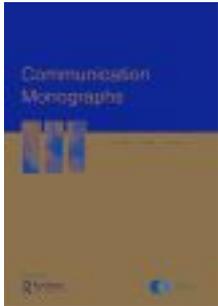


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Modeling Interactional Influence in Advice Exchanges: Advice Giver Goals and Recipient Evaluations

Lisa Mary Guntzviller & Erina Lynne MacGeorge

This study examined how advice givers' self-reported interaction goals influence recipients' evaluations of advice. A typology of giver goals was developed based on message production theories, and the influence of goal pursuit on evaluations of advice was analyzed in interactions between friends (N = 189 dyads). In the structural equation model, several giver goals directly affected recipients' evaluations of specific advice features (e.g., greater effort to give efficacious and feasible advice resulted in ratings of advice as more efficacious and feasible). In turn, recipient evaluations of specific message features influenced their ratings of advice message quality. Advice giver goals of efficacy/feasibility, politeness, and novelty led to positive recipient ratings, whereas effort to change the recipient's mind led to negative evaluations.

Keywords: Advice; Support Provision; Interaction Goals; Dyadic Influence

Advice has drawn attention as a consequential form of supportive communication due to its frequent use and highly variable outcomes (e.g., Goldsmith, 2004; MacGeorge, Feng, & Thompson, 2008). Generally, advice is conceptualized as “recommendations about what might be thought, said, or done to manage a problem” (MacGeorge et al., 2008, p. 145; see also Goldsmith, 2004). Although recipients can perceive advice favorably, feel it helps them to cope, and implement advised actions (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010), advice can also be evaluated negatively, fail to assist with coping, and damage the self-concept of the recipient or the relationship between giver and recipient (Thompson & O’Hair, 2008).

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Prior studies have identified multiple factors that help to determine whether advice will be received more or less positively (see MacGeorge et al., 2008 for a review). However, this body of research suffers from a critical limitation: it has focused almost exclusively on the perceptions of the advice recipient, largely ignoring the perspective of the advice giver or how this perspective affects the recipient. The current study examines how advice giver goals affect recipient message evaluations, thereby modeling the interactive nature of supportive communication (see MacGeorge, Feng, & Burleson, 2011). Specifically, the study identifies a set of interaction goals relevant to advice giving and examines how giver-reported pursuit of these goals influences recipient perceptions of advice messages. This study also replicates prior work connecting recipient perceptions of advice messages with predicted advice outcomes. At a practical level, understanding how advice giver goals affect recipients can help identify approaches to advice giving that result in more favorable outcomes.

Explaining Recipient Evaluations of Advice Messages

In a recent articulation of advice response theory (ART), Feng and MacGeorge (2010) review theory and research on several qualities of advice messages that appear to affect how advice recipients respond. Four of these qualities relate to the advice content (i.e., the nature of the advised action). These qualities are *efficacy* (the advised action will be effective at addressing the problem), *feasibility* (the recipient can perform the advised action), *absence of limitations* (the advised action is relatively free of risks or drawbacks), and *confirmation* (the advised action affirms what the recipient already intended to do). Several studies indicate that advice recipients respond more positively to advice they perceive as having those four qualities (Feng & Burleson, 2008; Feng & MacGeorge, 2010; MacGeorge, Feng, Butler, & Budarz, 2004). Furthermore, advice messages that explicitly highlight the efficacy, feasibility, and absence of limitations of an advised action are perceived as higher in quality than messages that do not explicitly address these issues (Feng & Burleson, 2008).

A fifth consequential quality of advice messages is facework, or the extent to which the advice is presented in a style that addresses the face needs of the recipient. Advice has the potential to be face-threatening because the way the advice is presented may threaten the recipient's image as a liked and capable person (*positive face*) or as an autonomous actor (*negative face*; Brown & Levinson, 1987; MacGeorge et al., 2008). Multiple studies indicate that advice perceived as less face-threatening (or more polite) is evaluated more positively (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010; Goldsmith & MacGeorge, 2000; MacGeorge et al., 2004). Additional studies show that advice messages that utilize facework strategies (e.g., compliments, hedges) are preferred to messages that lack these strategies or contain overtly face-threatening language (Goldsmith, 1999; 2004). To date, many studies have assessed perceived facework or politeness as a unitary concept, but recent work suggests that facework directed at positive face needs and negative face needs (i.e., positive and negative facework) can be assessed separately and may have distinctive implications for responses to advice (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010).

As research on advice has developed, scholars have assessed recipients' reactions to advice in a variety of ways, with steadily increasing attention to outcomes such as whether the advice facilitates coping or is implemented (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010; MacGeorge et al., 2004). However, the relatively broad construct of *message quality*—measured as a synthesis of perceptions of helpfulness, effectiveness, sensitivity, supportiveness, and appropriateness—continues to be a useful summary indicator of responses to advice (Feng & Burleson, 2008; Feng & MacGeorge, 2010; Goldsmith & MacGeorge, 2000; MacGeorge et al., 2004). Consistent with ART and prior research, the following hypothesis predicts the influence of advice message content and style on evaluations of message quality:

- H1: As recipient evaluations of efficacy, feasibility, absence of limitations, confirmation, positive politeness, and negative politeness increase, recipient perceptions of message quality will increase.

