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## CURRICULUM & TEACHING STUDIES | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Immediacy and distance in teacher talk—A comparative case study in German elementary- and outdoor school-teaching

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**Abstract:** This case study examines authentic speech acts by a German primary school teacher in the classroom context and the outdoor learning location of a forest. The study will compare the degree of linguistic immediacy or distance in these two contexts, respectively. Once a week, the class is doing “outdoor school” [*Draußenschule*] in places of natural or cultural interest near to their school. The structural change in the teaching environment means a change in the communication setting. The question arises if the teacher speaks to the students differently indoors than outdoors. The theoretical reference framework for the study is provided by the linguistic model “language of immediacy and language of distance”. Using a conversation analytical approach, the study will document the organisation and form of speech acts with a focus on the teacher. This study occupies a point of intersection between linguistics and teaching research. The results show how the teacher’s speech changes. There are different reasons for this: Depending on where the class is being held, the teacher has to work with different possibilities and challenges to maintain the concentration of the class, and to organise and structure the lesson. The less functionalised and prestructured forest presents the teacher with more organisational challenges, something which in turn has an effect on the teacher’s speech acts. At the same time, the more open spaces outside the school

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### PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Little is known about the way teachers speak in class, the language they use, especially when class is held at learning places outside the classroom. This study seeks to provide insight into classroom- and “outdoor school”-teaching in Germany in a case study based on conversation analysis. In the “outdoor school” compulsory school subjects (mathematics, language, history etc.) are taught outside the classroom on a regular basis all over the year and during regular teaching time (e.g. one day per week). Teaching and learning are initiated in places of the nearby environment, like forests, parks, museums or factories. Leaving the well-structured and orderly classroom entails changes on different levels of teaching and teacher-child interaction. Linguistic research can spotlight how these changes affect the communication situation in class and the way a teacher speaks. This article might also sensitise practitioners to the teaching situation and requirements of teaching in- and outdoors.

often allow for a greater degree of direct contact between the teacher and the students which results in greater linguistic immediacy.

**Subjects:** Interpersonal Communication; Primary/Elementary Education; Teaching & Learning; Classroom Management & Organisation; Language & Linguistics

**Keywords:** teacher talk; teacher–child relationship; outdoor school; *Draußenschule*; conversation analysis; language immediacy

## 1. Introduction

School-based learning usually takes place in a classroom. It is only in isolated cases that school classes leave the school buildings in order to experience learning elsewhere. However, this is not the norm in the “outdoor school”, which is known in Germany as *Draußenschule* (Armbrüster et al., 2016), in Scandinavia as *Udeskole/Uteskole* (Bentsen, 2010; Jordet, 2007) and in English-speaking countries by various terms including “outdoor education”, “outdoor learning” and “education outside the classroom” (Beames, Higgins, & Nicol, 2012; Waite, 2011). The outdoor school approach is becoming increasingly widespread, especially in northern European schools, as a way of holding regular classes outside the usual school-based learning locations. Most commonly, children have a fixed day of the week on which they have lessons at places of natural or cultural interest—like a forest, park, museum or factory. Teaching in the outdoor school is curricular-based, includes (almost) all subjects in an interdisciplinary manner and is closely related to the classes held inside the school building. Children are able to use all their senses in the outside learning environment and experience objects in a first-hand and vivid way. Linguistic communication is of central importance for teacher–pupil interaction and the way lessons evolve both inside and outside the school. This study focuses on the language the teacher uses in class at a German primary school and seeks to identify differences in communication between the classroom context and the context of the outdoor school in a forest environment. Given that communication takes place in concrete communication situations and is influenced by these, leaving the classroom implies a spatial-structural change in the communication setting. The change in communication setting can then in turn lead to changes in linguistic expression. Using conversation analysis, this case study will document the organisation, the content and the formal construction of speech acts. Samples of the teacher’s speech acts will be analysed based on their degree of linguistic immediacy or distance. The theoretical reference framework is the linguistic model of “language of immediacy and language of distance” by Koch and Österreicher (1985/2012). The underlying data for the study is provided by two communication sequences from (1) the classroom and (2) the outdoor school/forest in a German primary school class.

The study begins by presenting existing research findings. This is followed by a theoretical introduction to the immediacy-distance model (Koch & Österreicher, 1985/2012). It then continues with a description of how the research was designed and which procedural methods were selected. The results include a comparison of the communication situations as well as the core findings gleaned from the contrastive conversation analysis. The study closes with an interpretation and discussion of the results.

## 2. Current state of research

Research into the language (of teachers) in the classroom context covers a broad range of topics: Studies have focused on the pedagogical functions of teacher language (Ehlich, 2007; Spanhel, 1971; Witt, 2016), the importance of teachers’ expression for teaching children specialist- and education-related language skills (Leisen, 2010; Sertl, 2010) or the structuring of lessons by teachers’ speech acts (Bellack, 1974; Ehlich & Rehbein, 1986; Wragge-Lange, 1980). The third area mentioned above also includes studies on conversation analysis: McHoul (1985, 1990), for example, examines variants of turn-taking and corrections in classroom talk in the classrooms of Australian high schools. The South Korean researcher Lee (2007) has analysed turn-taking in teacher-student-teacher sequences and the role of third turn position in teacher talk. Nevertheless, the studies do not examine the linguistic expression of the conversation partners, but tend to focus on the organisation of the

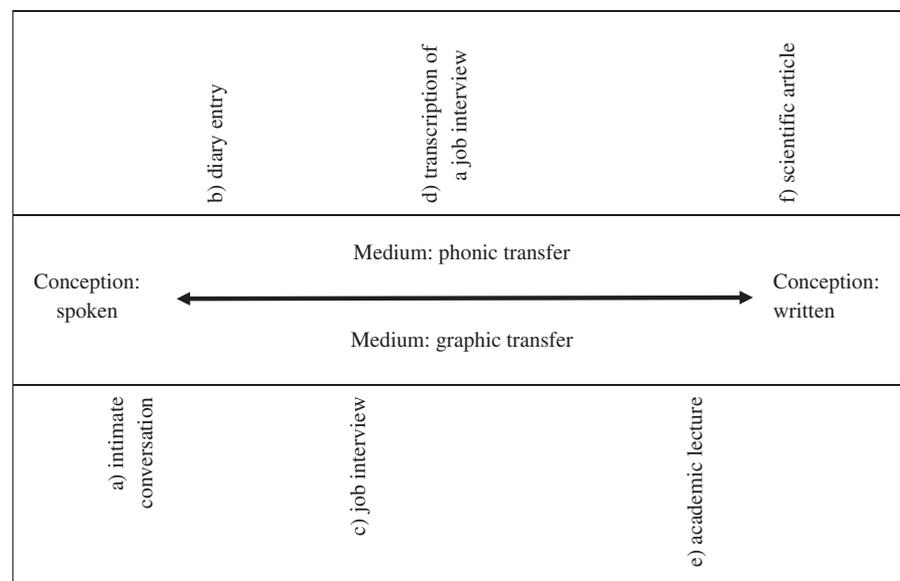
classroom talk or the use of specific discourse features. The situation is similar with respect to studies on immediacy in classroom communication and instruction, which also tend to deal with communication structures focussing teacher–student interactions in the classroom (Zhang & Witt, 2016). Areas of remaining interest include nonverbal immediacy (Andersen, 1979; McCroskey, Sallinen, Fayer, Richmond, & Barraclough, 1996) as well as verbal immediacy in classroom communication (Gorham, 1988; Javidi & Long, 1989; Nussbaum, Comadena, & Holladay, 1987). One aspect is clearly revealed by the studies referred to here: When immediacy in classroom talk is being discussed, the focus tends to lie on *communication behaviours* and hence (teachers’) speech acts in their instructional function as well as their effect on teacher–student relations and the classroom situation. The linguistic immediacy or distance in teacher–student communication at the level of *linguistic expression* has therefore yet to be researched.

