I don't really know. I knew I wanted to say I wouldn't be able to afford it and (I wanted to say) 'Ich kann' but I realized that was like in the present tense or whatever so I changed to 'Ich könnte' as in 'I would be able to'.

This interview comment follows up on a section from the discussion analysed in detail in chapter 4, in which Brooke had proposed that she personally would not be able to pay for alcoholic drinks if their prices were raised. Brooke reports on using a conditional instead of a present tense form during the conversation. This shows that she had some awareness of the potential of the conditional for the purpose of conversational mitigation at the syntactical level, but again, there is no evidence of her activating rule knowledge in terms of how an argument should be presented. She also does not use any terms such as, for example, 'politeness', to refer to the reasons for her efforts in using the conditional.

Furthermore, learners generally report of strategies in making an argument in terms of communicative strategies (109):

(109) InterviewStage5.6

Catherine: I thought that when she said 'What do you think about the situation' I immediately leapt into a general picture of what was going on and then what I thought about how I drink and how my friends drink and then about Eggburton. I don't know why I did that, but I thought I should introduce the topic on a nation-wide thing and then perhaps go on to Eggburton's level which is what the question was about.

Catherine reports having used a long account to precede her actual suggestion based on the general situation regarding binge-drinking on campus. What is quite interesting about her comment here is that it is difficult to decide whether she reports on her thoughts during the task or the observation of her own performance during the

stimulated recall. Her account of her thought processes is introduced by 'I thought', a verb in the past tense. She also uses past tense to describe her actions ('I leapt'). In addition, there is a direct contradiction between her initial suggestion that she didn't know why she did that and her immediate explanation for her actions. It is therefore possible that Catherine reports her thoughts at the time of the interview rather than at the time of the discussion, again because what she said was automatised to such an extent that her decision-making processes were not accessible to recall.

The trends reported here suggest strongly that, in contrast to vocabulary and grammar, arguments and their presentation did not initiate attended processing and were therefore only salient enough for learners to address them in terms of communicative strategies. Furthermore, there is a question of whether the strategies reported genuinely reflect what was taking place at the time of the conversations. This is an issue I will discuss in more detail later in this chapter (7.5).

The third trend emerging from the data is that learners' reports of communication strategies as well as communicative strategies support many of the conclusions made based on the analysis of the conversational data, but can also help uncover the source of problems necessitating the use of communication strategies. For example, some learners report resorting to evaluative phrases when faced with problems in retrieving other vocabulary. In (110) – an example from Stage 3 – Jim did not know how to say that he agreed:

(110) InterviewStage3.3

Interviewer: Now specifically to you – how did you decide how to say what you just said?
Jim: Yeah I wanted to say that I agree that I think that as well but I wasn't sure how to say that so I just said it was a good idea.

In this case, the use of an evaluative phrase also appears to have served the avoidance of possible problems and errors, as Jim suggests using 'es ist eine gute idee' instead of other ways of agreeing.

Further to evaluative phrases, learners report other strategies to make the task easier. For example, the sentences from the task instruction cards were chosen as prompts and an easy means of starting a turn or topic (114). Generally, most communication strategies reported dealt with issues of vocabulary and expression, with learners reporting having had to rephrase and simplify in some way in order to compensate for a lack of declarative knowledge. An example of many instances of this is (104), in which Catherine reports having used an evaluative phrase in order to avoid a pause.

In other cases however, learners also report having consciously limited themselves as far as their argument is concerned in an effort to avoid anticipated problems (111):

(111) InterviewStage5.6

Emily: They did an experiment in our school back at home, which is why I had written it down as a possibility. But in order to explain that it would just have required such a monologue. I was just 'No don't do it'!

This is in line in what we have, in chapter 5, described as a tendency of some learners of lower levels of proficiency to introduce new arguments rather than elaborating on old ones. Although Emily and her interlocutor Catherine were generally engaging in extended argumentative sequences, considerations of this kind may nevertheless have caused Emily to change her argument due to anticipated problems.

It is beyond the scope of this research to discuss all learners' reports on communicative and communication strategies. Other frequently reported strategies are:

- making pauses, slowing down

  (112) InterviewStage3.10

  Lee: I think also that my sentence before was really jumbled and it was so long that I couldn't put all the words in the correct order. I don't even know if it was in the right order. It was just a too complex sentence to say and I think that's why I am talking really slowly because I am trying to think where all the verbs are going and where they should be.

- taking a gamble:

  (113) InterviewStage3.10

  Rosamond: I found that I just I did say anything because you know I don't know what the case is or the gender so I just guess. I think it is better just to say something than to say nothing at all.

- using prompts:

  (114) InterviewStage3.5

  Jim: I just thought I would start the conversation off by actually just saying the title so it's easier to do.

- using formulaic expressions:

  (115) InterviewStage3.5

  ((Interviewer stops recording after "das glaube ich auch"))
  Interviewer: What did you think while you were saying this?
  Jim: It is something I always said to start of a sentence. It is easier - it gives you some time to think about what is coming next.

- transfer from L1:

(116) InterviewStage5.6

Catherine: I forgot the word there. It's not the biggest gap where I forgot the word but I couldn't – I had the English word in my head but it's not the same as the German word. 'Zimmer' just (   ) I could think of. I think I was thinking what I could say in English and then translating it rather than what I would say in German.

- consulting the interlocutor :

(117) InterviewStage7.9

Shirley: Well I think all the way through this is going to be me going 'äh äh' because I can't think of the right word and I just have to try to think of another way to say it. Or a couple of times I asked Tina 'Is that right?' when I wasn't sure.

Generally, the analysis of the stimulated recall data in terms of learners' communication strategies and communicative strategies suggests that learners were often actively trying to make life easier for themselves and limiting the cognitive and processing effort for making an argument. The price for these efforts, however, are restrictions on the line of argumentation pursued and consequently the expression of face and identity through these arguments. Furthermore, the data also show that there is a clear division between what is reported in terms of communication strategies and in terms of communicative strategies. The issues associated with facework – arguments and the manner of their presentation – appear to be much less 'problematic' for learners than other aspects (grammar and vocabulary) in terms of attention and cognitive effort.

7.4 Self-observation

7.4.1 Choosing between alternative utterances

During the self-observation phase, two questions were asked to probe the processes learners went through in order to decide about alternative utterances:

- Did you, at any time during the conversation, consider alternatives to what you said, and if so, why did you reject them?
- Did you consider the hearer's reactions when planning your utterances, and how did this influence what you said?

The answers to the first question provide further evidence that most learners across all levels primarily chose certain strategies due to issues associated with grammar and vocabulary, rejecting other possible strategies or ways of expressing ideas on linguistic grounds (118):

(118) InterviewStage3.10

Interviewer: Did you, at any time during the conversation, consider alternatives to what you said, and if so, why did you reject them?
Roberta: Yeah I think so but they were too hard
Interviewer: Too hard in what way?
Roberta: I didn't have the vocabulary to put them together
Lee: Sometimes I know I am getting the word order wrong like I say 'weil habe ich...'. I just think to myself 'Shall I change it and sound silly or shall I keep speaking and just leave as it is' and then I always try and change it. So that shows I do know... but I am just slow at knowing.

In (118), Roberta proposes linguistic resource deficits as a reason for choosing particular alternatives over others, while Lee points out that word-order had been an important issue for her, resulting in her repairing incorrect word-order in an effort not to sound 'silly' and showing that she knows German word-order.

Lee's answer to the same question is also revealing for different reasons. By using the expression 'sound silly', she effectively associates a lack of fluency with embarrassing herself. Furthermore, she makes a distinction between declarative knowledge ('that shows I do know') and procedural knowledge ('I am just slow at knowing'). It seems she is keen to show that she has acquired the symbolic representations to make her arguments (here, knowing that in subordinate clauses, the verb comes last), and that it was access to this knowledge and control over the production of her arguments that she was lacking. These problems and fears are by no means limited to Stage 3, and learners at the two higher levels reported similar problems.

In contrast to the first question, learners do discuss facework at both an interpersonal and an ideational level in the answers to the question about considerations of the hearer's possible reactions. Example (119) is again from Stage 3:

(119) InterviewStage3.2

Interviewer: Did you consider the hearer's reactions when you were planning your utterances at any point and did this influence what you said?
Ashley: Reactions? I think I sort of went 'Oh ja' and laughed every now and then just to try and sort of react to what she was saying.
Brooke: And I kind of – like we were talking about Crowns we talked about something that one another knew about so we could relate to that I guess.

Both Ashley and Brooke comment on the need to ensure good interpersonal relationships with their conversational partners. While Ashley reports having used using feedback tokens, Brooke reports using an example familiar to her interlocutor. However, the use of vague language in this extract ('I guess', 'sort of'), and the fact that Ashley refers to providing feedback to the interlocutor with an example ('oh ja') rather than an exact label, suggest that politeness or interpersonal aspects of language

production are not salient concepts for Ashley and that she lacks the words and concepts even in L1 to talk about them. This is mirrored in other examples as well.

Other learners from this Stage say that their overriding concern had been to get the task done (120):

(120) InterviewStage3.10

Interviewer:	Did you consider the hearer's possible reactions when you were planning your utterances?
Roberta:	No, I was only worried to get out what I needed to say.
Interviewer:	And you?
Lee:	I don't know really. I just said what I had to say.

In (120), Lee's claim is interesting as the analysis of the discussion she had been engaged in shows clearly that she did indeed do facework commonly associated with politeness (e.g. epistemic verbs, downtoners). This suggests that for her, some basic facework strategies at the interpersonal level were already quite automatised and were therefore not attended to.

A further reason for a limited attention to facework at the ideational and interpersonal level is suggested by a number of learners at all Stages. Example (121) features two speakers from Stage 5:

(121) InterviewStage5.5

Interviewer:	Did you consider the hearer's reactions or possible reactions while you were talking to each other?
Sara:	Not as much as I could have.
Abigail:	I think partly because there were only those four things and we thought both of our answers would be quite similar.
Sara:	I think if we had spoken in English I'd probably have argued a lot better with you. Not that I didn't disagree. But because it was in German I felt like just agree because if you disagree it is going to make it harder to argue and if you agree it's just easier to say 'yeah' but if it was in English, I would probably more go like 'actually...'.

In (121), Abigail's answer suggests that due to the fact that her own and Sara's lines of argument were quite similar, she felt that less facework at the interpersonal level was necessary. In contrast however, Sara quotes her own and her interlocutor's linguistic proficiency as the main reason for not arguing her point with more rigour.

In chapters 4 and 5, I have made reference to the fact that some learners, in particular those at Stage 3 and some at Stage 5, did not seem to actually conceptualise the task as an argument but as merely an exchange of ideas. One comment by a Stage 5 learner in the interviews also points in that direction (122):

(122) InterviewStage5.6

Interviewer:	Did you also consider the hearer's reactions when you were planning your utterances – or the hearer's possible reactions?

Clifford:	It's not a discussion or a debate or something – then I am always thinking what your are going to say, not like in sort of a debate where you think what are you going to say and how can I contradict that – I suppose I was thinking about what you will say but... ( )
Courtney:	I was setting questions so that he actually did make a response. In that way I think I was looking for a response but...
Clifford:	I was just happy to talk about whatever.

Clifford explicitly defines the task as not being a debate or discussion in which it would be necessary to consider ways of rejecting the interlocutor's opinions. Rather, he 'was just happy to talk about whatever', i.e. what exactly was said did not matter as long as one said something. Interestingly, this comment actually stems from one out of only two dyads in the learner data that engaged most intensively in argument. It nevertheless provides an insight into how some learners may have conceptualised the task.

At Stage 7, there is explicit mention of facework, in particular at the interpersonal level (123):

(123) InterviewStage7.3

Interviewer:	Did you consider the hearer's reactions when you were planning your utterances and did this influence what you said?
Emma:	I think like – two thirds during the conversation I suddenly started thinking about the vocabulary and my grammar a bit more – and I think it probably made me worse in a way.
Donald:	Do you mean by hearer one another? I could have been rude and said 'That's complete rubbish what you say' but obviously I had to bear in mind her feelings.

Here, while Emma makes a comment on vocabulary and grammar, Donald discusses issues of politeness and rudeness, though not without asking whether the researcher referred to the interlocutor when asking about hearers' reactions. Emma may well be thinking beyond the interlocutor, because she reports concerns for vocabulary and accuracy, which her interlocutor as a classmate is quite likely not to care about as much. Furthermore, she suggests that these concerns may have had a negative impact on her performance.