Toward an Interactive Model of Advice Quality

Although there are established relationships between advice recipients' perceptions of message content and style and their evaluations of message quality, the impact of advice giver interaction goals on recipient perceptions and evaluations has not been previously examined. Interaction goals are “desired end states” that individuals must “communicate and coordinate with others to achieve” (Wilson, 2002, p. 134). Current theories of message production indicate that goals have a significant influence on interaction behavior and outcomes (Berger, 1997; Dillard, 1990). Thus, as advice givers formulate and pursue goals for conversing with recipients, these goals should affect the messages they produce, and consequently, how the messages are received. Advice researchers have called for research to examine the interaction between the advice giver and recipient, especially the impact of advice giver goals (Goldsmith & MacGeorge, 2000).

Advice Giver Interaction Goals

Although there has been some work on interaction goals relevant to supportive communication (e.g., MacGeorge, 2001), there is no current typology of goals specific to giving advice. O'Keefe (1988) notes that individuals are expected to follow goals that are relevant to the situation at hand. Thus, advice givers will likely be expected to try to give advice that helps to resolve the recipient's problem (i.e., advice that is efficacious, feasible, and absent of limitations) and is polite (i.e., includes positive and negative facework). However, some advice givers may not recognize these goals as relevant or may choose not to pursue them (O'Keefe, 1988).

In addition, because advice can be viewed as a form of persuasion (Wilson, Aleman, & Leatham, 1998), the persuasion literature suggests three other goals that may be relevant to advice givers. Persuasion theorists distinguish between three types of persuasive efforts: reinforcing a previously held belief, changing a previously held belief, and creating a new or novel belief (Miller, 1980; Stiff & Mongeau, 2003).

Correspondingly, advice givers may *reinforce* or recommend a recipient's intended course of action, advise a *novel* action not previously considered by the recipient, or attempt to *change* a recipient's intended course of action by advising a different or contradictory action.

Because there is no empirical evidence available regarding advice giver goals, little is known about the extent to which advice givers report pursuing each goal. Thus:

- RQ1: Which advice giver goals (efficacy, feasibility, absence of limitations, positive facework, negative facework, reinforcement, change, and novelty) are most strongly pursued by advice givers?

Advice Giver Interaction Goals and Recipient Evaluations

Message production theories indicate that speakers' goals influence their messages, which are in turn interpreted and evaluated by message recipients (Wilson, 2002). In an advice interaction, advice recipients evaluate specific qualities of advice (content and style) and the overall message quality (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010). Advice givers' goals that focus on the advice message (efficacy, feasibility, absence of limitations, positive facework, and negative facework) will likely influence recipients' evaluations of advice on the respective dimensions. For example, if an advice giver reports being strongly focused on providing positive facework while giving advice, that goal should be detectable in the style of the message, and the advice recipient should perceive the advice as conveying greater liking and approval. Accordingly:

- H2: As advice giver pursuit of an interaction goal increases, recipient evaluations of advice messages with regard to that characteristic will also increase.

The advice giver goals of reinforcement, change, and novelty are expected to directly influence advice recipients' ratings of advice confirmation (the extent to which the advice confirms what the recipient already intended to do). When advice givers attempt to reinforce recipients' plans of action, recipients will likely recognize this and view the advice as being higher in confirmation. However, if an advice giver puts effort into the goals of change or novelty, an advice recipient is likely to recognize that the giver is attempting to alter his or her actions and therefore rate the advice as less confirming. Thus:

- H3: As advice giver pursuit of the reinforcement goal increases, advice recipient evaluations of confirmation will increase.
 H4: As advice giver pursuit of (a) change and (b) novel solutions increase, advice recipient evaluations of confirmation will decrease.

Advice giver efforts to reinforce, change, or create a solution may also influence the advice recipient's perception of the politeness of the advice. Giver efforts to validate the recipient's solution may make the recipient feel likable and competent (enhancing positive face) and autonomous (enhancing negative face). However, giver attempts to change the recipient's plan or to brainstorm a new solution may lead to recipients feeling less liked, competent, and autonomous, as they may feel that givers did not think their problem-solving abilities were good enough. Thus:

- H5: As advice giver pursuit of reinforcement as an interaction goal increases, recipient evaluations of (a) positive facework and (b) negative facework will increase.
- H6: As advice giver pursuit of (a) change and (b) novelty as interaction goals increase, recipient evaluations of positive and negative facework will decrease.

All of the preceding hypotheses can be integrated into a model that depicts how goals reported by advice givers are predicted to influence recipient evaluations of specific elements of advice messages, which are predicted to influence recipient evaluation of advice message quality as a whole. The model (see Figure 1) depicts multiple goals that may be salient to the advice giver and how these goals may simultaneously impact a variety of recipient evaluations.

