

## A REAL INTERLOCUTOR IN ELICITATION TECHNIQUES: DOES IT MATTER?

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates whether adding a real interlocutor to elicitation techniques would result in requests that are different from those gathered through versions with a hypothetical interlocutor. For this purpose, a written method is chosen. One group of 40 students receive a written discourse completion task (DCT) with two situations that ask respondents to write emails on paper to an imaginary professor. This data is compared to earlier data collected from 27 students, where a group of students composed emails for the same situations and sent them electronically to their professor. Thus, while one group write emails to a hypothetical professor, the other group is provided with a real interlocutor. The data is analyzed for the inclusion of opening and closing moves, density, the level of directness and the choices of moves in the opening and closing sequences, as well as the choices of supportive moves. Results indicate significant differences in (the) level of directness, and the choices of moves in the opening and closing sequences. The other analyses do not show significant differences. The findings reveal that the addition of a real interlocutor does make a difference, albeit not a drastic one. The results have implications for the design of elicitation techniques that aim to simulate real life.

**Keywords:** Elicitation techniques, DCT, interlocutor, email

### **1. Introduction**

People are social beings and language is one of the factors that differentiate humans from other beings. We communicate daily using language despite the fact that only a fragment of our communication is verbal. As we communicate, we perceive our interlocutors and the messages they give verbally and non-verbally. We derive meaning(s) from body movements (55%), vocal qualities (38%) and, finally, words (7%) (Mehrabian, 1981, cited in McKay et al., 2009: 59). This shows that we analyze our interlocutors during conversations, which probably leads us to adjust our linguistic behavior based on the people with whom we are having a conversation. However, in most written elicitation techniques, interlocutors are imaginary and knowledge is declarative. This is one of the reasons why elicitation techniques are considered unnatural and the validity of the data gathered through them is considered questionable. There are a number of studies and commentaries about elicitation techniques in general and discourse completion tasks in particular. While some of these works are

critical of elicitation techniques, others show differences between elicited and naturally-occurring data (e.g. Yuan, 2001; Golato, 2003; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2013; Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig, 1992; Félix-Brasdefer, 2007; Bou Franch and Lorenzo-Dus, 2008 to name a few). One of the possible drawbacks in DCT studies that are within the framework of cross-cultural or interlanguage pragmatics is that the written version of DCT is used to collect oral data. Bardovi-Harlig and Shin (2014: 38) propose that computer-mediated data collection may allow researchers to increase the authenticity of their data by collecting it in “written-for-written format” rather than “written-for-oral” format such as written open-ended DCTs. Since written language and spoken language are essentially different domains and production in these two domains requires different kinds of competence and actions, asking a participant to perform actions in one domain to see what he or she can do in another domain increases concerns over validity. In a typical open-ended DCT, researchers ask participants to write what they would say orally in the given situation, but do it in writing. To remedy this, “written-for-written” format is considered to be a correct match. However, as long as the data is not composed of naturally-occurring written or online communication, the situations will still be hypothetical and the data will be unnatural. If researchers are to collect elicited data, simulation of real life needs to be improved. The closer the simulation to real life, the more naturalistic the data is likely to become. It is like the training of astronauts, which requires them to work with simulators and work in simulated environments like pools to prepare them for environments with no gravity. For example, according to NASA’s website, astronauts are trained in a Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory that houses a tank holding 6.2 million gallons of water with mock-ups in it. It provides a simulation of zero-g or weightless conditions. The closer the simulation to the actual situations, the easier for the astronauts to adjust to those environments. They are trained to act as they would in real environments by being exposed to situations similar to actual conditions. Following up on this analogy, to make the outcome more naturalistic, we need to make the simulations of actual written conversations more naturalistic. One idea of simulating reality is to add a real interlocutor to data elicitation. Rather than asking the participants to imagine a hypothetical interlocutor, providing a real interlocutor with whom they would normally communicate could possibly make the simulation more like real-life. This is because a real interlocutor may influence our linguistic behavior. Lee et al. (2009: 1983) say that “in dyadic (two person) human-human conversation, the interactions between the two participants have shown to exhibit varying degrees and patterns of mutual influence.”