7.4.2 Overcoming linguistic difficulties

Asked whether they ever had to change something they would have liked to say due to language difficulties – a question asked of only two dyads from each level – learners made comments along the same lines as they had when discussing strategies earlier. For example, learners discussed having to find a way around what they had originally tried to say due to not knowing the relevant vocabulary. One learner from Stage 3 even suggests that the task required a different range of vocabulary (124):

(124) InterviewStage3.5

Wendy: Obviously with this kind of topics which don't come up in everyday conversation you have to use some kind of intellectual language which you don't have in German.

One speaker from Stage 5 suggested limitations in procedural rather than declarative linguistic knowledge as a reason for having to change an original plan (125):

(125) InterviewStage5.6

Emily: I found it hard using what we'd learnt in classes on grammar to apply to spoken language. I mean it is easier when you are writing because you've got the time to sit and think 'This is how to construct this!'. But when you are speaking you don't have time to think 'Oh I should be using the Konjunktiv II.'

Hence, Emily perceived a lack of time to plan while engaged in spoken discourse as one reason for not being able to say what she may have originally wanted to say. None of the answers to this question suggests explicitly whether linguistic difficulties actually led learners to changing their argument, although comments made at other points during these interviews point in that direction. One Stage 7 dyad was actually quite adamant that changing an argument due to linguistic difficulties was not an option (126):

(126) InterviewStage7.6

Interviewer: Did you have a situation – did you ever have to change something because of language problems – something you would have liked to say but you couldn't?
Heather: Not like a major point of my argument.
Jenny: No I mean sometimes there is things that I have to change round to say them differently in German, but it didn't actually change my argument. Because we both say what we want to say even if it doesn't sound brilliant German. We can say everything that we – we have got a point obviously!

Jenny's claim that linguistic difficulties would not have led her to change an argument is interesting because – as I will show subsequently (see 7.4.3) – few learners, in particular at Stages 3 and 5, share this enthusiasm and confidence. It is of course likely that the gain in confidence in their own performance is due to the year abroad that Heather and Jenny had just finished at the time when data were collected.

7.4.3 Pragmatic awareness, knowledge and difficulty

7.4.3.1 Aims of this complex of questions

The following questions were originally designed to elicit learners' opinions, knowledge and perceptions with regard to cross-cultural differences, in particular pragmatic norms for doing facework in English and in German (see 1.3.2):

- Do you think that a German would have argued in a different style in a conversation like this?

- Would you have phrased anything in a different way at any time if you had done the conversation in your mother tongue with another native speaker of your mother tongue? In what ways?

- Would you have phrased anything in a different way if you had done the conversation with a native speaker of German? In what ways?

- Did you feel in any way uncomfortable with what you were asked to do, i.e. arguing about a given topic?

However, learners reacted to these questions in a way not originally intended. They predominantly discuss interlanguage-related issues of task performance, and only one dyad discusses cross-cultural issues.

7.4.3.2 Perceptions of cross-cultural differences

The first question in this complex generally received comments suggesting that native speakers of German would make their point more strongly. Only one dyad from Stage 7 suggests cultural reasons for this behaviour and explicitly compared German and English pragmatic norms, reporting on their personal perceptions of German and English style (127):

(127) InterviewStage7.2

Interviewer:	Do you think a German or two native speakers of German – they would have argued in a different style in a conversation like this?
Donald:	They are a lot more confrontational I think.
Emma:	They wouldn't say as much 'vielleicht'; they would be more direct and say 'This is what I think'.
Donald:	This is a difference in German, not necessarily only in discussions. In German you would say 'Stop doing that' or 'Do that' or whatever whereas in English you would say 'Would you mind em...?' Just approaching it in a different way – I think Germans are much more confrontational and direct, which is good and bad.
Emma:	When I lived in Germany I actually preferred it.
Interviewer:	Imagine you would have done the conversation in German with a native speaker of German – you both are obviously very high level speakers of German as a foreign language – would you have argued in a different style?
Donald:	Depends on who I would have argued – I am taking my lead from them. If they started arguing aggressively then maybe.
Emma:	Yes... maybe the same.
Donald:	Because it's all generalisations aren't they. You might still have a German who is quite conscious or being polite and stuff. It's all generalisations.

At the time of the recording, Donald and Emma had only very recently spent a year abroad in Germany. They describe Germans as more confrontational than speakers of English, using fewer mitigating devices like 'vielleicht' and other markers of politeness. These observations are generally supported by the academic literature (see

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1.3.2). Furthermore, it is interesting that Donald feels that he has got a choice with regard to his argumentative style, which is a degree of confidence that is not shared by many of the other learners.

There are several possible reasons for the fact that only two dyads discussed cross-cultural issues. Firstly, most learners from Stages 3 and 5 had, at the time of the recording, enjoyed little exposure to the target culture for a significant amount of time. In addition of course, those issues hardly matter to them in the contexts in which they normally use their L2, which is the highly structured and rule-governed environment of the language classroom.

7.4.3.3 Perceptions of interlanguage performance

As I have already said, this complex of questions mostly did not elicit the kind of answers expected. Nevertheless, students' answers proved to be extremely consistent in one particular respect. Across all levels, native speaker performance was associated with assertiveness, confidence and higher complexity, while learners described their own interlanguage performance as severely constrained in a number of areas, as the following example regarding the complexity of arguments shows (127):

(127) InterviewStage3.5

Interviewer:	Imagine two Germans – native speakers of German – would have done the same conversation about the same topic. Do you think they would have argued in a different style, in a different style from how you argued?
Jim:	Yes
Interviewer:	In what way?
Jim:	They can develop their arguments in much more of a sort of fuller sense so they can actually express what they want to say whereas we were just reading off the sheet.
Wendy:	They can express a much stronger opinion as well because they have more to back it up and it's hard if you say 'I believe this' but then you can't really explain it and it's a lot less stronger.

In this example, Jim suggests that native speakers would be able to develop arguments more than learners, while Wendy says that they could provide reasons to support their arguments and therefore strengthen them. There are many more points of comparison between what learners perceived as behaviours typical for native speakers of German, how they thought they would behave in their native language, and the ways in which they felt speaking in L2 German had constrained their performance. Table 6 aims to summarize these:

NS German behaviours	Speaking in native language	Interlanguage constraints
1) Language and expression		
• complex sentence structures • wide range of phrases to express opinions • use of 'negative' words, e.g. 'doch', ... • constructions common to spoken language • fluent • less ordered • varied intonation	• wide vocabulary • wide range of structures • ability to express things in sophisticated manner, with more detail, etc. • speaking fast	• repetition of 'nicht gut' and 'ja aber': not as forceful • halting, stumbling • very ordered conversation • conversation very calm • waiting for each other to finish • repeating phrases to buy time • steady intonation • 'mindblocks'
2) Making an argument, getting one's point across		
• assertive, forceful • attention to arguments rather than language • involved in arguments	• assertive, forceful • involved in arguments • expansion on arguments possible (going into details, supporting an argument with evidence) • relaxed and confident	• 'polite' • attention to language rather than arguments • unable to explain reasons for arguments • lack of involvement

Table 6: Learners' perceptions of native and interlanguage behaviours

Table 6 shows that learners do see native speakers of German as assertive and forceful. As I have said before, however, they do not attribute these behaviours to cultural patterns. Instead, they contrast native speaker behaviour to what is considered severely constrained interlanguage performance. These suggestions made by learners regarding these constraints are in line with the results from the analysis of learners' conversations. For example, learners see themselves as less involved in the arguments due to their attention being primarily directed to language. Furthermore, some learners suggest that, although they were able to make their points, they were not always able to support them with evidence, which is indeed an issue the analysis (chapter 5) has picked up on. Moreover, learners also mention a number of other aspects, such as the repetition of certain formulas such as 'ja aber' and 'das ist nicht gut', and the orderly way in which many of the learner conversations tend to proceed, i.e. the tendency to discuss topics one by one, with little overlap between speakers.

In contrast, native speaker performance is associated with higher complexity and the use of a much wider range of structures and expressions. Some learners are aware of structures commonly used by native speakers of German (128):

(128) InterviewStage5.5

Interviewer: If two Germans, two native speakers of German, would have done the same conversation in German together. Do you think they would have argued in a different style?

Sara: They would have used more negative words such as 'doch'. I didn't use anything like that. And I said 'ja aber', and it was kind of 'yes but' and you are not being as forceful.

Abigail:	Yes. The Germans – I find – are a lot more forceful in their way of speaking. And obviously when you've got more speed and if it's your native language you are more likely to cut through whereas I think we were quite polite with each other we waited for each other to finish. And often – if you say something like 'Do you think that fastfood should be banned?' the other person will go 'Yes I think that fastfood should be banned' whereas in English we wouldn't bother with just saying 'Yeah ( )' or 'yeah I agree'.
Sara:	Or 'No I totally disagree'.
Abigail:	But you wouldn't repeat the point. But it's something that in a foreign language you do to buy time.

This extract is revealing in a number of ways. Firstly, it shows that Sara is aware of native speakers of German using more of what she calls 'negative words' such as 'doch' (a modal particle), making them, in her opinion, more forceful. She is also aware that she is not using these words herself, although no reasons for this are suggested. Furthermore, Sara also discusses her own tendency to use 'ja aber', which she associates with a less forceful way of speaking (see analysis in chapter 5).

As the interview continues, Sara and Abigail continue discussing native speaker performance vs. interlanguage performance. For example, they use the word 'polite' to describe their performance, they make reference to the tendency not to interrupt each other and furthermore, they also suggest that repeating parts of each other's turns is a way of 'buying time'.

It is however not only a lack of declarative linguistic knowledge that learners make responsible for the constraints in argumentative competence. In two interviews from Stage 7, there is explicit reference to procedural knowledge as well (129):

(129) InterviewStage7.9

Interviewer:	If you imagine two native speakers of German doing this conversation. Do you think they would have argued in a different style in a conversation like this?
Tina:	I think they would probably have been more ( ) and stuff. We were having quite a problem. They probably would have got more involved
Shirley:	Yeah I think so.
Interviewer:	Why is that?
Tina:	Because they wouldn't have had like mindblocks. They would have just talked and talked like us in English right now.
Shirley:	Yeah I mean it's difficult to get involved in something if you can't actually speak the language fluently. If Tina had been talking with another German - native German speaker - she probably would have found it a lot easier. But obviously I don't know all the words so I find it difficult to get involved. I might feel like I want to say something more but I can't.

In (32), Tina uses the word 'mindblocks' to describe the challenges imposed by cognitive processing constraints. Shirley then elaborates on this by saying that 'I might feel like I want to say something more but I can't', which again relates to procedural rather than declarative linguistic knowledge.

Answers to the question about possible changes in their argumentative patterns if they had done the conversation with a native speaker of German also elicited very

interesting answers. Many of the learners suggest that a conversation with a native speaker of German would have led to more status-insecurity (130):

(130) InterviewStage7.1

Matthew: I think because if they are German native speakers it would have been on them to be the ones to be in charge. You'd expect them to lead the discussion a lot more. And maybe you would make just one or two points but maybe just generally agree with what they were saying. And it would be the same if were doing it in English with a non-native speaker of English. I think the emphasis is on you to lead as the native speaker.
Darren: You would be more worried about making mistakes I think in the language.
Matthew: Yeah you would possibly concentrate more on the language than the actual what you are talking about.

According to Darren, talking to a native speaker of German would have made him more insecure and more worried about errors, while Matthew thinks that it would have been automatically the native speaker who would lead the discussion. This opinion is repeated often, in comments such as 'I would have let them take the lead' or 'I would have picked out words that they use'.

What also emerges from some of the answers to this question is a feeling of mediocrity and failure, in particular expressed by speakers at lower levels of proficiency (131):

(131) InterviewStage3.3

Interviewer: If you had done the conversation with a native speaker of German. Would you have phrased anything different in some ways?
Gopal: I don't think so.
John: It would depend on how long they'd stop laughing. I think you possibly might pay a bit more attention, hope they wouldn't think somebody is murdering our language. But again you might simply lack the ability or you might be so intimidated.

The last question in this complex – whether learners felt comfortable about arguing – was originally designed to elicit comments about the general readiness by learners to engage in argumentative discourse as determined by their cultural background. Yet again, learners chose to discuss the presence of the camera, or the mere task of arguing in a foreign language. John – the learner quoted in example (131) brings these feelings to the point (132):

(132) InterviewStage3.3

Interviewer: Did you feel in any way uncomfortable with what you were asked to do – like arguing about a certain topic?
Gopal: Not really.
John: Not really uncomfortable with arguing. Only in as much as you are aware that you are a reasonably intelligent person but yet you are limited by your knowledge of stumbling halting incorrect German.