In the field of outdoor school research conversation analysis presents a new perspective. So far, teachers have been the subject of several empirical studies which have examined their motives for and opinions about outdoor schooling (Bentsen & Jensen, 2012; Bentsen, Schipperijn, & Jensen, 2010; Gräfe, Gillessen, Harring, Sahrakhiz, & Witte, 2016) or their perception of their students in outdoor school (Jordet, 2007). These studies have identified changes in the immediacy-distance relation in teacher–student interactions—on an emotional (Gräfe et al., 2016) as well as an interactional (Dietrich, Jacobsen, Mygind, & Stelter, 2002) level. But the teachers’ speech acts have not, however, been the subject of research in themselves.

### 3. Theoretical framework

The “language of immediacy and language of distance” model originated in Koch and Österreicher (1985/2012, 1990). It serves to describe language variation and to distinguish characteristics of speech utterances. Following Söll (1980), the initial basic premise is the differentiation between orality and literacy (Koch & Österreicher, 1985/2012, p. 443). The fundamental basis of this differentiation is the medium (=form of realisation: phonic vs. graphic) and the conception (=characteristic style: spoken vs. written) of a speech act. The characteristics of the medium are dichotomous, i.e. they are mutually exclusive so speech acts are transmitted either graphically or phonically. Differences in conception, however, are gradable, i.e. the characteristics spoken and written represent two opposite poles on a continuum of degrees of conceptual possibilities. Figure 1 depicts the two transfer media phonic/graphic as well as the continuum between the conceptions spoken/written. The diagram illustrates how ideal-typical forms of expression (a–f) can be located in relation to one another:

**Figure 1.**  
**Orality-literacy-continuum.**



The orality-literacy-continuum shows that the way of transmission does not tell anything about language variation dependent on orality and literacy. Therefore also the conception of a speech act is important. The orality-literacy-continuum results from the interplay of several parameters (e.g. the familiarity of the interlocutors, the number of listeners etc.) and conditions of communication (ibid., 445). Referring to this, Koch and Österreicher (ibid., 450) speak of the continuum of linguistic immediacy and distance, which correlates with the orality-literacy-continuum. This correlation can be explained because the “language of immediacy”—in ideal-typical circumstances—exhibits several characteristics of conceptual orality. The “language of distance” exhibits several characteristics of literacy (ibid.). In simple terms: the less an utterance corresponds to the norms of a written speech act, the closer it is to the “language of immediacy”. The more an utterance corresponds to the norms of a (formal) written speech act, the closer it is to the “language of distance”. An intimate conversation among friends is an ideal-typical example of a language of immediacy. Here, the language is expressed in a more process-orientated manner, but exhibits more interconnected dialogical elements, has more open topic development and contains fewer terminological references than does an academic lecture, for example, which tends to follow the rules of written language more closely.

The immediacy-distance-continuum is understood by Koch and Oesterreicher (1990) as being universal and therefore a fundamental principle of language variation, which is independent of individual languages. In addition to the interplay between the conception and medium of an utterance for its positioning in the immediacy-distance-continuum, the “conditions of communication” are also relevant. These include (ibid., 8f.)

- the degree of “publicness” and the number of recipients
- the degree of familiarity between the interlocutors
- the level of emotional involvement (of the interlocutors/to topic of conversation)
- the degree of involvement in the situation/action
- the point of reference (i.e. the closeness of the referenced topic/person to the speaker)
- the physical proximity of the communication partners
- the degree of cooperation (i.e. the possibility to participate in the conversation)
- the degree of dialogicity (i.e. the possibility and frequency of changing speakers)
- the degree of spontaneity
- the degree to which subject matter is fixed

Depending on the weighting and combination of the variables, the communication conditions of an utterance move towards the immediacy or distance poles, respectively. These two poles are characterised by an extreme in all of the conditions: The combination “‘dialogue’, ‘free turn-taking’, ‘familiarity of the partners’, ‘face-to-face interaction’, ‘free development of the theme’, ‘external to the public sphere’, ‘spontaneity’, ‘intense involvement’, ‘situation embedding’ ... can most appropriately be called ‘language of immediacy’” (Koch & Österreicher, 1985/2012, p. 447). The language of distance is represented by the opposite constellation of combinations (ibid.). On a critical note, however, it is worth pointing out that the communication conditions are not so much “conditions” as structural characteristics for describing the setting and the form of the conversation (also Ágel & Hennig, 2007). It should also be mentioned that the parameters are not always clear-cut and measurable. Nevertheless, communication conditions do still exert an influence at the linguistic level and are of relevant use while classifying utterances. Linguistic reactions to the communication conditions are identifiable, according to Koch and Österreicher (1985/2012, p. 454), in the universal (i.e. language-independent) immediacy and distance characteristics of language. Language of immediacy, for example, is apparent in a face-to-face conversation

- on the phonic level, e.g. as syllable reduction,
- on the lexical level, e.g. as limited paradigmatic differentiation,
- on the morphosyntactic level, e.g. in the form of single-word utterances,
- on the textual-pragmatic level, e.g. in the form of speaker and listener signals.

Within individual languages, the universal characteristics have language-specific equivalents, for example a certain lexeme. These language-specific characteristics then mark out whether language is immediate or distant based on their combination and frequency of occurrence.

No catalogue exists for the immediacy or distance characteristics of a language. The attributes immediate or distant are not inherent in utterances. That is why *concrete* characteristics always need to be distilled from the empirical material of *each individual case*. The basis for any analysis is provided by the communication conditions, the rules and norms of written language (e.g. dictionaries and grammar books) in each individual language, as well as the phenomena of spoken language (e.g. Ágel & Hennig, 2007; Fiehler, Barden, Elstermann, & Kraft, 2004; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974).