Method

Participants

Participants for the present study were recruited from communication courses at a large Midwestern university. Students were instructed to bring a friend with them to the lab, and thus participated in dyads. One participant was assigned the role of advice giver and the other the role of advice recipient. The current study is a subset of a larger dataset, as only dyads in which both participants agreed that advice was given are included ($N = 190$ dyads; see Procedure). Advice recipients identified their dyadic partners as best friends (32.1%, $n = 61$), good friends (30.5%, $n = 58$), casual friends (24.7%, $n = 47$), romantic partners (6.8%, $n = 13$), or roommates (5.8%, $n = 11$). For the 380 participants, the average age was 19.76 years (range = 17–35 years, $SD = 1.92$).

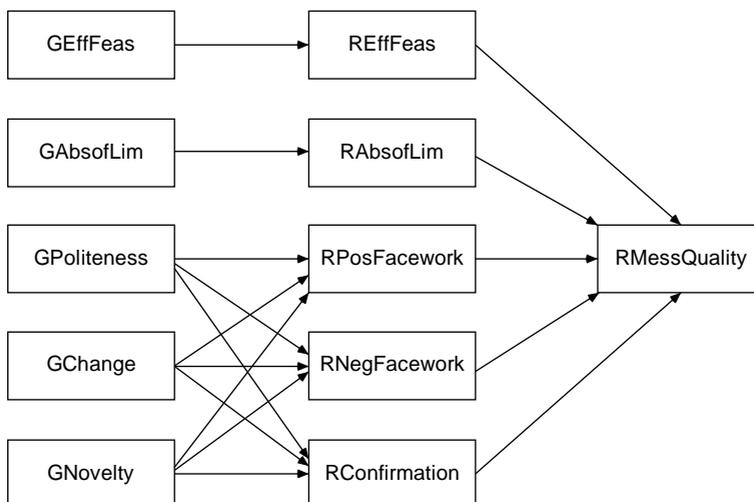


Figure 1 Hypothesized structural equation model after EFA. Error terms not pictured for parsimony. For abbreviation key, see Table 3.

There were more women in the sample (66.8%, $n = 254$) than men (33.2%, $n = 126$). Participants received \$10 compensation or extra credit, if eligible.

Procedure

When each dyad arrived at the research lab, participants were separated and asked to list three to five problems, stresses, or hassles they were currently experiencing and to rate them on several dimensions. The researcher selected the problem that was rated as most serious by the participants from the problems that had not been previously discussed. The participant whose problem was selected was designated the advice recipient and the other participant was designated as the advice giver, though these labels were not communicated to the participants.

Participants were separately told that they were going to have a conversation together about the advice recipient's selected problem. The advice giver was instructed to lead the conversation as naturally as possible by briefly discussing plans for the upcoming break, and then introducing the recipient's problem (the advice giver was given the recipient's own description of the problem). Participants were reunited in a room with a discreet video camera and an audio recorder, and given 15 minutes to discuss the problem. Afterwards, the participants were separated again to complete surveys for the current study. During this time, the advice givers reported on their pursuit of interaction goals relevant to giving advice (see below, advice giver measures); advice recipients evaluated specific advice features and the overall advice message quality (see below, advice recipient measures). Givers and recipients who reported not giving or receiving advice about the problem were not asked to complete advice-related measures. Consequently, data in this study comes from dyads in which both participants reported that advice was given.

Measures

Advice giver measures. The scales completed by the advice giver were created for the current study, were modeled after MacGeorge (2001), and are included in Table 1. Items were worded as closely as possible to the recipient items measuring evaluations of related message dimensions. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *very little effort*, 5 = *very strong effort*) to assess the amount of effort that advice givers put into each goal. Although goals researchers have also examined the importance of a goal (rather than the effort exerted toward that goal), the importance of goals and effort exerted to achieve those goals are generally assumed to have a strong association (Dillard, Segrin, & Harden, 1989). Giver goal items were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2006).

The 29 advice giver goal items were subjected to principal axis factoring with oblimin rotation. The initial run of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) revealed five factors with eigenvalues over one. Brown (2006) notes that item loadings greater than or equal to .3 are typically considered salient, although criteria vary. Three items (two negative facework items and one reinforcement item) cross-loaded above .3 on more

Table 1 Advice Giver Goal Items EFA

	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
Could help improve my friend's situation ^a			-.787		
Could help to fix my friend's problem ^a			-.798		
Could solve my friend's difficulties ^a			-.745		
My friend was capable of accomplishing ^b			-.699		
Was possible for my friend to do ^b			-.729		
My friend could do ^b			-.771		
Would not have serious drawbacks ^c				.636	
Would not have undesirable effects ^c				.658	
Would not have significant disadvantages ^c				.856	
Make my friend feel good about him/herself ^d	.823				
Make my friend feel liked ^d	.874				
Make my friend feel understood ^d	.759				
Make my friend feel approved of ^d	.860				
Make my friend feel capable ^d	.718				
Make my friend feel identified with ^d	.656				
Make my friend feel competent ^d	.711				
Make my friend feel able ^d	.704				
Show respect for my friend's right to make his or her own decisions ^e	.655				
Show consideration for my friend's independence ^e	.692				
Agree with my friend's understanding of how to solve the problem ^f	.587				
Support my friend's plan for dealing with the problem ^f	.624				
Confirm my friend's decision about how to handle the problem ^f	.637				
Change my friend's idea for solving the problem ^g		.732			
Adjust my friend's plan for dealing with the problem ^g		.725			
Alter my friend's understanding of how to solve the problem ^g		.834			
Modify my friend's decision about how to handle the problem ^g		.670			
My friend had not previously considered ^h					.795
My friend had not thought of ^h					.717
My friend had not taken into account ^h					.830
Eigenvalues	10.98	3.58	2.12	1.31	1.13