This quote sums up well the way many learners seem to perceive their performance. They tend to see themselves as severely constrained in presenting themselves as a certain kind of person ('reasonably intelligent') by the arguments that they bring forward, with the constraints imposed through their interlanguage knowledge. Within a framework of face and identity, this means that they feel that they are unable to present themselves in the way they want to. John's reference to intelligence is, in fact, a very good example for showing that facework is far more than just positive self-presentation through politeness, but includes other personal qualities and social roles as well (see 1.6).

Of course, there is variation in the extent to which speakers feel constrained, and it is also possible that some learners are engaging in conventional self-depreciation during the interviews. Perceived performance is however just as important as actual performance when it comes to being able to project identity and face in a foreign language.

7.4.4 Influence of the research situation

Learners were also asked in how far they thought the research situation (task, camera recording) had influenced their conversational behaviour. Not surprisingly, many report feeling uncomfortable (133):

(133) InterviewStage3.3

Interviewer:	Do you think that the experiment as such – being recorded by a camera – did this influence in any way how you want about the conversation?
John:	I perhaps was a little more intimidated, a little more influenced because our conversation would be 'on record' if you like. I mean in an unrecorded conversation you can perhaps get away with it.
Gopal:	Yes it kind of takes away a bit of a feeling that it is a conversation I think. Because you hit 'start recording' and then you start the conversation and it's like – it's a bit sort of difficult.
John:	unnatural
Gopal:	Yes it feels unnatural. And also in another language it feels quite strange.

Those comments convey two major feelings that learners had towards the recording and the research situation. John reports feeling intimidated and put 'on record', while Gopal describes situation as unnatural, making it difficult to spark real argument. The latter observation is particularly important for the discussion of face and identity, as it suggests that the research situation is likely to have changed learners' perceptions and conceptualisations of the task they were engaged in. I will discuss this further in chapter 8.

Not all learners shared these feelings of intimidation, and some reported not being bothered by the camera too much at all. However, many were aware that the research situation did, to some extent, influence their performance (134):

(134) InterviewStage3.8

Interviewer: And did the camera make you feel uncomfortable? Did it influence what you said and how you said it?
Scarlett: Not how I said anything. But I felt uncomfortable.
Wayne: You don't say anything too difficult when you are on camera. You just get it out and keep it simple.

Wayne's comment is interesting in that it is held in the impersonal 'you', which suggests that he does not necessarily report his own feelings and strategies during the discussion. Nevertheless, the generalisation implies that Wayne associates himself with a wider social group of people, a group that is concerned with the avoidance of errors rather than elaborated discussion.

7.4.5 Learners' evaluations of task performance

Asked whether they thought they had reached their conversational goals, learners' reactions were mixed. I need to add at this point that this question may not have been posed in a clear enough way for learners. In particular, no definition was provided about what exactly was meant by goals. On occasions, I added to my question that goals meant expressing one's ideas and making one's opinions heard. On this basis, learners interpreted the question in different ways. While some discussed whether they had managed to make their opinion heard, others referred to the overall degree of argumentativeness.

Although the data set is very small, there is an observable tendency that learners at Stage 7 were relatively happy with their performance, while learners at Stages 3 and 5 were less so (135):

(135) InterviewStage3.3

Interviewer: Now if you think about the goals you had set for yourself before the conversation, your ranking. Do you think you have met those goals, you have reached those goals? Do you think you have got your point across?
Gopal: I think mostly I did.
John: I think we understood what...
Gopal: ... each other was trying to say. Maybe a few little things didn't get across, like I wanted to say a bit more about work experience maybe.
John: I actually had a few points that were more well developed, but I was responsive rather than active. Maybe that's the consequence of going second, But I think I didn't bring as much to the conversation as he.
Gopal: I found it difficult to think of something in response to what you had said.
John: I imagine the biggest one would be limited knowledge (   ). You sort of know more words that you can sort of remember. You look at something and think 'Yes I should know this word'.

In (135), John describes his own performance as 'responsive rather than active', a fact that he relates to going second in the discussion and to limited knowledge of vocabulary. Other reasons offered for a self-perceived lack of engagement in argument

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were the pressurized situation, the fact that there was agreement on most of the points anyway, limiting the need to argue one's point, and a lack of interest for or involvement in the issues discussed.

As I have said earlier, learners at Stage 7 appears to be most comfortable with their performance, as (136) shows:

(136) InterviewStage7.1

Interviewer: Now if you think abut the goals you had set for yourselves before the conversation – do you think you have met those goals – getting your position through, making your position heard?
Matthew: Yeah I think so
Darren: I think so yeah.
Matthew: We both got the point about the one we had made up ourselves and we came to an agreement in the end on the order.
Darren: Yeah we sort of summarized (   ) didn't we.
Matthew: I think I pretty much got everything across what I'd been thinking about before.

Evaluations of task performance can actually be found throughout the interviews (see some earlier quotes), and they are almost without exception negative, self-depreciatory comments. This suggests that conventional self-depreciation plays an important role. In the stimulated recall part of the interview, learners would actually occasionally stop the recording specifically for letting the researcher know that they were aware of an error.

7.5 Talking about thoughts and decision-making processes: language issues

The aim of this final section of this chapter is to bring together earlier observations and to discuss in more detail the way how learners describe their strategies and decision-making processes. Although the analysis cannot go into much detail, the issue is important for the validity of the data.

So far, the analysis has already uncovered some instances in which learners' discussions of task performance appear to be vague. In example (99) for instance, Brooke claims having used 'ja aber' 'all the time', and in example (104), Catherine appears to be reporting her thoughts at the time of the interview rather during the conversations.

Further to this, an analysis of vagueness markers used by learners in the interviews reveals that learners often hedge their comments, although there are no clear differences between themes and between the three levels of proficiency (137):

(137) InterviewStage3.3

((Interviewer stops recording after "nicht"))
Interviewer: How did you decide what to say at this point and how to say it? What did you think?

John: I *sort of* make up everything as I go along. I didn't *sort of* take time to *sort of* preplan my utterances - I knew what I wanted to say in English but you can tell that German word order it is coming out pretty much as I think of the words. So... I *just* wanted to *sort of* give some idea of the fact that sometimes it's difficult when you are applying for certain subjects that it is difficult to get work experience that relates to those subjects. That's what I was trying to get across.

In the beginning of his answer, John does not provide any information about his actual thoughts and strategies relating to the conversations. Instead, he discusses his strategies more generally ('I didn't sort of take time to sort of preplan my utterances'). Later, John appears to move into the specifics of this particular encounter, first by pointing to the issue of word-order, and then by repeating what he had meant to say. Moreover, the entire comment is strongly hedged (4x sort of, 1x just), indicating that John is trying avoid being specific with regards to his thoughts and decision-making processes.

While any explicit claims regarding differences in the validity of the retrospective reports are impossible to make based on learners' use of vague language, there are, however, differences in learners' language use in other areas. As I have shown earlier (7.3.2), learners at Stage 3 are generally able to report their decision-making processes in much more concrete terms than those at Stages 5 and 7, i.e. they discuss their concrete strategies at the time of their conversations, rather than describing their communicative problems in general terms, using expressions such as 'always' or the inclusive 'you', as in (138):

(138) InterviewStage5.9

Courtney: Yeah if you had an idea in your head and then you realize you don't know how to say that you have to rethink and say something else. You just don't know what the word is and you just don't want to sound stupid.

Moreover, differences exists depending on whether speakers describe issues connected to vocabulary and grammar or issues connected to the manner arguments are presented, in particular in terms of limiting imposition or being polite. As I have shown with examples (119) and (123) (see 7.4.1), learners use examples or colloquial language to describe their strategies for maintaining a good relationship with the interlocutor. This is mirrored in a comment on interpersonal issues by Matthew and Darren (139):

(139) InterviewStage7.1

Interviewer: Did you consider the hearer's reactions when you were planning your utterances, when you were planning what to say?
Matthew: I think quite often we said 'perhaps that should be like the first point' because we didn't want to ...
Darren: ...rather than like steam in and say it.

In (139), Darren and Matthew comment on their use of modality markers like 'perhaps' in order to soften the impact on the interlocutor. However, Matthew does not use a label for 'perhaps', but instead puts the word into the context of an example, while Darren employs the colloquial expression 'steam in' to describe unmitigated utterances. They do not have the labels to discuss these issues, which is in some contrast to the use of concrete and academic terms used for grammatical and lexical issues (e.g. verb, word-order, etc.)

For our data, this means that the absence of words, labels and rule knowledge for issues related to pragmatic aspects of task performance may not only have determined what learners choose to talk about but even what their attention was directed to during the stimulated recall, as suggested by the quantitative data. Together with the strong focus on grammar, vocabulary and accuracy in the language classroom which shapes the context of L2 acquisition for these learners, this formed the background based on which learners interpreted what was going on in the retrospective interviews and decided what kind of answers they were required to give.

As a consequence, the often vague descriptions of thoughts and decision-making processes provided by learners do not necessarily mean that the data are invalid. In contrast, they tell us about learners' perceptions of the situation and the decisions they made based on these perceptions. Moreover, what learners reported in terms of their strategies and problems affecting their discourse was generally in line with the results from the analysis of the production data.

7.6 Chapter summary and outlook

In this chapter, I have conducted an analysis of the data collected through retrospective interviews, combining stimulated recall and self-observation. The analysis has provided a number of interesting insights into learners' thoughts and decision-making processes, and their relationship to maintenance and expression of face and identity.

Firstly, the analysis has revealed some interesting and interrelated divides. One of these divides concerns the themes of learners' reports as proficiency progresses: While those of the two lower levels of proficiency predominantly discuss lexical and grammatical issues, those at the highest proficiency level focus more on arguments and their presentation. A further division concerns the fact that it is grammatical and lexical issues that are attended to and reported in terms of communication strategies, while pragmatic issues are reported as communicative strategies, which means that reports do not focus on problems.

Both divisions are likely to have their sources in the context in which these learners predominantly learn, use and acquire L2 German. For the learners at the two

lower levels, this context is almost exclusively the language classroom where there is traditionally a strong focus on declarative knowledge (rule knowledge), in particular of course in the areas of grammar and vocabulary. In contrast, pragmatic aspects of language production (facework) are rarely an explicit focus. Learners from Stage 7, the highest level of proficiency, however have experienced their L2 in its natural context, where pragmatic aspects are important, whereas grammatical and lexical rule knowledge plays less of a role.

Furthermore, the analysis has also revealed that, while high degrees of vagueness exist throughout learners' answers, it is particularly learners at higher levels who discuss their performance in general terms or retell what they had originally said rather then report their thoughts and decision-making strategies during a particular incident. In addition, learners generally lack the concepts and vocabulary to discuss the manner in which arguments are presented.

From the perspective of face and identity these data suggest very strongly that learners' attention as a whole was not primarily focused on the projection of face and identity via the arguments brought forward, but rather on lexical and grammatical accuracy. Hence, learners' frame of reference during the discussions may have been rather different from the frame proposed to them by the researcher and altogether more aligned with their experience as language learners. Learners' frequent self-depreciation during these interviews is further evidence for this.

This does, however, not mean that learners perceived facework to be a negligible or unimportant issue. In fact, the interview data show that learners generally perceived their performance to be constrained, in particular when it came to presenting an image of authority and conviction. Many of their comments point to problems in making their arguments heard and bringing them forward when most of their attention is directed to grammatical and lexical accuracy. The analysis in chapters 4 to 6 has picked up on many of these constraints, e.g. a preference for introducing new points rather than elaborating on current ones, an inability to support arguments with evidence, use of formulaic phrases to avoid pauses or to replace alternative expressions etc. This has a severe impact on learners' ability to project a desired self-image based on social roles and personal qualities.

In chapter 8, I will discuss these issues further together with those from the conversational data. I will suggest that learners act within two overlapping frames of reference that necessitate different facework strategies. Furthermore, the chapter will discuss implications for research and teaching resulting from this research project.

Chapter 8 Discussion

8.1 Chapter Outline

This chapter draws together the results gleaned from the analysis of the conversational data in order to interpret them from a linguistic/psycholinguistic perspective as well as the perspective of face and identity. In addition, learners' reports of their thoughts and decision-making processes will also be evaluated under the face/identity framework.

The chapter proceeds as follows: After a re-introduction of the research questions and the two perspectives applied to the data in this study, I will discuss in detail the possible reasons for learners' facework strategies in the area of discourse organization, and the expression of modality. I will then move on to illuminating how learners' reports about their decision-making processes in the retrospective interviews are connected to face and identity. The next part of the chapter will then be concerned with the interconnections between the social/individual perspective (face) and the linguistic/psycholinguistic perspective. The chapter ends with a discussion of the implications for pedagogy and for research that this study has thrown up.