#### 4. The study: Design and method

The data were collected in a German primary school class (second grade), which has been practicing outdoor school for two years at the time the data were gathered. The students and teacher were already familiar with one another and they had already been experiencing the different teaching situations in their classroom and in the nearby forest. The empirical basis of the study consists of audio-recordings of authentic spoken material taken from the lessons of a year two class containing 20 students aged between 7 and 8. “Authentic” means that the communication was not “arranged” for research purposes (Gülich & Mondada, 2008). Explanations for the purpose of making the recordings took place afterwards, in order to acquire recordings of natural speech. The recording device was attached to the teacher’s clothing.

The audio-recordings document two 30-min-long teaching sequences taken (1) in the classroom and (2) in the outdoor school in the forest. The communication situations are documented in a memo. The recordings were made shortly after one another at the same day, in order to reduce the chance that the teacher–student relation might have been “influenced” differently by previous events. Both sequences document a teacher-centred teaching method, which is dominated by a teacher-led, question-based class dialogue (Becker-Mrotzek & Vogt, 2009).

The transcription took place in accordance with the rules of the “minimal transcript of the conversation analytic transcription system 2/GAT 2” (Selting et al., 2009). The transcriptions are in literary transcription. Deviations from standard transcription are documented in GAT 2 using Latin characters and are discussed only on that basis. In a running segment-by-segment format, utterances and their subdivision are separated by segment boundaries. Names and places have been rendered anonymous.

#### Transcription rules, special characters and abbreviations:

	Segment boundary
((...))	Omission of part of the original transcript
(1) (2,5)	Pause in speech; duration in seconds
((Laughing)) ((Steps))	Paralinguistic and extralinguistic elements
<<loud> no>	Different manners of speech; manner of speech in first brackets, extension in second brackets, e.g. loud speech
thats	Clitics and slurring, transcribed without special characters
Sto	Speech broken off
T	Teacher (Speaker)
P	Pupil (Speaker)

The results were analysed using conversation analysis (Gülich & Mondada, 2008; Henne & Rehbock, 2001; Sacks, 1984). Conversation analysis based on Sacks, Schegloff und Jefferson (u.a. Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973) is considered to be a key approach to examining spoken language from authentic interaction situations.

In order to limit the data volume to be examined, the study focuses on the teacher's speech acts. Speech acts are linguistic units of communication, the use of which (theoretically) allows certain actions to be completed (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). Proceeding sequentially, the speech acts "explanation", "request", and "question" had been distilled from the data. The following analysis compares well-chosen explanations, questions and requests from the lessons inside and outside the school in an exemplary manner. These speech acts are of critical importance for structuring classroom teaching (Spreckels, 2011). They also provide an insight into the relationship between the teacher and the students during the lesson (Wragge-Lange, 1980). Even when the (linguistic) immediacy-distance-relationship cannot be defined with regard to one of the interlocutors alone, the teacher's utterances clarify the way in which *she* deals with the class situation(s) and thereby reveals either a more or less immediate or distant relation in communication. The students' utterances are accounted for implicitly, as their (linguistic) actions and reactions also exert an influence on the speech acts of the teacher.

## 5. Results

### 5.1. *Immediacy and distance in the communication situations*

Following the description of the recorded conversation situations in the classroom and in the outdoor school, there now follows a comparative analysis of the communication conditions, which will serve to demonstrate structural similarities and differences.

#### 5.1.1. *Communication situation: Classroom*

The recording documents a 30 min-long classroom sequence covering the topic "the body/eye" which took place in the classroom during the morning. The teacher stood in front of the class for the entire recording and led the classroom discussion. The students sat at their desks in rows next to each other. During the course of the lesson, two children were allowed to come to the front of the class and lead the discussion together with the teacher. During the class, the students were given small tasks to complete which they were required to do at their desks on their own (e.g. drawing a face) or with their neighbour (e.g. examining each other's eye pupils). The sequence closes with the students being prepared to begin their outdoor school lesson. The students are given non-transparent paper glasses for their "walking blind activity" in the forest, which they start testing immediately while moving freely in classroom.

#### 5.1.2. *Communication situation: Outdoor school/forest*

The recording documents a 30-min-long sequence in the outdoor school, which took place a little later the same morning. At the start of the sequence, the class gathers at the edge of the forest. The children stand near to and move about around the teacher, and one or two are out of earshot. The teacher explains the "walking blind activity": The children are to take the familiar path to the forest playpark "blind" and in pairs. To do this, one child wears a pair of non-transparent glasses, and the other acts as a guide. They then switch roles halfway. The teacher helps the children to put on the glasses using sticky tape and also assists when the children later switch roles halfway. During the activity, the teacher approaches individual pairs of children to ask them about their experiences. These teacher-led educational dialogues take place mostly between the teacher and individual children or small groups of children respectively. Later, at the forest playpark, the children are spread across the playground. The teacher tries to conduct a discussion with the children as a whole class, but ends up only speaking to a large group of children while other children continue playing out of earshot.

The communication conditions for both communication situations in the classroom and in the forest are similar in a number of ways. By focusing on the teacher's speech acts, her position takes centre stage also now: During lessons inside as well as outside, the *degree of intimacy between the dialogue partners* is essentially the same. Additionally, *involvement in the situation and action* are present in equal measure in the two face-to-face communications. The teacher is able to react directly and without hesitation to external (linguistic) circumstances. With respect to the *point of reference*, both places have people and objects within eye and earshot to which reference is made in the communication. The *degree of cooperation* is constrained in both of the teacher-led teaching sequences: The teacher, as the facilitator of the discussions, is the one to determine what will be discussed. In addition, the institutional setting requires her to deal with curriculum content. Hardly any differences can therefore be anticipated in the two class discussions. Both evolve through a questioning process, where the teacher controls the turn-taking process by asking the questions. Similarities can also be seen for the *degree of spontaneity*. The teacher spontaneously shapes the discussion and her formulations. The topic of the lesson is, however, planned—so to a certain degree the subject matter is fixed. The level of emotional involvement is hard to determine. The conversations were recorded shortly after one another; since no unusual incidents were documented, no change in the emotional relation between the teacher and students can be assumed. In addition to the similarities, there are differences with regard to the *degree of publicness*. Because there were no passers-by in the forest, the dialogue situation was just as closed here as it was in the classroom. Nevertheless, utterances in the classroom situation are usually audible by all students, whereas discussions between the teacher and single children or small groups of children often take place in the outdoor school. Thereby occasionally more conversations that are intimate are possible. Moreover, there are considerable differences in the two communication situations when it comes to the *physical immediacy of the communication partners*. In both situations, the teacher is in the immediate proximity of the students. Yet in the classroom situation, she is standing in front of the children, who are sitting down. The children have very little freedom of movement, and the tables function as barriers. In the forest, all of the students are standing and moving around. Due to their continuous physical movement, their distance to the teacher is constantly changing, with one or two occasionally venturing beyond eye or earshot. The situation is not as static as it is in the classroom but much more dynamic. The structural analysis of the communication conditions shows that both the communication situation in the classroom and that in the forest constitute, in principle, an immediate setting. There are variations with regard to the degree of publicness and the occasionally greater physical distance. The question is, whether this more pronounced immediate communication situation in the outdoor school is also mirrored on the linguistic level.