In a study with a high school student, Collyer (2010) mentions that reflective writing and interview modes of communication are influenced by the interlocutor. One of them is the written mode of communication and the feedback of the interlocutor is delayed. Even though the student needs to submit the essay to his teacher, the nature of the reflective writing addresses itself to a

unidirectional communication directed to an imaginary interlocutor. An interview, on the other hand, is a bidirectional communication and online resources and actions need to be utilized. As in this student's case, it is safe to assume that one modifies and accommodates one's speech based on one's interlocutor. Casasanto et al. (2010: 127) suggest that "a speaker accommodates towards or away from their interlocutor to achieve interactional goals: to make one's interlocutor do, think, or feel things." They also say that "in any conversation between two real people, the interlocutors may have social goals and relationships that could be influencing their linguistic behavior" (p. 127). However, in their experiment with a virtual interlocutor named VIRTUO, participants still adjusted their speech rate according to the speech rate of their interlocutor. One of their conclusions is that accommodating to one's interlocutor is an automatic behavior that is applied in any specific situation even when one is interacting with a non-human interlocutor. That is, linguistic accommodation may be due to interactional goals, yet in an automatic way without specific intentions about a specific interaction. Since it is possibly an automatic behavior, speakers may have automatic responses even without online social motivations as they are guided by general social motivations (Casasanto et al. 2010: 131). This finding is interesting, but also triggers the question of accommodation when the interlocutor is imaginary. In their experiment, there was an interlocutor, although it was virtual. In studies in which data is collected through elicitation techniques, availability of a real interlocutor may influence linguistic behavior.

There are some studies that investigate the factor of the interlocutor, especially the familiarity, in testing oral communication. The findings, however, are not harmonious. For example, Ockey, Koyama and Setoguchi (2013) investigated whether testing with classmates would influence test performance. To investigate this, they grouped some students in a group oral placement test with their classmates while others were clustered together with unfamiliar interlocutors. They found that "test performance on the group oral placement test would not appear to be negatively affected when test takers take the exam with classmates" (p. 302). There were no differences between scores of groups that tested with classmates and those that did not. In contrast, in a similar study in which two formats of discussion groups with familiar and unfamiliar participants were compared, Ying (2009) found that familiarity between test takers had a positive influence on the scores of test-takers. The author also implemented a post-test questionnaire. According to the results of the questionnaire, more test-takers preferred to be grouped together with strangers than acquaintances because they believed they could learn something new from strangers, thought it was more challenging talking to strangers and felt more relaxed talking to strangers.

Other studies looked at the influence of the interlocutor on different aspects of speech. For example, Campbell (2007) investigated the change in prosodic characteristics of the conversational speech of one Japanese male over a period

of three months in his conversations with six different partners over the telephone and found “a gradual decrease of steepness ... in the high-end spectral tilt that would be consistent with an increase in familiarity as reflected by more frankness and less polite softening of the voice” (p. 12). Campbell (2007) claims that the changes in speech are not due to the influence of time that could bring conditions such as tiredness, but rather they are a function of differences in interlocutor and the establishment and progress of individual relationships with an interlocutor. He concludes that “the four prosodic characteristics, duration, pitch, power, and voicing all vary significantly according to interlocutor differences and to differences in familiarity and politeness over a fixed period of time with the same interlocutor” (p. 13). It is important to note that familiarity with an interlocutor leads to some sort of adjustment in one’s speech. This finding is significant for studies that use elicitation techniques employing hypothetical situations. The influence of the familiarity with a real interlocutor may not be observed in such studies since the interlocutors are often imaginary. If familiarity with the interlocutor is influential in one’s speech, natural and unnatural data may potentially be different, as one includes a real interlocutor and the other one often does not.

There is a lack of social goals in communication with an imaginary interlocutor. Since our speech is by and large shaped by our interlocutors and as Sifianou (1999: 32) puts it, many communication activities are face-threatening activities causing our communications to be face-saving actions, there must even be adjustment problems. If people communicate according to their interlocutors, there would be little point in communication unless there is a real interlocutor because the goal of communication is to extend a particular meaning to a particular interlocutor. In imaginary situations, there is no meaning and guiding principles that would only be in effect when there is a real interlocutor. Thus, when there are no real goals, a confusion may be at play. Because of this issue, this study aims to answer the following question: Would adding a real interlocutor to the elicitation method produce data that is different from the one collected through techniques which require participants to communicate with an imaginary interlocutor?