8.2 Perspectives on the data

Before launching into an in-depth discussion of the data, this is a reminder of the research questions that this study aimed to answer:

1) What strategies do L2 learners of German at different proficiency levels use to do facework in spoken argumentative discourse, and how do these strategies develop and change across levels? How can these changes best be accounted for?

2) What can learners express about their decision-making processes in argumentative discourse, and how far are these processes governed by learners' commitment to maintenance and expression of face and identity?

While chapters 5 and 6 have already drawn up a comprehensive developmental framework for learners' facework strategies across the three levels, the second part of this research question – reasons for learners' behaviors at different levels and the changes in their behaviors – yet remains to be considered. In the same way, the connection between learners' expressions of decision-making strategies and their commitment to maintenance of face and identity still needs to be explored.

As I have laid down in the theoretical part to this thesis, I aim to interpret the data from two different perspectives. Firstly, the developmental approach that I have taken requires a linguistic/psycholinguistic framework, a framework that takes into account the cognitive processes learners go through and the constraints which they encounter

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during development. In chapter 2, I introduced two related models. One of these (Faerch & Kasper, 1984) distinguishes declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge, with declarative knowledge referring to the knowledge of rules and linguistic resources, while procedural knowledge describes the ability to make choices based on an evaluation of the context, to plan an utterance and to monitor its execution. Similarly, Bialystok (1993) distinguishes the process of analysis – the acquisition of form–function matches – and the process of control, the retrieval and selection of these forms in real time.

Secondly however, face is of course the overarching framework guiding this study. In the definition used in this study, face has two sides, individual and social. It is, on the one hand, the self-image that speakers claim during an encounter, a self-image that is associated with how speakers wants to be seen, including both personal qualities and social roles. However, it is also the image that is actually conveyed to interlocutor(s) during the course of the interaction. Facework is what speakers do to enact, protect and maintain their own and their interlocutors' face.

Furthermore, the self-image speakers try to project and foreground in an encounter is strongly dependent on what they perceive to be the reference point or frame of a situation. As many of these frames may coexist at any one time, we cannot assume that speakers suspend faces or identities other than their conversational identities during the discussions. I will show later (8.5) that it is frames where the individual/social perspective and the linguistic/psycholinguistic perspective meet.

8.3 Facework strategies and their development

8.3.1 A developmental framework: Three axes of description

Before moving on to interpretation I will start with a comprehensive summary of the results of the analysis of the conversational data in view of the first part of research question 1:

What strategies do L2 learners of German at different proficiency levels use to do facework in spoken argumentative discourse, and how do these strategies develop and change across levels?

Although I have attempted, in my earlier accounts of developments regarding conversational aspects and issues of modality, to relate particular strategies to particular Stages (levels of proficiency), this is an extremely difficult and possibly unrealistic goal. The fact that no independent measure of proficiency was applied,

together with the fluid nature of interlanguage discourse, mean that strategies are more easily and possibly more accurately described within a general developmental framework.

Table 7 summarizes this general developmental framework by describing learners' strategies on three axes of development. It identifies two different ends of the spectrum that are roughly represented by Stage 3 speakers on the left and Stage 7 speakers on the right:

exchange of opinion	focus on establishment of common ground through elaboration on agreement	defense of own and attack of interlocutors' opinion (use of interlocutors' turns for own disagreement; upgraded agreement to sharpen disagreement, challenging questions)	argument
	responsibility for action unassigned	responsibility for action assigned	
	lack of cohesion with interlocutors' turns	generally cohesive	
communicative efficiency	brief argumentative sequences	longer argumentative sequences	communicative redundancy
	unelaborated turns; lack of evidence	elaborated turns; evidence, inclusion of concessive elements	
	sequentially expected turns missing	sequentially expected turns present	
	low frequency of markers of epistemic modality (except epistemic verbs)	higher frequency of markers of epistemic modality	
	small variety of markers of epistemic modality	higher variety of markers of epistemic modality	
formulaic language	evaluative phrases	modal verb combinations	creative language
	markers of epistemic modality as aids to processing	markers of epistemic modality to express degrees/shades of meaning	
	'ja aber' as disagreement preface and turn-entry device	more elaborated agreement elements as disagreement preface	

Table 7: Axes of description for the development of facework strategies

Table 7 describes learners' strategies on three axes, moving from formulaic language to creative language, communicative efficiency to communicative redundancy, exchange of opinion to argument. Almost all strategies can, in some way, be described under these three axes, but no claim for full comprehensibility is made.

My results agree in many ways with the results of other studies on the use and acquisition of pragmatic strategies in L2 German, in particular those focusing on argumentative discourse. For example, both Kotthoff (1988, 1991) and Jahnel (2000) observed that, while downgraders were used with high frequency in L2 interlanguage,

upgraders were under-represented. In addition, Kotthoff also observed that learners had problems aligning their own turns with their interlocutors' turns, and that relevant turns were missing.

The second part of research question 1 is concerned with the reasons for the observed developments:

How can these changes best be accounted for?

In the subsequent discussion, I will try to explain these developments from a linguistic/psycholinguistic perspective as well as the perspective of face and identity. The learning and research environment will also feature in both accounts.

8.3.2 The linguistic / psycholinguistic perspective

8.3.2.1 Preliminary remarks

From the linguistic and psycholinguistic perspective, it is a lack of declarative knowledge (knowledge of resources and rules) and procedural knowledge (constraints in processing) that are responsible for these developments. In many cases, the two issues cannot be easily distinguished. Learners may have had certain words or strategies in their active vocabulary, but not find access to them in real time, i.e. under the constraints of the communicative situation.

Generally, it is the axes of "communicative efficiency" vs. "communicative redundancy" and "formulaic language" vs. "creative language" that best describe the development of facework strategies from a linguistic/psycholinguistic perspective. Developments in the knowledge of resources and lexical/grammatical rules make it linguistically easier for learners to elaborate on their arguments, to defend their positions and to increasingly move away from pre-fabricated chunks of language. They also mean that processing resources are freed to attend to pragmatic aspects of language production.

8.3.2.2 Lexical resources, grammatical resources and rule knowledge

The influence of developments in declarative knowledge shows in a number of areas, but in particular in the organisation of argumentative sequences and individual turns. With a limited lexical knowledge base it is, for example, difficult for learners to elaborate on their turns and support them with evidence. Furthermore, they may lack the resources to react with an adequate reply to an argument brought forward by the interlocutor and drop the subject instead of following up on it.

A further example of the effects of a lack of declarative knowledge is the development of markers of epistemic modality. The fact that – with marked exceptions that will be discussed separately – both frequency and range of these makers grow in line with proficiency, suggests that over time, learners acquire not only the meaning of these items, but also the rules and contexts of their use.

The learning environment certainly plays an important role for these developments. With increasing proficiency, the amount of exposure to the target language learners have enjoyed via classroom instruction (and potentially also via contact with native speakers) increases. This applies, of course, particularly to Stage 7 learners of German who, at the time of data collection, had just recently returned from their year abroad in a German speaking country. It is no coincidence that turn entry devices such as 'ja genau' and 'also', which are not usually explicitly taught in the language classroom, appear at Stage 7, just as modal particles increase in range and frequency at this level.

Exposure through the learning environment is also a likely contributor to the diverging development of upgraders (intensifiers, uptoners) and downgraders (hedges, downtoners, epistemic verbs). While downgraders feature very frequently in learners' strategies from early on, the frequency of upgraders remains lower overall, with intensifiers at Stage 5 being one exception. One possible reason for this development is the fact that downgraders are more often an actual pedagogic focus within a politeness agenda, i.e. students are explicitly taught strategies for mitigation. In contrast, upgraders, although they might feature in dialogues and texts, are rarely made an explicit pedagogic focus and are therefore less salient to learners.

Further areas in which developments in declarative knowledge appear to play a major role are modal verbs for the expression of deontic modality and the conditional as marker of hypothetical meaning and mitigator for suggestions. Although the two phenomena do not converge completely, they nevertheless develop very similarly. There is a clear rise in both the explicit marking of deontic modality and the use of conditional forms between Stage 3 and 5. Moreover, the conditional often mitigates modal verbs that express deontic modality.

Although learners generally become more competent users of the conditional as well as of modal verbs – which may, of course, be due to the influence of instruction – it is nevertheless clear that many learners do not have a sufficient amount of rule knowledge to form and appropriately use conditional forms and modal verbs. As a consequence, learners compensate with forms that are easier to use and process, for example conditional forms composed of würde + infinitive, evaluative phrases or recurrent formulaic subject-modal verb combinations.

This suggests that none of the two hypotheses with regard to the relationship of pragmatic and grammatical development introduced in chapter 2 (see 2.3.3) can be fully supported. Although particular grammatical structures clearly need be in place before they can be used to express pragmatic meaning, learners develop strategies to express pragmatic meaning through other means, means they find easiest to use at a particular level, e.g. epistemic verbs at Stage 3. I will elaborate further on this in the next section.

8.3.2.3 Processing constraints

As I have said earlier, it is not always easy to distinguish between linguistic and psycholinguistic reasons for the development of facework strategies. Do learners not possess particular resources or grammatical rules or are they simply not able to process and access their knowledge under the pressures of the situation, thereby prompting the use of communicative strategies?

The major linking point between declarative and procedural knowledge or, in other words, the analysis and control axis of linguistic/pragmatic competence, lies in the fact that processing resources are freed as declarative knowledge develops. When this happens, learners have more of their cognitive resources available to use for other areas of discourse. This shows in the general development towards higher degrees of argumentativeness and cohesion between turns. With fewer processing resources necessary for retrieving vocabulary, and constructing words and sentences, learners' processing resources are freed to construct effective turns that build on and challenge interlocutors' turns rather than just being globally connected to the overall topic of the discourse.

In order to free cognitive resources, learners have also been shown to be using a number of strategies that help them to avoid or circumnavigate potential trouble spots. As shown, learners at lower levels of proficiency tend to introduce new topics rather than elaborating on those currently discussed. The fact that the task instruction cards provided learners with the vocabulary and structures necessary to introduce a new point is likely to have contributed to this choice, as this helped them avoid a potentially long word-search and move on without much pausing.

The second area to mention in this respect concerns the frequent evaluative phrases by which learners at lower levels introduce turns, which for some are the only means for expressing necessity or desirability. The recurrence of particular phrases in the language of particular learners suggests that they offer islands of reliability under the constraints of the communicative situation. Very often, learners actually start their

turns with them, which gives them more time to think about and construct the remaining part of these turns.

In a similar way, epistemic verbs, hedges and downtoners are all used as aids to processing by learners. Epistemic verbs, which are particularly frequent at Stage 3, have been shown to be discourse-structuring devices, used at transition points within a turn. The reason why epistemic verbs are used with such high frequency at this level is most likely the fact that they are, within the group of downgraders, the features most easily accessible to learners, given that they are often taught as prototypical devices for the expression of opinion.

This interpretation agrees with suggestions made by Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig (2000) with regards to argumentative discourse, and Barron (2003) and Koike (1989) in relation to requests, all of whom interpreted a high frequency of particular markers such as 'think' or 'please' / 'bitte' as a way for learners to protect face with whatever means possible at their particular proficiency level. Multi-unit downtoners and hedges fulfil similar functions throughout all levels, giving the speaker time to think and construct a turn. In many cases, they are preceded and/or followed by pauses, which strongly supports an interpretation that they have a double function as time gainers.

One reason for the productivity of all these markers as aids to processing lies in their structural properties. Not all, but many downgraders are multi-word items (e.g. 'ich weiß nicht'), and their length makes them extremely functional as aids to processing, because the longer chunk affords the speaker more thinking and processing time. Multi-turn devices are also syntactically free and are therefore easy to position with a turn. Moreover, Kotthoff (1988), who had very similar findings, also suggests that these items are very similar to equivalent English markers in both shape and meaning. In contrast, upgraders are always single-unit items, and they need to be syntactically integrated within a turn. As a consequence, upgraders remain limited to their epistemic meaning.

These semantic, morphological and syntactical differences are able to explain many of the differences in the frequency development of upgraders versus downgraders, in particular the overall low number of upgraders compared to downgraders and the fact that, while downgraders are already in place from the lowest proficiency level onwards, upgraders are not. Jahnel's (2000) interpretation that nonnative speakers' orientation towards harmony and therefore towards the more frequent use of downgraders is culturally based and the result of the rejection of the typically very direct German argumentative style, cannot therefore be supported.