## **5.2. Immediacy and distance in the teacher's speech acts**

The presentation of the results is divided according to the types of speech act *explanation*, *request* and *question*. In the following utterances made by the teacher in the classroom and the outdoor school are examined comparatively.

### **5.2.1. Analysis of explanations**

Explanations are documented in the data as speech acts which the teacher uses to explain an exercise or instruction for an activity, to tell the children how the rest of the lesson will be constituted, or to clarify her own actions.

### **5.2.2. Explanation in the classroom**

In the classroom, the teacher prepares the children to go outside. She explains the imminent "walking blind activity" and therefore distributes paper glasses.

1	T: <<whispering > soa>  aand today we are going into the forest (0,5) again   (2) aand there you
2	may close your eyes   ((two children speaking in the background)) (2,5)   so that you can see how it feels
3	when you are
4	P: blind
5	T: yeeesss   now I am going to give you
6	P: glasses
7	T: yer have to be very careful   it is a pair of glasses after all   you may all take a look through them   and
8	when wes are in the forest   then we will put on these glasses   (2) you may now (1) <<louder > write
9	your names on the glasses >   I will collect them in again later   ((chattering children))
10	<<louder > now in the classroom you may > (1)   lets see how that works and write your names on
11	them   ((chattering children))
(Classroom Transcript, lines. 420–429).	

In the example, the change in the volume of the teacher’s voice should be noted as a paralinguistic feature of a language of immediacy (lines 1, 8, 10). In this communicative situation, it indicates a direct and immediate utterance. It serves the purpose of calming the children and directing their attention. The teacher periodically lowers the volume of her voice to explain the activities of the lesson (line 1). The indirect requests which are embedded in the explanation are however delivered in a louder voice (lines 8, 10). They are “indirect” in the sense that the modal verb *may* (ibid.) moderates the characteristic directness of a request, dressing it instead as permission. The increased volume of the teacher’s speech after the children have been given the glasses (line 5 ff.) goes hand in hand with the children’s increasing movement and restiveness. At the phonic level, the characteristics of a language of immediacy become audible through individual deviations in standard articulation: *you* (line 1 f., 5) is realised as *yer* (line 7), and *we* (line 1) as *wes* (line 8). The phonic transmission of utterances (other than the graphic medium) favours this kind of articulatory deviation (Koch & Oesterreicher, 1990, 122 ff.). The reasons for non-standard articulation might be the speed of communication, spontaneity of utterance and emotionality (ibid.). The teacher then again “corrects” her manner of articulation in the course of her speech (*you*, line 7 ff.; *we*, line 8 ff.). Her self-correction shows that she endeavours to use standard articulation. Further examples of immediate speech are to be found on the textual-pragmatic level in the use of personal deixes (references), for example *we*; *you*; *your* (line 1 f.), local and object deixes, for example *there* (line 1), *these glasses* (line 8) and temporal deixes, for example *today* (line 1), *now* (line 5). These are markers of the face-to-face situation. The more distant the communication, the more precisely phrased these linguistic references would have to be. Linguistic immediacy is also indicated by structural characteristics of the speech, such as the turn-taking signal *soa* (line 1). These kinds of structural signals are indicative of spontaneous changes of interlocutor in informal dialogue situations which in principle have a lower level of pre-planning and a high degree of dialogicity and which allow for an orderly change of interlocutor (Koch & Oesterreicher, 1990, p. 55). In addition to the turn-taking signals for asserting one’s right to speak, turn-maintaining signals for retaining the right to speak should be identified as characteristics of immediate speech, for example the first *aand* in line 1. As a coordinating conjunction, it is actually grammatically redundant at this point. The lengthening of the vowel sound in *aand* also serves to bridge the utterances. A bridging function also can be identified for the frequent pauses in speech (line 1 f., 8, 10). Bridging phenomena stem from the spontaneity of an utterance and allow the speaker time to plan her formulations, and are therefore also typically found in language of immediacy (Koch & Oesterreicher, 1990, p. 60). The pauses in speech throughout the example seem to support and allow the teacher to express herself grammatically correctly and to articulate her speech in mostly (syntactically) complete sentences. “Grammatically correctly” means in accordance with the norms of written language, as it is understood for conceptual literacy and typically therefore for the language of distance. Nevertheless, the example also contains corrections in content (e.g. the temporal adverb *again*, line 1), breaks in speech, or changes to a different sentence construction (line 10). As characteristics of immediate language, these highlight the processual

nature of the teacher’s speech and its low level of planning. It is also striking that the teacher uses both paratactic (line 1) as well as hypotactic (line 2) constructions. In addition to this syntactic variation, there is also lexical variation in how the clauses are connected using different conjunctions (line 1 f.). The pause in speech which precedes the hypotaxis (line 2) might be an indication of the higher degree of planning required (Koch & Oesterreicher, 1990, p. 96) for the formulation of that subordinated clause. It is clear, however, that the teacher takes plenty of time formulating her speech in the classroom and remains focused. Even the background chatter of the children (lines 2, 9, 11) does not lead the teacher to express herself in ways which would be highly marked in the sense of written language norms, also there are no explicit linguistic reactions on her part to interruptions.

### 5.2.3. Explanation in the outdoor school

Reaching the edge of the forest, the teacher explains the impending “walking blind activity” as she did earlier in the classroom.

1	T: soa   (1) erm   (1) maria   (5) soa   <<louder> I now want (1) two children to come here   (1,5) I will
2	call you up   ((chattering children)) (5) soa sshh   (1) just listen for a second >   (1) sshh   soa   sshh
3	(2) now we have arrived in the forest   (1,5) and now one of the children in each group will receive
4	glasses   (1) that is the blind child   (1) and the other child (1) is to be the guide   (2) yea   and the
5	child   who is the guide   have to take good care of the blind one   so wes really do (2) <<louder> get
6	to our ((chattering children))   (1) sshh   (2) to our place   (2) sshh   (1) in the middle>   erhan listen
7	carefully
8	P: yes
9	T: in the middle we will switch   (2) it is important (2)   that you speak as little as possible

(Transcript Outdoor School/Forest, lines. 6–14).