## **2. Method**

To answer the question, two request situations were employed. In one of these situations, participants requested that a professor accept a homework assignment past its due date. In the second situation, they requested a retake of an exam from which they did not get a good score. These two situations were created to collect data for an earlier study. A portion of the earlier data was included in the analysis. This portion of the data came from 27 college students. Twenty one of them were female and six were male. Fifty four requests were gathered from this group. For this portion of the data, the participants had been asked to send the

requests to the email address of their professor using their own email account. That earlier study focused on the simulation of real life. That simulation included a real interlocutor as they used real means to send emails to the email address of a real person. In addition to this earlier data, 40 college students received the same situations for the current study. Of these students, 32 were female and 8 were male. These participants were also asked to write an email to their professor in both situations. They were, however, asked to write these emails on a sheet in the form of a discourse completion task. The space that was given to them on the task sheet looked like an email composition page. They were asked to imagine a professor while they were writing the emails. Eighty requests were gathered from this group. Added together, a total of 134 requests were investigated. All the data was gathered in Turkish and all the participants were native speakers of Turkish. Bilingual students or respondents that identified a language other than Turkish as their native language were excluded from the analysis.

The raw data was initially coded into strategies according to the coding manuals of Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) and Hudson, Detmer and Brown (1995). The manuals were slightly modified to accommodate Turkish. For example, a head act strategy in Turkish, which was not in the original coding scheme, was added to the coding scheme and named Turkish desiderative. In addition, the coding in Bou-Franch and Lorenzo-Dus (2008) and Bou-Franch (2011) was taken as a model for the coding of the opening and closing sequences. The data was keyed into SPSS software for analysis. The requests of the group that wrote the emails on paper addressed to a hypothetical interlocutor (henceforth, HI) were compared to the requests sent electronically to a real interlocutor (henceforth, RI) in terms of inclusion of opening and closing sequences, directness, choice of moves in opening, closing and support sequences as well as density of requests in number of words and number of strategies. The density of requests was analyzed using the independent-samples t-test while the remaining analyses were performed using the chi-square test.

### **3. Results**

#### **3.1. Opening**

The first analysis of the data is whether the emails sent electronically and written on paper have an opening sequence. The findings reveal the frequent use of an opening sequence in both groups. It seems that having a real interlocutor in a simulated email situation does not influence the inclusion of an opening sequence. While 90.7% of the electronic emails have an opening sequence, 96.3% of the emails written on paper include one. This slight difference is not significant,  $\chi^2(1, N=134) = 1.743, p > .05, p=.267$ . Regarding the frequent inclusion of opening and closing sequences in her data, Bou-Franch (2011) says that it may be due to the fact that the emails were sent in an institutional context

because they were between university lecturers or between undergraduate students and their lecturers. Likewise, in this study the data comes from undergraduate students. However, the difference is that in this study the data is elicited while her data consisted of spontaneous emails. Thus, high inclusion of opening sequence may be due to the institutional context. It also needs to be noted that address terms and endearment terms are commonly used in Turkish in many kinds of encounters between many kinds of interlocutors. Such address terms and endearment terms may also have an influence on the tendency to include an opening sequence.

**Table 1.** Inclusion of opening moves

	Group		
	RI	HI	
	N (%)	N (%)	
Includes an opening move	49 90,7%	77 96,3%	126 94,0%
Does not include an opening move	5 9,3%	3 3,8%	8 6,0%
Total	54 100,0%	80 100,0%	134 100,0%

### 3.2. Closing

When it comes to closing sequences, we see a much less frequent use. The majority of emails sent electronically or written on paper ended abruptly without any closing move. The HI group used closing moves 47.5% of the time while 35.2% of the email group included them. This difference is insignificant,  $\chi^2(1, N=134) = 2.000, p > .05, p=.157$ . It seems that adding a real interlocutor to elicited simulation does not improve the simulation in this aspect of the investigation. Interestingly, students who sent electronic emails from their email accounts to the email address of their professor used closing moves even less frequently than those that wrote emails on paper to a hypothetical lecturer. The finding does not support the assumption that the addition of a real interlocutor may make the data more realistic.