8.3.3 The perspective of face and identity

From the face perspective, it is again two axes that best describe the observed developments: "exchange of opinion" vs. "argument" and "communicative efficiency" vs. "communicative redundancy". The face perspective is concerned with learners' individual decisions based on social considerations: How do I want to be seen by others, how are others likely to see me given the linguistic strategies I use?

The way learners conceptualise the task changes considerably across the levels. While at lower levels of proficiency, the two speakers of a dyad often merely appear to be exchanging opinions, the discussions become more argumentative at higher levels. Moreover, learners at lower levels orient towards getting the task done with whatever means possible, i.e. they try to get through the task as efficiently – and quickly – as possible. At higher levels, at least some orient towards actually making their voice heard, resulting in more extended stretches of discourse.

Seen from the perspective of face, there is therefore a strong drive for many learners to be communicatively efficient, i.e. to say what needs to be said as required by the task instructions. Learners exchange opinions without risking running into linguistic problems when elaborating on their own arguments and reacting to their interlocutors' arguments. At higher levels of proficiency, learners take more risks and start arguing their own points more vigorously and challenging their interlocutors' arguments. Hence, not engaging in argumentative discourse appears to be a face-saving and enhancing strategy by learners of lower levels of proficiency (or lower levels of confidence in their own proficiency), in that this protects them from potential linguistic and communicative trouble.

Some of the developments described earlier within a linguistic and psycholinguistic framework appear in a new light from this perspective. In particular, the strong reliance on formulaic evaluative phrases, hedges, downtoners and epistemic verbs as aids to processing suggests that learners, possibly consciously, use these items in an effort to appear fluent, to avoid pauses and to gain time to think about what to say. Although there is no direct evidence for this in the retrospective interviews, learners' reports strongly suggest that fluency and accuracy was extremely important for them.[68]

Moreover, both the data collection environment and the language learning environment are playing a role in these orientations and decisions. Firstly, the data were collected in the educational institution where learners were enrolled for their degrees and their language classes. This is certain to have influenced learners' strategies, in particular when the learning environment is taken into account.

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[68] Dörnyei & Kormos (1998) found phrases such as *well, you know, actually, okay, how can I say that, t his is raterh difficult to explain* to be used as lexical fillers and time-gainers.

For Stage 3 and Stage 5 learners, the language classroom has been the dominant environment to use German. Although the language programme in which the learners taking part in this study were enrolled makes efforts to teach language for real-life contexts, assessment nevertheless focuses mostly on grammatical and lexical accuracy and penalises errors in these areas. It is therefore no surprise that learners feel that accuracy and fluency are the main factors determining their social worth as L2 speakers. In contrast, the year abroad has exposed Stage 7 learners to high-stakes situations in which self-worth is gained through presenting a particular self-image and by making one's voice heard, with real-life consequences attached.

As a consequence, learners move away from a focus on accuracy and fluency to a focus on the argument, which is reflected in the strategies they use and in the way they interpret the task instructions. From this perspective, there may even be another factor contributing to the occurrence of some strategies. For example, the fact that epistemic verbs are used with such frequency at the lowest level of proficiency may, in addition to the reasons already discussed, be the result of overgeneralization and learners showing off their knowledge by employing strategies for the expression of opinion frequently taught in textbooks ('ich denke', 'ich glaube' etc.).

8.4 Retrospective Interviews

Research question 2 relates to the second data source, the retrospective interviews. This question has, again, two parts: It asks what learners have to say about their decision-making processes, but also aims to establish the relationship of these processes to face and identity:

What can learners express about their decision-making processes in argumentative discourse, and how far are those processes governed by learners' commitment to maintenance and expression of face and identity?

In the interviews, the question 'What CAN learners express about their decision-making processes' is intrinsically related to the question 'What DO learners express about their decision-making processes'. Furthermore, to what extent and in what way learners actually talk about their decision-making processes is related to their proficiency level.

With regard to the cognitive processes which learners report, a move can be observed from a dominance of grammatical and lexical aspects at lower levels towards pragmatic aspects and problems at higher levels, i.e. issues of manner and content

related to the expression of opinion.[69] Furthermore, there is a move from relating ideas and arguments to resource deficits to discussing them in terms of their relationship to interlocutors' arguments. With regard to the actual decision-making processes reported by learners, the most interesting result is the fact it was primarily lexical and grammatical problems that lead to breakdowns in processing. In contrast, pragmatic issues did generally not cause such breakdowns. As a consequence, learners were able to report, in concrete terms and with accurate terminology, the communication strategies by which they aimed to overcome grammatical and lexical problems, while pragmatic issues were not reported in terms of problems at all, and were discussed in vague and colloquial terms. The higher their proficiency, the more problems learners appeared to have accessing cognitive processes altogether.

When considering these results within a framework of face and identity, it is again important to relate them both to the context of the educational institution in which the data were collected and the context in which learners use and learn L2 German. In the retrospective interviews, learners actually interacted directly with an interviewer/ researcher, whom they also knew as a member of teaching staff in German. With regard to the learning environment, there is, as I have already said, a focus on accuracy and fluency.

These contexts are likely to have shaped learners' attention to an extent that they attended more to grammatical and lexical aspects of language production during their conversations than to pragmatic aspects. Moreover, the focus on accuracy in the language classroom also helped learners to acquire the language to discuss these issues (e.g. 'word-order' or 'adjective'), while it did not allow them to pick up on the language needed to describe pragmatic issues (e.g. politeness, authoritativeness, arguments) even in the L2. Not only this, but talking to a person they knew as a language tutor within their programme is also likely to have prompted them to present a positive self-image as language learner, trying to promote themselves positively within this role.

In monetary terms, the "currency" for this goal is, for example, to show an awareness of lexical and grammatical problems, which learners did throughout the interviews. They also consistently downplayed their performance and engaged in self-depreciation. Moreover, avoiding such problems altogether is a further strategy. Strategies with this aim that were actually reported by learners include the use of prompts, the reliance on formulas such as evaluative phrases, and even dropping particular ideas and arguments.

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[69] Robinson (1991) found similar proficiency effects in her think-aloud and retrospective interviews. Linguistic difficulties were only reported by intermediate, but not from advanced students.

This suggests that learners consciously took restrictions in their argumentative performance into account in order to foster accuracy and fluency, although, at the same time, they also found it difficult to maintain a positive self-image linked to the discussion topics and their engagement in the discussions. In fact, some learners appeared to be trapped in a loop between actual interlanguage-imposed constraints on performance, an orientation to accuracy and, consequently, a perception of inadequateness. Whether interlocutors or other addressees of the discourse share these perceptions is another question.

8.5 Face and the linguistic/psycholinguistic perspective: interconnections

In chapter 1, the concept of frame was introduced and defined as speakers' own reference point based on which they interpret what is going on in discourse and decide how they are going to act in that particular piece of discourse, with the potential of different frames overlapping.

The data strongly suggest that learners not only acted within a discussion frame, but also within a language task frame. As a researcher, I had designed the tasks with a view to their potential to elicit argumentative discussions from learners which would allow me to trace the development of facework for the enhancement and protection of the conversational identities. However, the tasks appear to have opened up an entirely new frame for the discussion, overlapping the discussion frame, as table 8 shows:

	Discussion frame	Language task frame
role	e.g. student	language learner
face: self-image/image	e.g. student who loves socialising, enjoys having fun with friends	e.g. good L2 speaker who is able to form syntactically / lexically accurate sentences
line	arguments, e.g. "campus bars should not be closed down"	accuracy & fluency
facework	markers of epistemic modality, expression of deontic modality, preference organisation, structural organisation, etc.	epistemic verbs and evaluative phrases as an aid to processing, short argumentative sequences etc.; self-depreciation in interviews
interlocutor	actual discussion partner; societal expectations for behaviour / opinions	researcher seen in role as language tutor, expectations set by language programme
identity	The kind of person learners construct themselves to be and interlocutor(s) construct the speaker to be as a result of the encounter	The kind of person learners construct themselves to be and interlocutor(s) construct the speaker to be as a result of the encounter

Table 8: Frames

Within the discussion frame, face is the self-image that learners are trying to project in terms of their social role and personal qualities, both of which are linked to the task topics. They may, for example, construct themselves as a fun-loving student

who loves socialising and enjoys having fun with friends. Facework are the strategies which ensure that his self-image can be projected and enhanced. For example, learners can use markers of epistemic modality not only to enhance the authoritativeness of what they are saying, but also to limit the commitment to these propositions. Furthermore, learners can use the sequential organisation of turns in order to entice interlocutors to back down. Speakers mainly interact with their conversational partner, but their actions may also be at least partly determined by what other expectations they think they need to fulfil (e.g. taking a stance against binge-drinking).

In contrast, the language task frame provides for different values. Within this frame, learners act mainly in their role as language learners and try to be seen as good L2 speakers (face/self-image), mediated by accuracy and fluency. Facework therefore includes all strategies that help learners achieve this goal. In the interviews, one facework strategy is certainly the self-depreciation learners engage in, while in the actual discussion tasks, other strategies such as the use of epistemic verbs or formulaic evaluative phrases are employed in order to ease processing and avoid errors. The interlocutor is, within this frame, not mainly the actual discussion partner, but rather the researcher seen in her role as language tutor and embodying the expectations learners feel they need to fulfil.

Both frames provide, as suggested by Schiffrin (1993), "a different basis for understanding how one utterance follows another – a different resource for sequential coherence" (p. 256). While the 'discussion frame' requires speakers to negotiate arguments and come up with challenge and counter-challenge, the 'language task frame' requires one to keep things simple and uncomplicated. Hence, from the textual perspective on language, two entirely different kinds of texts are constructed within these two frames. What is, however, true for both frames is that, as an end result, how learners construct themselves to be may or may not converge with how interlocutors' construct the learner to be. Identity is, just as face, a property of speakers as well as addressees; it is co-constructed (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995).

What must be said at this point is that none of these frames completely replaces the other. Rather, the two frames are overlapping and coexist throughout the discourse. Moreover, more frames are of course possible, e.g. a cultural frame that determines learners' behavior in terms of culturally determined pragmatic norms of behavior. The data available to us do not allow as any conclusion as to how important this frame was for learners, but there is little reference to cross-cultural issues in the interview data.

Altogether, these observations confirm Wildner-Bassett's (1989, 1990) claim that learners, when engaged in linguistic tasks, are acting within what she calls different "discourse worlds", which means that different social roles are overlapping. Furthermore, Roebuck (2000) observed that students in a problem-solving activity did not necessarily act within the frames initiated by the researcher, e.g. 'subject of an experiment' or 'Spanish university student'. Instead, they "were also engaged in the ongoing activity of constructing and maintaining an interaction in which the self needed to be positioned", and continuously "reframed the activity in which they were involved" (p. 93).

The discussion frame and the 'language task' frame not only overlap, they also interact with each other. The interviews clearly show that learners' perceptions of their own linguistic ability strongly influence how they perceive of themselves within the discussion frame. When learners feel that they cannot maintain their face within the language task frame – in other words, when they perceive of themselves as bad L2 speakers – they easily lose confidence in their ability to maintain their face within the discussion frame. On the other hand, learners often even consciously simplified their argumentative strategies in order to foster accuracy and fluency, i.e. they sacrificed the presentation of their conversational identity to maintain presentation as good L2 speaker.

Arising from these observations, I suggest that earlier interpretations of interlanguage strategies as *message oriented* (Ellis, 1993; Kotthoff, 1988) must be revised. Although learners may indeed compromise particular pragmatic strategies and goals in order to get a particular message across and to fulfil a task in an efficient manner, it may be these very compromises that make it possible for learners to reach goals within a less evident pragmatic agenda.

8.6 Implications for pedagogy

Even though what I have just said with regard to the split allegiances of learners to different frames of experience implies that we should not evaluate their performance from the perspective of native speaker (or any other) norms, it is nevertheless necessary to ask in what ways learners could be assisted in improving their performance.

In the case of these discussions, the restrictions in the communicative performance of learners that my analysis has extrapolated – and that learners perceived themselves to be suffering from (see chapter 7) – did not lead to any form of sustained problems. There were no real-life implications attached to learners' ability to project and present their positions during these discussions, and hence they would, in the long term, neither lose nor gain from them. Nevertheless, they are likely to have

important implications in more high-stakes speech events, in which it is important to project what Riley (2006, p. 298) calls *speaker identity* ("who I am and who I want to be taken for").[70]

Let's take the case of a non-native speaker of a language involved in business negotiations. This person would have to achieve different goals related to all three levels of discourse that I have made reference to earlier. At the ideational level, s/he would have to be able to follow the line of argument s/he has chosen to follow (or has been asked to follow). For example, s/he would need to make sure that s/he can react when being challenged. At the interpersonal level, s/he would have to make sure that she uses strategies that present her/himself as a confident, competent, trustworthy and polite person. And at the textual level, s/he would have to make sure that s/he is able to construct the speech event as the event it is intended to be.