In the forest, there is a difference to the classroom context on a paralinguistic level: The teacher no longer uses quiet speech but periodically speaks in a loud voice only (line 1, 5) in order to retain the children’s attention. Nevertheless, the situations inside and outside in which the teacher speaks in a loud voice are similar: The children are standing up and moving about in the outdoor school—while in the classroom they are standing up and moving about, because they test their glasses. On the phonic level, it is also true for the outdoor school that the teacher endeavours to express herself using standard articulation. Only on individual occasions does she deviate from standard usage (*wes*, line 5). Binding in the situative context through deixes, for example *now* (line 1), *I* (line 1), *we* (line 3) marks the immediate face-to-face situation in the forest, as it was previously in the classroom. On the textual-pragmatic level, the teacher frequently uses the same linguistic (immediacy) mechanisms outside as she does inside: *soa* as a turn-taking signal (line 1) or a bridging technique (line 1 f.), or pauses in speech for bridging purposes (lines 1–9). In contrast to the classroom context, the increasing restiveness, which is caused by chattering children (lines 2, 6), does leave its mark on the language of the teacher in the outdoor school: bridging phenomena and structural signals become considerably more numerous in the course of the example. These include discourse particles which allow the teacher time to work on her formulations and which, in contrast to pauses in speech, simultaneously mark the continuation of the speech act and defend the teacher’s right to speak, for example *soa* (line 1 f.), *erm* (line 1), *yea* (line 4). Overall, these particles locate the manner of the teacher’s speech in the outdoor context more towards the pole of language of immediacy. Her efforts to defend her own right to speak and make her voice heard appear more pronounced in the forest than in the classroom. In this way, she reacts directly verbally to the children’s increasing restiveness using the interjection of appeal *sshh* (line 2, 6). The teacher interrupts her explanation several times to make this kind of request for the children to be quiet (*ibid.*). She also interrupts articulating her request more precisely phrased in form of an imperative (*just listen for a second*, line 2). In contrast to the classroom context, where requests were articulated indirectly “dressed” more as

permission, in the outdoor school the characteristic instructive manner of request is here reinforced using the imperative. On the syntactic level, it is also noticeable in the outdoor school that the teacher struggles to achieve congruence (e.g. lines 1–5). Nevertheless, due to the spontaneity of the utterance, there are also syntactic breaks (e.g. pronominal congruence error *have*, line 5). The interruptions by requests, which take place when she calls on the children to be quiet, also represent breaks in content within the explanation.

#### 5.2.4. Analysis of requests

As speech acts, requests are utterances, which are made irrespective of location (classroom as well as outdoor school), and which the teacher uses to call for quiet and attention or to ask the children to carry out or stop carrying out an activity. The requests underscore the hierarchically structured relationship in which the teacher is entitled to make requests and expects the children to act in accordance to them.

#### 5.2.5. Requests in the classroom

The teacher expresses requests in the classroom on different formal levels: as single-word utterances, or using imperative, interrogative or declarative sentences. These various forms of request correlate with phenomena of language of immediacy or distance. Selected examples serve to clarify this in the following. The requests (1–4) are taken from the teaching unit on “the eye” in which the teacher asks the children about familiar parts of the human eye and their function.

(1)	T: (1.5) what have we also got   (2.5) tiffany   (Transcript Classroom, line 17).
(2)	((one student makes loud siren noises, others chatter to each other)) T: okay   soa   sshh   what else is there about the eye   (1,5) diana sit down   ((children speaking)) (2,5) ssshh   (3) soa   ali   (Transcript Classroom, lines 114–116).
(3)	T: sshh   tiffany can you sit down please   (Transcript Classroom: line 142).
(4)	T: <<loud> wait   stop> stop stop   we are on the eyelashes   (Transcript Classroom, line 278).

The examples (1) and (2) show, at the end of the utterance, a particular type of request which is typical for classroom communication: the appeal. Saying the name of the person suffices in (1) to pass the right to speak to the student Tiffany, and in (2) to tell the student Ali to pay attention. Due to the educational context, there is no need for any greater specificity. The students know, based on their educational socialisation, what the function of the appeal is during a lesson and understand the requests which are targeted at them. The appeal refers to an immediate face-to-face situation because it is strongly bound in with the situation and action.

In order to request that the children be quiet or stop doing a certain action, the teacher also makes use of one-word utterances which are directed at the class collectively, for example the interjections of appeal *sshh* (2, 3), *wait* (4) or *stop* (4). The requests in the form of interjections represent a linguistic simplification and as such are markers of a language of immediacy. Their proposition becomes accessible only after factoring in the situative context. In (4), the children are requested to *wait* and *stop* naming further parts of the eye and to stay looking at the eyelashes, which is at this moment topic of the session. The teacher’s raised voice and repetition of the interjections reinforces in this example (4) the character of the request. Viewed from the perspective of standard written language, this abbreviated and imprecise form of communication can here be classified using the term “linguistic inaccuracy”. The examples (2) and (3) illustrate how the teacher can express requests with the same propositional content (the children are to sit down) in different ways using a imperative (2) or by speaking indirectly using a polite question including the particle *please* (3). The

reason for the more directly instructional and less linguistically complex request in (2) might be the restiveness in the classroom (documented as noises and chatter). In (2) there is therefore an accumulation of particles at the beginning (*okay soa sssh*) as well as at the end of the speech (*sssh soa*), which indicates highly a language of immediacy. These particles show also that the teacher is trying to keep the situation (linguistically) under control and to bring order both to the classroom as to herself. The requests (2) and (3) also represent a thematic interruption in the question-based class dialogue.

The following example (5) covers a lengthy sequence and allows for a more precise examination of makers of immediacy regarding different linguistic levels. In addition to the forms which have already been discussed, types of request are documented which use declarative sentences and more politeness strategies.

(5)	1	T: soa   please put your pens away   (2) all children put their pens away   and they <<louder> now tell
	2	helena and lena>   (2) you may now tell helena and lena   what they should draw   aand   (0,5) then
	3	you may tell them as well   why it is so important for an eye   (0,5) if yers know
	4	P: ((laughter)) we switch places
	5	T: oook   diana would yer put your pen away please   (3) who   lena too   (1,5) tiffany   (1) would you
	6	please put your pen away   <<whispers> right then>

(Transcript Classroom, lines 216–222).

