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Drivers of Negotiation Performance -
The Role of the Negotiation Opening and Indiviudal Factors

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Abstract

Negotiations are an omnipresent phenomenon in professional and private life. A significant amount of research has investigated what drives negotiations and uncovered a plethora of factors that influence negotiation outcomes. The present thesis contributes to this research field by investigating research gaps in two aspects: the impact of the negotiation opening and the role of digital technology as a negotiation channel. This thesis consists of four essays that address different research questions regarding these aspects.

Essay 1 is a structured literature review, which is based on the extant research on the first offers made in negotiations since the year 1967. In this essay, we[1] proposed a definition of first offers in negotiations, developed a process model that integrates previous findings, summarized the results of 119 reviewed studies in a literature review, and identified the most relevant research gaps. We argue that future research needs to adopt a "negotiation lens" that emphasizes the dyadic and interactive character of negotiations.

In essay 2, we picked up one of the research gaps of Essay 1 and investigate the role of the counteroffer in negotiations. In two experimental studies ($n = 190$, $n = 206$), we uncovered that the counteroffer predicted negotiation outcomes as a first offer, but with a lower coefficient. In addition, we conceptualized the "anchor zone" as the distance between the first and the second offer. This anchor zone predicted how far the final agreement was from the initial offer. Furthermore, we uncovered mechanisms of these effects: the third offer size and the concession-making behavior. Finally, a larger anchor zone also predicted a lower subjective value for the negotiators. These findings support the idea of a negotiation opening–consisting of first offer and counteroffer–that predicts negotiation behaviors and outcomes rather than an isolated first offer.

Essay 3 investigates a phenomenon, which we observe in the field: asking for the best price that the other is willing to accept at the beginning of a negotiation. We investigated the impact of such a question in a

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[1]The essays were written in co-authorship with other authors under the first authorship by me, thus, I use "we" throughout this dissertation. I am the first author of all essays and the details regarding the contributions are given in the appendix.

laboratory experiment with $n = 454$ participants and found that the question led to a lower first offer of a seller than if the first offer was made without the question. In addition, we uncovered moderators of this process and found that such a question did not lead to a lower subjective value for the negotiators.

Essay 4 addressed a more current topic of negotiations, the use of electronic channels in negotiations. In an experiment with $n = 189$ negotiators, we investigated the individual x channel fit hypothesis. This hypothesis asserts that some individuals fit better with an online negotiation channel than others and thus achieve better outcomes. We investigated the fit in video and chat negotiations and found support for an individual x channel fit. Gender was most predictive of the results in video negotiations while openness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and extraversion predicted results in the chat negotiation.

Beyond the individual contributions of the essays, this thesis contributes to our understanding of the broader topic of negotiation openings and highlights that despite 60 years of research, several open questions remain that need attention in the field. Furthermore, it also advances the discourse the on drivers of outcomes of electronic negotiations, which is highly actual due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Zusammenfassung (German Abstract)

Verhandlungen sind ein allgegenwärtiges Phänomen im Berufs- und Privatleben. Zahlreiche Forschungsarbeiten haben bereits untersucht, welche Faktoren Verhandlungen beeinflussen, und eine Vielzahl von Faktoren aufgedeckt, die das Verhandlungsergebnis beeinflussen. Die vorliegende Arbeit leistet einen Beitrag zu diesem Forschungsfeld, indem sie Forschungslücken in Bezug auf zwei Aspekte in Verhandlungen untersucht: den Einfluss der ersten Angebote in Verhandlungen und die Rolle digitaler Technologien als Verhandlungskanal. Diese Arbeit besteht aus vier Aufsätzen, die verschiedene Forschungsfragen zu diesen Aspekten bearbeiten.

Aufsatz 1 ist ein strukturierter Literaturüberblick, der auf der bestehenden Forschung zu ersten Angeboten in Verhandlungen seit 1967 basiert. In diesem Aufsatz haben wir[2] eine Definition von ersten Angeboten in Verhandlungen entwickelt, ein Prozessmodell, welches die bisherigen Erkenntnisse integriert, entwickelt, die Ergebnisse von 119 evaluierten Studien in einer Literaturübersicht zusammengefasst, und die wichtigsten Forschungslücken identifiziert. Wir argumentieren, dass zukünftige Forschung einen "Verhandlungs-Blick" einnehmen muss, welcher den dyadischen und interaktiven Charakter von Verhandlungen berücksichtigt.

In Aufsatz 2 haben wir eine der Forschungslücken aus Aufsatz 1 aufgegriffen und die Rolle des Gegenangebots in Verhandlungen untersucht. In zwei experimentellen Studien ($n = 190$, $n = 206$) haben wir herausgefunden, dass das Gegenangebot das Verhandlungsergebnis genauso beeinflusst hat wie das erste Angebot, allerdings mit einem geringeren Koeffizienten. Darüber hinaus haben wir die "Anker-Zone" als den Abstand zwischen dem ersten und dem zweiten Angebot konzeptualisiert. Diese Anker-Zone sagte voraus, wie weit die endgültige Einigung vom ersten Angebot entfernt ist. Darüber hinaus haben

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[2]Die Aufsätze wurden in Ko-Autorenschaft mit anderen Autoren entwickelt. Daher nutze ich "wir" in der gesamten Dissertation. Ich bin Erstautor aller Aufsätze. Die einzelnen Erklärungen zum Beitrag der Autoren können im Anhang eingesehen werden.

wir Mechanismen für diese Effekte aufgedeckt: die Höhe des dritten Angebots und das Konzessionsverhalten. Schließlich sagte eine größere Anker-Zone auch einen geringeren subjektiven Wert für die Verhandlungspartner voraus. Diese Ergebnisse unterstützen das Konzept einer Verhandlungs-Eröffnung aus zwei Angeboten, welche Verhandlungsverhalten und -ergebnisse besser vorhersagen als ein isoliertes erstes Angebot.

Aufsatz 3 untersucht ein Phänomen, das wir in der Praxis beobachten: die Frage nach dem besten Preis, den die Gegenseite zu Beginn einer Verhandlung zu akzeptieren bereit ist. Wir untersuchten die Auswirkungen dieser Frage in einem Laborexperiment mit $n = 454$ Teilnehmern und fanden heraus, dass die Frage tatsächlich zu einem niedrigeren ersten Angebot eines Verkäufers führt, als wenn das erste Angebot ohne die Frage gemacht würde. Darüber hinaus haben wir Moderatoren dieses Prozesses untersucht und festgestellt, dass die Frage nach dem besten Preis nicht zu einem niedrigeren subjektiven Wert für die Verhandlungspartner führte.

Aufsatz 4 befasst sich mit einem aktuelleren Verhandlungsthema, der Nutzung elektronischer Kanäle in Verhandlungen. In einem Experiment mit $n = 189$ Verhandlungspartnern haben wir unsere Hypothese der Passung von Individuum und Kanal untersucht. Diese Hypothese besagt, dass einige Personen besser zu einem Online-Verhandlungskanal passen als andere und deshalb bessere Ergebnisse erzielen. Wir untersuchten die Passung in Video- und Chat-Verhandlungen und fanden Unterstützung für Individuum x Kanal Hypothese. Das Geschlecht hatte Einfluss auf die Ergebnisse der Videoverhandlungen, während Offenheit, Gewissenhaftigkeit, Neurotizismus und Extraversion die Ergebnisse der Chatverhandlungen vorhersagten.

Über die einzelnen Beiträge der Aufsätze hinaus trägt diese Arbeit zu unserem Verständnis des breiteren Themas der Verhandlungseröffnungen bei und macht deutlich, dass es trotz 60 Jahren Forschung noch einige offene Fragen gibt, die der Aufmerksamkeit des Feldes bedürfen. Darüber hinaus bringt sie den Diskurs über die Einflussfaktoren auf die Ergebnisse elektronischer Verhandlungen voran, der aufgrund der Auswirkungen der COVID-19-Pandemie hochaktuell ist.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Nomenclature

Abbreviations

AG	Aktiengesellschaft (German stock company)
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
b	Regression coefficient
BATNA	Best alternative to negotiated agreement
C	Chat
CFI	Comparative fit index
CFO	Chief financial officer
CI	Confidence interval
CMC	Computer mediated communication
COVID	Coronavirus disease
e-negotiation	Electronic negotiation
EUR	Euro
F	F-statistic
F2F	Face-to-face
GED	General Educational Diploma
GmbH	Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung (German limited company)
H	Hypothesis
M	Mean
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MESO	Multiple equivalent simultaneous offer
MLM	Robust maximum likelihood estimator
Mturk	(Amazon) Mechanical Turk
NEO-FFI	Neo Five factory inventory (personality test)
OLS	Ordinary least squares
p	p-value
PANAS	Positive and negative affect scale
R^2	R-squared
RMSEA	Root mean square error of approximation
SD	Standard deviation
SE	Standard error

SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SLR	Systematic literature review
SRMR	Standardized root mean square residual
SVI	Subjective Value Inventory
TLI	Tucker-Lewis index
TUM	Technical University Munich
T	T-statistic
US	United States (of America)
USD	US-Dollar
V	Video
w	w-statistic (Wilcoxon test)
χ^2	Chi-Square
ZOPA	Zone of possible agreeement

I | Introduction

The present thesis contributes to the understanding of the drivers of negotiation performance. It consists of four essays, which investigate the impact of the negotiation opening (i.e., what happens at the outset of the negotiation; for example, the first offer) in Essays 1 to 3, and the role of the individual when it comes to different electronic negotiation (e-negotiation) channels in Essay 4. This introduction provides the motivation for this research, an overarching discussion of the related literature, our research questions, the methodology deployed to answer the research questions, and the main contributions to the field.[3]

I.1 Motivation

"The importance of negotiation can't be overstated. Negotiation holds the key to getting ahead in the workplace, resolving conflicts, and creating value in contracts."

