Communication Conflicts in Family Relationships: A Conversation Analysis of Mother-Daughter Mediation

Yi Ran Duan¹, Yang Li¹, Ying Qi Wu¹*
¹School of Foreign Languages, Hebei Minzu Normal University, Chengde, 067000, China

*Corresponding Author
Email: yingqiwu@outlook.com

Abstract
Family is the basic unit of society, and communication conflicts among family members have a great influence on their psychological state and the relationship of the entire family. The parent-child relationship, in particular, often faces tensions arising from communicative differences and misunderstandings. Drawing on Conversation Analysis, this critical case study aims to explore how impoliteness is realized through speech acts in family conflicts between a mother and daughter participating in a mediation show '金牌调解' (*Jin Pai Tiao Jie*). Findings reveal that high-frequency speech acts like insult and sarcasm significantly escalate mother-daughter tensions, while low-frequency but high-impact acts (e.g., threat and criticism) further damage their relationship; moreover, avoidant speech acts, such as disassociation, fail to resolve conflicts and instead mask deep-seated issues, exacerbating the discord. This study advances the under-researched field of family communication by showing how impoliteness escalates conflicts. This study contributes to offering practical insights for parents and children to recognize and mitigate harmful interactions in daily communication.

Keywords: *pragmatics; conflicts; parent-child relationship; impoliteness*

**JOURNAL OF
PRAGMATICS
RESEARCH**

INTRODUCTION

As one of the basic units of society, the communication and interaction among members of family members greatly affect the emotional and psychological conditions of family members and the living quality of the entire family (Segrin & Flora, 2018). However, disputes and conflicts often occur among family members, especially between parents and children. This is caused by complicated factors such as intergenerational discrepancies, different values, and distinct communication modes (Verma & Satyanarayana, 2018). Family conflict is widely experienced by people in terms of various family relationships. This issue can be defined as an intricate interpersonal phenomenon regarding psychology, behavior, and language (Caughlin et al., 2011). Regarding the psychological level, the family conflict exists whenever a family member desires something while perceiving other family members as 'interfering' or 'baffling'. In terms of the behavioral level, the family conflict occurs when actions or interactions among family members may hinder or restrain each other, causing aggressive arguments or even violent outcomes. The language perspective refers to impolite speech acts that reveal family members' negative appraisal attitudes and expressive offenses (Caughlin et al., 2011; Li & Wu, 2023). Both the speech and act involved in the family conflict are varied and complex in their degrees of explicitness, directness, and aggressiveness, and the extent to which they influence family members. Therefore, the family conflict is not only a commonly witnessed phenomenon in today's familial relationships but also a significant social problem that needs to be discussed and solved urgently.

Nowadays, conflicts often occur in the parent-child relationship, due to intergenerational differences, different living backgrounds, and distinct communicative methods (Mulholland et al., 2020). Such conflict often involves complex communicative dynamics that are manifested in the use of distinct speech acts and the misalignment of understanding (im)politeness. While few studies adopt a pragmatic lens to analyze family conflicts. Notably, research focusing specifically on parent-child relationship with conflictual communication remains

scarce. Therefore, it is imperative to understand the speech acts involved in the conflictual situation between parents and children to promote interpersonal understanding and maintain family harmony. This study aims to explore the speech acts used by a mother and her daughter in a very conflicting and intense relationship. Using a critical case study design and conversation analysis, this study identifies impoliteness realizations in their interactions. The findings aim to enhance pragmatic understanding of parent-child conflict and promote harmonious communication in family relationships.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Impoliteness in Pragmatics

Pragmatics, as a significant subfield within linguistics, primarily examines utterances in human communication, placing particular emphasis on the nuanced correlation between expressions, contexts, and usage scenarios (Shahsavari et al., 2014; Zhao & Wahid, 2024). Research in pragmatics is heavily modelled on the most cited concept of politeness (Culpeper, 2010; Yaqin & Shanmuganathan, 2020; Zhao, 2025). Politeness theory is based on the idea that people have a social self-image that they consciously construct and maintain. This self-image has been defined as 'face' (Culpeper, 2011; Jumanto, 2011). Brown and Levinson (1987), as pioneers, proposed that certain communicative acts are intrinsically threatening 'face' of people, which are termed as 'face-threatening acts' featuring an offensive nature and ultimately result in impoliteness (Terkourafi, 2008).

The concept of impoliteness has currently been a focal point in pragmatic studies, which is an emerging research field to delve into how speech acts subtly yet powerfully convey offensive, disrespectful, and even harmful messages within complex communication circumstances (Risdianto et al., 2023; Yaseen Hassan et al., 2023). Studies of impoliteness not only enrich people's understanding of language functions but also expose the hidden power dynamics and affective complexities

inherent in social interactions (Culpeper, 2005, 2010). Understanding the interplay between communication and impoliteness is crucial when examining family conflicts (Li & Wu, 2023). In the family context, the levels between what is considered 'polite' and 'impolite' can blur and entangle, making it essential to insightfully interpret conversational dynamics to accurately comprehend intentions and emotions involved. This nuanced understanding of impoliteness facilitates a more effective approach to resolving disputes among family members, as it contributes to identifying the root causes of conflicts and developing strategies for navigating the fine line between maintaining 'face' and expressing favourable voices in the family context.