Note. All items were primed with the question "How much effort did I give to achieve this goal?" and were answered by the advice giver. Items with subscripts a, b, c, and h included a subsequent phrase "Advise an action that. . ." Item subscripts represent the following categories: a: efficacy; b: feasibility; c: absence of limitations; d: positive facework; e: negative facework; f: reinforcement; g: change; h: novelty. Loadings reported from Pattern Matrix. Blank cells indicate loadings less than .30. All reported loadings are from the final EFA.

than one factor and were dropped. As suggested by Brown, the EFA was then rerun, to ensure replication of the factors. The same five factors produced eigenvalues over one and no items cross-loaded over .3 (see Table 1). The five factors collectively explained 65.91% of the variance, and indicated that advice giver goals factored slightly differently than expected.

The first factor loading revealed that all retained facework and reinforcement items loaded together. Potentially, advice givers view reinforcement as a face-saving act and do not distinguish between positive and negative facework. Reinforcement could be

considered to be facework if the giver's intent was to make the recipient feel that their solution was viable. Alternatively, advice givers may distinguish between reinforcement and facework types, but simply perform them simultaneously, therefore making them statistically indistinguishable. Distinctions between positive and negative facework are fairly subtle, as it is not unusual for scale items assessing these constructs to load together (e.g., MacGeorge et al., 2004). Because the factor is mainly composed of facework items measuring politeness, and the reinforcement items could be classified as positive politeness, the factor was labeled *politeness*. The items loading on the second factor were all *change* items. The efficacy and feasibility items loaded together on the third factor, which was labeled *efficacy/feasibility*. *Absence of limitations* and *novelty* items loaded on the fourth and fifth factors, respectively. Cronbach's alphas for all scales were acceptable.

Advice recipient measures—evaluations. All items for the advice recipients' evaluations of the advice were measured on 5-point Likert-type scales (1 = *strongly*

Table 2 Advice Recipient Evaluation Items EFA

	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
I believe that the advised action could help to improve my situation ^a	.719				
I perceive that the advised action could help to fix my problems ^a	.781				
I think that the advised action could solve my difficulties ^a	.793				
The advice given is something I could do ^b	.406				
I am capable of accomplishing the advised action ^b	.823				
It is possible for me to do the recommended action ^b	.635				
I predict that the advised action will have serious drawbacks ^c			.758		
I can see that the advised action has significant disadvantages ^c			.869		
I can tell that the advised action would have undesirable effects ^c			.868		
The advice showed that my friend approved of me ^d				.793	
The advice showed that my friend understood me ^d				.684	
The advice made me feel that my friend identified with me ^d				.793	
The advice made me feel good about myself ^d				.721	
The advice made it clear that I could choose whether or not to take it ^e					.804
The advice was respectful of my right to make my own decisions ^e					.666
The advice leaves me free to do what I want to do ^e					.612
The advice showed consideration for my independence ^e	.342				.409
The advised action is something I had already planned to do ^f		.923			
I had already anticipated doing what the advice told me to do ^f		.903			
The advice recommends I do something I had already intended to do ^f		.916			
Eigenvalues	6.69	2.20	1.73	1.43	1.19

Note. All items answered by the advice recipient. Item subscripts represent the following categories: a: efficacy; b: feasibility; c: absence of limitations (all items reverse-worded); d: positive facework; e: negative facework; f: confirmation. Loadings reported from Pattern Matrix. Blank cells indicate loadings less than .30. All reported loadings are from the final EFA.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Cronbach's alpha	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. GEff/Feas	3.75	.73	.92	–									
2. GAbsLim	3.33	.86	.73	.54***	–								
3. GPolite	3.76	.68	.94	.62***	.43***	–							
4. GChange	2.76	.84	.82	.27***	.21**	.13 [†]	–						
5. GNovel	2.98	.90	.84	.44***	.31***	.34***	.57***	–					
6. REff/Feas	4.10	.50	.85	.16*	.13 [†]	.09	.07	.09	–				
7. RAbsLim	3.94	.83	.84	.06	.07	.08	–.16*	–.01	.43***	–			
8. RPosFace	4.06	.55	.79	.09	.09	.15*	–.11	.07	.57***	.40***	–		
9. RNegFace	4.01	.48	.67	.08	.10	.11	.04	.07	.51***	.38***	.52***	–	
10. RConfirm	3.71	.78	.90	–.05	–.07	–.03	–.04	–.13 [†]	.34***	.17*	.24**	.21**	–
11. RMessQual	4.28	.55	.76	.13 [†]	.11	.10	–.06	.06	.54***	.32***	.55***	.42***	.12

Note. GEff/Feas: Giver Efficacy/Feasibility Goal; GAbsLim: Giver Absence of Limitations Goal; GPolite: Giver Politeness Goal; GChange: Giver Change Goal; GNovel: Giver Novelty Goal; REff/Feas: Recipient Efficacy/Feasibility Evaluation; RAbsLim: Recipient Absence of Limitations Evaluation; RPosFace: Recipient Positive Facework Evaluation; RNegFace: Recipient Negative Facework Evaluation; RConfirm: Recipient Confirmation Evaluation; RMessQual: Recipient Message Quality Perception.

