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Abstract

This article reports on a classroom experience related to the teaching of English requests with modal verbs in a beginning ESL grammar class. The materials and activities used, as well as the progress made by the students, in terms of the politeness level of their written requests, are described. The structure of the students' requests during and after instruction was examined and also the teachability and effectiveness of explicit pragmatics in the grammar classroom was explored. Students' requests followed politeness parameters given and those features that seemed problematic at first seemed to improve, therefore, we conclude that the explicit instruction on pragmatics was relevant.

Polite requests in the classroom: Mixing grammar and pragmatics instruction

Key words

requests, pragmatics instruction, politeness, grammar instruction, modals of request

Palabras clave

peticiones, enseñanza de la pragmática, cortesía, enseñanza de la gramática, modales de petición

Resumen

Este artículo reporta una experiencia pedagógica relacionada con la enseñanza de peticiones con verbos modales en una clase de gramática para estudiantes de inglés como segunda lengua. Se describe el tipo de materiales y actividades usados, así como el progreso de los estudiantes en cuanto al grado de cortesía de sus peticiones escritas. Se examinó la estructura de las peticiones

escritas de los estudiantes durante y después de la instrucción recibida y se exploró la efectividad de la incorporación explícita de la pragmática en la instrucción gramatical. Las peticiones siguieron los parámetros de cortesía sugeridos y los elementos problemáticos fueron corregidos, por lo cual se concluye que la incorporación de instrucción explícita de elementos de pragmática fue relevante.

1. Introduction

Being competent in a second language entails the control of knowledge and skills that go beyond the correct use of the grammar and pronunciation rules when communicating in the target language. Communicative competence is a construct that also implies the ability to understand how language is used in different contexts to produce different results. Communicating in a second language requires awareness of both the way native speakers manipulate the linguistic system to interact with others and produce effects and the appropriateness of the diverse uses of language in different situations.

For these reasons, second language instruction should provide guidance to learners on how to use language appropriately, not only syntactically and phonetically, but also pragmatically so they can be successful when communicating outside the language classroom. The production of effective speech acts and the issues of politeness in discourse should be discussed and shared with language students along with the traditional teaching of other language skills, for instance, grammar.

2. Theoretical framework and literature review

2.1 Requests as speech acts

According to the speech act theory, speakers produce utterances to perform illocutionary acts (Austin, 1962) or speech acts (Searle, 1969) such as requests, apologies, offers, complaints, and some others. The illocutionary force of language surpasses the purely declarative function of communication; in fact, it consists of the pragmatic use of

language to convey intentions. By performing these acts, speakers do things with words and communicate their needs through language. Thus, linguistic form is linked with communicative intent either in an explicit or implicit way.

This potential to allow speakers and hearers to do things with words makes language a powerful tool that needs to be used effectively and appropriately in order to achieve the goal of communication and avoid misunderstandings. In the case of requests, one of the most frequent speech acts (Achiba, 2003), the need expressed by the speaker is imposed on the listener, which makes a request a face-threatening act (Brown and Levinson, 1987) that calls for modifications and strategies in order to reduce the possible face damage. These modifications depend on the nature of the request and the power and distance relationships between speaker and listener (Scollon and Scollon, 2001), which vary from culture to culture and are determined by the values, beliefs, and social norms of the speech community. This is why learners of a second language may differ with native speakers in their pragmatic ability, even though their linguistic competence is highly developed.

2.2 Native vs. Non-native requests

Among the research that aims at contributing to the understanding of pragmatics in second language learning, there are few longitudinal studies dedicated to explore the development of pragmatics in L2 learners, like the one carried out by Achiba (2003), in which she examined the requests of her daughter, as she gained command of English. Instead, a significant number of researchers

have concentrated their efforts to provide means of description of requests and other speech acts produced by both native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs) in naturalistic and non-naturalistic contexts. Among these studies, some authors have designed taxonomies that can be utilized to describe the features of the speakers' requests. The one designed in the framework of the Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989), in which discourse completion tests (DCTs) were used, is a thorough inventory that facilitates the examination of the components of requests and apologies. A more recent taxonomy has been presented by Alcon Soler, Safont Jorda, and Martinez-Flor (2006). Their classification is based on other authors' research on ESL learners' requests. This taxonomy refers to the modifiers of the request head act and groups them into two major categories of modification: internal and external.

