

## **"My friend thinks you are beautiful". Playfully aggressive interactions in a telecollaboration context**

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In this talk, I explore facework and teasing in an exchange involving German and Spanish adolescents during synchronous task-based video-conferencing in the context of a secondary-school language class. My approach to facework can be described as neo-Goffmanian (1967) and is also informed by the work of Craig, Tracy and Spisak (1986), Brown and Levinson (1987), Penman (1990) and Wood and Kroger (1994). Regarding teasing, I agree with most researchers who see it as both playful and aggressive (Keltner et al, 1998). Unlike Keltner, et al (2001), who state that teasing normally consists of one or more face-threatening acts that are offset by some kind of redressive paralinguistic or extra-linguistic actions, the examples in the exchange under scrutiny begin with unadorned leading questions (Pawluk, 1989). These are of a very personal nature and might even be considered rude and do not seem to constitute instances of mock-impoliteness. In the literature, teasing is generally said to occur almost always among friends but in this case, the participants had never met.

Nevertheless, my analysis shows that by the time the initial question and answer sequences had finished and before the teasing proper took place, an easy-going relationship had already been created. In this sense, I will explore the way the interaction moves from being essentially transactional to interpersonal. Along with Kowalski (2004), I found that an audience played an important role in the teasing sequences. From a facework perspective, I conclude that for a tease to be successful, it must not only enhance the teaser's face but also that of the butt of the tease. So, what may look initially like aggressive facework actually contributes towards creating common ground among those participating in the tease.