—Program on Negotiation, Harvard Law School

This citation from Harvard Law School illustrates the importance of negotiations. Moreover, many large problems of our times such as environmental crises and conflicts, like the Russia-Ukraine war, can mostly be solved by negotiations only. Thus, the topic of negotiations and what drives the outcomes of negotiations is more actual than since the end of the Cold War. Besides these large conflicts, negotiation is an ubiquitous phenomenon in both professional and private contexts. The ongoing globalization and digitalization add additional relevance as negotiation becomes more international and increasingly takes place in digital channels. Thus, negotiation is a crucial skill in today's business world. Byrnes (1987) estimated that managers devote 20% of their time to negotiation and that the 20% likely impact the other 80%. The importance of negotiations for the management profession is also reflected in the increasing

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[3]This introduction is partly based on the individual essays in the present thesis.

inclusion of negotiation in curricula of higher education. While it has been an integral part of MBA curricula for years, more and more non-MBA programs are including negotiation in their curricula.

However, research on negotiation is scarce compared to other fields of management research. To illustrate this, we performed a Google Scholar search with the keyword "negotiation," which led to 2.5 million results, while other fields, for example "dynamic capabilities" led to 4.7 million results (Google Scholar, 2022). The comparably small size of the field leaves many questions about negotiation unanswered and not only leaves relevant research gaps in the field of negotiation but also in the tangent fields of psychology, economics, and management.

A negotiation is characterized as a situation in which people cannot achieve their goals without the cooperation of others (Thompson et al., 2010). One of the central questions in negotiations focuses on the outcomes. Negotiators and researchers are typically most interested in economic (e.g., the price paid) and subjective outcomes (e.g., the relationship between negotiators). While economic outcomes are relatively easy to measure, subjective outcomes are more complex. However, there is a well-established scale for the subjective outcomes, the subjective value inventory (SVI) (Curhan et al., 2006). The SVI contains four sub-scales: instrumental outcome (the perceived adequacy of the negotiation result), feelings about the self (satisfaction with one's own behavior and performance), process (how satisfying the process was perceived), and relationship (impressions of the counterpart, such as a feeling of trust or overall impression). Other popular subjective measures of outcomes, that are included in the SVI but can be measured separately, include trust and liking (Bitterly & Schweitzer, 2020). In addition to the individual outcomes of negotiations, there is the dyadic perspective of outcomes. Measurements like dyadic economic outcomes (e.g., joint profit) or trust among the dyad are dyadic outcomes of interest that extend the individual outcome measures.

The complexity of the outcomes already hints toward the fact that negotiation is a complex process with a multitude of dimensions. This becomes even more apparent, if we look into the factors that influence negotiations: the negotiation issues, the negotiating parties and their relationship, the negotiation context, the negotiation process and its tactics, the group context (i.e., what group the negotiator is associated with, like culture), the organizational context (i.e., which factors are determined by the membership in an organization, like a firm), and the channel in which the negotiation takes place (Agndal et al., 2017; Thompson et al., 2010). Accordingly, the space for potential inquiry in negotiations is large. The present thesis focuses on two aspects, namely the role of the negotiation opening and the impact of the individual in electronic negotiations.

The negotiation opening is concerned with the very beginning of a negotiation. A negotiation typically starts with making a first offer that has to be made by either party. Research has shown that first offers significantly predicted negotiation outcomes (Orr & Guthrie, 2005). Orr and Guthrie reported a coefficient of 0.497 between the first offer and an agreement and the first offer is thus one of the strongest predictors of negotiation outcomes. The first offer effect has been replicated by multiple studies (e.g., Bateman, 1980; Galinsky & Mussweiler, 2001; Kristensen & Gärling, 2000; Ritov, 1996). However, we argue that the field still lacks a full understanding of the process of how first offers originate, which effects they cause, how they interact with other elements of the negotiation opening, and how they finally influence negotiation outcomes. One example is the counteroffer. Even though anecdotal advice on which counteroffer to make after receiving a first offer exists (Gunia, 2017), we lack empirical investigation of this phenomenon. This is remarkable, as the first offer has the aforementioned power to predict negotiation outcomes. Thus we adopted the view of the negotiation openings and investigated multiple aspects of how negotiation openings function and influence negotiation outcomes.

Besides the more fundamental issue of negotiation openings, we also investigated a more current topic in the field of negotiation: the role of the interaction of the individual and the negotiation channel. Due to the increasing digitalization of the workplace, more and more negotiations have moved to digital channels. The coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic magnified this development, and the increase in digital communication can be illustrated by the growth of daily meeting participants on the Zoom platform. While in December 2019, 10 million people participated in meetings on a daily level, this number reached 300 million in April 2020 (Woodward, 2022). This corresponds to a 3000% increase. However, the understanding of the differences across channels and the impact on the outcomes is in its infancy. As Geiger (2020, p. 293) noted "this research field within group decision and negotiation is still far from consensus as to the effects of different media on most negotiation processes and outcomes". An intuitive assertion is that an individual may fit better into one channel than another. For example, an introverted individual might be more afraid of a face-to-face (F2F) negotiation and thus have an advantage in a chat negotiation. Even though some studies have investigated the impact of the individual in "normal" negotiations (e.g., Antonioni, 1998; Barry & Friedman, 1998; Sass & Liao-Troth, 2015; Sharma et al., 2013), no publication has yet investigated the interaction between the individual and the channel. We investigate this gap by exploring if individual factors drive the negotiation outcomes differently across electronic negotiation channels.

I.2 Related Literature, Theoretical Background, and Research Questions

In this section, we introduce the four research projects. Therefore, we briefly review the related literature, summarize the theoretical background, and derive the specific research questions.

I.2.1 First Offers in Negotiations

Research on first offers in negotiations dates back to the year 1967 when Chertkoff and Conley (1967) reported a correlation between the first offer and the negotiation outcomes. Since then, multiple studies (e.g., Bateman, 1980; Galinsky & Mussweiler, 2001; Kristensen & Gärling, 2000; Ritov, 1996) have replicated this first offer effect. Orr and Guthrie (2005) reported a correlation coefficient of 0.497 between initial offers and final negotiation outcomes in a meta-study. Thus, making the first offers seems to be an important topic in negotiation and we can assert that this is potentially one of the most robust findings in negotiation research.

This correlation between a first offer and the negotiation outcomes is also described as *anchoring effect*. The anchoring effect was defined as "insufficient adjustment from an initially obtained value (anchor)" (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). Tversky and Kahnemann used an experiment in which subjects had to estimate the percentage of African countries in the United Nations. Subjects received arbitrary numbers (10 and 65) before they estimated the percentage. The arbitrary numbers had a significant effect on the resulting estimate, which was 25 versus 45 in the two groups. The insufficient adjustment perspective was for long assumed to be the underlying mechanism of the correlation. However, the currently dominant view on the mechanism is the so-called *selective accessibility model* (Furnham & Boo, 2011). In the selective accessibility view, information is selectively recalled and interpreted to fit the anchor value (Chapman & Johnson, 1999; Mussweiler & Strack, 1999, 2001; Strack & Mussweiler, 1997). The anchoring effect was found to be robust across various decision-making processes (Furnham & Boo, 2011).

However, there is more to the first offer effect than the mere correlation between the first offer and the outcome. Oesch and Galinsky (2003), in a working paper, made the first attempt to summarize the knowledge regarding first offers and identified four themes: factors affecting who presents the first offer, factors affecting the extremity of first offers, effects of first offers on final outcomes, and effects of first offers on evaluations of negotiated outcomes. For all themes, there is already existing research in the field. In the following, we will introduce the most relevant findings per theme.

Factors affecting who presents the first offer In general, negotiators tend to avoid first offers (Maaravi & Levy, 2017). However, training influences this general disposition. Maaravi and Levy (2017) found that negotiation training increased the likeliness of making the first offer increased from 36% to 59%. Furthermore, power leads negotiators to make the first offer more frequently (Magee et al., 2007).

Factors affecting the extremity of first offers Previous research has shown, that the BATNA[4] of the counterpart plays an important role in determining the size of the first offer (Buelens & Van Poucke, 2004). But not only the negotiation situation does impact the first offer, but also the experience of the negotiators. In repeated games, negotiators improve their first offers over time (Rapoport et al., 1990).

Effects of first offers on final outcomes As discussed above, multiple studies (e.g., Bateman, 1980; Chertkoff & Conley, 1967; Galinsky & Mussweiler, 2001; Kristensen & Gärling, 2000; Orr & Guthrie, 2005; Ritov, 1996) have shown the impact of the first offer on negotiation outcomes and the effect has been shown to be very robust.