In order to compare NNSs and NSs production, Kim (1995) and Kubota (1996) used an oral approach to observe the responses of their participants when making requests. Kim (1995) employed an oral DCT to elicit responses from the NS (American) and NNSs (Korean) informants. She found that NNSs deviated from the norm and produced more direct or less direct requests than expected in certain scenarios, especially those in which a remarkable age difference between the speakers was involved. Concerning the study reported by Kubota (1996), she asked her participants (Americans learning and speaking Japanese, Japanese speaking Japanese, and Americans speaking English) to engage in role-plays in order for

her to examine requests in the Japanese and American business cultures. No significant differences were found besides the Japanese's unwillingness to mention the reason of the request when it was a private matter.

Other authors have focused on the description of non-native requests in English in naturalistic settings. Francis (1997) analyzed the production of requests by ESL learners at different proficiency levels and found that, in general, participants preferred direct strategies although non-conventional indirect strategies were evidently more used by the most advanced learners. Biesenbach-Lucas (2007) explored the different issues of politeness in e-mail exchanges among English students and their NS instructors and proposed pedagogical intervention to treat pragmatic failure in this kind of communication.

2.3 The development of L2 pragmatics in the classroom

The incorporation of pragmatics in second language instruction has gained importance in the last two decades. The increasing number of studies focusing on pragmatics in the second language classroom suggests that researchers and teachers have become aware of the need to have the improvement of students' pragmatic competence as one of the goals of second language programs. However, there is still a great deal of issues related to the development of pragmatic competence in the classroom that need to be investigated. In this respect, authors such as LoCastro (1997) and Ellis (1992) have some points of agreement, and yet they seem to present contrasting conclusions on the role of classroom interaction in the development of language learners' pragmatic competence.

In her study of markers of politeness used during classroom discussions by a group of EFL learners in Japan, LoCastro observed that pedagogical intervention did not have the expected effect on the pragmatic competence of her participants. Despite these unanticipated results, her conclusions are not completely discouraging. She claims that in order to determine the teachability of pragmatics, researchers must keep in mind the complexity of pragmatic competence as a construct that involves issues related to linguistic competence, beliefs and values, and social norms. Likewise, it is important not to disregard or underestimate the influence of the learners' cultural background.

On the other hand, Ellis (1992) does not focus on the feasibility of pragmatics instruction, but he concludes that the classroom context does not provide students with sufficient opportunities to produce speech acts with the variety of features that native speakers use. In his study of two novice ESL learners, Ellis analyzed the types of requests these participants made in the language classroom during more than one year. Although Ellis acknowledges the fact that the participants did not receive instruction on making requests, he concludes that being in a classroom in which perhaps only the teacher is a native speaker narrows students' chances of learning how to perform the same illocutionary act in different ways.

The studies above mentioned illustrate researchers' attempts to provide insights that inform the teaching of illocutionary acts such as requests. Nevertheless, it seems that research has focused on the comparison between native and nonnative production of requests.

Although this is of paramount importance for planning pedagogical intervention, there are still other issues that remain unsolved, such as determining where pragmatics instruction should fit in a language program and which particular course(s) should focus on pragmatics. Furthermore, there is little research on how teachers can incorporate pragmatics instruction to their classes when a syllabus, an evaluation scheme, and even a textbook have been imposed on them.

In this article, I explore the feasibility of teaching aspects of politeness, appropriateness, and effectiveness of requests in the context of a grammar course. I describe how I approached the teaching of some aspects of this illocutionary act in my grammar class by using the resources that were available to the students and others created by me, while still following the syllabus of the course. Moreover, I analyze the requests produced by my students to determine its components and to consider some interpretations of the students' choices.

3. Method

3.1 Context

This study was carried out in the Grammar 2-A class of the 5-level EAP program at the English Language Institute (ELI), University of South Florida. I taught this Level 2 class during the semester Fall 2007, which started on September 7 and finished on December 3. The participants were 14 of the 15 students enrolled in the course. Ten of them were new students at the ELI, placed in Level 2 according to their scores in the proficiency tests. Three students had been promoted from Level 1, and one student was a returning

student. The level of proficiency of this class seemed to be mixed according to the results obtained in the classroom diagnostic test administered at the beginning of the

semester and to my judgment of the students' performance throughout the term. Table 1 displays the participants' gender, nationality, and first language.