[†] $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

disagree, 5 = *strongly agree*) and are included in Table 2. These measures included three efficacy items (Feng & Burleson, 2008), five feasibility items (modified from MacGeorge et al., 2008), three absence of limitations items (MacGeorge et al., 2004), eight positive facework items (modified from Feng & Burleson, 2008), four negative facework items (MacGeorge et al., 2004), and three confirmation items (Feng, 2006). Previous studies reported slight variations in the factor loadings for items measuring recipients' evaluations of advice (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010; MacGeorge et al., 2004), indicating the need for a factor analysis of these items.

The 26 recipient items were subjected to a principal axis factoring with oblique rotation (see Table 2). Six items (two feasibility items and four positive facework items) had cross-loadings above .3, and were therefore dropped; all except one of the dropped items were reverse worded. Although one negative facework item cross-loaded (at .34), it was retained because it improved the Cronbach's alpha for that scale. With 20 items retained, the five factors collectively explained 66.24% of the variance. Efficacy and feasibility items loaded together on the first factor. This factor was labeled *efficacy/feasibility*. The items for *confirmation*, *absence of limitations*, *positive facework*, and *negative facework* loaded respectively on the remaining factors. Reliability statistics for all scales are shown in Table 3; all were acceptable.

Advice recipient measures—message quality. Five items that have been frequently used in advice studies to assess recipient perceptions of *advice message quality* (e.g., Goldsmith & MacGeorge, 2000; MacGeorge et al., 2004) were used in the present study. Cronbach's alpha was acceptable (see Table 3).

Revised Hypotheses

The factor analyses prompted the collapsing of efficacy and feasibility into a single *efficacy/feasibility* variable and giver goals of positive facework, negative facework, and reinforcement into a single *politeness* variable; therefore, the hypotheses were revised accordingly. A model with the revised variables and paths is depicted in Figure 1.

Dyadic Data

Because the current study examines distinguishable dyads, or dyads in which the two members can be identified as distinct from each other (i.e., advice giver versus recipient), and examines the causal effects of one partner on another at the level of the dyad, nonindependence does not need to be controlled between partners (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). However, measures that come from one partner are subject to nonindependence with each other, and therefore all of the giver variables are correlated with each other and all of the error terms of the recipient evaluations are correlated, as suggested by Kenny and colleagues.

Results

Data analysis was conducted in three stages. First, preliminary analyses were run to ensure that the data met the assumptions of structural equation modeling (SEM; see Table 3 for descriptive statistics and correlations). Second, paired *t*-tests were run to determine on which goals givers reported exerting the most (and least) effort. Finally, AMOS 16.0 was used to conduct the path analysis, which included assessing overall model fit and specific hypotheses.

Data were screened for univariate, bivariate, and multivariate normality. One multivariate outlier was identified (*Mahalanobis distance* = 59.04) when using 36.12 as the critical cutoff value for multivariate normality ($p = .001$), as suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). This outlier was removed from subsequent analyses. Data were normal apart from the multivariate kurtosis, which was slightly abnormal (*Multivariate kurtosis* = 14.40).

Ten paired *t*-tests were conducted to test Research Question 1, which asked which goals (efficacy/feasibility, absence of limitations, politeness, change, and novelty) advice givers reported as pursuing most strongly. Each goal was compared against the other goals to determine if reported exerted effort statistically varied between goals. The goals of politeness ($M = 3.76$, $SD = .68$) and efficacy/feasibility ($M = 3.75$, $SD = .73$) were pursued the most strongly by givers, with no significant difference between how strongly givers pursued the two goals ($t = -.29$, $p = .77$). The goal of absence of limitations ($M = 3.33$, $SD = .86$) was the second most strongly pursued goal compared to politeness and efficacy/feasibility ($t = -7.05$, $p < .001$ and $t = 7.41$, $p < .001$, respectively). Novelty ($M = 2.98$, $SD = .90$) was pursued less strongly than absence of limitations ($t = 13.60$, $p < .001$), and change ($M = 2.76$, $SD = .84$) was pursued less strongly than novelty ($t = -3.71$, $p < .001$).

Advice Interaction Model

A maximum likelihood structural equation analysis was run in AMOS 16.0 to analyze the hypothesized path diagram (see Figure 1). Kenny and McCoach (2003) recommend that researchers simultaneously use CFI, TLI, and RMSEA fit statistics. The fit statistics indicated that the model had excellent fit, TLI = 1.00, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, RMSEA CI90 = .00 to .05. The model was not statistically significant, CMIN = 14.28, $df = 19$, CMIN/ $df = .75$, $p = .77$, indicating that the model was not rejected for the data.