Effects of first offers on evaluations of negotiated outcomes Only a few studies have investigated the impact on subjective negotiation outcomes. Galinsky et al. (2002) have shown that satisfaction decreases, if the first offer of a negotiator was immediately accepted. This was the case even if the outcomes were better than in a group without immediate acceptance. This hints toward the fact that first offers have a strong potential to influence subjective negotiation outcomes. In addition, Maaravi et al. (2014) showed that anchoring could lead to perceived worse results, which in turn decreases the willingness to negotiate in the future.

However, other factors influence first offers, that are not represented in the suggested structure of Oesch and Galinsky (2003). For example, the impact of different types of first offers. One of the important findings is, that a precise first offer (e.g., 12.763 USD) is more effective in influencing outcomes than a round first offer (e.g., 13.000 EUR) (Loschelder et al., 2014). In addition, Maaravi et al. (2011) showed that adding arguments to a first offer might increase the anchoring effect but only if counterarguments could not easily be generated. Furthermore, some findings have shown how first offers influence the negotiation process. In a study by Campbell et al. (2015), the authors showed that if first offers voiced constraints (e.g., "I don't have more money"), counteroffers were lower than in the case of a disparagement argumentation (e.g., "It's not worth it"). Finally, several variables moderate the impact of the first offers, for example, gender and culture (Kray & Gelfand, 2009; Ma, 2007). It is important to note that

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[4]BATNA is an acronym for "Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement" and is a key concept in negotiations as the BATNA determines the strength of a negotiators position. The better the alternative, the stronger the negotiators' power in a negotiation.

the term *first offer* has, to our knowledge, not been defined yet. Intuitively, a first number mentioned in a negotiation qualifies as a first offer but this may be too restrictive as it does not encompass other first offers, such as qualitative first offers.

Despite plenty of research on first offers being carried out, the findings remain largely unconnected. Most findings focus on either the first offer or an aspect of the first offer and relate them to the outcomes. So far, a process that explains how first offers originate and function, and that connects the findings of previous research, is missing. Furthermore, most of the research features single-sided decisions, and the dyadic character of negotiations is not sufficiently reflected. A *negotiation lens* would help to cater to the specifics of dyadic decision processes. This missing orientation is probably related to the fact that anchoring research is rooted in psychology and single-decision problems. In summary, the goal of Essay 1 was to review the extant literature, structure the research in an overarching model of first offers in negotiations, and identify the most relevant research gaps.

> ***Research Question 1:*** *How can the extant literature on first offers in negotiations be structured conceptually and which gaps exist in the extant literature?*

An additional goal of Essay 1 was to generate the basis for Essay 2 and Essay 3 as both studies pick up research gaps put forward in Essay 1.

I.2.2 The Role of the Counteroffer

As discussed in the previous section, the first offer or anchoring effect has a strong empirical backing. However, previous research has focused on a single-sided decision perspective like in the early experiment of Tversky and Kahneman (1974), in which a single-sided decision was influenced by an anchor value. Conversely, a negotiation is a joint decision-making process that involves at least two parties. These parties attempt to reach an agreement by influencing each other's decisions throughout the negotiation process and start with their opening offers (Raiffa, 2007). As per Raiffa's definition, a first offer is typically followed by a counteroffer and both constitute the opening offers. So far, no research focused on these opening offers in combination even though it seems intuitive that a small gap between the first offer and counteroffer leads to different outcomes than a large gap between the first offer and the counteroffer. Therefore, we assert that only after both offers are made, the "negotiation scene" is set and that both offers influence negotiation outcomes.

Previous research on first offers and anchoring has already discovered that there is more to a first offer than its mere value. First offers convey additional information, which is used by the counterpart to evaluate the situation. As mentioned above, several authors found that precise first offers have a stronger effect than round first offers as the counterpart infers that the other has more competence (Loschelder et al., 2014; Mason et al., 2013). Furthermore, the type of communication also matters. If an anchor is framed as a request, it generates higher counteroffers than anchors framed as an offer (Majer et al., 2020). Extreme first offers have also been found to lead to higher concession-making (Bateman, 1980). In addition, the reaction to the first offer has an impact. If the first-offer receiver displays a strategic flinch after receiving the first offer, the impact of the first offer was reduced (Fassina & Whyte, 2014). Thus, research has developed some understanding of the effects of the first offer already.

Surprisingly, there is little research available that has investigated the counteroffer (the offer by negotiator 2 in reply to the first offer by negotiator 1). As the first offer, the counteroffer conveys an anchor value but could also convey additional information that in turn influences the first offer proposer and the whole negotiation situation. Previous research has shown that first offers do influence counteroffers (Kristensen & Gärling, 1997; Moran & Ritov, 2002; Ritov, 1996; Van Poucke & Buelens, 2002). This influence is also explained by the anchoring effect. However, previous research has neither investigated different levels of the counteroffer, nor strategic counteroffers (i.e., a counteroffer that is made deliberately), and the effect a counteroffer has on the subsequent negotiation process. There is only anecdotal advice when it comes to making the counteroffer.

Gunia (2017) provides some practitioner advice and suggests three strategies based on the value of the first offer. If the first offer was bad, Gunia recommends making a quick counteroffer in the size of the initially planned first offer. If the first offer was mediocre, Gunia suggests the same procedure. Finally, for a good offer, Gunia suggests continuing negotiating mainly for relationship issues. This would still employ a counteroffer but a less aggressive one. However, these recommendations are derived from experience, not from empirical research. This relates well to the practitioner-researcher gap put forward by Hüffmeier et al. (2011), who asserted that negotiation research does often not answer the questions of practitioners. The question of the counteroffer is a good example for this: It is a highly relevant question for practitioners, but a rigorous empirical inquiry is largely missing to date.

It is intuitive to assume that a counteroffer also exerts an anchoring effect on the negotiation outcomes, as compared to a first offer. Mussweiler (2002) has shown that anything that would make negotiators pay attention to unique features of the negotiation item, diminishes the anchoring effect of the first offer. Additionally, Galinsky and Mussweiler (2001) provided a potential explanation of how a counteroffer could

influence outcomes. The authors found that a focus on own goals and other reference points reduced the anchoring effect. A counteroffer could exactly serve this purpose. Additionally, the *scale distortion theory* (Frederick & Mochon, 2012) is a potential mechanism behind the expected effect. Frederick and Mochon (2012) found that a distortion of the reference scale reduces anchoring. The counteroffer could also lead to a scale distortion as there is suddenly a smaller value on the scale which is also used to judge subsequent offers. This additional value and resulting changed judgment could reduce the anchoring effect. In line with this argumentation, Bahnik et al. (2019) showed in an experiment that an opposing stimulus reduces the anchoring effect. Based on the same theoretical considerations, we expected that the aggressiveness of the counteroffer also impacts the negotiation outcomes. Furthermore, we also expected that the counteroffer influences negotiation behaviors. First, the third offer was expected to be influenced by the counteroffer similarly to the counteroffer itself. This would mean that the counteroffer could "pull down" any third offer and thus correct the first offer. Second, we assumed that the own and other concession-making will increase if the counteroffer is more aggressive as the negotiators need to "give in" more. Third, we also expected that the number of offers increases if aggressiveness increases. These theoretical considerations lead us to our second research question.

> *Research Question 2: Does the counteroffer influence negotiation outcomes comparable to a first offer and what are the mechanisms of this effect?*

I.2.3 Alternative Negotiation Openings

Some evidence shows, that there is another tactic for opening a negotiation besides making a first offer: asking for the lowest price, the other party is willing to accept. This tactic is quite common, especially in the context of used items sold on classifieds websites like eBay Kleinanzeigen or craigslist.com. There is even a subreddit (i.e., a discussion thread) on reddit.com that is called "r\wasletztepreis" and has 204 thousand members (reddit.com, 2022). Even though it features more comical interactions on classifieds websites, we suspected that there is indeed a phenomenon of the question for the lowest price. Furthermore, we conducted a pre-study with 183 American adults, of which 81.4% indicated that they already encountered the question. This number is remarkable as it seems that despite its alleged commonality, this tactic was not yet investigated by the research community and the focus has been on first offers by either negotiator.

Even more remarkable, the negotiation literature did not yet explore the use of questions in negotiation in detail (Miles, 2013). Questions can serve four purposes: Requesting information, providing information,

examining the other's knowledge, and requesting activity indirectly (Athanasiadou, 1991). All these purposes are integral to negotiations. But beyond these purposes, questions also influence decision-making by conveying subtle information and by influencing decision-makers. An example of how a question can influence the judgment of a decision-maker is the study by Loftus and Palmer (1974). The authors conducted a study in which they asked participants "about how fast were the cars going when they smashed into each other?". Replies to this question were higher than when words like "collided, bumped, or contacted" were used instead. This example illustrates that questions can influence the answering party and that questions can have more functions than the four purposes of Athanasiadou (1991).

For our study, we were interested in sensitive questions asked by a counterpart as the best price questions can be considered a sensitive question. The way to answer sensitive questions received some attention in the field already. In general, the literature describes six ways to answer a direct, difficult question (Bitterly & Schweitzer, 2020):

1. *Deflection* is defined as "responding to a direct question with a new question that shifts the conversation to another person" (Bitterly & Schweitzer, 2020, p. 945). The authors showed that deflecting questions does less harm than detected deception and yields less reputational harm than declining to answer. Thus, deflection can be considered a valid strategy if one does not want to answer a question.