N° of students	Nationality	First Language
4 (1 male, 3 females)	South Korean	Korean
4 (1 male, 3 females)	Japanese	Japanese
1 (male)	Chinese	Mandarin Chinese
1 (female)	Russian	Russian
1 (male)	Turkish	Turkish
1 (female)	Venezuelan	Spanish
1 (male)	Dominican	Spanish
1 (male)	Saudi	Arabic

Table 1. Participants' gender, nationality, and first language

As Table 1 shows, the class was multicultural. The age range was similarly wide, although for this study no specific information was gathered in that respect. It is important to stress that this study does not relate the procedures or results to specific issues of the culture background or proficiency level of each participant, but to the participants as a group.

3.2 Instruction procedures

The syllabus of each class at the ELI is common for all the sections. The one used in Grammar 2 includes 9 units, which numbers match with the units presented by *Focus on Grammar 3* (Fuchs, Bonner, and Westheimer, 2006), which is the textbook used in the class. According to the syllabus, the students in this course have to study one instructional unit corresponding to the modals of request *can, could, will, would*, and the expression *would you mind* (Unit 13). It is the Area (Grammar) Coordinator who allocates the approximate amount of time in which the content is

supposed to be covered. For Unit 13, the Coordinator estimated that one week was roughly the time that the instructor should spend covering the structures.

The Grammar 2-A class used to meet 3 days a week: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for 1 hour and 50 minutes each day. This means that Unit 13 was to be taught in 3 periods of class, with a total of 5 hours and 30 minutes. However, after the end of that week, I took about 30 minutes from the following lesson to complete the last activity related to this instructional unit. After this addition, the total instructional time spent on Unit 13 was 6 hours.

Three lesson plans were created for Unit 13. In all of them, I tried to incorporate instruction about not only the form of modals, but also about the pragmatic aspects of making polite requests in English. I felt that the textbook used in class had enough information to address issues of appropriateness in the speech act of

requesting in a way that students would be able to understand.

For the first lesson, I planned to concentrate the instruction on the first two modals of request, *can* and *could*. Students provided examples of the uses of these modals and we discussed the distinction between talking about ability, asking for permission, and making other requests. I emphasized the idea of using modals as one of the ways that polite requests can be made in English.

We used the textbook to read an e-mail exchange between mother and daughter. Here is the text of the request:

“Marcia, dear—

Can you drive me to the Burtons after work today? They’ve invited me for dinner. Oh, and will you pick up something special at the bakery before you come? I told them I’d bring dessert.

Thanks, honey.—Mom” (p. 144)

This text provided the context to examine the different components of polite requests involving modals. We agreed that the request(s) made by the mother had a brief explanation (grounders) that made clear the reason of the demand. We also talked about the use of “thanks” as an optional closing for the message of the request.

When focusing on form, we talked about the possibility of inserting “please” in the request questions. According to the textbook “You can also use *please* to make the request more polite” (p. 147). However, I did not stress the use of “please”; instead, I tried to emphasize the idea that asking a question with a modal is usually considered appropriate for requesting.

The homework assignment was to make a request to a classmate, using the forum on Moodle, an online course management system available for ELI students and instructors. Moreover, students were required to respond to the request received by a classmate. I provided the situation of the request and some guidelines to complete the assignment (see Appendix 1). After the deadline, I printed each message with the respective response to write my comments on both the appropriateness and the form of the request/response.

In the second lesson plan, we talked about the three other modals of request presented in the textbook: *will/would/would you mind*. The homework assigned was a second request on Moodle, for which I provided new guidelines. This time, I gave each student a different scenario with a situation that they may encounter while living in the United States or while studying at the ELI (see Appendix 2). For this assignment, they also had to make comments on one of their classmate’s request. Again, when students submitted their responses, I made a printout and provided feedback on both the appropriateness and the form of the request/response.

The third lesson was based on issues of politeness as related to the weight of imposition of the request and the relationship between the speakers. Three different scenarios with different types of requests were used. We focused on the different ‘intensity’ (weight of imposition) of each request and the appropriateness in the way each one was expressed. Students worked in pairs to write a dialogue/message making a request according to a scenario that they were given. I collected

the papers and handed out the instructions for posting another request on Moodle (see Appendix 3), which was supposed to have a higher weight of imposition.