Throughout my analysis I have shown that learners, to varying degrees depending on their level of proficiency, have problems with all these issues. Perhaps not surprisingly, I am therefore calling for a more pragmatics-focused approach to communicative language teaching, albeit without neglecting accuracy at the same time.

Pedagogic intervention in the language classroom would need to include an element of awareness-raising and self-observation that allows learners to see for themselves where their specific problems are located. Then, practical strategies would need to be taught. Learners could, for example, be made aware that agreement elements can be used to precede and sharpen forthcoming disagreement. Furthermore, teaching could help learners expand their vocabulary in the area of epistemic modality and teach them to use these markers effectively in discourse. Having been a language teacher for many years now, I am aware that these areas are traditionally neglected in language teaching. Of course, opportunities would need to be created for learners to practise these strategies with peers or native speakers, again possibly followed by reflection.

Does this then mean that lexical and grammatical accuracy should be de-emphasized in the language classroom? My data, in particular the retrospective interviews show that these areas of proficiency should by no means be neglected. On the one hand learners tend to perceive of themselves as reduced personalities in the L2 due to a self-perceived lack of lexical and grammatical accuracy. On the other hand, attempts at enhancing accuracy cause them to avoid strategies and moves that would allow them to argue their points and to present their conversational identities fully. Therefore, learners need to be made aware of how particular lexical and grammatical items are formed and used (e.g. modal verbs, the conditional), in order to make these

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[70] Speaker identity is, according to Riley (2006), just one side of ethos. The other side is perceived identity (who you think I am and who you take me for).

items productive for pragmatic functions and to free learners' processing capacities when using them.

This suggests that teaching grammar and vocabulary can actually contribute to the creation of a positive cycle that enhances learners' confidence as well as competence in all areas of language production rather than focusing solely on their deficits. Nevertheless, learners would still have to deal with linguistic and communicative problems at times. Does this mean that learners need to be taught communication strategies which will allow them to deal with these problems?

From my point of view, this question needs to be very carefully considered. The descriptor for the Stage 5 language module at the University of Southampton[71], for example, suggests that vague language be taught as a communication strategy to help learners maintain fluency. Within a framework of face, vague language may however mean that learners' messages come across as weak and the speakers are perceived as uncommitted to what they are saying. Hence, the potential social implications of any kind of communication strategies need to be considered. Furthermore, it is of course important to set realistic targets in all these activities. Although native speaker examples are able to provide learners with positive examples and strategies for certain behaviours, a native speaker target of proficiency is not necessarily appropriate or realistic (House & Kasper, 2000).

Apart from that, pedagogical approaches need to consider learners' specific goals and backgrounds. Going back to the user perspective on L2 development and the theoretical background that sees language use as guided by roles and identities, pedagogical intervention needs to ask what roles and identities learners want to primarily present when dealing in the foreign language: Business (wo)man? SLA researcher? Journalist? Pedagogic intervention would then need to address the strategies that learners need in order to project a self-image that takes these social roles and associated personal qualities into account. Although the language classroom can never completely simulate the conditions encountered in the outside world, it can nevertheless help L2 speakers to grow into their roles and develop a voice appropriate to it.

8.7 Implications for research

In addition to these pedagogical implications, this study has also thrown up a number of implications for further ILP research in particular and SLA research in general. These implications concern the research questions asked and the ways data are gathered, analysed and interpreted.

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[71] Centre for Language Study, University of Southampton. (2002). *Documentation for language stages: Descriptors. Stage 5 language units.*

Firstly, in terms of the overall focus of interlanguage pragmatics, I believe that it is necessary to go beyond speech acts and a focus on politeness. If the production of action in an L2 is the subject of interlanguage pragmatics research, action must be understood as far more than the maintenance of face through politeness or language use with a goal to achieving smooth interpersonal relationships in limited social encounters (e.g. apologies, requests, etc.). Instead, "doing" things with language entails the presentation of face and identity related to social roles and personal qualities. This framework includes using strategies that are deliberately not polite or even rude if they serve to enhance that self-image or face

Secondly, researchers need to see clearly that language use, with whatever method the data are collected, is likely to always entail learners' subjective perceptions of the situation, influencing their actions. They need to carefully consider what source their data stems from and keep an open mind as to what learners perceive to be the context of the interaction. DePaiva & Foster-Cohen, (2004), exploring the relationship between theories of SLA and relevance theory, talk of an internal context in that respect:

> [...] Under relevance theory, context is explicitly defined as internal to the learner (because it is cognitive context), and is explicitly defined as the set of assumptions the hearer brings to the interpretation of any ostensive communication. Thus, [...] relevance theory maintains the cognitive stance, incorporating external notions of context such as place, situation, etc., but, crucially through an internal context, that is via the eyes/mind of the speaker/hearer. The fact that relevance theory in this way makes stronger cognitive claims for pragmatics means a shift from a view where social and cultural aspects of interactions represent central constraints to a more agent-based perspective with a clear emphasis on the individual's internal context. (p. 283)

There needs to be recognition that such an internal context[72] is likely to go beyond what has been determined by the task instructions, but is indeed shaped by factors such as the environment in which data are collected. When data are collected within an educational institution, researchers need to be particularly aware of the effects on their data.

A short excursion to some basic tenants of sociocultural theory and activity theory is warranted at this point. Activity theory sees human activity to be mediated by the

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[72] The notion of an internal context of speaking is also taken up by the term *discourse domain*. Douglas (2004) defines them as "a cognitive construct within which a language is developed and used. Discourse domains are developed in relation to context, as defined by setting, participants, purpose, content, tone, language, norms of interaction, and genre. They are created as part of communicative competence along three dimensions: the *extent* of content knowledge, its *importance* in the life of the user, and the *currency* of the knowledge in interaction. Discourse domains are dynamic and changing, and vary in strength depending on the amount and quality of experience associated with particular communicative situations." (p. 34)

sociocultural setting in which it occurs, with agents engaging in goal-directed behaviour to reach particular objectives (Donato & MacCormick, 1994). According to Thorne (2005), "the term *activity* [...] brings together cognitive/communicative performance as it relates to, and in part produces, its socio-cultural context" (p. 399). In the case of this study, learners appeared to orient to the institutional context of the university, perceiving of the task as a language task and focusing on accuracy.[73]

More research on pragmatic development from the perspective of identity and the L2 user perspective would be desirable to gain insight into the individual and social considerations guiding learners to use particular strategies, thereby complementing linguistic and psycholinguistic perspectives. As this thesis has shown, cognitive and sociocultural perspectives on pragmatic development may not be as altogether incompatible as suggested by Kasper (2001).

As a consequence of this insight, methods of data collection and analysis should aim to adopt a more emic perspective. In the past, interlanguage pragmatics research has often employed the CCSARP framework (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989) to account for speech act behaviour. Although some researchers have adapted the framework for their own data, the assumption was nevertheless that learners act within frames and categories pre-established by the researcher, e.g. that they orient to factors such as social distance, power and imposition.

The analysis presented in this thesis, however, suggests strongly that learners may orient to unexpected frames of reference. This advocates a bottom-up approach to data analysis which can contribute to uncovering these frames, while top-down approaches with pre-established categories of analysis may hide them. Microanalytical approaches to data analysis, such as interactional sociolinguistics or conversation analysis are methods appropriate to that agenda (Kasper, 2004; Seedhouse, 2004). Data triangulation can further contribute to uncover these frames. Verbal protocols in particular, as one way of achieving triangulation, can do much more than just provide insight into learners' cognitive processes. They also give clues as to the individual decisions made by learners based on individual/social considerations.

Moreover, there are implications for the way different sources of data are evaluated. For example, authentic, unelicited data are not necessarily superior to data gathered through other methods, for example DCTs or role-plays. L2 learners may not completely suspend attempts at displaying what I have earlier called the 'good L2

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[73] This makes my own data a form of what Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford (2005) call 'institutional talk' in a way not intended. Institutional talk I defined as talk taking place within an institution or between representatives of and/or costumers of an institution and characterised by an orientation by participants to a core goal, task or identity, involves constraints as to what are allowable contributions, and is associated with inferential frameworks particular to specific institutional contexts.

speaker identity' even in such real-life contexts, and as a result, some of the strategies may be the result of an attempt of making this identity relevant.

Furthermore, when it comes to data interpretation and analysis, the question of the native speaker norm needs to be carefully reconsidered. House & Kasper (2000) suggest that "even though the difference = deficit equation may hold true in specific instances, it is certainly wrong in its absolute form" (p. 105). In this respect, it is particularly important to consider the perspective from which interlanguage pragmatic data are evaluated.

From the perspective of politeness, an evaluation in terms of native speaker norms may be feasible, particularly if learners strive to use the language in the context of a particular target community (for example, second language learners who actually learn the language in the context of the target community of foreign language learners on a year abroad). House (2003) illustrates this through conversational incidents between native speakers of German and native speakers of English, in which non-convergence led to misunderstanding and even problems in the relationship of the speakers.

From the perspective of face and identity, however, an evaluation of L2 learners' pragmatic performance in relation to a native speaker pragmatic norm is not useful. As shown, divergence from such a norm could simply be an attempt to make other social roles relevant and personal qualities relevant. And, as I have already shown, this may then allow insights into the social and individual processes of second language learning more generally.

In order to uncover what strategies are successful in terms of conveying a particular self-image one area in which more research is needed is the question of how particular pragmatic strategies (be it strategies produced by native speakers or those produced by learners of a particular language) are perceived by addressees of a message. So far, conclusions regarding the appropriateness of pragmatic strategies have usually been made by way of a comparison to some kind of norm or through the personal impressions of the researcher as judge. Researchers should instead produce research designs that allow for a more objective perspective on the question of what kind of self-image L2 learners convey through particular strategies. Seen from a different angle, research of this kind would also ask what strategies and moves are necessary for the successful projection of a particular image. This kind of research could then eventually contribute to drawing up pedagogic curricula.

8.8 Chapter summary and outlook

Using the data from the argumentative conversations as well as those from the retrospective interviews, this chapter has interpreted the findings from both a linguistic / psycholinguistic perspective and the perspective of face and identity. The interpretations suggest that a multi-causal approach needs to be taken in order to explain the route of development of facework strategies in L2 German argumentative discourse. This framework should consider learners' multiple social roles as a major contributor to their decisions about particular facework strategies rather than seeing learners as passive victims of their linguistic and processing abilities. A number of implications for both research and pedagogy were drawn from this result.

The concluding part of this thesis will summarize the limitations of this study as well as its contributions to SLA and interlanguage pragmatics research.

Conclusion

As the title suggests, this thesis was concerned with how L2 learners of German learn to do facework in an effort to project a particular identity, described through the framework of face. Through an analysis of L2 argumentative data at three levels of proficiency, this study has shown that learners' ability to argue their case develops steadily as proficiency progresses. Moreover, the study has also shown that learners act within more than one frame of reference when engaged in L2 argumentative discourse. Two main links between face and cognitive processes can be uncovered from this.

The first of these links concerns cognitive process at the level of psycholinguistic processing. Here, learners – whether consciously or not – favour strategies which ease processing and therefore make it easier for them to present themselves as good L2 speakers. And secondly, a cognitive sieve is at work, an internal context based on which learners process language and choose strategies rather than orienting to an externally defined context.

To conclude, I will now summarize what specific contributions the study has made to our understanding of pragmatic development. Before this, however, I will discuss its limitations.

Firstly, the study has followed a cross-sectional design. Although the background of the learners at the three levels of proficiency was comparable, allowing me to draw up a rough framework for the development of facework, there are nevertheless limitations to what a cross-sectional design can achieve. A longitudinal design would have allowed me to relate linguistic and psycholinguistic constraints to particular interlanguage strategies and to trace how learners overcome such constraints over time. For example, it would have enabled me to arrive at empirically founded conclusions with regard to the route of acquisition of certain pragmatic strategies, such as the question of whether modal particles are acquired via the route of formulaic expressions, or whether individual learners move from an initial reliance of formulaic means of expressing epistemic modality (e.g. epistemic verbs, the downtoner 'ich weiß (es) nicht'). Although my data, as they are, have allowed me to make my conclusions with some degree of confidence, direct evidence is lacking.