Maximum likelihood regressions for the specified paths in the model tested the proposed hypotheses (see Table 4). A model of the statistically significant paths of the main effects (H1 through H6) is displayed in Figure 2. In-text statistics are reported only for significant paths. Squared multiple correlations were computed for each of the endogenous (recipient) variables: efficacy/feasibility $R^2 = .02$, absence of limitations $R^2 = .00$, positive facework $R^2 = .04$, negative facework $R^2 = .01$, confirmation $R^2 = .02$, and message quality $R^2 = .39$.

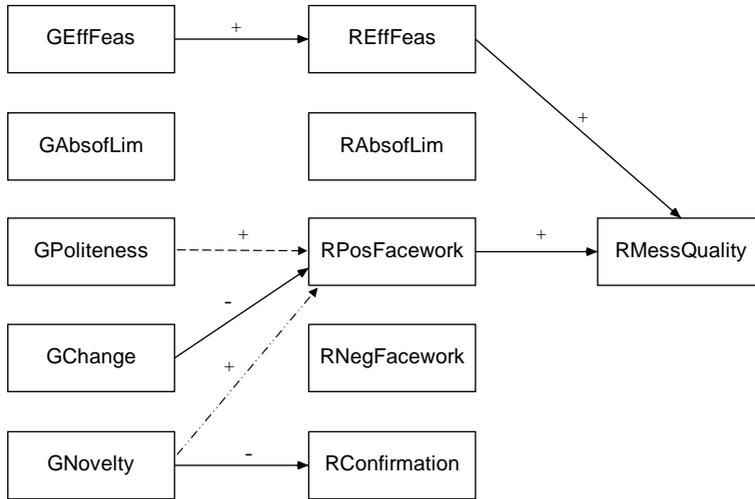


Figure 2 Statistically significant paths of structural equation model. Solid lines represent $p < .01$. Dashed line represents $p = .05$. Error terms not pictured for parsimony. For abbreviation key, see Table 3.

Table 4 Path Model Hypotheses Results

	IV		DV	B	SE	β	p
H1	REff/Feas	→	RMessQual	.35	.08	.32	.000
	RAbsLim	→	RMessQual	.02	.04	.04	.580
	RPosFace	→	RMessQual	.33	.07	.33	.000
	RNegFace	→	RMessQual	.11	.08	.10	.170
	RConfirm	→	RMessQual	-.07	.04	-.10	.108
H2	GEff/Feas	→	REff/Feas	.10	.04	.15	.012
	GAbsLim	→	RAbsLim	.04	.06	.04	.506
	GPolite	→	RPosFace	.10	.05	.12	.053
	GPolite	→	RNegFace	.07	.05	.10	.156
H3	GPolite	→	RConfirm	.02	.08	.02	.781
	GChange	→	RConfirm ^a	.05	.08	.05	.550
H4	GNovel	→	RConfirm ^a	-.15	.08	-.17	.047
	GChange	→	RPosFace ^a	-.12	.05	-.19	.007
	GChange	→	RNegFace ^a	.03	.04	.04	.559
	GNovel	→	RPosFace ^a	.07	.05	.12	.103
	GNovel	→	RNegFace ^a	.00	.04	.00	.960

Note. H5 was deleted due to the collapse of reinforcement into the politeness goal. For abbreviation key, see Table 3. ^aNegative predicted relationship.

Hypothesis 1 stated that recipient evaluations of positive and negative facework, efficacy/feasibility, absence of limitations, and confirmation would influence recipient perceptions of message quality. The hypothesis was partially supported, as recipient evaluations of positive facework ($\beta = .33, p < .001$) and evaluations of efficacy/feasibility ($\beta = .32, p < .001$) significantly influenced message quality perceptions.

However, negative facework, absence of limitations, and confirmation did not have statistically significant effects.

Hypotheses 2 through 6 predicted that the advice giver goals of politeness, efficacy/feasibility, absence of limitations, change, and novelty would influence recipient evaluations of positive and negative facework, efficacy/feasibility, absence of limitations, and confirmation. Specifically, Hypothesis 2 predicted that giver goals would influence the matching recipient evaluations of that topic; this was partially supported. Giver pursuit of efficacy/feasibility positively influenced recipient evaluations of efficacy/feasibility, $\beta = .15$, $p = .012$. Additionally, giver pursuit of politeness was associated with recipient evaluations of positive facework, although the effect was marginally significant, $\beta = .12$, $p = .053$. Giver pursuit of absence of limitations and politeness did not influence recipient evaluations of absence of limitations and negative facework, respectively. Hypothesis 3 stated that as giver effort at politeness increased, recipient evaluations of confirmation would increase. The hypothesis was not supported. Hypothesis 4 indicated that as giver pursuit of (a) change and (b) novelty increased, recipient evaluations of confirmation would decrease. While the hypothesis was not supported with respect to the goal of change, giver pursuit of novelty did negatively influence recipient evaluations of confirmation, $\beta = -.17$, $p = .047$. Hypothesis 5 was eliminated due to the collapsing of variables after the factor analysis. Hypothesis 6 stated that as advice giver pursuit of (a) change and (b) novelty increased, recipient evaluations of positive and negative facework would separately decrease. Giver effort toward novelty was not associated with recipient positive or negative facework evaluation; additionally effort toward change was not associated with negative facework evaluation. However, giver pursuit of change was negatively associated with recipient evaluations of positive facework, $\beta = -.19$, $p = .007$. The statistically significant paths are depicted in Figure 2.