When giving students my feedback concerning this assignment, I asked them to avoid the repetition of the request. I also commented on the overuse of “please” that I had noticed in some of the papers. This repetition of “please” might have been caused by intercultural transfer of politeness conventions, as suggested by White (1993), or by the belief that in English it is necessary to insist on the use of “please” in order to ‘sound’ more polite.

I also used in my class some transcripts (Transcript ID SEM545MG083, OFC300JU149, LEL195SU120, and DEF420SF022) taken from the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (Simpson, Briggs, Ovens, and Swales, 2002) that contained examples of requests. Students identified the requests and related their form to the relationship between the speakers and the ‘intensity’ of the request. That day, the homework was to revise and edit the requests and the refusal posted on Moodle, taking into account my feedback and peer comments. Students were also required to write a reflection paragraph comparing requests in English and in their first language.

3.3 The quiz

On November 5, one month after the instruction on requests started, the students were given a quiz (Quiz 3). For Unit 13, the quiz included multiple choice and short answer questions that intended to assess the form and appropriate use of modals

of request. Quiz 3 also contained two essay questions, one of which asked students to write a request (see Appendix 4). Students’ responses were scored in terms of syntactic and pragmatic appropriateness of the speech acts produced.

3.4 Analysis of the students’ requests

In order to carry out the analysis of the students’ production, I selected the 3 requests they made online and the request they wrote in Quiz 3. I printed a copy of the Moodle pages and photocopied the quizzes. It is important to mention here that only 12 students posted Request 2. Likewise, 3 quizzes were not included in the analysis because these students only wrote a few words, possibly due to lack of time to finish the messages.

I used the taxonomy in Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) to identify the primary features of the requests: alerters, supportive moves (checking on availability/attempting to get a precommitment), grounders, strategy and perspective of the head act, downgrader (consultative devices/understaters), and upgraders (intensifiers/expetives). Although students were not taught some of these features, such as supportive moves, downgrader, or upgraders, I wanted to see if there was any spontaneous production of them by the learners. I added four more categories to the analysis, in an attempt to measure if some pragmalinguistic mistakes had been corrected (e.g., request expressed more than once, multiple “please” vs. single “please”) or if students had included some other elements mentioned during the instruction process (e.g., “thanks” as the closing of the message).

4. Results

Table 2 illustrates the features students included in their requests. Some of the features had a high percentage of occurrence, whereas others were hardly included or completely absent in the data. For instance,

‘alerters’ was one of the most recurrent components of my students’ requests, with an occurrence of 100% in each assignment. Likewise, the occurrence of grounders had a frequency of 100%, both in the requests made online and in the quiz.

Features	Request 1 (Asking for your classmate’s notes) N=14	Request 2 (Different real life situations) N=12	Request 3 (Big requests) N=14	Request (Extension) Quiz N=11 (-3)
- Alerter	14	12	14	11
- Supportive move checking on availability	0	0	0	0
- Supportive move attempting to get a precommitment	1	1	11	1
- Grounder	14	12	14	11
- Modal in head act:				
Can	6	0	2	3
Could	6	1	3	3
Will	0	0	0	0
Would	2	8	3	1
Would you mind	0	3	6	4
- Downgraders (consultative devices)	0	0	0	0
- Downgraders (understaters)	0	0	0	1
- Upgraders (intensifiers)	0	1	0	0
- Upgraders (expletives)	0	0	0	0
- Request expressed more than once	2	4	6	1
- Single “please”	7	6	4	4
- Multiple “please”	0	1	5	0
- Thank you	13	9	7	7

Table 2. Features of the students’ requests.

On the other hand, we can observe in Table 2 that there are some categories that had 0 occurrences. One of them was the use of supportive moves checking on availability, of the type “are you busy now” or “are you going to be home next weekend?” Other kinds of modifiers that were absent from the students’ production were the downgraders that serve as consultative devices and the upgraders that act as expletives. Similarly, no student used the modal “will” in any of the requests assigned during the semester.

Regarding the mistakes that students commonly made, i.e., the formulation of the request more than once and the use of multiple please, it is noticeable that in the request made in Quiz 3 most students corrected the pragmalinguistic error. In the same way, there was a reduction in the use of *thank you* and single *please* towards the last request.

