

# A Study of the Politeness Strategy for Maintaining Courtesy between Parents and Their Children

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## ABSTRACT

This study concentrates on the analysis of selected texts found in parents and children conversations depending on politeness strategies. Such analysis is employed to identify the face that parents adopt in dealing with their children, which in turn depend on linguistic items that are used in identifying these strategies. Whether it was positive face or negative face, this is relied on the strategies of politeness that the researcher explained. Furthermore, Parents and children as a family members they adopt certain strategies of politeness in dealing with each other, these strategies may differ from one family to another depending on number of factors.

Depending on the above problem, the researcher works to find answer to the questions, which are: 1-Does the evolution affects family's adoption of politeness strategies? 2- What are the strategies that are used by the two families? 3- What is the most and least frequent strategy in the two families?

The study aims at identifying the effects of evolution on families' awareness and usage to the strategies of politeness and finding out the strategies, which are used by the two families. To achieve the aims the study hypothesized that: 1- The evolution has strong effect on the families' adoption of the strategies. 2- Positive and Bald on Record strategies are used by the two families 3- Bald on Record is the most frequently than other strategies and negative strategy is the least

This study adopted the model of Brown and Levinson (1987) because this model classifies all aspects of politeness in relation to social structure. In addition to that, this study analyzed five data from the modern family series and five from Little House on the Prairie because each family belong to different time. The family of Little House on the Prairie is in year 1974, it is considered as the old-fashioned or the uncivilized family, the other family is considered the civilized family, and it is in year 2009.

The study come to the conclusion that evolution has an effect on the families' adoption of the strategies, depending on the quantitative analysis, which demonstrated that, the awareness and the adoption of the modern and civilized family was more than the uncivilized family.

**Keywords:** *community; politeness; context; excuse; negative face and positive face.*

## INTRODUCTION

The human and the language are inextricably linked. Human beings utilize language to communicate with one another. They can convey their emotions, views, and other things in their daily lives by using language. It appears that humans cannot engage and communicate with one another without the usage of language. According to Weiten (2007:10), "any language contains symbols that transmit meaning. As a result, those symbols aid language users in communicating their messages through their utterances". Moreover, when people use language to connect with others,

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they always want to have a discussion that goes well and smoothly because they may keep a good and close relationship with others by having a nice conversation.

According to Wang (2010:121), "speakers must be able to employ a variety of communicative methods in order to maintain a positive relationship with both interlocutors and to establish a good discussion". These are also referred to as politeness strategies In reference to Leech (1983:81). "The overall goal of the politeness principle is to reduce feelings of disrespect and discomfort during a discourse between the speaker and the listener". Watts (2003:90) gives the example, if someone wants to ask his friend to stay at his place, he could say, "I think you've had a bit too much to drink, Jim." This kind of strategy will keep the face of the hearer since the speaker uses a special strategy named giving or asking for reasons strategy of positive politeness.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A brief overview of the theories and approaches that are related in one way or another with the present study is introduced in this section.

### Discourse Analysis

Deborah Tannen (1995: 90) defines discourse Analysis as "the analysis of language beyond the sentence. This contrasts with types of analysis more typical of modern linguistics, which are chiefly concerned with the study of grammar: the study of smaller bits of language, and sounds (phonetics and phonology), parts of words (morphology), meaning (semantics), and the order of words in sentences (syntax). Discourse analysts study larger chunks of language as they flow together".

Moreover, Cameron (2001: 7) refers to "as an "umbrella term," "discourse analysis" encompasses a wide range of methodologies in a variety of fields. Discourse Analysis is a branch of linguistics that examines genuine forms of communication, such as spoken, written, or visual texts with genuine communicative aims. Second, as Cameron points out, "Discourse Analysis involves the analysis of texts in context (as opposed to the analysis of decontextualized sentences associated with the formal approaches), although as has been noted above, the conceptualization of this relationship varies from one paradigm to another, as does the centrality of power as the defining social factor which shapes linguistic choice" (Cameron, 2001:12).