Furthermore, no control was applied that could have determined exactly the level of proficiency of the learners based on their lexical and grammatical competence. Instead, proficiency levels were defined according to learners' progress through the language programme, i.e. the language 'Stage' they were enrolled in at that time. For the analysis, this has had the effect that particular facework strategies could not be

assigned to one particular level of proficiency. Moreover, this approach has also made it impossible to relate particular interlanguage grammatical/lexical constraints or constraints in processing to particular sets of interlanguage pragmatic strategies. If a control for proficiency had been applied, it might have been possible to see patterns of pragmatic strategies emerging from learners who have similar lexical and grammatical problems. More specific retrospective interview questions than the ones applied in this study could then have probed these processes further.

In addition to this, the comparability of the three levels of proficiency from a quantitative point of view was somewhat limited by two factors. Firstly, the small number of learners at each Stage and their limited availability for the study made it necessary for some dyads of speakers to do two tasks, while others only did one. Furthermore, dyads of learners were asked to choose the tasks they felt most comfortable doing, which led to some tasks being done more frequently than others. Moreover, the different task topics appear to have elicited somewhat different kinds of data. While obesity and binge-drinking generally elicited very controversial discussions and made it possible for learners to switch to some extent between different social roles made relevant through discourse (e.g. young, fun-loving student vs. conscientious adult in the binge-drinking task), this happened to a much lesser extent with the other task topics (e.g. activities for first year students of German). All these issues may have distorted the quantitative data to some extent. Nevertheless, as only very rough frequency counts were employed and qualitative evidence always supports the quantitative account, I am confident that the results gleaned from the analysis as a whole are valid.

In addition, the study has not addressed the influence of the L1 and the native culture on learners' development of facework strategies. As suggested in chapter 1 (1.3.2), there is stable research evidence for the existence of a number of cross-cultural differences with regards to German and English discourse norms, making it likely that L1 cultural influence plays a role in learners' choice of strategies. Furthermore, pragmalinguistic transfer from the native language is also possible. Although L1 data were collected, organisational constraints and recruitment issues made it impossible to collect them from the same speakers that were engaged in the L2 conversations. As a consequence, these data were eventually discarded for lack of comparability.

Despite these limitations, this study has made a number of important contributions to the field of Interlanguage Pragmatics. Firstly, the study is adding to the very small base of developmental studies on pragmatic aspects of L2 German, of which other examples include Barron's account of the development of requests during

a year abroad (2003), Dittmar & Ahrenholz' longitudinal account of one learners' acquisition of expressions of modality (Dittmar & Ahrenholz, 1995) and two studies on the development of modal particles (Rost-Roth, 1999; Cheon-Kostrzewa & Kostrzewa, 1997). Among these examples, this study is the first one which does not focus on an isolated speech act or a single feature, but takes a holistic approach by looking at the data from different perspectives.

Secondly, within the field as a whole, the study has recognized the need for moving away from studying isolated speech acts within a politeness framework to the study of interaction within the wider framework of identity. While research on the projection of identity in spoken L2 is still sparse, such research has already been conducted in the field of second language writing, often with 'voice' as the guiding framework (see, for example, Ivanič & Camps, 2001).

Thirdly, this thesis has proposed a cognitive, internal view of context. According to Coupland & Jaworski (1997), social interaction constantly reshapes the frames through which speakers interpret and produce talk. This means that, if we want to observe the processes underlying language learning, we need to look not only at language use in an interactive environment, but we also need to observe how learners create and recreate the context of interaction.

Context, intrinsically connected to the notion of frames as the reference point based on which speakers interpret what others say and decide what they are going to say, is a concept that has been very important throughout this thesis. This new view on context has not been commonly employed in the study of SLA and Interlanguage Pragmatics. As I have suggested in 2.2, context is usually defined by external factors such as power, distance and imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987) or settings, participants, purpose, content, tone, language, norms of interaction and genre (Hymes, 1972). This study advocates a view of context that sees it created by participants, as an internal context. Such an internal context does not suspend external factors such as setting, participants, etc. – but is formed around these factors. It can contribute greatly to an understanding of the processes underlying language learning and even provide for an integrated account of psycholinguistic/linguistic and individual/social approaches. Drawing up the theoretical framework that allows this connection to be made, and at the same time moves the field away from a focus on face and facework as politeness and social appropriateness is probably the biggest contribution of this study.

Within this framework, facework is essentially defined as identity work, through which speakers try to project a certain self-image based on an internal discursive context, and this allows for interlanguage data to be seen in a new light. Rather than asking where learners' performance fails to match up with a native speaker norm, we

can now ask what learners achieve with particular strategies. Hence, learners are not seen as being at the mercy of their linguistic abilities, but as people who are actively trying to reach discursive goals through the strategies they use. To re-quote Firth & Wagner (1997):

> NNs' marked or deviant forms are not of necessity fossilizations of interlanguage, nor can they on each and every occasion be accounted for by inference or a reduced L2 competence. Such forms may be deployed resourcefully and strategically to accomplish social and interactional ends – for example, to display empathy, or to accomplish mutual understanding. (Firth & Wagner, 1997, p. 293)

This opens up a new view on the notions of appropriateness and competence. As I have argued earlier (chapter 2), interlanguage pragmatics has so far failed to take the speaker perspective into account when talking of competence, making learners' subject to the mercy of external evaluation as to whether what they say is considered to be appropriate. Their own perspective in strategy choice is seemingly unimportant. Here, I argue that both competence and appropriateness must also be seen from the perspective of the speaker.

From this point of view, appropriateness is the result of what interlocutor(s) in an interaction have negotiated to be allowable contributions to a particular interaction, even though convergence with social or cultural norms of behaviour is not achieved. Competence is the ability to speak one's mind, to construct the identity one attaches most importance to. Attention to formal correctness, target language norms or general social norms is less important in this context. In fact, non-convergence to those standards or norms of behaviour may be the precise factor that allows speakers to maintain and project a certain self-image or identity.

"Faces, roles and identities in argumentative discourse" is the title of this dissertation, and the results of this research have shown that the plurals were a deliberate choice. Learning and using a foreign language is not only about learning the grammar and vocabulary of the target language, but also about achieving membership of particular subgroups depending on individual learners' particular circumstances. Both research and pedagogy can contribute to the success of this endeavour, and I hope that this thesis has added a distinctive contribution.

Appendixes

Appendix A: Task instruction cards

A.1 Binge

Was sollte die Universität Eggburton tun, um den Trend des "Kampftrinkens" unter Studenten zu bekämpfen?

_____ Alkohol aus allen Campus-Bars verbannen
_____ alkoholische Getränke in den Campus-Bars teurer machen
_____ alkoholische Getränke in den Studentenwohnheimen ganz
verbieten (auch auf den Privatzimmern)
_____ alkoholische Getränke in den Campus-Bars nur noch an
Studenten über 21 Jahre verkaufen

_____ _____

Please rank the suggested measures from what you think is the most acceptable one (1) to the one which, from your perspective, is the least acceptable one (5). Add a further suggestion of your choice.

Then discuss the above question with your partner. Your task is to find the best compromise which you can present as a list of suggestions to the university authorities. However, make sure your opinion is heard, and always give reasons for your choices!

Some German words you might not understand:

bekämpfen	to fight
das Kampftrinken	binge drinking
verbannen	to ban
verboten	to forbid

Some German vocabulary you might need for your conversation:

to ban	verbannen
binge-drinking	das Kampftrinken
measure	die Maßnahme
to forbid sth.	etwas verbieten
to take one's responsibility for one's own actions	Verantwortung für sein eigenes Handeln übernehmen
to suggest	vorschlagen
to tackle a problem	ein Problem bekämpfen
opening hours	die Öffnungszeiten
to consider	in Betracht ziehen

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A.2 Obesity

Was sollte die Universität Eggburton tun, um Fettsucht unter Studenten zu bekämpfen?

_____ **Fast-Food, Cola-Getränke und Automaten vom Campus verbannen**

_____ **kostenlose Sportkurse in allen Teilen der Universität anbieten**

_____ **Essen mit viel Fett, Zucker oder Salz teurer machen**

_____ **mehr gesunde Mahlzeiten in allen Cafeterias anbieten**

_____ _____

Please rank the suggested measures from what you think is the most acceptable one (1) to the one which, from your perspective, is the least acceptable one (5). Add a further suggestion of your choice.

Then discuss the above question with your partner. Your task is to find the best compromise which you can present as a list of suggestions to the university authorities. However, make sure your opinion is heard, and always give reasons for your choices!

Some German words you might not understand:

kostenlos	free
Cola-Getränke	fizzy drinks
die Mahlzeit	meal
anbieten	offer
die Fettsucht	obesity

Some German vocabulary you might need for your conversation:

to fight obesity	die Fettsucht bekämpfen
measure	die Maßnahme
to ban	verbannen
to exercise	Sport treiben
to take one's responsibility for one's own actions	Verantwortung für sein eigenes Handeln übernehmen
to suggest	vorschlagen
vending machine	der Automat
to consider	in Betracht ziehen

A.3 Activities

Welche extra-curricularen Aktivitäten sollte die Deutsch-Abteilung an der Universität Eggburton anbieten, damit die Studenten besser und leichter Deutsch lernen?

_____ **wöchentliche deutsche Filme**
_____ **Exkursionen nach Deutschland oder Österreich**
_____ **regelmäßige Treffen mit deutschen Austauschstudenten**
_____ **deutsche Vorlesungen von deutschen Professoren**

_____ _____

Please rank the suggested activities from what you think is the most desirable one (1) to the one which, from your perspective, is the least desirable one (5). Please add a further suggestion of your choice.

Then discuss the above question with your partner. Your task is to find the best compromise which you can present as a list of suggestions to the German section leader. However, make sure opinion is heard, and always give reasons for your choices!

Some German words you might not understand:

extra-curriculare Aktivitäten	extra-curricular activities
der Austauschstudent	exchange student
die Vorlesung	lecture
die Exkursion	away trip

Some German vocabulary you might need for your conversation:

degree	der Universitätsabschluss
to improve	verbessern
to suggest	vorschlagen
course tutor	der/die Kursleiter/in
activity	die Aktion; die Aktivität
to be useful	nützlich sein
desirable	wünschenswert, erstrebenswert
to consider	in Betracht ziehen

A.4 Tuition

Für was sollte die Universität Eggburton die Studiengebühren der Studenten verwenden?

_____ **Verbesserung der Sport- und Freizeiteinrichtungen**
_____ **Einstellung von mehr Personal**
_____ **Verbesserungen im Service der Bibliotheken (mehr Bücher, längere Öffnungszeiten**
_____ **Renovierung / Modernisierung von Gebäuden etc. (z.B. Studentenwohnheime, Vorlesungssäle)**

_____ _____

Please rank the suggested activities from what you think is the most desirable one (1) to the one which, from your perspective, is the least desirable one (5). Please add a further suggestion of your choice.

Then discuss the above question with your partner. Your task is to find the best compromise which you can present as a list of suggestions to the university authorities. However, make sure opinion is heard, and always give reasons for your choices!

Some German words you might not understand:

verwenden	to use
die Studiengebühren	tuition fees
Sport- und Freizeit-Einrichtungen	sports and leisure-time facilities
das Personal	staff
jnd. einstellen	to employ sbd.
Renovierung / Modernisierung von Gebäuden	building improvements
die Verbesserung	improvement

Some German vocabulary you might need for your conversation:

to improve	verbessern
to suggest	vorschlagen
university authorities	die Universitätsleitung
staff	das Personal
library	die Bibliothek
measure	die Maßnahme
to consider	in Betracht ziehen

A.5 Advice

Was sollten Deutsch-Studenten des ersten Studienjahrs tun, um in ihren Deutsch-Kursen die bestmöglichen Resultate zu erzielen?

_____ so oft wie möglich mit deutschen Muttersprachlern sprechen
_____ so viele Grammatik-Übungen wie möglich machen
_____ authentische Materialien anhören / lesen
_____ in deutschsprachige Länder reisen

_____ _____

Please rank the suggested activities from what you think is the most effective one (1) to the one which, from your perspective, is the least effective activity to achieve good results (5). Please add a further suggestion of your choice.

Then discuss the above question with your partner. Your task is to find the best compromise which you can give as a list of suggestion to new students. However, make sure your opinion is heard, and always give reasons for your choices!

