

## Clarity versus politeness in written communication



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***(Prof. Adell Lubowitz)***

## CLARITY VERSUS POLITENESS IN WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

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GRIN Verlag Aug 2007, 2007. Taschenbuch. Book Condition: Neu. 210x148x2 mm. This item is printed on demand - Print on Demand Neuware - Seminar paper from the year 2006 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Linguistics, grade: 1,3, University of Marburg (Institution für Anglistik und Amerikanistik), course: Hauptseminar Strategic Writing in English as a Second Language , 7 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: The following paper seeks to be an empirical approach to the usage of clear and polite expressions in written communication. The material concerned are think- aloud-protocols, so-called TAPs, and respective letters written by students in their Hauptstudium who got the task to write to an imaginary guest professor and record their thoughts while doing this. The letters were first written in English (L2) and afterwards in German (L1) but since the main concept of politeness is very similar in these two languages and a detailed analysis of cultural differences would reach beyond the scope of this paper only the English letters are concerned here. The students were supposed to remind the professor of correcting their term paper early because the credit was needed for the registration to their final exams. Obviously, this task requires to deal with the conflict between polite behaviour and a precise presentation of facts. As it will be shown it is on the one hand often not easy to be friendly and polite when one simultaneously wants to get an important message across. On the other hand there is the danger of creating a negative impression if one exaggerates politeness. Since I am one of the students who had to write an imaginary letter and especially since I already had to write similar letters in reality and am likely to have to do it again I am really interested...



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