Discourse Analysis, we can infer, is a "study of how language is used in expressing meaning, ideas, purpose, and so on, by having a broader meaning than what it is and employing specific ways in a context or circumstance" (Ibid).

Furthermore, discourse analysis aims to understand more about the purposes of language (that is, what it is used for) and how meaning is created in a variety of situations, such as the social, cultural, political, and historical contexts of speech (Nunan,1993:80).

For example, if you want to study a politician's speeches, you'll need to put them in context, which means looking at the politician's background and views, the reasons for giving the speech, the audience's history or context, and the country's social and political history (to name a few – there are always multiple contextual factors).

### Politeness

Brown and Levinson published their theory of language politeness in 1987. A politeness theory is founded on the premise that humans have a social self-image, as described by Brown and Levinson in Cutting (2002:45). "Face" is another term for this sense of self-image. In many cultures, it is customary for speakers to be conscious of their listeners' requirements about their faces, to consider their sentiments, and to avoid face-threatening behavior.

Lakoff (1990: 34) defines politeness as "a system of interpersonal relations aimed to make interaction easier by reducing the risk of conflict and confrontation that is present in all human interactions". Moreover, politeness is defines as showing that you are aware of and care about "the appearance of another person" (Yule, 1996: 60).

In addition, politeness is "a lexeme in the English language whose meaning is subject to negotiation by the participants interacting in English. " (Watts, 2003: 13). Therefore, the meaning of politeness is reproduced and renegotiated whenever and wherever it is utilized in verbal interaction.

Thus, though many linguists have defined politeness, their definitions reveal that they all agree that "face" is the most important notion in the study of linguistic politeness.

### *Types of Politeness*

Yule (2010:139-140) believes that cultures are different in the way they identify a polite behavior. According to Lakoff (1990:108), there are three types of politeness: distance politeness, deference politeness and camaraderie politeness.

1. Distance politeness: "This term refers to a civilized human strategy that is similar to that of other animals. Animals use physical boundaries to communicate with one another: this is my territory, stay out. Humans using symbols typically build symbolic buildings. The distance politeness demonstrates that the parties are on an equal footing. For a long time, it has been common in the middle and upper classes of most of Europe" (Lakoff, 1990: 108).

2. Deferential Politeness: "A culture that avoids the risk of confrontation will use this type. Conflict can be avoided if one of the participants considers that everything is said and what it means in a conversation is up to the other person. Deference etiquette implies degrading one or both of the participants in a dialogue. Many Asian societies are characterized by this level of politeness. In the vast majority of cultures. It is the favored style of communication for women, particularly when conversing with men" (Ibid).

3. Camaraderie politeness: "The third type demonstrates that engagement and connection are socially beneficial concepts, with openness being the most important indicator of civility. Being open and pleasant is desirable and lovely, according to a camaraderie system" (Lakoff, 1990:109).

### *Politeness and the Concept of Face*

In politeness theory, the concept of 'face' has become quite essential. For example, Brown and Levinson (1987) used it as the key concept in their investigation of universals in language usage and politeness phenomena. They have defined 'face' as the public image that each member wishes to claim for himself.

Brown and Levinson (1987) have come to distinguish between negative face and positive face in the process of their analysis, and they have defined them as follows:

(a) Negative face: "The basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distinction i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition" (Yule, 2010: 87).

For example, if someone orders you to do something that you do not want to do you may feel sad because you do something that you do not want. This case shows negative threatening act to the hearer and the power, distance and ranking between speaker and hearer.

(b) Positive face: "The positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants" (Yule, 2010:87).

For example, when our friend asks you 'Do you like food?'. And you said 'Sorry', I don't like it, it is not yummy, I hate it. This is a case that shows a positive threatening act to the hearer and he will be sad to hear that response.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Data Collection and Description**

Ten conversations between parents and children have been taken from two series: The first series is Little House on The Prairie, it is an American drama and it is released in 1974 with nine seasons. Laura Ingalls Wilder is the writer of this series; she derived this series from her childhood and her adolescence in the American Midwest between the years of 1894-1870. It is about simple family living on the farm in Plum Creek, consists of parents, three daughters and a

dog. They decided to leave the country side and live in the city side and there they will face a new experiences and incidents.