2. *Dodging* is defined as evading a question by answering a different question (Rogers & Norton, 2011). The authors investigated the ability of listeners to detect dodges and found that it is generally difficult to detect dodges. If detected, they lead to a lower evaluation of the "dodger".

3. *Paltering* is defined as the "active use of truthful statements to create a false impression" (Rogers et al., 2017, p. 456). As an example, to the question "Do you plan to have kids?" one could answer "I think having kids is a huge responsibility and really is not for everyone." (example from Bitterly and Schweitzer (2020)). A study by Rogers et al. (2017) suggests that paltering is a common phenomenon and that paltering is preferred over lies by commission. However, it may promote conflict and lead to an impasse – even though it could lead to additional value claimed by the palterer (though lower than in the lie by commission condition and significantly higher than in the truth condition) (Rogers et al., 2017).

4. *Lying by commission* is defined as an outright false statement. The literature also defines a lie by omission, which is defined as withholding information with the intent to deceive (Mahon, 2008).

A lie by commission is not relevant in our context, as a direct question is asked and thus the other answer types or a lie by commission have to be chosen.

5. *Declining to answer*

6. *Replying with the truth*

So the question becomes, what will negotiators do if faced with the question of the best price? Theoretically, there is some reason to believe that the question about the best price has an effect, as questions can have powerful effects on the receiver. A study by Williams et al. (2006) found that if someone was asked about their likelihood to exercise or do illegal drugs, this question alone increased the likeliness of these behaviors. In addition, direct sensitive questions were found to not negatively affect the question asker (Hart et al., 2021). Hart et al. argued that people typically expect negative effects if they ask sensitive questions (e.g., the counterpart being angry). However, their study showed that the negative effects did not occur. This potentially has a strong implication for negotiations as the inherent information asymmetry can be reduced by asking sensitive questions. In a negotiation context, Minson et al. (2018) found that assumption questions (i.e., questions that convey an assumption) led to more disclosure of information that would otherwise be hidden by the counterpart. This has also been shown for direct, sensitive questions (Schweitzer & Croson, 1999). One could expect that the question for the lowest price is then answered with a lie. This is a behavior most negotiators would evaluate as completely ethical (Lewicki & Robinson, 1998). However, there is also reason to believe that negotiators would at least partly tell the truth due to a truth default of humans (Verschuere et al., 2011) and the fact that lying is unpleasant and that people tend to use minimization strategies to reduce distress (Aquino & Becker, 2005). Therefore, we examined the following research question.

Research Question 3: Does asking for the best settlement price at the beginning of the negotiation influence the negotiation process and outcomes compared to a "normal" first offer?

I.2.4   The Role of Individual Fit in Electronic Negotiations

For this research project, we moved away from the fundamental issue of first offers in negotiations and shifted the focus to a topic that has become increasingly important in the last decades: the topic of electronic negotiations. As outlined above, more and more negotiations move to electronic channels but

the specifics and the drivers of electronic negotiations are not yet sufficiently understood. Geiger (2020) showed in a review of the field, that there are conflicting results when it comes to negotiation via different channels. This can be illustrated by exemplary studies: some authors find better economic outcomes for face-to-face (F2F) negotiations (Arunachalam & Dilla, 1995; Lim, 2000), and some authors did not report a difference in economic outcomes (Geiger, 2014; Giordano et al., 2007).

These diverging results are noteworthy as there are well-known communication theories that theoretically support a difference in e-negotiations. To begin with, Daft and Lengel (1983) developed the *media richness theory*, which classified media according to their potential to transmit information. According to media richness theory, rich media like F2F can transmit more information than less rich media such as email. Daft and Lengel recommended rich media for complex decision problems like negotiation. The media richness theory was later extended to the *task-media-fit theory* (McGrath, 1993). The task-media-fit theory posits that different media fit different tasks. According to the task-media-fit theory, negotiation would require a rich medium that can transmit most information. Using other media, such as chat or email, may lead to sub-optimal results. In addition, there is the *barrier effect* (Carnevale & Isen, 1986) that showed that if a barrier physically separated negotiators (like an electronic negotiation), negotiations became more integrative and less contentious.

As explained above, it seems that the difference across negotiation channels is not solely driven by the channel and that additional boundary conditions need to be explored to reconcile the previous findings. We suspected that individual factors of the negotiator interact with the different negotiation channels and could thus help explain the differences across channels. In the following, we introduce the status of the extant research.

Elfenbein et al. (2008) drew on the most commonly used individual factors in negotiations: expectations and beliefs, motivational styles, abilities, enduring dispositions, and gender. In our study, we focused on the individual factors that have been previously investigated by negotiation researchers to a large extent: personality traits as enduring dispositions and gender. In the following, we introduce these individual factors.

The impact of **personality** in negotiations has been investigated by several researchers in the last decades (e.g., Barry & Friedman, 1998; Elfenbein et al., 2008; Sharma et al., 2013). The most commonly used measure of personality is the five-factor-model of personality (often referred to as the "Big 5") developed by McCrae and Costa (1987). The inventory is called the NEO-FFI. The five personality factors

of the model are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness. In the following, we briefly introduce these dimensions according to Costa and McCrae (1992) and Borkenau and Ostendorf (2008):

1. *Agreeableness:* Agreeableness is mainly concerned with interpersonal behavior. Agreeable individuals are described as altruistic and interact with others with understanding, goodwill, and compassion. Agreeable individuals tend to cooperate and put a high value on relationships. Thus, agreeableness can be an important trait in negotiations as it might lead to giving in in favor of the relationship.

2. *Conscientiousness:* Conscientious individuals are described as efficient and rational. Conscientious individuals prefer planning, organizing, and completing tasks and are described as goal-oriented, ambitious, enduring, hard-working, and systematic. Conscientiousness has been shown to have the highest impact on job performance in a meta-study by Hurtz and Donovan (2000). These traits are also relevant for negotiations, as planning, preparation, and goal-orientation support negotiation success.

3. *Extraversion:* Extravert individuals are described as somewhat formal and distant in relationships with others but enjoy large and noisy crowds or parties. They are described as sociable, self-confident, and assertive. Extravert individuals do have high energy, are perceived as forceful and dominant, and tend to prefer to be group leaders rather than followers. In addition, extravert individuals frequently experience strong feelings of happiness and joy. Extraversion is intuitively helpful in negotiations as communication lies at the core of negotiations.

4. *Neuroticism:* The neuroticism scale captures individual differences in emotional stability and emotional lability. A neurotic individual is perceived as anxious, generally apprehensive, and prone to worry. If the score on this trait is low, individuals are perceived as relaxed, balanced, and stable even in stressful situations. Also here, as negotiations are social conflicts, neuroticism intuitively does not support negotiation success.

5. *Openness:* Open individuals are intellectual, open to experimentation, and interested in art. They exhibit experiential styles and like to explore new endeavors. In contrast, low scores on openness indicate preference for existing behaviors and processes.

Even though most of the traits intuitively relate to negotiations, the impact of the five-factor traits on negotiation performance has for long been assumed to be insignificant, which led to the so-called "irrelevance consensus" (Sharma et al., 2013). However, Sharma et al. (2013) refuted this consensus by identifying several significant impacts of the five factors on economic and subjective outcomes in a meta-study. However, the different results in the field are still hard to reconcile and studies uncovered diverging results. One example is the study by Sass and Liao-Troth (2015), who found a significant impact of agreeableness and openness on distributive outcomes. This finding is not supported by the study by Sharma et al. (2013).

Also **gender** is a relevant factor in negotiations. Men do generally reach better negotiation outcomes than women (Mazei et al., 2015). However, Mazei et al. also found that this depends on the context. If the gender differences favoring men were reduced, if the negotiators had experience or information about the bargaining range, and if the negotiators negotiated on behalf of another individual, the differences were reduced. Furthermore, the authors showed that if role congruity for women was increased, performance increased. This is also in line with the "social role effect" (Stuhlmacher et al., 2007) which posits that women act in line with an expected social role. This relates also to the fact that women less often initiate a negotiation (Kugler et al., 2018). However, Kugler et al. argue that the effect is small and context-bound.

The question we aim to answer is if personality and gender interact with different negotiation channels. To date, no studies investigated this interaction even though there is some reason to believe that individual factors interact with the channel. Intuitively, a neurotic negotiator should be less anxious in a chat negotiation than in a F2F negotiation. Similarly, social roles could be of less importance in a less rich negotiation medium, which could in turn reduce the gender effect. This assertion is supported by the *individual x situation fit* perspective (Judge & Zapata, 2015). The authors reported that the fit of an individual to a situation predicted job performance in different situations. Thus, a better fit of an individual to a negotiation channel could drive different performances. Previous research has shown that personality drives a channel preference (Geiger & Laubert, 2018) and we extend this idea of fit to actual negotiation behavior and outcomes. We were thus interested in how individual factors (personality and gender) drive the negotiation outcomes in different channels.