**Table 2.** Inclusion of closing moves

	Group		
	RI	HI	
	N(%)	N(%)	
Includes a closing move	19 35,2%	38 47,5%	57 42,5%
Does not include a closing move	35 64,8%	42 52,5%	77 57,5%
Total	54 100,0%	80 100,0%	134 100,0%

### 3.3. Choice of moves in the opening sequence

What specific strategies are chosen in the opening sequence is the next analysis in the study. Three strategies, namely alerter, greeting and self-identification, were used by both groups. However, there are differences in the choices. The group that sent emails electronically used greetings more than those that wrote them on paper. While 52% of the RI group used greeting in the opening sequence, only about 34% of the HI group did so. In contrast, they used alerter more frequently. About 53% of their strategies in the opening sequence are alerters. This figure is about 28% for the RI group. There is not much difference in the self-identification strategies. About 20% of the RI group's opening strategies are self-identification. The percentage of the use of self-identification by the HI group is about 13%. Overall, this distribution is significantly different,  $\chi^2(2, N=182) = 8.421, p < .05, p = .015$ .

**Table 3.** Opening

		Group		
		RI	HI	
		N (%)	N(%)	
Opening	Alerter	13 28,3%	72 52,9%	85 46,7%
	Greeting	24 52,2%	46 33,8%	70 38,5%
	Self-identification	9 19,6%	18 13,2%	27 14,8%
Total		46 100,0%	136 100,0%	

### 3.4. Level of directness

Within the head act of the requests, participants in the RI group used six different strategies. The HI group, on the other hand used four different types. The dominant strategy in both groups was preparatory, accounting for nearly half of the head act strategies. Other than the preparatory, both groups preferred want statement as the next common choice. Statement of fact and explicit performatives were not as common as those strategies. The HI group preferred explicit performative more than the RI group. Mild hint and Turkish desiderative were only used by the RI group. When the head act strategies are investigated for their directness, it can be seen that the HI group chose direct strategies more than indirect strategies. While 51.2% of the strategies used by the HI group are direct, 41.1% of the strategies by the RI group are so. Indirect strategies were used by the RI group at a rate of 59%, whereas the HI group used them 48.8% of the time. This difference is significant,  $\chi^2 (2, N= 140) = 6.389, p < .05, p=.041$ .

**Table 4.** Directness of head act

	Group		
	RI	HI	
	N (%)	N (%)	
Direct	23 41,1%	43 51,2%	66 47,1%
Conventionally Indirect	30 53,6%	41 48,8%	71 50,7%
Non-conventionally Indirect	3 5,4%	0 0,0%	3 2,1%
Total	56 100,0%	84 100,0%	140 100,0%

Communicating with a real interlocutor that one knows, in this case one's professor, seems to influence how one forms one's utterances and adjusts one's indirectness. When one communicates with a hypothetical interlocutor, that sensitivity may be lost because there is no real person who may perceive it as impolite. The threat to face is not serious, as the person who he or she is writing to is imaginary. In addition, there are no social goals or motivation to maintain relationships. In the case where participants send emails to their professor there is a real person with whom they need to maintain their professional relationship, thus they have social goals. The situation is hypothetical, but the interlocutor is real.

### 3.5. Choice of supportive moves

Supportive moves are used to mitigate requests. The strategies observed in this sequence are imposition minimizer, grounder, disarmer, preparator, apology, gratitude and promise. Grounder is the most common strategy. It accounts for 46.1% of the supportive moves of the RI group and similarly 45.1% of the HI group. Grounder is the support strategy which is used to give the reasons for the request. A majority of the requests, in fact, included a grounder. The second most frequent strategy is imposition minimizer for both groups. About 28% of the supportive moves by the RI group are imposition minimizers. This figure is 20.6% for the HI group. This strategy is used to play down the imposition of the request in the eye of the interlocutor. The remaining strategies are not as common as grounder and imposition minimizer, though disarmer was used slightly more commonly than others by the HI group. The choice of strategies in the support sequence does not result in a significant difference,  $\chi^2(6, N=290) = 9.048, p > .05, p=.171$ .