The second series Modern Family. It is an American comedian series about modern family, and it is released in 2009 with ten seasons. Steven Levitan is it's writer, it consists of the parents, their two daughters and one son. This family lives in modern society with other families and number of incidents and events are happened between them and the other families.

Moreover, the researcher chose the two series because they are from different times and they represent the families at that time. For example, Modern family series represents civilized families in the year 2009 and "Little Family" on the Prairie represents uncivilized families in a year 1974.

In addition to that, the researcher selected five texts from each series because these texts are rich in politeness strategies that the researcher can depend upon in his analysis.

### Adopted Model

Brown and Levinson (1987) model has been chosen to analyses the data of this study. It consists of a number of strategies; these strategies are: Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, Bald on Record, and Off Record.

**1. Positive Politeness:** It is strategy, which is directed by the speaker towards positive face or the positive self-image, it is expressed by satisfying the hearer positive face. In other words, it is the strategy that over used between friends and it uses familiar address terms such as (honey, mate, bud), using exaggeration, noticing attending to the hearers (interest, wants, needs and goods), intensifying interest to the hearer in the speaker 's contribution and asking for reason are examples of positive politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 67) .

For example,

(1) Jim, "you're really good at solving computer problems. I wonder if you could just help me with a little formatting problem I've got".(Watts, 2003:89)

The speaker is well aware that Jim is adept at resolving computer issues. As a result, whenever he or she has a formatting issue, he or she turns to Jim for assistance. Prior to asking him, the speaker tries to maintain Jim's cheerful demeanour by praising Jim's abilities to solve computer problems. As a result, Jim is pleased and strives to assist the speaker in resolving his or her difficulty.

(2) Good old Jim. Just the man I wanted to see. I knew I'd find you here. Could you spare me a couple of minute? (Watts, 2003:89)

The speaker expresses his delight upon meeting Jim in this statement. The speaker shows that he or she is exaggerating by declaring that Jim is the only person they wish to meet. Jim feels satisfied because the speaker gives his interest by embellishing what he or she is saying. As a result, Jim is unconcerned about devoting time to the speaker.

**2 - Off Record Strategy:** "It is an indirect way of politeness. The utterances are not directly addressed to the hearers. Bonvillain (2003:127) gives six examples of Brown and Levinson's off-record strategies. Those are giving hints; understating; overstating; being ironic; using rhetorical questions and being vague or ambiguous." (Ibid, 67).

For example:

(1) It's cold in here

The speaker is hinting that the receiver should lock the door or window because it is cold outside by encouraging the listener to figure out the implicit meaning of the hints.

(2) It's not half bad. (Bonvillain, 2003:127)

By employing the understatement method in the above example, the speaker makes his remark appear less important than it is.

**3- Bald On Record :** “It is the strategy in which the speech is uttered directly. It does not make the speaker to misunderstand or misinterpret the speech. This strategy does not minimize the speech. Direct demand and direct imperative are all examples of this strategy” (Ibid, 67).

For example:

- (1) This door handle’s falling off. (Cutting, 2002:46)

In the above example the speaker will consider the hearer uncooperative if he or she does not adjust the door handle in this demanding form of bald on-record. As a result, the most face-threatening type of politeness action is the mandatory form of bald on-record.

- (2) Have some more cake. (Yule, 1996:127)

The speaker directly offers the listener more cake. This form's directness makes the listener feel delighted and socially connected to the speaker.

**4- Negative Politeness:** “It is the strategy which focuses on the negative face by showing distance between the speakers. It is the individual’s needs to have an independence of action and imposition. Being conventionally indirect, not assuming willingness to comply and being pessimistic about ability or willingness to comply are some of the this strategy” (Ibid, 67).