> **Research Question 4:** *How do personality characteristics and gender affect the outcomes of different types of e-negotiations?*

I.3 Research Methods

I.3.1 Essay 1: Theoretical and Conceptual Research

In Essay 1, we first carried out a systematic literature review (SLR). A systematic literature review is defined as the "process of reviewing, critiquing, and synthesizing a "representative" literature to generate new frameworks and perspectives." Fan et al. (2022, p. 173). To achieve this, we carried out a six-step process that started with a keyword search in four databases (Web of Science Core Collection, Scopus, PsycInfo, and Business Source Complete). PsycInfo and Business Source Complete were included to make sure that both the psychology and the business perspective are thoroughly covered in the literature search. The keywords were defined after reviewing several sample articles. After duplicate removal and title screening, we evaluated the abstracts and read 145 full articles. After the full reading and a manual addition from a manual Google Scholar search, we ended up with 119 articles that we included in the review. This process is also depicted in Figure I.1.
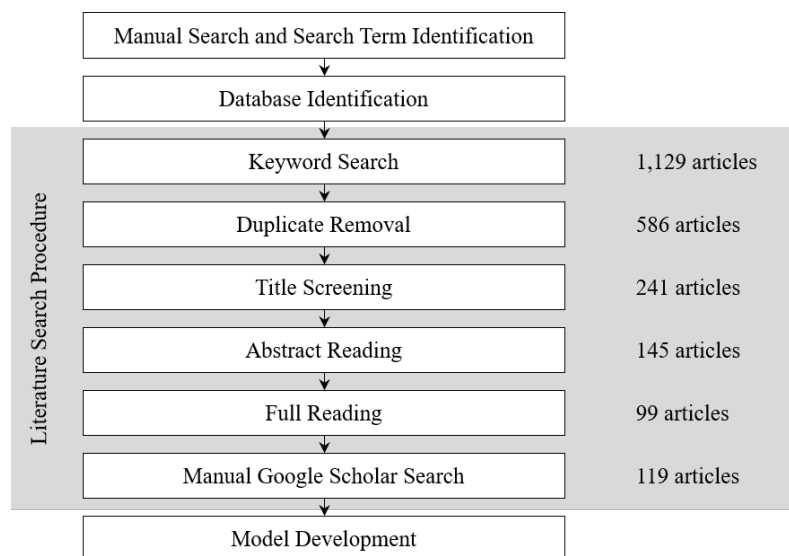
FIGURE I.1: Structured Review Methodology.

After identifying the relevant articles, we uncovered a need for defining the first offer in negotiations as this has not been done before. Based on the literature review, we developed a definition that can serve as a baseline for discussion in the field. Afterward, we developed a model of first offers in negotiation in an iterative, conceptual process, and related the articles to the phases of the process. Finally, we summarized the reviewed articles and evaluated the status of the field as well as the most important research gaps.

I.3.2 Essay 2-4: Empirical Research Based on Laboratory Experiments

Negotiation research is mostly conducted with simulations and experiments. Agndal et al. (2017) reviewed 316 empirical negotiation studies and reported that 61% were using simulations or experiments as a method. This is likely caused by the fact that real-life negotiations are typically confidential and that researchers are not allowed to participate. In addition, there are few comparable negotiations, so comparability is a mostly unsolvable issue in field negotiation research. As the majority of the work in the field, we also used different negotiation simulations in our experiments to generate data. Our laboratory approach mainly drew on students as subjects. This is standard in the field and there is evidence that there is no difference in the results obtained using students and professional negotiators (Herbst & Schwarz, 2011). In addition, we investigated behavioral processes and biases, which are fundamental traits of human decision-making and are thus assumed to be stable across age groups and experience.

The experiments were conducted in the experimenTUM laboratory at the Chair of Corporate Management at TUM. In addition to the experimenTUM laboratory, we used Amazon Mechanical Turk (Mturk) to conduct our vignette experiment in Essay 2 and our pre-study in Essay 3. Recruiting participants via crowdsourcing platforms has become increasingly popular in experimental research, and our Essay 1 analysis revealed that 23% of the included studies used Mturk as a recruitment method.

On the technical side, our experiments were programmed in Otree (Chen et al., 2016) or using the Qualtrics survey platform. In addition, we used the ORSEE platform Greiner (2015) to manage the experiment invitations and the participants. The data analysis was carried out with the statistical computer program R (R Core Team, 2020).

Essay 2 consists of two studies based on two experiments. In *Study 1*, we carried out a vignette study, in which participants were asked to react to a negotiation scenario. The participants were asked to make the first offer to either the buyer or seller of a used car. After the first offer was made, the manipulation consisted of an automatically calculated counteroffer on different levels, and the participants needed to make the next offer. Furthermore, the participants were asked to evaluate their satisfaction and to rate their counterparts. The participants were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk and participated online. We obtained a total of $n = 190$ participants. We used a linear regression model to estimate the third offer, the satisfaction, and the impression of the other based on different levels of the counteroffer, the first offer, and the role of the negotiator.

Based on the findings of the vignette study, we conducted a laboratory experiment, *Study 2*, in which we extended the research design to a full negotiation. Study 2 was conducted at the experimenTUM laboratory at the Chair of Corporate Management with $n = 206$ participants. In the experiment, two participants negotiated the sale of a pharmaceutic plant (Galinsky & Mussweiler, 2001) by exchanging offers. No other communication was possible for the negotiators and we manipulated which player was able to make the first offer. In addition, we manipulated the first offer size on three levels, leading to a 2 x 3 experimental design. We recorded the offers made and the final agreement obtained. Furthermore, participants evaluated their subjective value of the negotiation.

We tested our hypotheses using three analytical approaches. Group differences among the means were evaluated with t-tests or the corresponding non-parametric tests. The correlations were estimated with linear regression models. Finally, we used the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2017) to evaluate the mediation models. PROCESS is an ordinary-least-squares (OLS) and logistic regression path analysis modeling tool that is widely used in the social, business, and health sciences in single and multiple mediator models (Hayes, 2017).

Essay 3 also used an experimental research approach. It was also conducted at the experimenTUM laboratory and featured a chat negotiation between two participants. We manipulated the first offer (buyer first, seller first, and question) and the availability of additional information (list price) in a 3 x 2 experimental design. The participants then negotiated the selling price of a smartphone. A total of $n = 454$ participants took part in the experiment and we yielded $n = 227$ dyadic data points that were used in the analysis. The data for the analysis was extracted from the chat transcripts of the negotiation. Among other variables, we measured who made the first offer, if the question was asked at the beginning, the first offer size, the reply to the best price question, and the final price.

As in Essay 2, we used three main analytical approaches. We first investigated group differences using ANOVA, t-tests, or the corresponding non-parametric test. Furthermore, we used linear regression to investigate the anchoring effect, and conducted a PROCESS model analysis to investigate the mediating effect of the first offer.

Essay 4 also employed an experimental research approach conducted at the experimenTUM laboratory. The manipulation consisted of different negotiation channels (video chat and text chat). The negotiation task was taken from Geiger and Hüffmeier (2020) as it is based on the known "New Recruit" negotiation case (Neale, 1997) and as it was already tested in the German language. We had a total $n = 187$ individuals negotiating in the two channels. Besides measuring negotiation outcomes (economic outcome and

subjective outcomes), we measured individual characteristics (Big 5 personality traits and gender) of the negotiators, and selected negotiation behaviors.

The research model was inherently complex due to employing multiple predictor-, mediator-, and outcome variables. Thus, we estimated a multi-group structural equation model (SEM) to test our hypotheses. This methodology can efficiently model more complex mediation models, and compare different groups. This methodology has been applied in comparable publications in the negotiation field (Ma, 2007; Zhao et al., 2020). In addition, we used a standard non-parametric group difference test to understand the differences between the treatment groups.

I.4 Main Results and Contributions

Essay 1 made four main main contributions. First, it reviews the research of more than 60 years of research on first offers in negotiations from 119 studies. No study has yet systematized this research and this is important as a starting point for future research and theory building. In addition, the study provides an overview for managers, teachers, and negotiators that seek guidance on what to consider when making first offers in negotiations. Second, the essay defines first offers in negotiation. To date, no definition has been given and the intuitive understanding of a first offer can be too shortsighted or ambiguous. Third, we developed a model of how first offers originate, function, and influence negotiation outcomes. Previous research has been investigating issues in first offers in an unconnected manner. With our process model of first offers, we provide a structure for both previous and future research. Fourth, we call out important research gaps based on the process model. As previous research focused mainly on different types of anchors and their impact on outcomes, we show that especially the antecedents and the influence on the negotiation itself lack detailed understanding and suggest topics for future research.

Furthermore, we argue for a *negotiation lens* that takes the dyadic character of negotiations into account. This could potentially trigger a research program that focuses on opening offers and their impact on negotiation behaviors and outcomes. This is of high theoretical and practical importance. Essays 2 and 3 address questions regarding first offers and start to fill two gaps identified in Essay 1.

Essay 2 made four central contributions to theory. First, it showed that counteroffers significantly influence negotiation outcomes as first offers do. This is a novel finding and has a significant impact on negotiations as it shows that even if the first offer cannot be made by a negotiator, one can still influence the negotiation with the counteroffer. Second, we introduce the concept of the anchor zone (the distance

between the first offer and the counteroffer) and show that the anchor zone significantly predicts negotiation outcomes. Thus, the more aggressive the counteroffer, the stronger its correction of the first offer. The intuitive this finding, the important it is for negotiation theory and practice. Third, we were able to show how the counteroffer influences negotiation outcomes. The counteroffer influences the third offer, own concessions, other concessions, and the number of offers, and these factors act as mediators of the relationship between counteroffers and negotiation outcomes. Fourth, we showed that aggressive counteroffers, or a large anchor zone, lead to a lower subjective value.