5. Discussion

This paper focuses on the examination of the students’ requests during and after the instruction they received in order to determine whether or not they followed politeness parameters and so decide on the effectiveness of the explicit pragmatics instruction. Most of the components of the students’ request were the product of pedagogical intervention and extensive practice inside and outside the classroom. It is necessary here to analyze the structure of the requests by relating them to the context given in each scenario so as to conclude on the appropriateness of the students’ discourse.

The use of alerters by all the students in all the requests was not a surprising result.

As the requests had a written (email) format, all the students used greetings that acted as alerters (“Hi,” “X,” “Dear X,” “Dear Cousin”). This was an expected outcome, since we had talked about the general structure of e-mails, in which the greeting precedes the body of the communication.

On the other hand, no student produced supportive moves to check on availability. This was also a predictable outcome, if we take into consideration that, on the one hand, students did not receive instruction in this respect and, on the other hand, the requests were not made during a real time interaction, which made the use of this kind of supportive moves less likely.

Concerning the attempts to get a precommitment, some students used phrases such as “I need a favor,” “Can I ask you a favor?” “I need to ask you something...” and some others to introduce their ‘big requests’ (Request 3). As the use of these kind of supportive moves was not part of the explicit pedagogical intervention, this result may suggest that students gained some understanding on how the weight of imposition affects the way the request is expressed, in the sense that some preliminary movements have to be made to introduce an upcoming ‘intense’ request. Grounders were present in all the requests. The students took information from each scenario to provide the reason for the demand and some of them added additional details to the explanation: “I couldn’t come to the academic preparation’s class because i felt very sick this morning and i had to see the doctor immediately...” The use of grounders or explanations to express the motivation of the request was recommended by the textbook and discussed in class.

The strategy used in the requests was always the “query preparatory” (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989), which involves conventions that combine grammar (e.g., modals and expressions of ability/ willingness) and propositional content. Likewise, the perspective of the head acts was always hearer oriented (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989), since the role of the recipient of the request was emphasized (“Could **you** make a copy of your note for me?”).

Regarding the choice of the modal, some factors need to be considered. First of all, it is worth considering the ‘classification’ in terms of formality that the textbook makes of the five modals, which goes from less formal to more formal (*can, will, could, would*, p.147) whereas the expression *would you mind* is presented as a device that is followed by the gerund “to make polite requests” (p. 147). This formality continuum could have been one of the reasons that influenced the students’ choice of modals.

On the other hand, it is important to remember that, at the moment of posting the first request on Moodle, students had only studied in class the modals *can* and *could*. Therefore, it was expected that most of them decided to include one of these two modals in the head act of Request 1, as most of them did. It is interesting that 6 of them used the modal considered least formal by the book (*can*), whereas other 6 students thought that a more formal modal (*could*) was the appropriate option for the situation. Finally, two students chose *would*, described by the textbook as the most formal modal.

For the second request, 9 students (75%) used the two formal modals *could* and *would*.

The other 3 students used the expression *would you mind*. We can speculate that the students thought that the formality of some of the situations depicted in the scenarios (e.g., sending a message to the bank, to the library, to the ELI advisor) required the use of more formal expressions of request. The most frequent head act expression in Request 3 was *would you mind* (6 students). The recipient in the 3 scenarios proposed was a classmate, so perhaps these 6 students felt that it was not necessary to use a formal modal, but rather an expression that inquired about how ‘bothered’ the hearer would be by the big request.

For requesting an extension to a professor, the modals *can, could*, and the expression *would you mind* were selected almost evenly. Interestingly enough, only 1 student decided that *would*, the most formal modal, was appropriate for the situation. Another remarkable outcome was the 0 occurrence of the modal *will*. We could speculate that students avoided this modal because they relate more the word *will* to the future tense than to the communication of requests. However, as I did not inquire students about the reasons behind the students’ selection of modals, I have no sufficient arguments to explain their decisions. The formality continuum presented in the book as related to the students’ perceived formality of the situations described in the scenarios is the only objective factor I can resort to when analyzing the students’ use of modals. In relation to the occurrence of upgraders and downgraders, it was expected that these elements were not present in the students’ production, since no instruction had been given about these features. Nevertheless, 1

student used an upgrader (*“as soon as possible”*) when asking the bank to correct the overdraft mistake (Request 2), whereas another student used a downgrader (*“a little more time”*) when asking for an extension in Quiz 3.