For example:

- (1) Could you tell me the time, please? (Watts, 2003:90)

This example shows that the speaker is trying to ask information about the time to the hearer by using an indirect expression.

- (2) I wonder whether I could just rather ask you a little question (Watts, 2003:90)

By using some hedges, “I wonder” and “sort of” in his or her sentence, the speaker can avoid willingness to comply.

## DATA ANALYSIS

This study is focusing on ten texts; five are taken from (Little House on The Prairie) which was released in 1974 with nine seasons. In addition, five conversations are taken from the second series, which is (Modern Family) which was released in 2009 with ten seasons. These texts will be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to show how often Parents and children’s use of politeness strategies in their conversation and the function of these strategies. So the analysis of the texts will be done by using strategies of politeness discussed by Brown and Levinson (1975), these texts are:

### Conversations

#### *Little House on the Prairie*

##### Conversation 1

**Charles :** You said that was a find day work it seems to be you kind of works schooling.

**Laura :** Oh i do pa ,and you should just see miss peetle ,she is the best teacher in the whole world and she smiles all the time and she smells as good as she looks ,she is the most beautiful lady i ever saw except for mom of course.

**Charles : I'll say .**

**Context**

This conversation took place in little house of the family when they were gathered in their sitting room and the father (Charles) was talking with Laura and asking her to spell certain words she supposed to be learned at her first day at school in the city side , then Laura started talking about her admiration of her teacher .

**Analysis**

In this conversation Off- Record strategy the indirect way of politeness is used. Laura in describing her teacher gives a hint that her teacher's beauty cannot be compared to her mother's beauty. Charles in responding to his daughter he used indirect politeness when he praised his wife by saying that Laura's teacher should be special to be compared to her mom. furthermore Laura's talking about her teacher makes the listener a have an idea about Laura's good impression towards her teacher, and to which extant she admires her teacher, but at the same time she didn't want her mother fell inferior she said " except for mom of course" , to tell the listener that she can't prefer any one over her mother . In return, her father responded by saying "she must be something special to be even close to your mom". In his statement, he tried to praise his wife and to show the listener his love and admiration for her.

**Conversation 2**

**Charles : Anybody in particular you like laura?**

**Laura : Someone in particular I don't like. That's sippy nelly also ,(interrupted by her sister).**

**Marry : You know what she called up ?country girl.**

**Charles : You are country girls there's nothing bad about that.**

**Laura : That there is the way said it 'look at the country girl' mad me so mad i wanted to smack her good .**

**Charles : Just a minute I don't hear you talking like that ,you go to school to learn not to fight .**

**Caroline : Part of what you have to learn is how to get on with others .**

**Laura : all right**

**Context**

The family were in the sitting room and Charles started asking his daughters about their first day at school and how did they find it and asked them about their classmate.

**Analysis**

In this conversation, Charles (father) applied Bald on Record strategy by carrying out the face-threatening act. He used imperative form in high tone to make Laura stop talking badly and telling her that she is going to learn not to fight. Even Caroline the mom used this strategy but with low tone by advising Laura to go on with others (Bald On Record ). In addition to that Laura by saying "i wanted to smack her good" in high tone applied Bald on Record by giving a possibility of carrying out face threatening act towards the girl she meant. In addition to that, some statements imply certain meanings. For example, Laura's statement "wanted to smack her good" gives the listener insight about Lara's temper and upset from being treated as a second class. Furthermore, Charles's comment, "I don't hear you talking like that, you go to school to learn not to fight," conveys to the listener his disapproval of this type of behavior in the classroom as well as his negative impression of it. It also reveals to the listener how conservative and aware of his daughter's behavior he is.