These findings contribute to the theory of negotiations as they move from first offers to a more dyadic view of negotiation openings and show the potency of the first moves in negotiations. This also underlines the importance of the "negotiation lens" we emphasize in Essay 1. Furthermore, our findings are of high relevance to practice. It seems to be clear that a counteroffer should be low to generate a high anchor zone. However, this comes at the expense of reduced subjective value.

In addition to our findings, our essay also generates many new questions. For example, how the negotiation opening consisting of the first offer and the counteroffer influences additional negotiation behaviors and outcomes. It also raises the question of the most efficient counteroffer. It is interesting to inquire if there is a sweet spot that gives the largest effect of a counteroffer with the lowest impact on satisfaction.

The contributions of **Essay 3** are threefold. First, we were able to show that asking the question for the best price leads to a first offer that is below the normal seller's first offer and above the normal buyer's first offer. This is remarkable, as we add a new negotiation opening tactic to the discourse and show its applicability in situations with high information asymmetry. We also provide the first research on the phenomenon of the question for the best price, which exists in the field, yet has not received any attention in research. Furthermore, we showed how the question (and the related answer) translated to negotiation outcomes. Second, we established that the best price question did not have an impact on subjective outcomes. This is a counter-intuitive finding that even strengthens the applicability in real-life negotiations. Third, we substantiated the literature on information availability by showing that additional information reduced the effect of the best price question. In addition to these main contributions, we uncover additional data points that are of interest for negotiation research. We showed how such questions were answered and show where initial anchors are set by negotiators concerning their reservation points.

This essay supports the role of questions in negotiations and argues for more research in understanding the power of questions in negotiations. This need has been called out by Miles (2013) and thus our

essay adds to a more recent investigation of the effects of questions (e.g., Hart et al., 2021; Minson et al., 2018). The study is highly relevant as eBay and Craigslist are huge marketplaces with 950 million (eBay) and 410 million (craiglist.org) monthly site visits (Visualcapitalist.com, 2022). In addition, also Facebook (19.98 billion visits) offers a function for classified ads.

The overarching contribution of **Essay 4** is that we have shown that individual factors make a difference in predicting negotiation outcomes depending on the channel used. We thus provide the first evidence in favor of the individual x channel fit in negotiations. We found that in the video negotiation, gender significantly predicted negotiation outcomes via the number of spoken words. This was not the case in the chat negotiation and showed how women can have an advantage in chat negotiations. In chat negotiations, openness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and extraversion significantly predicted negotiation outcomes. In addition, we found that individual factors affected several attitudes toward the negotiation. Our research also contributes to the long-standing debate on the impact of personality in negotiations. However, this first evidence and also the diverging nature of findings to previous literature calls for more research in this area.

Overall, this thesis contributes to the understanding of what drives negotiation outcomes from different lenses. All four essays contribute to the theory and practice of the drivers of negotiation outcomes in the negotiation, psychology, and adjunct literature. Besides the theoretical contribution, we help close the practitioner-researcher divide as all our results have direct implications for practice.

I.5   Summary and Structure of the Present Thesis

This section introduced the research questions and their grounding in the literature, the methodology used to investigate the questions, and the results and contributions of our research. A summary of the essays can be found in Table I.1. The present thesis consists of four essays, which are presented in the following chapters 1-4. Chapter 5 concludes with a general discussion of the findings, limitations, and implications for practice.

TABLE I.1
Essay Summary

	Essay 1: Toward a Process Model of First Offers in Negotiations	**Essay 2**: Beyond the First Offer: Decoding Negotiation Openings and Their Impact on Economic and Subjective Outcomes	**Essay 3**: "What is Your Best Price?" - An Experimental Study of an Alternative Negotiation Opening	**Essay 4**: Individual Factors in Electronic Negotiations: How Individual x Channel Fit Influences Negotiation Behaviors and Outcomes
Research Question	How do first offers originate and influence negotiation outcomes in negotiations and which gaps exist in the extant literature?	Does the counteroffer influence negotiation outcomes comparable to a first offer and what are the mechanisms of this effect?	Does asking for the best settlement price at the beginning of the negotiation influence the negotiation process and outcomes compared to a "normal" first offer?	How do personality characteristics and gender affect the outcomes of different types of e-negotiations?
Theoretical Background	First offers in negotiations	Anchoring in negotiations; Selective accessibility	Asking questions; First offers in negotiations; Anchoring	e-negotiation; Communication theories; Individual x task fit; Personality
Research Design	Structured Literature Review of 116 publications	Vignette study ($n = 190$); Negotiation experiment ($n = 206$)	Negotiation experiment ($n = 454$)	Negotiation experiment ($n = 189$)
Analytical Approach	Descriptive statistics, theoretical model building	Linear regression; PROCESS mediation model; Group difference tests	Linear regression; PROCESS mediation model; Group difference tests	Multigroup SEM model; Group difference tests
Main Results and Contributions	• Structured review of 119 studies since the 1960s • Definition of first offers in negotiations • Development of a process model of first offers in negotiation • Identification of largest literature gaps	• Showed significant effect of counteroffer on negotiation outcomes • Conceptualized and verified anchor zone as a driver of outcomes • Theorized and verified mediators of the process • Showed significant impact on subjective value	• Showed impact of "best price" question on negotiation outcomes • Refuted hypothesis of a negative impact on subjective value • Confirmed moderating effect of additional information • Generated descriptive data on question replies	• Confirmed individual x channel fit • Showed which individual factors predict outcomes per channel • Uncovered word count and the role of gender in F2F negotiations • Showed additional impact of individual on attitudes
Concerned Fields	Negotiation, conflict management, (group) psychology	Negotiation, conflict management, (group) psychology	Questions research, negotiation, conflict management, (group) psychology	Individual x situation fit, personality, (e-)negotiation, information systems, performance
Current Status	Published in *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research*	Published in *Group Decision and Negotiation*	Under Review at *Negotiation Journal*, Presented at 2022 Group Decision and Negotiation Conference	Under review at *Negotiation Journal*, Presented at 2021 EBES Conference

1 | Toward a Process Model of First Offers and Anchoring in Negotiations

by Wolfram E. Lipp, Remigiusz Smolinski, Peter Kesting

There is a wide consensus that first offers have a significant impact on negotiation outcomes by causing an anchoring effect. Many aspects of first offers have been analyzed, including factors that lead to making the first offer and characteristics that strengthen the impact of first offers. However, a holistic view of the process of first offers in negotiations remains missing, and significant research gaps must be filled to fully understand the mechanisms of first offers. Furthermore, while extant research contains anecdotal advice for negotiators, no holistic overview of research findings has been presented to date. This study conducted a structured review of 119 journal articles published since 1967, contributing to the field in four main ways: (a) proposing a definition of first offers, (b) integrating previous findings into a process model of first offers in negotiation, (c) summarizing the results to date in a structured literature review, and (d) identifying crucial research gaps that must be addressed. Future research should conduct systematic investigations of the influence of first offers on negotiation outcomes, employing a "negotiation lens" to emphasize the dyadic and interactive character of negotiations.

Keywords: negotiation, conflict, first offer, anchoring, negotiation opening, structured review

Note: This essay has been published and thus, this version only includes the abstract to avoid self-plagiarism.

2 | Beyond the First Offer: Decoding Negotiation Openings and their Impact on Economic and Subjective Outcomes

by Wolfram E. Lipp, Remigiusz Smolinski, Peter Kesting

First offers play a significant role in negotiations as they anchor negotiators' perceptions and influence negotiation outcomes. However, negotiation is a joint decision-making process in which a first offer is typically succeeded by a counteroffer. The impact of a counteroffer has not yet been systematically researched. We propose that a counteroffer influences negotiation outcomes like a first offer. In addition, we conceptualize the "anchor zone" as the distance between the first offer and the counteroffer. We theorize that the anchor zone influences negotiation outcomes because it captures additional information compared to a single offer. To test our hypotheses, we conducted two studies: Study 1 was a vignette study ($n = 190$) in which participants reacted to a counteroffer that they received based on their first offer as part of a simulated negotiation. Study 2 was an online experiment ($n = 206$) in which participants negotiated by exchanging offers with no further communication. Our analysis suggests that the counteroffer is a significant predictor of economic outcomes. Thus, it works like a first offer, but with a lower impact. In addition, the anchor zone predicted how far the final agreement was from the first offer. Furthermore, we found that the third offer, the average concessions, and the number of offers mediated the effects of the counteroffer and anchor zone on economic outcomes. Finally, we discovered that a more aggressive counteroffer reduced the subjective value of both negotiators.

Keywords: negotiation, first offer, counteroffer, anchoring, bargaining

Note: This essay has been published and thus, this version only includes the abstract to avoid self-plagiarism.