Discussion

Prior research on advice in supportive interactions has focused on the advice recipient's experience, giving relatively little attention to the perspective of the advice giver. As an initial response to this limitation, this study was designed to examine how advice giver self-reported goals influence recipient responses to advice. A typology of advice giver goals was developed to determine (a) the extent to which advice givers pursue goals that are related to how recipients evaluate advice and (b) the influence of these goals on recipient evaluations of advice message features. This study also replicated previous research on recipient evaluations of facework, message content, and confirmation in a more naturalistic and immediate setting than previous studies. Overall, advice givers varied in the extent to which they pursued different advice goals. Advice giver goal pursuit influenced recipient evaluations of specific elements of the advice, which influenced overall recipient perceptions of the advice. The proposed model of advice interactions was supported, though not all giver goals influenced recipient evaluations.

Linking Advice Giver Goals to Recipient Evaluations

The findings of this study indicate that advice recipients recognized advice givers' efforts to create messages with specific characteristics, and evaluated those messages accordingly. This supports the general theoretical claim that speakers' interaction goals influence message features, which in turn influence how message recipients evaluate the messages (Dillard, 1990; Wilson, 2002). More specifically, these findings provide a preliminary view of how advice givers influence recipient evaluations of advice: when advice givers put more effort into certain goals (such as giving advice that is polite), recipients recognize these efforts and rate aspects of the advice accordingly. These ratings in turn affect recipients' overall evaluations of advice quality. In particular, when givers exerted more effort to produce advice that was efficacious/feasible and polite, recipients rated the advice as more positive on efficacy/feasibility and politeness, and this resulted in higher evaluations of message quality. However, not all giver goal efforts were met with positive evaluations; higher effort at change led to lower recipient ratings of politeness, as predicted. Greater giver effort at novel advice was also recognized by recipients as less confirming; however, confirmation ratings did not have a statistically significant impact on overall message quality ($\beta = -.10, p = .11$).

Although, broadly speaking, goals affected perceptions of advice quality through message evaluations, not all hypothesized paths were supported. The absence of limitations goal did not significantly affect any recipient evaluations and other giver goals only influenced some of the hypothesized recipient evaluations. For example, although giver efforts at giving novel advice caused recipients to view advice messages as less confirming, giver efforts at changing the recipient's mind about the course of action did not have this effect. This was counter to prediction and surprising, as the act of changing appears to be in opposition to the act of confirming. Possibly, some advice givers first confirmed a recipient's solution as a good option, but ultimately attempted to convince them to pursue a different course. Alternatively, if recipients do not feel they have a good solution, they may not perceive a change goal as disconfirming, especially if they were hoping for the giver to advise a better solution.

This study demonstrates that advice giver goals affect recipient evaluations of advice; however, goal pursuit explained only a small portion of the variance in recipient evaluations. Future research that examines how givers select and combine multiple goals may explain more variance. The way in which these goals are pursued may also be important, since differing advice giver strategies or skill levels may result in very different messages, even if giver effort to pursue specific goals is similar. Theoretically, giver goals influence message production (i.e., advice), and advice messages influence recipient message evaluations; however, the current study indirectly assesses this assumption, by examining the influence of advice giver goals on recipient message evaluations. Future research could address exactly how varying pursuit of giver goals influences advice messages, and in turn, which actual message features affect recipients' positive or negative evaluations. Furthermore, qualitative

analyses of advice conversations may highlight other important phenomena not captured by this quantitative data.

Furthering Knowledge of Advice Recipient Evaluations

Although the primary purpose of the current study was to examine the relationship between advice giver goals and recipient evaluations, the present study also provided an opportunity to replicate prior studies examining how specific features of advice influence perceptions of message quality (e.g., Feng & Burleson, 2008; Feng & MacGeorge, 2010), and to do so with a more naturalistic methodology (laboratory interactions vs. recalled interactions or hypothetical scenarios). Consistent with prior findings, the current study shows that recipient evaluations of efficacy/feasibility and positive facework have a positive impact on perceptions of overall message quality. The current study's finding that absence of limitations did not influence message quality is also consistent with a recent study that found it to have a weaker influence relative to other dimensions of advice evaluation (Feng & MacGeorge, 2010).