### Conversation 3

**Marry : Mom what can i give pa for Christmas .**

**Caroline : I don't know what I'm gonna give him myself. I am sure he will like what ever you find to give him**

**Marry : It's gotta be special ,this is our first Christmas here .**

**Caroline : No thing a certainly we don't mind of our presence ,it's gonna to be special if we're gonna have to make it that way ourselves .**

### Context

This conversation took place in their new house after travelling to the city side .Marry and Caloine were in the bedroom alone preparing for Christmas day when people are expected to exchange presents at these periods.

### Analysis

In this conversation positive politeness is applied because Caroline and her daughter appeared as having the same interest and goal which is preparing a present for Charles. In addition to that, the use of pronoun we as an example of positive politeness shows that the sense of threat is minimized and the sense of face saving act is increased between the daughter and her mom. Moreover, the daughter's statement "It's gotta be special, this is our first Christmas here" shows that Marry very happy and interested in their new house and because of being in their new house the Christmas day will be special.

### Conversation 4:

**Caroline: I have a surprise for you ,you are going to a party**

**Marry: we are !**

**Caroline : hmm**

**Laura: Meet a real one ?**

**Caroline: Yes . I was in the mercantile today and Mrs. Olison invited you both to Nelie's birthday day tomorrow .**

### Context

This conversation took place in the little house between mother and her daughters, it happens when mother return back to the house after she was outside to do shopping.

### Analyses

In this conversation, Caroline used a Positive politeness; she made her daughter to be drilled in conversation with her by saying "I have a surprise for you". In such statement, Caroline saved her daughter positive face because she made them involved in discussion with her. And this statement makes the listener enthusiastic and with certain amount of curiosity to the rest of that statement or to that surprise.

### Conversation 5

**Charles :Hi everybody .How did you get the raccoon?**

**Laura : Marry gave it to me .**

**Marry : I found him out in the woods.**

**Laura: I'm gonna make a pit out of it.**

**Charles : I'm sorry I think that would not work.**

**Marry : I gave it to our pot so she would not miss her dog so much.**

**Charles : Just wouldn't work.**

### **Context**

In this conversation daughters and their mom were sitting in their kitchen, then suddenly Charles came home seeing Laura playing with the raccoon which is not allowed to be at home with her after losing her dog .

### **Analysis**

In such conversation, Charles applied Off Record strategy when he prevented the existence of another pet in his or her house by saying "I am sorry I think that would not work". Within such statement, he avoided the possibility of doing face threatening act .And also such statement shows that the speaker wants to be excused for rejecting or doing certain thing.

### **Modern Family**

#### **Conversation 1**

**Haley : Why are you yelling at us when we're up stairs just text me .**

**Clair : All right , that's not happen again , and wow you are not wearing that out fit .**

**Haley : What's wrong with it ?**

**Clair : Honey ,do you have anything to sat to your daughter about her skirt ?**

**Phil : Sorry , oh yes that looks really cute**

**Clair : No it's way too short people know you're a girl you don't need to prove that to them .**

### **Context**

This conversation of the modern family, took place in their home specially in the kitchen when their mom was yelling at her kids in order to come down and having their breakfast .

### **Analysis**

In this conversation, Clair applied an Off Record strategy .When she speaks with her daughter ironically, she wanted to reduce face-threatening act by saying (wow) after seeing her daughter wearing short skirt instead of school uniform. By talking ironically and asking about school outfit, Clair has a hint that she was unsatisfied about her daughters wearing and she was blaming her. Positive politeness is the second strategy that is found in this conversation, when the daughter asked her parents about reason of yelling at her and her brother and sister. In addition to that, positive politeness appeared in another time when Phil was exaggerating in describing her daughter's skirt by saying 'that's really cute'. Furthermore, Clair's statement, "that's not happen again" indicate that the speaker confesses his mistake and she / he declares that this thing will not happen again.

#### **Conversation 2**

**Clair : Thank you for this already do feel better .**

**Phil ; You can go home again Clair .**



**Clair : Sweetie**

**Luke : My stomach hurts**

**Clair : Luke honey , I told you not to eat so fast , just sit back relax and you will be fine .**

### **Context**

This conversation happened between the families in the car. It took place when they were going for a picnic to watch the city from a high hilltop and eating fast food meal in order to change Clair's bad temper.