In the classroom, the teacher uses in connection with requests also the paralinguistic immediacy marker of a loud (line 1) and quiet (line 6) speech. The example (5) shows, that she uses mostly standard articulation, with a few exceptions (e.g. line 5). Turn structuring signals indicate a language of immediacy. There are again some of the already discussed turn-taking signals (e.g. *soa*, line 1; *oook*, line 5) and bridging phenomena using lengthened vowel sounds (*aand*, line 2, *oook*, line 5) and pauses in speech (lines 1–3, 5). The children are repeatedly asked to put their pens away: The teacher initially uses a polite imperative (line 1) and then, following a pause in speech, she repeats the request in the declarative mood (line 1), always addressing the whole class. Her repetition indicates that the children have not yet acted satisfactorily in accordance with her request. Later on, the teacher formulates the same request in the interrogative mood but directs it at individual children (Diana, later Tiffany line 5 f.). The interrogative sentence couches the utterance as a question and the particle *please* further dilutes the character of the demand (line 5 f.). Regarding the demands, the elliptical request *lena too* (line 5) is, respectively, much more immediate—its shortened form suggests it is a much more spontaneous formulated utterance which has caused the teacher to break off her intended question (*who*, line 5). Towards the end of the sequence, the teacher returns to a polite, lexically nuanced, syntactically complete method of expression with a toned down way of expressing demands (interrogative, directed at *Tiffany*, line 5 f.). The sometimes more strongly immediate language of the teacher in the classroom is therefore to be seen as a deviation from her determined efforts to achieve an exemplary and polite way of expressing herself.

### 5.2.6. Requests in the outdoor school

The teacher expresses requests to a large degree in the same way in both contexts, in the form of one-word utterances, as imperative, interrogative or declarative sentences. However, there are real differences in structuring with respect to the style of her utterances and the characteristics of immediacy. The appeal is an indicator of language of immediacy inside as it is outside (6).

(6)	T: ((...)) (1) merve   ((chattering children)) (8) nesli ((chattering children))   (5,5) samira
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(Transcript Outdoor School/Forest, lines 50–51).

Formally speaking, there are no differences: The naming of the children constitutes the speech act in itself. However, what is remarkable is that in the entire outdoor school sequence, the teacher expresses requests (other than in the classroom) on numerous occasions as one-word utterances. The following examples are taken from the teaching unit “walking blind”: A sighted child leads a “blind” one (7); halfway along the path, the teacher helps the children change places and put on their non-transparent glasses (8). The one-word requests might either constitute a complete step in the dialogue (7) or be incorporated into a longer turn (8) and therefore constitute a speech act in themselves (*stop*, 8, line 2), or be addition to previous or impending request acts (*sloowly*, 8, line 5).

(7)		T: carefully   very carefully   (Transcript Outdoor School/Forest, line 243).
(8)	1	P: its my turn now   <<protesting> but that aint mine>
	2	T: <<breathing heavily> dun matter>   now yer may walk at a bituva distance each   stop   (5)
	3	P: miss hauser   wis need new glue   its coming apart   its coming apart
	4	T: <<breathing heavily> lets switch round ((P laughs))   (1,5) gotta hold a bit underneath so it sticks
	5	soa   (1,5) now yer may walk   (1,5) sloowly>   (Transcript Outdoor School/Forest, lines 100-105).

In the outdoor school, lexemes from different word classes serve as requests and fulfil various functions: They do not only pass on the right to speak or call on the children to be quiet and attentive. In contrast to the classroom, the teacher also uses adjectives (*carefully*, 7; *slowly*, 8) in truncated constructions as requests, in addition to interjections of appeal (*stop*, 8). These adjectives of appeal also simultaneously indicate the way in which an action is to be performed. The one-word requests are functional and enable a person to react (linguistically) quickly to the action taking place. The example (8) also underlines as well differences between requests outdoors, which are made in the declarative mood. In addition to the use of the modal verb *may* (lines 2, 5), which moderates the demanding character of the request as it does in the classroom context, the teacher also selectively uses the verb *got to* (as in *gotta*, line 4) to reinforce the instructive character of her request. On the phonic level, it can be observed that the teacher uses much more characteristics of language of immediacy in her speech when being in the forest. Phonic deviations are more numerous (*dun, yer, bituva*, line 2; *gotta*, line 4; *yer*, line 5) and the teacher does not always return to standard forms of articulation as the utterance proceeds. The teacher’s heavy breathing (cf. Lines 2, 5) might be due to increased levels of physical exertion which might be the reason for her deviations from standard articulation. Syntactically, further simplifications of formulation are visible by way of omissions (e.g. of pronoun, line 4; postpositive pronoun, line 2). These phonic as well as syntactic phenomena move the utterances strongly towards the pole of language of immediacy.

Example (9) shows that the teacher’s manner of speech in the forest is at least occasionally more immediate on also the textual-pragmatic level than it is in the classroom.

(9)	1	T: soa   (2) murat   help him   ((footsteps)) (29) erm leena   leena and (2) hel-   (1,5) erm marina   (1)
	2	walk slowly   and up at the playpark yous wait for us   kay   (Transcript Outdoor School/Forest, line 114 f.).

Some of the characteristics of the language of immediacy are context-independent, such as the frequently referenced turn-taking signal *soa* or bridging using pauses in speech (line 1). However, while bridging in the form of speech pauses are observable in the classroom, in the forest the teacher occasionally uses also the strong immediate speech marker *erm* (line 1 repeatedly) for bridging purposes. In addition, the rather colloquial feedback signal *kay* (for *okay*, line 2) is used in this sequence for seeking a positive response. Neither of these discourse markers are documented in the classroom.

Whilst a request in the classroom context however mostly represents a turn on its own or when repeated, there tend to be longer stretches of speech in the outdoor school which document a complex succession of requests (10).

(10)	1	T: not too fast   ((chattering children)) (3) the two change afterwards   ((chattering
	2	children)) (2) marina runs   ((chattering children)) (5,5)
	3	your leading her now   ((chattering children)) (4) <<louder> soa children   stop
	4	listen up   (2) soa   can you please just listen   (2) sshh   sshh

(Transcript Outdoor School/Forest, lines 36–39).

The transition from formal requests which are expressed in different ways appears to be smooth: Following an introductory, impersonal appeal (line 1), there follow requests in the declarative (lines 1–3), imperative (line 4) and interrogative (line 4) moods. They are directed at several children (*the two ...*, line 1), then at one child (*Marina*, line 2 f.) and finally at the whole class (*children ...*, line 3 f.). The speed at which the teacher changes addressees suggests that she is using language to try and maintain order. Interjections of appeal (line, 3, 4), elliptical phrases (line 1), imperatives and the succession of requests underlines the instructional character of her speech and its sense of urgency. Whilst the teacher uses interrogatives to soften the demanding character of her requests in the classroom, she hardly uses these kinds of indirect and polite utterances in the outdoor school (e.g. only in line 4).

The requests in the outdoor school tend to be—in relation to those in the classroom—more expression of immediacy: They contain more variations in articulation, are often syntactically less complex and shorter, and largely dispense with politeness formulae.