Some German words you might not understand:

erstes Studienjahr	first year (of a degree program)
bestmöglich	best possible
tun	to do
der Muttersprachler	native speaker
authentic	authentisch
erzielen	to achieve

Some German vocabulary you might need for your conversation:

to travel	reisen
to be useful	nützlich sein
university degree	der Universitätsabschluss
listening comprehension	Hörverstehen
flueny	Sprechfluss

A.6 Admission

Welche Kriterien sollte die Universität Eggburton anwenden, um darüber zu entscheiden, wer zu einem Undergraduate-Studiengang zugelassen wird?

_____ **Schule, an welcher der Bewerber seinen Abschluss gemacht hat (stattliche Schule/private Schule; Ruf der Schule)**
_____ **A-level Resultate**
_____ **Arbeitserfahrung, die für den angestrebten Studiengang relevant ist**
_____ **persönlicher Eindruck vom Kandidaten (Vorstellungsgespräch)**

_____ _____

Please rank the suggested criteria from what you think should have the most influence in the selection process (1) to the one which, from your perspective, should have the least influence (5). Please add a further suggestion of your choice.

Then discuss the above question with your partner. Your task is to find the best compromise which you can present as a list of suggestions to the university authorities. However, make sure your opinion is heard, and always give reasons for your choices!

Some German words you might not understand:

das Kriterium	criterion
anwenden	to apply
der Studiengang	degree course
entscheiden	to decide
der Bewerber	applicant
einen Abschluss machen (an)	to graduate (from)
angestrebt	desired
persönlicher Eindruck	personal impression
das Vorstellungsgespräch	interview
zugelassen werden	to be admitted
der Ruf	reputation

Some German vocabulary you might need for your conversation:

admission	die Zulassung
work experience	Arbeits-, Berufserfahrung
university authorities	die Universitätsleitung
A-levels	das Abitur
private/state school	private/staatliche Schule

Appendix B: Retrospective Interview Grid

Stimulated recall

Categories	Probes
Noticed or attended features of the research situation	➤ What went through your mind while you were saying this?
Utterance planning and choice	➤ How did you decide what to say at this point and how to say it?

Self-observation

Categories	Probes
Evaluation of alternative utterances	➤ Did you, at any time during the conversation, consider alternatives to what you said? If so, why did you reject them? ➤ Did you consider the hearer's reactions when planning your utterances, and how did this influence what you said?
Overcoming linguistic difficulties	➤ Did you encounter a situation in which you had to alter what you would have wished to say due to language difficulties? Tell me about it!
Pragmatic awareness, knowledge and difficulty	➤ Do you think that a German would have argued in a different style in a conversation like this? ➤ Would you have phrased anything in a different way at any time if you had you done the conversation in your mother tongue with another native speaker of your mother tongue? In what ways? ➤ Would you have phrased anything in a different way at any time if you had you done the conversation with a native speaker of German? In what ways? ➤ Did you feel in any way uncomfortable with what you were asked to do, i.e. arguing about a given topic?
Influence of the research situation	➤ Did the experiment as such influence in any way what you said?
Evaluation of communicative performance	➤ Now think about the goals you had set for yourself before the conversation. Do you think you have met these goals? ➤ If not, what do you think has kept you from reaching those goals?

Appendix C: Tasks, interviews and subjects

Task title	Interview title	Subjects		
		Name	**Native language**	**Year in German speaking country**
Stage 3				
Stage3.1Obese		Ashley	English	no
		Brooke	English	no
Stage3.2Binge	3.2R	Ashley	English	no
		Brooke	English	no
Stage3.3Admission		John	English	no
		Gopal	English	no
Stage3.4Binge	3.4R	Anna	Polish	no
		Elena	Greek	no
Stage3.5Binge	3.5R	Jim	English	no
		Wendy	English	no
Stage3.6Activities		Jim	English	no
		Wendy	English	no
Stage3.7Obese		Anna	Polish	no
		Elena	Greek	no
Stage3.8Binge	3.8R	Wayne	English	no
		Scarlett	English	no
Stage3.9Obese		Wayne	English	no
		Scarlett	English	no
Stage3.10Activities	3.10R	Rosamond	English	no
		Lee	English	no
Stage 5				
Stage5.1Activities	5.1R	Elisa	English	no
		Joy	English	no
Stage5.2Advice	5.2R	Gordon	English	no
		Harry	English	no
Stage5.3Binge	5.3R	Gianna	Italian	no
		Roberta	Spanish	no
Stage5.4Tuition		Gianna	Italian	no
		Roberta	Spanish	no
Stage5.5Obese	5.5R	Abigail	English	no
		Sara	English	no
Stage5.6Binge	5.6R	Emily	English	no
		Catherine	English	no
Stage5.7Advice		Emily	English	no
		Catherine	English	no
Stage5.8Binge		Clifford	English	no
		Courtney	English	no
Stage5.9Tuition	5.9R	Clifford	English	no
		Courtney	English	no
Stage 7				
Stage7.1Advice	7.1R	Matthew	English	yes
		Darren	English	yes
Stage7.2Binge		Matthew	English	yes
		Darren	English	yes

Stage7.3Obese	7.3R	Emma	English	yes
		Donald	English	yes
Stage7.4Advice		Emma	English	yes
		Donald	English	yes
Stage7.5Obese		Esther	English	yes (spent part of childhood in GSC)
		Holly	English	yes
Stage7.6Binge	7.6R	Heather	English	yes
		Jenny	English	yes
Stage7.7Advice		Heather	English	yes
		Jenny	English	yes
Stage7.8Binge		Esther	English	yes (spent part of childhood in GSC)
		Holly	English	yes
Stage7.9Obese	7.9R	Shirley	English	yes
		Tina	English	yes

Appendix D: Transcript conventions

(.)	pause
em, eh	hesitation markers
but-	false starts and abrupt cut-offs
?	rising intonation
!	very animated tone
CAPITALS	extremely stressed utterance
(word)	utterance not clearly intelligible, transcriptioners' best guess
((comment))	some sound or feature of the talk which is not easily transcribable, i.e. coughing or laughing
=	latched turns and turns by the same speaker that are overlapping lines
[	simultaneous/overlapping utterances
( )	utterance unintelligible
:	elongation of syllable

Appendix E: Analytical categories for expression of disagreement

category	definition	example
token agreement	'ja aber'	*ja (.) aber* wenn es überhaupt keine getränke gibt dann müssen sie (Heather, Stage7.6Binge)
partial agreement	Full agreement to a partial aspect of the interlocutor's argument.	*ja ja ich weiß es wenn man em limonade mit em archers kaufen will oder mit wodka dann kostet es nur einen pfund fünfzig* aber wenn man zum eine normale em (.) eh pub geht dann ist es nur ist es (.) doppelt so viel (Courtney, Stage5.8Binge)
asserted agreement	Repetition of all or parts of the interlocutor's turn or agreement formula.	*ja das ist richtig* aber eh wenn man in dem ersten studienjahr ist und eh wenn man gute noten bekommen eh will ist es eh ein bißchen schwer ins em (.) in den deutschsprachigen länder zu reisen (Gordon, Stage 5.2Advice)
no agreement	No preceding element of agreement.	aber (.) nein ich mag nicht die gemüse in der cafeteria (Ashley, Stage3.1Obese)

Appendix F: Analytical categories for deontic modality

category	definition	example
implicit modalisation		
evaluative phrases	Phrases in which speakers explicitly evaluate certain actions.	*auch denke es em denke ich em dass em aus em wenn (.) man eh mit andere deutsche studenten ausgehen em und nur deutsch sprechen vielleicht in ein- eine kneip in in ein-e kneipe [kneipe und em (.) oder in nachtclub gehen und nur deutsch sprechen mit die anderen deutschen studenten **gut ist*** (Lee, Stage3.10Activities)
reference to ranking	Reference to ranking of the suggestions made on the task instruction cards.	***eh beste vorschlag** ist (.) mehr gesunde mahlzeiten* (Emma, Stage7.3Obese)
explicit modalisation		
modal verbs	Modal verbs which, depending on which verb is chosen, can express different degrees of desire or necessity.	***man muss** (.) vielleicht in den ferien nach deutschland fahren* (Gordon, Stage5.2Advice)
other strategies		
other	Strategies that belong to neither of the three categories above (evaluative phrases, reference to ranking, modal verbs)	*ich habe auch eh geschrieben vielleicht alcohol nur an wochenende in den campusbars also verkaufen* (Matthew, Stage7.2Binge)

Appendix G: Analytical categories for epistemic modality

category	definition	example
lexical markers of epistemic modality		
cajoler	Speech items whose semantic content is of little transparent relevance to their discourse meaning, their discourse function being the establishment, restoration, or extension of harmony between the hearer and speaker.	*ich **meine** mit andere deutsche leute ist es also nicht so ein großes problem* (Matthew, Stage7.1Advice)
downtoner	Sentence modifiers used to moderate the impact an utterance is likely to have on the interlocutor.	*man muss (.) **vielleicht** in den ferien nach deutschland fahren* (Gordon, Stage5.2Advice)
uptoner	Sentence modifiers used to increase the impact an utterance is likely to have on the interlocutor.	*ja super idee super idee **auf jeden fall*** (Donald, Stage7.4Advice)
hedge	Adverbials and longer formulae which render vagueness to their referent; scope smaller than for downtoners.	*ja schläft er immer alle tage ((both laugh)) **und so weiter** und und ja em (.)* (John, Stage3.3Admission)
intensifier	Adverbials and longer formulae which render definiteness and force to their referent; scope smaller than for uptoners.	*ich glaube ich bin **total** einverstanden mit eh du mit dir* (Roberta, Stage5.3Binge)
modal particle	Particles which unfolds their meaning only in the context of the turn in which it occurs or in its relationship to the interlocutors' turn and expresses the attitude of a speaker towards what is being said	*nein nein ich denke **schon** dass es weniger leuten die brauchen alkohol trinken* (Holly, Stage 5.8Binge)
subjectiviser	Fixed formulas and other expressions by means of which an utterance is marked as being a person's personal opinion (excludes epistemic verbs).	***meiner meinung nach** ist es nicht so wichtig sport und freizeiteinrichtungen zu verbessern* (Courtney, Stage5.9Tuition)
epistemic verb	Verbs which describe the mental attitude of a speaker towards an issue, e.g. denken, glauben. For the purpose of this research, we are only counting epistemic verbs in the 1st person, i.e. those that relate to the mental attitude of the current speaker.	***ich denke** dass eh em der filme em obs obe ob er ist eh em em vielleicht eh sechs uhr em die abend em das ist gut* (Rosamond, Stage3.10Activities)
syntactical markers		
conditional	Verbs in the conditional that mitigate propositions at the syntactical level; often used in directives / suggestions or to mark a proposition as hypothetical.	*ich glaube dass (.) em **sie könnten** nie (.) alkoholische getränke in den studentenwohnheimen verbieten* (Catherine, Stage5.6Binge)

Appendix H: Analytical categories for themes in stimulated recall

category	definition	example
comprehension	Comments relating to the comprehension and understanding of arguments brought forward by the interlocutor.	*Well when she said what she had put for number one I didn't know exactly what she had meant, so I had to ask her.* (Tina, InterviewStage7.9)
vocabulary	Comments relating to problems, strategies and other issues relating to the retrieval and use of vocabulary to express ideas.	*I was trying to ask Jolanta what she thinks is the best solution for alcohol problem with the students but I couldn't find the exact word to say* (Elena, InterviewStage3.4)
grammar	Comments relating to problems, strategies and other issues relating to grammar and word-order.	*I don't know why I find it easier - but when I try to sketch out a German sentence, because of all the verb going to the end and stuff - I moved my hands saying like "the verb is going to the end" with my hands.* (Courtney, InterviewStage5.9)
arguments	Comments relating to problems, strategies and other issues relating to the expression of ideas and the production of arguments.	*It was quite easy in as much as I agreed to what he was saying, so it wasn't particularly - I didn't have a contrary opinion.* (John, InterviewStage3.3)
presentation	Comments relating to problems, strategies and other issues regarding the manner in which these arguments are presented (modality, organisation of discourse).	*I don't really know. I knew I wanted to say I wouldn't be able to afford it and (I wanted to say) "Ich kann" but I realized that was like in the present tense or whatever so I changed to "ich könnte" as in I would be able to "Ich könnte nicht"* (Brooke, InterviewStage3.2)
retelling	Comments which are merely a repetition of what had originally been said during the discussion.	*Well I was sort of trying to say how it's eh student it's the student lifestyle and then Jane came up with the point that there is not many twenty-one year olds.* (Ashley, InterviewStage3.2)
other	Comments not classifiable under any of these categories.	*I realised after I had said that I just repeated exactly what you had just said.* (Clifford, InterviewStage5.9)

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