The presented results also extend knowledge about recipient responses to advice in at least two ways. First, the current study was designed to examine the distinctive effects of positive facework and negative facework. Although these are theoretically separate constructs (Brown & Levinson, 1987), prior studies have typically employed a single measure. In methodologically separating these dimensions, recipient evaluations of positive facework was associated with higher perceptions of advice message quality. However, negative facework had no significant effect. Because advice giving has been viewed as more threatening to negative than to positive face (Wilson et al., 1998), the current findings suggest the need to refine and further investigate claims related to advice, face threat, and facework. The reliability for the negative facework scale was also lower than desirable (Cronbach's $\alpha = .67$), indicating that methodological as well as theoretical issues need to be addressed in future studies.

Future research could additionally address aspects of the recipient's problem, which may also influence how recipients view advice. The problem seriousness or the extent to which the recipient wants advice about the problem will likely influence advice evaluations. Furthermore, advice recipient traits, such as thinking style, may also play a role. Factors such as these will likely not only influence recipient evaluations, but may impact advice giver goals as well.

Theoretical Contributions

Giving advice has previously been treated as a singular, persuasive goal (e.g., Wilson et al., 1998), or one of a set of goals in supportive interactions (MacGeorge, 2001). The current analysis was based on the observation that there may also be multiple, nuanced goals for giving advice, including goals that may conflict with each other (O'Keefe, 1988). Consistent with this contention, participants in the current study reported a variety of advice giving goals, pursued some goals more than others, and sometimes simultaneously pursued competitive goals (e.g., novelty and change).

Whereas some research on communication goals has focused on goals as outcomes (e.g., MacGeorge, 2001), the current study provides evidence that variation in speaker goals is associated with variation in recipient outcomes, and that this relationship is mediated by recipient perceptions of messages. Thus, this study demonstrates two key links within a multiple goals perspective on message production and interaction (Caughlin, 2010; Dillard, 1990; Wilson, 2002).

More generally, the current study responds to increasing calls for studying supportive communication—and interpersonal communication more generally—as an interactive process in which provider and recipient thoughts and behaviors are mutually influential (MacGeorge et al., 2011). Although the current study is limited to examining one direction of influence (from advice giver to recipient), this is an improvement over prior work that has typically focused exclusively on support recipients or providers, and it demonstrates that both conversational partners must be examined to fully understand conversational outcomes. Future research on advice interactions should continue to examine the role of the advice giver and how advice givers impact advice recipients, as well as how advice recipient reactions in turn influence advice giver goals.

Limitations

A few limitations of the current study merit consideration. The advice recipient's assessment of the advice was the only marker used to determine advice quality. Advice recipients' perspectives are important, as they are the people who can benefit from the advice and ultimately decide whether to want to follow the advice. However, there may be "tough love" advice that is viewed negatively by the recipient but would be evaluated more positively by a third party. Future research could consider ways of assessing the impact of advice giver goals and advice that are not solely dependent on the recipient's advice rating.

The current approach to goal assessment also has limitations. Because givers were asked post-interaction about goals that they may or may not have pursued, they may have inflated their reports of effort exerted. Additionally, the perceived importance of the goals was not measured, and goal importance may have influenced advice formulation differently than goal effort. However, the importance of goals and effort exerted to achieve those goals are generally assumed to have a strong association (Dillard et al., 1989). Future research might explore this relationship and employ other methods for assessing advice interaction goals. For example, participants could thought-list their goals or recall their goals through prompting when watching a videotape of their interaction and identifying goals at specific points in time. A different methodology could help distinguish whether the goal of reinforcement is distinct from facework, as they were statistically indistinguishable in the current study.

Although bringing participants into a laboratory setting was advantageous for obtaining reports of goals and message evaluations immediately postinteraction, the laboratory environment can influence participants and may have led them to

converse somewhat differently than they would have in nonmonitored settings. Accordingly, it is important to continue utilizing multiple methods to test hypotheses of theoretical interest. In addition, although participants represented naturally occurring friendships, the majority of the dyads were composed of Caucasian college students. The enactment of friendship and advice in this demographic may be somewhat different than for people of different ages or ethnicities (see Chentsova-Dutton & Vaughn, 2011). Future studies of advice with participants of more diverse age and ethnicity will help to test the generalizability of the current findings.

Conclusion

Findings from the current study can provide some guidelines for everyday advice giving. Obviously, recipients like advice that is “good” advice, meaning messages that provide solutions that can be enacted and serve to resolve their problems. Therefore, givers should try to give advice that the recipient believes can be carried out and will actually work. It may be helpful to articulate reasons why the advice will be feasible and efficacious (Feng & Bureson, 2008). Recipients also seem to appreciate givers’ efforts to brainstorm and come up with new problem-solving ideas (i.e., novel advice). Beyond the content of the advice, it is important to be polite. Although facework can take a variety of forms, the current study indicates that conveying liking and caring, and respecting recipients’ proposed solutions may be especially helpful.

Advice interactions between friends provide a rich opportunity to examine advice giving and advice evaluations, as well as broader issues of message production, evaluation, and dyadic influence. Future studies can continue to examine how advice givers attempt to give “good” advice, how their conceptualizations of “good” advice may differ from those of recipients, and how recipients evaluate and respond to advice interactions.

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