### 5.2.7. Analysis of questions

Two types of question are identifiable in the teaching sequences: “Teacher questions” serve to direct the topic of the lesson, to activate the students and test their knowledge base. They are an expression of institutionalised language use and serve an educational purpose (Ehlich, 2007). In addition to the primarily pedagogical questions in the classroom and the outdoor school, there are also “real questions” (e.g. queries). These are questions that arise when the teacher herself does not know the answer or is unsure of the answer and needs more information or an explanation. These questions do not mainly have a pedagogical aim that regards the children, but serve to bring enlightenment to the enquirer.

### 5.2.8. Questions in the classroom

In the classroom discussions, questions primarily take the form of short sequences of speech. In (11) and (12), the teacher’s questions are aimed at establishing how much the children know about the parts of the human body.

(11)	1	T: soa   we have all sung the song now (1)   the song about me (1)   so what are the things Ive got
	2	P: there is a <<very quietly> cat>
	3	T: a what

(Transcript Classroom, lines 6–9).

(12)		T: what else do I have
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(Transcript Classroom, line 20).

As did the explanations and requests previously, these questions also indicate immediate face-to-face communication. The teacher once again uses the immediacy marker *soa* as a way of taking a

turn (11, line 1). Speech pauses and references within deixes are also documented (e.g. *now*, line 1). More than in connection with other speech acts, imprecise formulations on the lexical level push the pedagogical questions (11; 12) towards the language-of-immediacy-end of the spectrum. Both example questions (on the parts of the human body) can only be comprehended within the situation and by knowing *the song* (11, line 1) which is about the human body. In (11), the lack of clarity in the teacher's speech then leads to misunderstandings. Instead of naming a part of the human body, a student names an animal (line 2). In the teaching unit, the teacher repeats her question on the parts of the human body in a monotone, i.e. without noticeable changings in syntax or lexis. The questions in sense of "so what are the (other) things I've got?" (11) or "what (else) do I have?" (12) only actually vary in the use of the verb (*get*, 11 vs. *have*, 12). Both verbs are (in these examples) nevertheless related to the existence of parts of the body. There are no variations documented in the recorded classroom lesson, e.g. "which parts of the body can you name?". The examples reflect a characteristic tendency in the language of immediacy, namely limited paradigmatic differentiation (Koch & Oesterreicher, 1990, p. 104). In (11), the teacher goes on to ask a real question in the form of a query (line 3). With its elliptical form, her utterance moves much closer towards the pole of language of immediacy: The query is not formulated completely (e.g. verb missing). The teacher also dispenses with any politeness formulae.

Queries are not only for a better comprehension regarding the teacher herself but also intended to support the students' understanding, as in the following example (13).

(13)	T: <<loud> soa children   (3) who has understood that   what I showed you>   (1) thanks to his eyes  (2) robert
(Transcript Classroom, line 131).	

Queries are a typical characteristic of language of immediacy in direct communication, because they stand for linguistic interactivity (Koch & Oesterreicher, 1990, p. 9). The example (13) is marked as being strongly immediate because of its strong situational context. This arises due to the pronoun (*that*) as well as in the following sub-clause (*what I showed you*) which serves to refine the content of this pronoun. Reference is made to something extralinguistic which cannot be exactly specified. Syntactically speaking, the pronoun is actually made redundant by the sub-clause following it. This double reference is an indicator of immediate speech which is attributable to the spontaneity of the formulation. At the same time, the hypotactic structure of the utterance is only moderately complex and therefore not highly immediate.

### 5.2.9. Questions in the outdoor school/forest

In the outdoor school sequence, the "teacher questions" are not directed at the children's knowledge base as they are in the classroom, but at the children's subjective feelings and impressions. The teacher uses her questions to induce the children to reflect on their own sensations and to verbalise what they have experienced during the "walking blind activity" (14; 15). This difference is due to the methodological and educational implementation of the teaching unit. In principle, knowledge-based questions would have been possible in the outdoor school and questions pertaining to subjective feelings would have been possible in the classroom. However, these momentary snapshots reflect one of the particular characteristics of the outdoor school, namely of emphasising subjective experience (Armbrüster et al., 2016).

(14)		T: robert howsit for you then   <<quieter > Ill put them now on you   because I only have the glue here >   tell me then what did you feel
(Transcript Outdoor School/Forest, line 188).		
(15)	1	T: tiffany you were just blind   can you tell me how it was   for you
	2	P: good   (1)
	3	T: what did you feel   (1)
(Transcript Outdoor School/Forest, lines 206–208).		

These sequences are not phonically marked. Similarly to the teacher questions in the classroom, however, the questions (14; 15) showed immediate language characteristics especially on the lexical level: The introductory questions after the children have experienced the “walking blind activity” (14, line 1; 15, line 1) in the sense of “how was it?” are linguistically imprecise and have a high situational context. The articles embedded in the contraction *howsit* (14, line 1) and the deixis *it* (15, line 1) refers to the “walking blind activity” which has just been completed. The general nature of the formulation here means that the situational context is crucial for understanding the utterances. In this situation, however, they still fulfil their pragmatic function even with this level of syntactic and lexical “simplicity”. A more nuanced formulation can be found in (14) and (15) in the repetition of the questions. The verb *feel* (14, line 2; 15, line 3) explicitly asks for the child’s subjective feelings, although the object of reference (the “walking blind activity”) is still not specifically referred to. Whilst the teacher in (14) clarifies her question after pausing, in (15) she only clarifies her formulation after the student gives—in her opinion—too brief an answer. As in the classroom (11; 12), both examples from the outdoor school (14; 15) show that the teacher adheres to certain formulations. There is hardly any paradigmatic differentiation. However, the questions asked outside exhibit more syntactic variation, i.e. they are more complex in their structure and slightly more distant than in the classroom: In (14, line 2) and (15, line 1), the question is, strictly speaking, prefixed by a request to relate something (“tell me then”). In (15, line 1) the teacher provides a brief explanation which introduces the next question and in doing so positions it situationally. These utterances suggest the teacher is giving herself time to work on her formulations and therefore indicate comparably few pauses or distractions. The reason for this might be that the teacher is in these moments alone outside with a pair of students and asks one of the students what he has experienced (cf. Memo). The rest of the children are distributed along the path in pairs during the activity. The communication situation can be seen as less complex in these moments, when the teacher is (intensively) surrounded only by a limited number of students.

Finally, the discussion turns to queries. These are similarly immediate outside to inside and take a comparably short form (16).

(16)	P: and I saw how (1)   how everyone (1) repeated everything
	T: repeat how what
(Transcript Outdoor School/Forest, lines 298–299).	

In (16), the elliptical formulation (empty subject position, part of the verb missing) indicates the spontaneity of the utterance. In order to accomplish a quick (linguistic) reaction, the teacher must dispense with any in-depth planning of her formulation.