**Table 5.** Support

	Group		
	RI	HI	
Imposition minimizer	32 27,8%	36 20,6%	68 23,4%
Grounder	53 46,1%	79 45,1%	132 45,5%
Disarmer	9 7,8%	26 14,9%	35 12,1%
Preparator	7 6,1%	4 2,3%	11 3,8%
Apology	8 7,0%	13 7,4%	21 7,2%
Gratitude	4 3,5%	12 6,9%	16 5,5%
Promise	2 1,7%	5 2,9%	7 2,4%
Total	115 100,0%	175 100,0%	290 100,0%

### 3.6. Choice of moves in the closing sequence

Within the analyses of choice of moves, closing sequence is the final category of analysis. In this analysis particular strategies the participant included in the closing sequence are compared. A total of six different closing moves were identified in the data, which are namely thanking, apologizing, self-identification, leave-taking, signature and address term. Among these strategies,

apologizing, self-identification and address term are fairly uncommon with a frequency of less than six percent. Of the remaining strategies, thanking is the most common strategy in both groups. Thanking accounts for 36.1% of the closing moves used by the RI group. This figure is 42.5% for the HI group. The other dominant strategy by the HI group is leave-taking. It constitutes 40.7% of the closing moves employed by this group of participants. This strategy is less common within the closing strategies of the RI group, with a percentage of 27.8. An equal amount of signature was employed in the closing sequence by the RI group. This strategy was employed much less commonly within the closing strategies of the HI group with a percentage of 5.1. This difference is probably due to the availability of a real interlocutor and the naturalistic simulation. When participants used real means to send emails to a real person, they signed their emails more frequently than the participants who wrote an email on paper to an imaginary interlocutor. It possibly made little sense for the participants in the HI group to include a signature in an email written imaginatively on paper. The choice of moves in the closing sequence results in a significant difference,  $\chi^2 (5, N= 95) = 11.461, p < .05, p=.043$ .

**Table 6.** Closing moves

	Group		
	RI	HI	
Thanking	13 36,1%	25 42,4%	38 40,0%
Apologizing	1 2,8%	2 3,4%	3 3,2%
Self-identification	0 0,0%	2 3,4%	2 2,1%
Leave-taking	10 27,8%	24 40,7%	34 35,8%
Signature	10 27,8%	3 5,1%	13 13,7%
Address term	2 5,6%	3 5,1%	5 5,3%
Total	36 100,0%	59 100,0%	95 100,0%

### 3.7. Density of requests

The final analysis in this study is the density of requests in number of words and number of strategies. For this portion of the data, an independent samples t-test was run. The coded number of words was used to calculate the length of requests. Total number of strategies employed in composing requests was also analyzed with a t-test. In the first analysis, although the email requests provided by the HI group ( $M = 30.96, SD = 11.50$ ) are longer than those composed by the

RI group ( $M = 29$ ,  $SD = 14.16$ ) when the mean length in words is considered, this difference is not large enough to be statistically significant,  $t(132) = .881$ ,  $p = .380$ ,  $p > .05$ . Although the HI group used slightly more words while composing their emails, the RI group ( $M = 6.66$ ,  $SD = 2.80$ ) used more strategies than the HI group ( $M = 5.95$ ,  $SD = 1.81$ ) to form their requests. However, this difference, again, is not significant,  $t(132) = 1.570$ ,  $p = .120$ ,  $p > .05$ .

**Table 7.** Density of requests

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	df	Sig.
Length	RI	54	29,00	14,16	,881	132	,38
	HI	80	30,96	11,50			
Number	RI	54	6,66	2,80	1,570	132	,12
	HI	80	5,98	1,81			

#### 4. Discussion

As mentioned in the introduction, this study investigates the influence of adding a real interlocutor to the design of an elicitation technique on the data produced. The rationale behind the study is that elicitation techniques are criticized for not reflecting actual language use. With a correct match in simulation, such as written-for-written, and approximation to real world realities, elicitation techniques may yield more naturalistic data. It is likely that people retrieve information in similar situations to those where initial experience was gained. In other words, it may be easier to perform tasks when exposed to situations with which there has been previous experience (see, for example, Franks et. al. 2000; although their work is in a different field of study). Thus, elicitation techniques may aid the performance of tasks when they simulate the situations in which they would normally be performed, activating the previous experience in the minds of the participants. The more hypothetical an elicitation technique is, the less likely it might be for the participants to perform the task naturally.

The first two analyses of the study were concerning the inclusion of opening and closing sequences. The analyses did not reveal a difference between the groups. In other words, the addition of a real interlocutor did not make a difference. It may be due to the fact that including an opening or closing was a function of writing emails. Since both test types asked participants to write emails, the results did not show a difference. There was, however, a much higher tendency to include an opening move than a closing move. The high inclusion of the opening move may be because of the general tendency to use address terms in Turkish and the less frequent use of closing moves may be because the task itself was not authentic, but a comparison with real emails needs to be made to support this assertion. Since the goal of this study is not to compare naturally-

occurring and elicited data, natural emails are not part of this study. A further study would compare data gathered through elicitation techniques with a real interlocutor and naturally-occurring data.

