

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	x
List of abbreviations.....	xi
List of tables	xiii
List of figures	xix
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Complaining within cross-cultural pragmatics	5
2.1. Pragmatics.....	5
2.2. Speech act analysis	6
2.2.1. Speech act theory	6
2.2.2. Discourse analysis	11
2.2.2.1. An integrative model of discourse	11
2.2.3. The focus of the present study: complaints	12
2.2.3.1. Reasons for choosing complaints	13
2.2.3.2. Characteristics of complaints	15
2.3. Theories of (im)politeness.....	18
2.3.1. The conversational-maxim view	19
2.3.2. The face-saving view	22
2.3.3. The conversational-contract view	27
2.3.4. The concept of relational work.....	28
2.3.5. The concept of rapport management	33
2.3.6. A model of impoliteness	37
2.4. Pragmatics across cultures	41
2.4.1. Contrastive pragmatics	41
2.4.2. Cross-cultural versus intercultural pragmatics.....	42
2.4.3. Culture	43
Chapter 3: Computer-mediated communication (CMC).....	46
3.1. Definition of CMC	46
3.2. A brief history of CMC	47

3.3. Classification of computer-mediated discourse (CMD).....	48
3.3.1. Earlier approaches to classifying CMD	49
3.3.2. The faceted classification scheme of CMD.....	51
Chapter 4: The methodology of the present study.....	59
 4.1. The data of the present study	59
4.1.1. eBay and its feedback forum	59
4.1.2. The technical and social context of the present data.....	61
4.1.3. Data collection procedures	70
4.1.4. Choice of data: advantages and disadvantages	74
 4.2. Statistical analysis	78
Chapter 5: Data analysis.....	80
 5.1. Complaint strategies	81
5.1.1. Data analysis	84
 5.2. Level of directness	86
5.2.1. Data analysis	88
 5.3. Modification.....	89
5.3.1. Data analysis	93
 5.4. Use of pronouns	94
5.4.1. Data analysis	98
 5.5. Features of CMC	99
5.5.1. Data analysis	103
 5.6. Sum variables.....	104
5.6.1. Data analysis	106
Chapter 6: Results	107
 6.1. Comparison of British English versus German complaints	107
6.1.1. Data set: Item has not been received.....	108
6.1.2. Data set: The item was different than expected	122
6.1.3. Data set: Item has not been received (double complaints).....	135
6.1.4. Data set: Item was different than expected (double complaints)	148
 6.2. Comparison of the British English data sets.....	162

6.3. Comparison of the German data sets	185
6.4. Summary of the results	206
Chapter 7: Discussion	216
7.1. Discussion in light of previous research on complaints	216
7.2. Discussion in light of (im)politeness theories	228
Chapter 8: Implications and outlook.....	243
References	247
Appendix	272