3 | "What is Your Best Price?" – An Experimental Study of an Alternative Negotiation Opening

by Wolfram E. Lipp, Remigiusz Smolinski, Peter Kesting

Empirical research on negotiation openings has primarily focused on first offers and their associated anchoring effects. However, in the field, we observe an additional tactic that is used at the start of negotiations—asking for the best price that the counterpart is willing to accept. Due to the powerful effects of asking questions, and the critical timepoint in the negotiation, we expected this tactic to influence the negotiation process and outcome. We investigated the impact of asking for the best price using an experiment where buyers and sellers of a smartphone negotiated synchronously via a text chat. The participants either made the first offer naturally or were instructed them to ask for the best price. We found that asking for the best price lead to a first offer that was lower than what a seller would normally offer but higher than what a buyer would normally offer. Furthermore, when sellers received the question, they made smaller total concessions compared to other treatments in the absence of a list price. The difference in first offers translated to changes in negotiation outcomes and functioned as an anchor. The effect of the question was moderated by information availability since the availability of a list price reduced the impact of the question. Finally, the subjective value of the negotiators was not affected by the question. This study connects the topics of asking questions, ethics, deception, anchoring, and negotiation and provides evidence supporting a negotiation opening strategy that is especially effective in situations with strong information asymmetry.

Keywords: negotiation, questions, first offer, best price, anchoring, bargaining

Note: This essay is under peer-review. Therefore, this version only includes the abstract to avoid self-plagiarism.

4 | Individual Factors in Electronic Negotiations: How Individual x Channel Fit Influences Negotiation Behaviors and Outcomes

by Wolfram E. Lipp, Alwine Mohnen

This paper investigates the role of individual factors in electronic negotiations (e-negotiations). It explores whether the individual x channel fit affects negotiation behaviors and outcomes. We build on previous research on electronic negotiations and individual factors and investigate how individual factors differently influence negotiations in specific channels, a topic that has become increasingly relevant. We tested individual x channel fit using an online integrative negotiation simulation in which participants (n = 187) negotiated in either a chat or a video conference system. The impact of individual factors on negotiation outcomes and mediators were estimated through a structural equation model. We confirmed the hypothesis that individual factors (gender and the "Big 5" personality traits) had differential impacts on video and chat negotiations. In video negotiations, gender significantly predicted negotiation outcomes. Women used fewer words than men, which lead both to lower economic outcomes and higher subjective value. In chat negotiations, openness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and extraversion significantly predicted negotiation outcomes. In addition, individual factors affected attitudes toward the negotiation. The impact of individual factors on negotiations has been extensively researched, but results have been mixed. With regard to e-negotiations, the drivers and differences to face-to-face negotiations received low attention to date. To our knowledge, this paper is the first to contrast the impact of individual factors on different electronic negotiation channels. The findings confirm the influence of individual

factors on e-negotiations and add a new factor to our understanding of e-negotiations.

Note: This essay is under peer-review. Therefore, this version only includes the abstract to avoid self-plagiarism.

5 | Overall Conclusion

The present thesis addressed four research questions in the field of negotiation and negotiation performance. Beyond the individual contribution of every essay, two overarching topics were addressed.

First, there is the topic of the opening of negotiations. Previous research has focused primarily on first offers in negotiations. With our work, we extend this view and argue for a more dyadic perspective in a negotiation opening. Based on our process model of first offers in negotiations (Essay 1), we addressed two aspects of a more dyadic perspective: the impact of the counteroffer (Essay 2) and the role of an alternative negotiation opening (Essay 3). Our results confirmed that what happens after a first offer plays a significant role and thus present a new perspective to this foundational issue of negotiations.

Second, we investigated the role of technology in negotiations. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic was an additional catalyst for e-negotiations, the role of electronic media in negotiations is not yet fully understood. We explored the role of an individual x negotiation channel fit and found the first evidence for a fit of an individual to an electronic negotiation challenge.

Both overarching topics contribute to the discussion of what drives negotiation performance and thus, contribute to the field of negotiation and conflict management research. The following section summarizes the main findings, practical implications, limitations, and the need for future research.

5.1   Main Findings and Contributions

In **Essay 1**, we carried out a structured literature review of first offers and anchoring in negotiations. After reviewing 119 studies, we defined first offers in negotiations, which is important, as we believe that the intuitive definition is too shortsighted and does not cover important aspects of first offers (e.g., a qualitative first offer). Further, we developed a process model for first offers. The extant literature of first offers focused mainly on single aspects of a first offer but did not connect the concepts. Subsequently,

we closed this gap by proposing a consecutive model that starts from the antecedents of the first offer, shows the impact of different types of first offers, identifies the impacts on the subsequent negotiations process, and finally leads to the negotiation outcomes. The process model clearly shows that the dyadic aspect of first offers in negotiations needs more emphasis. Thus, we argue for a "negotiation lens" toward anchoring and first offers.

While Essay 1 is a conceptual contribution, Essays 2-4 are empirical contributions based on laboratory experiments featuring at least a sample size of $n = 189$ and rigorous statistical tests ranging from basic correlations to complex mediation models. If different methods were applied, the results were consistent and the results are therefore robust. All studies make a significant contribution to theory as they investigate highly relevant research questions that were not yet addressed in the field despite their importance for understanding the theory of negotiations. In addition, all studies have a high practical relevance as the results can directly be translated into guidance for practice.

In **Essay 2**, we picked up one of the most prominent research gaps from Essay 1, the impact of the counteroffer. In two studies, we have shown that the counteroffer also predicts the economic negotiation outcome. The impact is lower than the one of the first offer but this shows that the counteroffer has the potential to reduce the anchoring effect of the first offer. We also uncovered that the third offer mediates the relation to the economic outcomes. Thus, the counterpart reacts to the counteroffer. Consequently, we extended anchoring and first offer theory with this dyadic perspective and supported the assertion we made in Essay 1.

We captured this dyadic perspective in a new variable–the anchor zone–which we defined as the distance between the two first offers. We showed that the anchor zone does predict different negotiation outcomes and behaviors. First, the anchor zone influenced economic outcomes in that a larger anchor zone increased the distance of the first offer to the final agreement. In other words, the more aggressive the counteroffer, the more favorable the agreement. Second, we found that the mediators of this effect are own concession average, other concession average, and the total amount of offers. Finally, the anchor zone was a predictor of the subjective value of both the own value and the value of the counterpart.

With these findings, we present a highly relevant perspective to the discourse. It is not only the first offer that influences the negotiation process and outcomes, but also the interplay between the first offer and what happens afterward. After the "scene is set" by the opening sequence, the initial impressions are formed and the negotiation process can unfold.

Essay 3 continued the investigation of negotiation openings and focused on a phenomenon that can be observed in the field (e.g., on ebay or craiglist), but was not yet investigated by the research community: asking for the lowest price that the counterpart is willing to accept at the beginning of the negotiation. We found that if a buyer asks this question, the seller makes a lower first offer compared to the condition without the question. In addition, we found that the availability of additional information (list price) reduces this effect. Furthermore, we confirmed that this lower first offer also functions as an anchor that predicts final negotiation outcomes. Finally, we rejected our hypothesis that the question for the lowest price has detrimental effects on satisfaction and found that asking the question had no downsides for subjective value.

Our study contributes to the theory of asking questions and applies it to an actual phenomenon. We showed that asking questions can be a powerful tool in negotiations and we observed that most negotiators answer, even if mostly with an untrue statement. Furthermore, our findings contribute to the anchoring literature as the question can be considered a qualitative anchor that leads to a change in behavior. In addition, the findings show that asking such a sensitive question does not harm the question asker. This is counter-intuitive but in line with other research regarding sensitive questions (Hart et al., 2021).

In **Essay 4**, we moved away from the issue of first offers and looked into the question of what drives negotiation performance across different e-negotiation channels. More specifically, we investigated the individual x channel fit hypothesis, according to which some individuals fit better to one negotiation channel than to the other. Our analysis showed that gender and personality differently predict behaviors and results of chat and video negotiations. While in video negotiations, gender significantly predicted negotiation outcomes, in chat negotiation, the personality factors of openness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and extraversion significantly predicted negotiation outcomes.

To the best of our knowledge, this paper is the first one to compare the impact of individual factors across negotiation channels. With our Essay 4, we contribute to the discussion of personality and gender in negotiations as well as the field of e-negotiations. We provided the first evidence that the individual does make a difference and laid the groundstone for further inquiry.

5.2   Practical Implications

In the field of negotiation, there is a significant practitioner-researcher divide (Hüffmeier et al., 2011). Hueffmeier et al. argue that especially in the knowledge production process, negotiation research could do better in producing practically meaningful results. This thesis aims at answering research questions that are relevant both theoretically and practically. It may be noted that there is, in our point of view, another issue that contributes to the practitioner-researcher divide: the approach in negotiation training. Many negotiation trainings are based on the negotiation bestseller "Getting to Yes" of Fisher et al. (2011), which is in its core from 1981, more than 40 years ago. Negotiation training needs to reflect the more recent findings and integrate them into their curricula to contribute to closing this gap. The training issue is, however not in the scope of this thesis. In the following, we discuss the practical implications of our results.

First, in Essay 1, we summarize the extant research on first offers in negotiations and thus provide the first holistic overview on this issue. This overview is highly relevant for negotiation teachers and practitioners to find the answer to the question "should I make the first offer in a negotiation?" Our essay gives clear guidance via the information of what we know and what we do not know. By developing the process of first offers, we provide clear guidance on what to consider regarding first offers and how negotiators can improve their negotiation performance, even after a first offer was already made. In addition, we outline boundary conditions and moderators, that influence the effectiveness of first offers in negotiations.