### **Analysis**

In this conversation a Bald On Record strategy was used in which Clair advised Luke to sit back and be relax in order to get better and tell about his stomach's pain. The second strategy is a Positive politeness in which Clair used markers like "Sweetie" in talking with her husband Phil and "honey" addressing her son to save their positive face. In addition to that Clair's statement "Thank you for this", that she said to her husband shows the speaker that she is very grateful to what the receiver did.

### **Conversation 3**

**Clair : Haley honey , I need you to do something for me .**

**Haley : Mom my arm hurts .**

**Clair : Why don't you find out what it is before you start making up excuses to get out of it ?**

**Haley : Ok what is it ?**

**Clair : I need you to talk to your sister I think there's something wrong with going on with her .**

### **Context**

This conversation was between Clair and Haley in the sitting room. Clair was asking Haley to help her sister in recovering her temper.

### **Analysis**

In this conversation an Off – Record strategy is used when Haley said "My arm hurts " as an excuse to avoid talking with her mother . She gives a hint that she does not care about her mother. Secondly, Clair applies positive politeness strategy when she used the word honey as a way to satisfy her daughter with face saving act but her daughter responses with excuse to avoid her mother's conversation. However, the statement "I need you to do something for me" which Clair says shows the listener that the speaker is having a trouble and he needs assistance.

### **Conversation 4 :**

**Alex : Hey guys , It was me .**

**Phil : What ?**

**Alex : I found a cigarette at school and when I was home I tried it and I guess I held too close to the couch , I am so sorry , you can take my Christmas away but don't take it from everyone else .**

**Phil : That very noble to care about the family but you still smoked and lied that's really , help me to grab the tree .**

**Context**

This conversation was in the sitting room between Alex and Phil in Christmas day. A few days ago, Phil discovered the couch is burnt; he accused his children in smoking. He asked them to confess but in fact, none of them smokes; he punished them by cancelling Christmas party and carrying out Christmas tree. Alex told Phil that she was smoking and burnt the couch, but in fact, she did that in order to persuade her father to keep the party going.

**Analysis**

In this conversation, Phil used a Bald On Record strategy by using high tone in his talk he ordered his daughter to help carrying the Christmas tree out, and by using high tone there is possibility in the existence of face threatening act. In addition, Alex utterance “ I am sorry” shows the receiver that she did some thong wrong and needs to be excused .

**Conversation 5**

**Haley : Hey it’s ok**

**Phil : I had to rehire the crew to shoot the whole thing again tomorrow , I’m way over budget , I’m probably gonna lose the listing**

**Haley : sh sh you’re just overtired , why don’t you close your eyes till I make some white noise , I’m going to try something (swaddling him )**

**Phil : You are really good at this .**

**Haley : Thanks , all right just rest now everything is gonna be ok .**

**Context**

Haley and Phil were in setting room . Phil was laying down on the couch because he was fainted and his daughter was trying to help to get relax and recover his conscious .Phill is telling his daughter about his lose , his daughter was pregnant and she swaddled her father in order to be fixed .

**Analysis**

In this conversation, there is a Bald On Record. Haley asked (demand) her father directly to have some rest in order to regain his conscious and get rest. In addition positive politeness strategy is also used when Phil used the word really as an exaggeration in describing his daughter swaddling. Phil’s utterance “ You are really good at this ” indicates that the speaker is trying to praise one’s deed and encouraging him to keep doing it .

Politeness strategies	Number	%
Positive Politeness	4	44,4%
Negative Politeness	0	0%
Off Record	2	22,2%
Bald – On Record	3	33,3%
Total	9	100%

**Table 1. The frequency of using strategies in Modern Family**

Politeness strategies	Number	%
Positive Politeness	3	33,3 %
Negative Politeness	0	0%
Off Record	2	22,2%
Bald – On Record	2	22,2%
Total	6	84%

**Table 2. The frequency of using strategies in Little House on the Prairie**

## **DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS**

The results indicate the two families have different percentages in their use of strategies. Table 1 demonstrates that the most frequent strategy in the Modern Families' texts was positive politeness with a percentage 44% followed by Bald - on Record with percentage 33%, Off Record with percentage 22%, then negative politeness with zero percentage.