The results obtained in Quiz 3 concerning the repetition of the request and the use of multiple *“please”* are very encouraging. They indicate that even though the context of the request was formal and the weight of imposition was not low, most students may have followed my recommendation, since they decided to avoid the repetition of the request and the use of multiple *“please”*. Finally, *“thanks”* was regularly used for closing all the messages, but it is interesting that it was less used towards the end of instruction, as happened with single *“please”*. This might suggest that students realized that these politeness markers were not as crucial as the correct formulation of the head act with the use of a modal.

6. Conclusions and directions for further research

In this article, I summarized the instruction given to the students in a grammar class on how to make written requests in English using the modals *can, could, will, would* and the expression *would you mind*. I described the teaching procedures, the materials used, and the activities done by the students. I also examined the features of my students' written requests following the taxonomy presented by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). This teaching and research project has shown that, with a great deal of practice and feedback, students can improve their pragmatic competence in the classroom, at least in relation to the speech act addressed

by the instruction. Teachers need to provide opportunities for students to increase and put into practice their knowledge of pragmatics through meaningful activities that involve a great deal of interaction. Throughout these instructional units, I realized that my students developed an understanding of the dynamics of the use of the type of request studied by applying the structures and other information shared in the classroom.

This study has also demonstrated that pragmatics instruction can be explicitly and effectively combined with the teaching of another language skill, for instance, grammar. Although language teachers may have to deal with varied constraints, such as following an imposed syllabus, using a specific textbook, and giving standardized or departmental tests and other evaluations, efforts can be made to incorporate examples from real life exchanges and other activities that contribute to prepare students to interact with others in the target language inside and outside the language classroom.

The results obtained in the quiz evidence the students' awareness of the use of the major constituents of requests that follow the *“query preparatory”* strategy (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). The outcomes also suggest that explicit instruction was effective to correct some mistakes, such as the repetition of the request and of the word *“please”*. However, the data and the focus of the analysis are too limited to make further conclusions about the students' progress in the production of written requests. A more exhaustive analysis needs to be done in order to investigate the specific reasons of the students' choice of incorporating certain features in the speech

acts over others, e.g., their resistance to use the modal “will.” Moreover, an additional post-test including a request with higher weight of imposition (a “big request”) could have helped us compare the outcomes with those obtained in Request 3.

This study did not focus on the participants’ cultural differences or individual proficiency level; for this reason, I did not analyze the students’ requests in terms of gender, nationality, first language, or English language proficiency. Besides, the research was limited to the production of requests through the use of modals and the participants did not receive any teaching related to the other request strategies, like those included in Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). Therefore, it is not possible to use the results obtained here to predict the participants’ performance when applying other request strategies or to determine their preferences for the use of one request strategy over the others.

Further studies that examine the effectiveness of classroom explicit instruction are needed to investigate the learners’ internalization of other types of requests strategies, especially the indirect ones. Similarly, the use of both internal and external downgraders to mitigate the weight of imposition of the request can be used in both teaching and research in order to determine if they contribute to eliminate pragmalinguistic errors, like those associated with the repetition of the demand or the use of multiple “please” to soften requests.

Note:

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Appendix 1: Section of the guidelines for Request on Moodle 1

Imagine that you missed today's Grammar or Academic Preparation class. Send a message (on Moodle) to one of your classmates explaining that you were absent, and ask him/ her to make a copy of his/her notes for you. Remember to be polite.

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Appendix 2: Sample Scenario for Request on Moodle 2

Imagine that you receive an email from your bank saying that you have to pay a fine of \$40 for an overdraft in your checking account. You check your statement online and you see that you have never had an overdraft in your account. Send a message (on Moodle) to your bank asking to correct the mistake. Remember to be polite.

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Appendix 3: Sample Scenario for Request on Moodle 3

You have to travel for one week. Your dog cannot be alone while you are away. Ask your classmate to take your dog to his/her house. You know that your classmate hates dogs, but you don't know who else can help you.

Appendix 4: Essay Question in Quiz 3

It's Sunday 10:00 pm. You finished writing an important college assignment that is due Monday at 11:00 am. When you are going to print the 30-page research paper, the computer breaks down. It is impossible for you to find another computer and write those 30 pages again in a few hours. Write an email to your professor **requesting an extension** for submitting the paper. Take into account the situation and the relationship between the two people. (6 points)