The other two analyses that did not reveal a difference are density of requests in number of words and strategies and the choice of supportive moves. The availability of a real interlocutor does not seem to influence the make-up of elicited emails. They were of comparable length and composed of a comparable number of strategies. The analyses that revealed significant differences are level of directness, the choice of moves in the opening sequence and the choice of moves in the closing sequence. The difference in the level of directness could be explained by automatic adjustment behavior that Casasanto, Jasmin and Casasanto (2010) argue for in their study. As cited in the introduction, they found that people adjusted their speech rate according to the speech rate of their virtual interlocutor. They think this is an automatic behavior and may take place automatically even when one does not have social or interactional goals. This adjustment may be due to the simulation of real life. One communicates with a figure as one does in real life. Similarly, the difference in directness in this study may be due to the availability of a real interlocutor. Such automatic behavior may be activated when there is a real person. The students who wrote emails on paper to an imaginary person preferred more direct head act strategies than those who sent them to their professor using their own email account. There are, of course, two differences between communication with a virtual interlocutor and written elicitation methods. Firstly, one of them addresses online knowledge while the latter addresses the offline knowledge of a person. Secondly, one of them requires spoken linguistic output, whereas the other produces written linguistic output. The fact that the participants accommodated to the speech rate of the virtual interlocutor may be due to the fact that they needed to perform the act of communication in real time and in a spoken manner. In this study, on the other hand, in both types of data, the knowledge required was offline knowledge. In any case, the addition of a real interlocutor resulted in a difference in the level of directness.

Regarding the difference in the choice of moves in the opening sequence, it could be argued that the real interlocutor plays a role. It is because more than half of the moves in the opening sequence written by the HI group are alerters, mostly the address term *hocam* [professor, teacher, master]. This more common use of alerter may be due to the decontextualized or formulaic composition of the emails. The RI group used greeting more commonly than alerters. This seems to be because there was a real addressee since they actually sent emails electronically to their professor. When it comes to the choice of moves in the closing sequence, again the influence of the real interlocutor may be observed. In both sets of data, thanking and leave taking were common strategies. However, the RI group also commonly used signature. While only about five percent of the closing moves produced by the HI group were signature, nearly 28% of the RI group's closing moves were signature. A real addressee, again,

may have made them sign the emails they were about to send to their professor electronically.

Overall, the availability of a real interlocutor seems to have an influence on the elicited data. However, the influence is not drastic. The make-up of the emails is similar in both sets of data. The choice of moves in the opening and closing sequences and the level of directness of the head act are the only analyses resulting in significant differences. With these findings, one cannot argue that the data collected through an elicitation technique with a real interlocutor is or is not real-life-like, nevertheless, improving the simulation does influence the data. In addition, the sample used in the study is relatively small and the two groups received the tasks at different times, although they were comparable in terms of their demographic characteristics. Thus, the generalizability of the study is limited. It is important to note here again that the goal of this study is not to establish similarities or differences between natural and elicited data, which has been studied numerous times previously, but rather it is to investigate the influence of adding a real interlocutor to the elicited data. As such, the study shows such an influence. Whether adding a real interlocutor would make the data more natural than other elicitation techniques or not would be the topic of another investigation.

## 5. Conclusion

There is a substantial doubt about the validity of elicitation techniques for they face the danger of not reflecting actual language use. However, I am of the opinion that elicitation techniques could have potential in gathering natural-like data as long as they are modified to simulate real life experience. Although this study does not ask or answer the question of whether modified elicitation techniques result in natural data, the findings show that modifications such as adding a real interlocutor/addressee could make a difference as is the case in this particular study. This is important for data collection methods because elicitation techniques bear considerable advantages for research design such as standardization and comparability and also in implementation such as gathering data in large amounts quickly and easily. As a result, I propose that elicitation techniques should be assessed and modified further to provide a real world simulation. Through such improvements, researchers may benefit from the advantages offered by elicitation techniques. Finally, further research could assess improved designs of elicitation techniques to investigate whether they are able to produce data that are similar to naturally-occurring data.

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