Table 2 demonstrates that most frequent strategy in Little House on the Prairie was Positive politeness with a percentage 33% followed by Off Record and Bald on Record strategies with equal percentage 22%, and then followed by the least frequent strategy which negative politeness with zero percentage.

Regarding the first research question the data analysis revealed that the evolution of has an effect on the adoption of strategies and this was obvious in the above tables in with the adoption of the civilized family was 100% and the uncivilized family was 84%. Moreover, regarding the second question the results showed the two families use the same strategies Positive politeness, Off Record strategy and Bald on Record strategy. Furthermore, the data analysis showed that the most frequent strategy in the two families is Positive politeness and the least frequent strategy is Negative politeness.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The primary objective of this research was to analyze the politeness strategies used in parent-child conversations as shown in two different historical television series, Modern Family and Little House on the Prairie. A comparison research using Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness has yielded some noteworthy outcomes.

The study highlights the significant impact of social development on the incorporation of politeness methods within families. The family shown in "Sophisticated Family" has a higher level of refinement and applies politeness strategies more often and effectively compared to the family depicted in "Little House on the Prairie." This difference is evident when comparing the two programs, which represent different times. This suggests that as societies progress, the acknowledgment and use of politeness in familial interactions are becoming more prevalent, indicating broader social changes in communication norms.

The Positive Politeness approach was the most often used in both series. This indicates a profound inclination to maintain harmonious relationships by reducing social distance, using endearing expressions, and utilizing familiar forms of speech. The persistent use of this strategy by both families demonstrates that nurturing strong relationships remains a primary focus in family communication, regardless of the era.

The purpose of bald-on-record and off-record strategies: While positive politeness was the prevailing approach, these strategies were also used, albeit with less frequency. Bald-on-Record strategies were often used in situations that required straightforward and unequivocal communication because to their directness and lack of mitigating factors. This was particularly evident in circumstances when parents had to provide instructions or assert their power. On the other hand, using off-record strategies allowed speakers to subtly provide hints or recommendations, so reducing the likelihood of their behavior being seen as scary. The judicious method parents use to manage facial issues while maintaining effective communication is evident via the well-balanced utilization of these strategies.

The use of negative politeness was limited in both series. In Modern Family, it was not utilized at all, while in Little House on the Prairie, it was used sparingly. Consequently, the significance of refraining from imposing on others or maintaining social distance is diminished when it comes to familial connections. Instead, the approach involves using indirectness and positive reinforcement to reduce conflict and enhance closeness.

The discrepancies in strategy utilization across the two sets reflect broader cultural and chronological shifts. The growing prevalence of politeness strategies within contemporary households might be seen as a manifestation of the prevailing societal values that prioritize emotional intelligence, independence, and reverence. Conversely, the traditional family shown in Little House on the Prairie represents an era when authoritative and straightforward parenting approaches were more often embraced.

The implications of this research have broader repercussions for understanding the dynamics of family communication. They argue that the methods by which civility and respect are negotiated in everyday encounters vary in accordance with changes in families and communities. Several factors, including changes in cultural values and social norms, as well as the increasing emphasis on emotional well-being in family dynamics, might potentially influence this rise.

The study's results underscore the need of using politeness strategies to maintain peace and civility among families. Furthermore, it highlights the evolution of these strategies throughout time to mirror larger societal changes. The systematic use of Bald-on-Record and Off-Record strategies, together with the consistent implementation of Positive Politeness, emphasizes the complexity of family communication and the ongoing process of power and respect negotiation in parent-child interactions. Future research may further explore these correlations in other cultural contexts and family structures, providing more insightful insights into the evolving nature of family communication.

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