Second, in Essay 2, we have shown that a counteroffer is also a significant predictor of negotiation outcomes. Even if a first offer cannot be made, the careful selection of a counteroffer can influence the negotiation outcomes favorably for the second mover. Furthermore, we have shown that the counteroffer is more effective, the further it is away from the first offer. The resulting anchor zone predicts how strongly the negotiation outcome can be "corrected" from the first offer. However, there is the downside of reduced satisfaction on both sides. Depending on the goals of the negotiation, this downside should be considered.

Third, Essay 3 has confirmed the effect of an already commonly used tactic in negotiation: asking for the lowest price. This tactic can lead to an improved first offer from a seller, but it is still higher than if a buyer would make the first offer. This means that if a negotiator knows the price range, it is advisable to make the first offer as this will lead to the best outcomes via the anchoring effect. However, if one is at

risk to make an offer that is too high due to information asymmetry, it is better to ask for the best price than to let the seller make the first offer. Furthermore, we have shown that this tactic has no downside in the satisfaction and relationship, and thus "it does not hurt to ask."

Fourth, in Essay 4, we have shown that the individual x channel fit can make a difference. However, this study integrates into a history of diverging results on individual factors in negotiations. Also in this study, we were not able to replicate all previous findings. Therefore, further research is needed to replicate these findings in different contexts as well. If we were to give first recommendations, we could summarize that women and individuals high on the openness trait seem to have an advantage in chat negotiations and should thus, consider changing the channel.

5.3 Limitations

All the quantitative studies in this thesis investigate new issues and theories in the field of negotiation performance mostly in laboratory settings. Thus, we encourage replication studies in different contexts and with different designs to substantiate the effects and uncover possible boundary conditions of the uncovered effects. There are several boundary conditions that could influence the topics we researched. A promising boundary condition is culture. Culture could drastically change the size of first offers, the interpretation of first offers, and subsequently the reaction to them.

Furthermore, we mainly used students as subjects. There is some evidence that this leads to comparable results as with professional negotiators (Herbst & Schwarz, 2011), but to increase robustness of our results, future research could use more experienced negotiators. This could for example be achieved via Amazon Mechanical Turk recruitment (as we used it in Essay 2). However, we would not necessarily expect any change as we investigated psychological phenomena and biases that should be stable for all humans.

In addition, we used a narrow scope for our research designs. Some simulations were restricted to a chat negotiation, others were restricted to one side making a first offer. While this simplicity enabled us to conduct a first test of our hypotheses and can thus be considered a virtue, future research should open up the scope to investigate the effects in other situations. Contrary to the narrow scope of Essay 2 and 3, Essay 4 is more complex as the nature of personality requires to add a multitude of variables (e.g., the Big 5 personality characteristics). Future research could employ a more focused approach to isolate the effects mechanisms. As discussed above, our studies investigate new questions of research

in negotiation and thus our approach fits well to this pioneering character. However, further studies are required to better understand the mechanics and to replicate the results.

5.4   Future Research Avenues

Even though extant research has uncovered many drivers of negotiation performance, it seems that we are still missing research on several foundational issues in negotiations. Understanding the role of negotiation openings and the impact of the negotiation channel are issues with a high importance on negotiations.

As in a chess game, the opening determines the negotiation process and results from the beginning. However, the processes after the first offer still mostly a "black box" and theory needs to be developed to complete our understanding of the impact of negotiation openings. But even before a negotiation starts, the channel needs to be determined. Despite the actuality of this issue, the drivers (if there are any) of the differences are not yet fully understood. Both issues are highly relevant for theory, practice, and teaching of negotiation. The following paragraphs will highlight the most important questions that should be addressed in the future but the work is certainly not limited to those.

Regarding first offers in negotiations, the most obvious research gap is the process after the first offer. We started closing the gap with Essay 2, but multiple other questions should be addressed. For example, how the negotiation opening impacts the negotiation process. The opening could change the impression of the counterpart and thus change negotiation behaviors. Furthermore, the antecedents that lead to negotiators making the first offer, need further inquiry as these are not well understood. The topic of cultural differences seems most promising in this area.

Given the results of our Essay 2—the impact of the counteroffer—some follow-up questions regarding the counteroffer immediately emerged. One issue is the size of the counteroffer. Even though we used three levels, it is not clear, which counteroffer is the most efficient. Finding the "sweet spot" would be highly relevant as advice for practice. In addition, many of the findings regarding first offers could be extended to the counteroffer as well. For example, which factors predict the aggressiveness of the counteroffer, e.g., personality, context, or culture.

Additionally, our research on the "best price" question as a negotiation start leads to several follow-up considerations. First, we only investigated one sensitive question. In negotiations, there are several sensitive issues, that could be asked, for example "Do you have an alternative?". Disclosure and effects

could be different and thus researching different kinds of questions seems to be warranted. Furthermore, we pointed out an ethical perspective of asking sensitive questions. As we disagreed in our discussions about whether such a question is ethical, a detailed analysis of this perspective would be interesting. In addition, questions, in general, seem to be under-researched in negotiation research. This also holds true for non-sensitive questions and their impact on negotiation success, which is a promising area for future research.

As discussed before, Essay 4 uncovered an influencing factor of negotiation performance across channels. However, it seems other factors have a strong contribution to the difference. Future research should aim at isolating these factors to understand what drivers are most important. Furthermore, we uncovered the effects of openness and word count that both influenced the negotiation outcomes. Future research could uncover, which factors mediate this relation. Word count could lead to more liking of the counterpart but simply mean more exchange and thus the mechanism remains unclear.

Appendix

Declaration of Own Contribution

(Working) Title: Beyond the First Offer: Decoding Negotiation Openings and Their Impact on Economic and Subjective Outcomes

Author(s)   Wolfram Lipp, Remigiusz Smolinski, Peter Kesting

Description of Own Contribution

The initial idea for the manuscript was developed by Remigiusz Smolinski. Wolfram Lipp was in charge with the initial review of the literature, the development of the theory, the hypotheses, and the experiment design. The design and hypotheses were then jointly discussed and refined. Wolfram Lipp prepared and executed the experiments including the design, funding acquisition, programming, and execution. Wolfram Lipp also carried out the statistical analysis and developed a first manuscript draft, which was then jointly revised and edited. Wolfram Lipp was also in charge with the journal submission process and the correspondence with the journal. Revisions were jointly edited with Wolfram Lipp making the first draft followed by joint editing.

Dates and Signatures

Wolfram Lipp (first author)

Remigiusz Smolinski (co-author)

Peter Kesting (co-author)

Declaration of Own Contribution

(Working) Title: Toward a Process Model of First Offers and Anchoring in Negotiations

Author(s) Wolfram Lipp, Remigiusz Smolinski, Peter Kesting

Description of Own Contribution

The initial idea for the manuscript was developed jointly in a discussion concerning another manuscript. Wolfram Lipp then established/selected the method of the review and carried out the systematic literature research, evaluated the articles, and developed a first draft of the paper including the suggested model. The model and the manuscript were then jointly revised and edited. The definition of first offers was jointly developed in a discussion. Wolfram Lipp was also in charge with the journal submission process and the correspondence with the journal. Revisions were jointly edited with Wolfram Lipp making the first draft followed by joint editing.

Dates and Signatures

Wolfram Lipp (first author)

Remigiusz Smolinski (co-author)

Peter Kesting (co-author)

Declaration of Own Contribution

(Working) Title: "What's Your Best Price?" – An Experimental Study of an Alternative

Negotiation Opening

Author(s)   Wolfram Lipp, Peter Kesting, Remigiusz Smolinski

Description of Own Contribution

The initial idea for the manuscript was developed by Wolfram Lipp. Wolfram Lipp was in

charge with the initial review of the literature, the development of the theory, the hypotheses,

and the experiment design. The design and hypotheses were then jointly discussed and

refined. Wolfram Lipp prepared and executed the experiments including the design, funding

acquisition, programming, and execution. Wolfram Lipp also carried out the statistical

analysis and developed a first manuscript draft, which was then jointly revised and edited.

Wolfram Lipp was also in charge with the journal submission process and the

correspondence with the journal. Revisions were jointly edited with Wolfram Lipp making

the first draft followed by joint editing.

Dates and Signatures

Wolfram Lipp (first author)

Peter Kesting (co-author)

Remigiusz Smolinski (co-author)

Declaration of Own Contribution

(Working) Title: Individual Factors in Electronic Negotiations: How Individual x Channel

Fit Influences Negotiation Behaviors and Outcomes
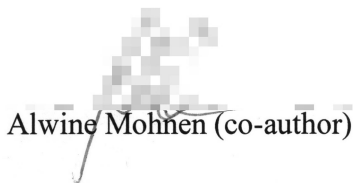
Author(s)   Wolfram Lipp, Alwine Mohnen

Description of Own Contribution

The initial idea for the manuscript was developed by Wolfram Lipp. Both authors then refined the research project jointly. Wolfram Lipp developed the first draft of the literature review, theory, hypotheses, and experimental design. The hypotheses and the experimental design were jointly refined and finalized by both authors. Wolfram Lipp prepared and executed the experiments including the design, programming, execution and carried out the data analysis. Wolfram Lipp wrote the first draft of the paper, which was then jointly reviewed and edited by both authors.

Dates and Signatures

Wolfram Lipp (first author)

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