## 6. Interpretation of results and discussion

The analysis shows that the two communication situations in the classroom and in the outdoor school give rise to conditions indicating a language of immediacy. Accordingly, the teacher’s speech in the two teaching contexts is therefore immediate. Firstly, the classroom and outdoor school

situations exhibit the same characteristics of conceptual orality which are due to the immediate face-to-face nature of the speech, including dialogical elements such as speaker signals and pauses in speech, situational references or a largely “simple” syntax and lexis. Secondly, in comparison, the teacher’s way of speaking in the outdoor school sequences overall appears to show somewhat more immediacy. This is illustrated by her use of more phonic variations, her increased use of (colloquial) discourse particles and, particularly in connection with requests, her tendency to use shorter syntactic structures outside. At times, her utterances in the classroom, however, indicate less immediacy: The study documented thereby grammatically complete, uninterrupted clause structures, sometimes more elaborate lexis and greater paradigmatic differentiation. The reasons for her sometimes similar and sometimes varied way of speaking in both teaching contexts will now be discussed.

### **6.1. Language as a way of organising a lesson**

The analysis of the speech acts shows that the teacher uses her speech as a way of organising the course of the lesson. The *question* as speech act primarily organises the educational dialogue in the classroom on a pragmatic level as it does in the outdoor school: In both contexts, pedagogical questions predominate as they structure the lesson and support the children’s learning process. The *explanation* and the *request* as speech acts are used for guiding and disciplining the students and show further that the linguistic order of lesson correlate with a way of speaking that indicates a different degree of immediacy in the classroom as in the outdoor school. The way the teacher uses her speech to deal with interruptions is especially highlighted in the context of explanations: Her explanations in the classroom show—despite the restiveness of the children—comparatively few interruptions, they are largely syntactically congruent and tend to comply with the norms of written language. In the outdoor school, in contrast, the teacher interrupts the explanations she has already begun in order to ask the children to be quiet and attentive. Outside the school, the teacher appears to set store by quick (linguistic) reactions. The ensuing effect on her expression results in syntactic breaks and interruptions in content. Her attempts to react quickly also result in an increased use of sometimes colloquial discourse particles. At the same time, these particles also stress the teacher’s right to speak and help her to bring the situation under control. In the outdoor school, the teacher’s speech therefore moves further towards the immediacy end of the spectrum. A comparison of the explanations also indicates that the teacher’s way of speaking outside seems to be more hectic due to the numerous interruptions, increased use of discourse particles and mainly short phrased utterances. This might be due to the more dynamic communication situation in the forest. Her reduced level of (inner and outer) calm in the outdoors “moves” the teacher and her speech and seem to make it harder for her to invest the same amount of time in formulating her utterances in the forest as she does in the classroom.

These results are supported by the findings related to requests: In the context of the outdoor school, the teacher frequently expresses discipline-related utterances and instructions in shortened syntactic forms. Interjections of appeal, one-word appeals and short imperatives indicate a functional form of speech in the outdoor context, all of which enable the teacher to react quickly to the events going on around her. The function of the speech act gains in importance even before its formal structuring. Accordingly, there are more immediacy markers in the requests that the teacher makes in the forest than in the classroom, for example in the form of colloquial discourse particles or phonetic variations from standard usage. In the forest, it might potentially be necessary to intervene quickly in cases of inattentiveness, considering that the open space and the freedom of movement enjoyed by the children carries with it a degree of unpredictability and risk. With this in mind, the way the teacher expresses herself also indicates a higher degree of tension due to the conditions prevailing in the outdoor environment. What also becomes clear is that in the protected classroom environment, which represents at least a less physically dynamic context, the teacher often expresses herself using much more complex formulations. Inside the school building, the teacher expresses her requests in a more polite manner, often using a more complex syntax, and in doing so formulates her requests in less instructive way.

### 6.2. Language as a way of limiting space

The teacher uses the volume of her voice—a marker of immediacy—in both teaching contexts as a way of addressing the children. However, while in the classroom she uses quiet as well as loud speech to focus the children’s attention on the classroom discussion, in the context of the outdoor school in the forest, she almost exclusively uses loud speech to achieve this. The temporary use of exclusively loud speech might also indicate increased tension levels on the part of the teacher (also Kehrein, 2001, on loud speech as a prosodic indicator of emotion). Anyhow, the louder speech emphasises the teacher’s utterances. By speaking loudly, she expresses a strong need to bring the educational activities outdoors under her control and to secure the attention of the children. This might be a reaction to the more open and less standardised teaching space in which the children are able to move about more freely and where they might therefore move beyond earshot more quickly. Her raised voice not only serves to enforce her right to speak and to indicate the urgency of her utterances, it also serves to limit the linguistic scope of the teaching space: The distance her voice can travel limits—at least for the time she is speaking—the radius around her in which the children must remain in order to be able to participate in the lesson. In the classroom, the walls contain the sound of her voice, so that quiet utterances also remain audible.

In order to “contain” the “borderless” teaching space in the forest, the teacher also uses more strongly directive formulations and often repeats requests. The short imperatives and appeals in the outdoor school have a specific character and stress the *instructive* nature of the request. Using these forms of request, the teacher sets clear borders within which the children must operate. In the classroom, however, she tends to phrase her requests using greater syntactic complexity as questions and/or polite formulations using *please*. These imply rather more of a *choice* to act and (supposedly) leave open the possibility of complying with the request or not.

### 6.3. Language as an expression of relation

In the classroom and the outdoor school, the speech acts which have been analysed each fulfil comparable functions: The study has documented, among other acts, explanations for directing an educational task, discipline-orientated requests for quiet and attentiveness and educational questions relating to the organisation and support of the learning process. The speech acts do not indicate any significant change in the relational structure between teacher and children due to the change in the teaching environment: Indoors and outdoors, the teacher remains the instructing, guiding, disciplining and testing instance. Irrespective of the communication situation, teaching is “a form of communication carried out under conditions of asymmetric power relations” (Stables, 2016, p. 55). With reference to the speech acts, it once again becomes clear that the language of immediacy makes reference to the immediacy of the *form*, i.e. *expressive side* of a speech act, something which should not be equated with a strong sense of immediacy in the teacher’s *speech behaviour* (=inclusion of content, e.g. personal forms of address etc.). The expressive side of the speech acts nevertheless indicate a change in the teacher’s relation to the communication situation in class: The more immediate and often functionally truncated way in which the teacher expresses herself in the outdoor school shows that she is more affected by the situational demands in this context. This *lack of distance to the communication situation* might be a reason for her *less distant manner of speech*. Her very direct (linguistic) involvement in the actions going on around her make it difficult for her to engage in more considered and time-intensive planning of formulations. At the same time, the teacher is more occupied with her supervisory role in the outdoor school in a forest. She feels she is required to react quickly in her speech in order to ensure the (planned) course of the lesson is adhered to. This results in the previously discussed short-phrased utterances, in a greater number of interjections of appeal, phonic variations, colloquial discourse particles and interruptions of teacher talk for disciplinary purposes.

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