Conflicts in Communication

Communication is the cornerstone of any social relationship. It plays a crucial role in maintaining harmony and promoting understanding in social groups and interpersonal interactions (Antonio, 2023). However, communicative conflicts are often observed in social contacts and significantly impact the members in various relations. In recent academic studies, Guerrero et al. (2021) have highlighted the significance of understanding interpersonal communication in social relationships with partners, friends, and family members. They argued that communication is not just about the words used but also involves the underlying meanings, intentions, and interpretations that shape different processes and consequences of interactions. The more members a social relation has, the more information needs to be shared with each other or within the entire group. Appropriate message sharing is not easy to ensure because a speaker may not be fully aware of all ongoing states and predominant considerations within the interactional context. In social contact, appropriate pragmatic communication is essential for constructing successful interaction and maintaining a good relationship.

In each part of the human interaction, pragmatic expressions, such as requests or suggestions, need to be communicated with appropriate strategies and methods. Neither missing nor incorrectly implemented messages or expressions are desirable. Therefore, the right amount of message sharing and acceptable acts are highly necessary in human interactions (Arendholz, 2013). To ensure this, pragmatically refined communication is a mandatory requisite for speakers now. Furthermore, knowledge about conflicts in communication among social groups is quite important.

Family Communication

The family constitutes the basic building block of society, with the quality of interaction among its members being crucial to the family's harmonious operation and well-being. According to Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2002), how family members communicate with each other remarkably affects how they get along and handle disagreements. When there are problems with communication, it may cause family relationships fraught with troubles and mired in crisis. For instance, the way parents and children talk to each other is especially essential for the overall development of a family.

Regarding family communication, previous studies have shown that impoliteness, offence, and hurt can happen in various family relationships. Zhao and Ran (2022) have investigated how offence can be found and rationalized in mothers-in-law/daughters-in-law conflict in China. Findings indicate the complex formation of impolite acts between Chinese mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. This study also shows that mediators, from the third-party perspective, try to reframe these impolite behaviors and propose effective remedial measures to this kind of problematic relationship. In the marital relationship, Li and Wu (2023) aimed to discover how a couple realized impoliteness, drawing on a critical pragmatic approach. Their study initially demonstrates that the impoliteness

realizations in the marriage communication largely align with the widely established models of impoliteness (e.g., Bousfield, 2008; Garrido Ardila, 2019). Specifically, eleven types of impoliteness were identified to establish a model of impoliteness realizations in marital relationships. They found that both verbal (speech-based) and non-verbal (act-based) practices can be profoundly impolite to obstruct couples from reaching desired goals and ultimately establish hostile emotional conditions. Both Zhao and Ran's (2022) as well as Li and Wu's (2023) studies indicate that the communication within the family context is highly connected with pragmatic features and social norms. Despite their studies having brought heuristic understandings of the relationship in families, communication, and conflict, more studies are suggested to examine impoliteness in family contexts. Therefore, the present study in this regard may utilize a pragmatic-based approach to uncover conflictual practices in another prominent yet underexplored family relationship, namely the mother and the daughter.

RESEARCH METHODS

Data Collection

This study adopts a qualitative-based study approach, leveraging the methodological framework of Conversation Analysis (CA) to examine a specific instance of the mother-daughter conflict. The critical case study method is particularly applied to this research as it allows for in-depth explorations of the complex and nuanced communication patterns that occur within family interactions, especially within a culturally rich context like Chinese society (Zhao & Ran, 2022). The research focuses on a real-life conflict case between a mother and her daughter, drawn from the popular Chinese mediation television show '金牌调解'（*Jin Pai Tiao Jie:* literally *Ideal Mediation*)*.* The rationale for selecting *Jin Pai Tiao Jie* was its "focus on real emotions and the true life of the Chinese people" (Li & Wu, 2023, p. 30). In other words, as an official broadcast under the auspices of China

Jiangxi Radio and Television Network (a provincial government entity), this mediation show's credibility is state-affirmed. This show is committed to helping people deal with conflicts and dilemmas. In the show, the 'parties' looking for mediation are usually two persons who are encountering complex disputes, concerning property controversy, maintenance for parents, marital conflicts, etc. There is a host and multiple mediators in diverse professions (e.g., lawyer, psychologist, civil servant) on-site to uncover problems and discover solutions for the 'parties' (as shown in Figure 1). By analyzing this case, the study aims to identify and interpret the speech acts with impoliteness effects that result in the conflict.

Figure 1. On-site mediation concerning the mother-daughter conflict

Based on this study's analytical theme of mother-daughter relationship, the episode selected for analysis was entitled: *单亲母亲含辛茹苦 两个女儿却反目成仇 20240318* (The single mother endures immense hardships, yet her two daughters become bitter enemies 20240318). The entire episode is divided into two parts: the first half and the second half, with a duration of 35 minutes and 38 seconds and 35 minutes and 39 seconds, respectively. The primary rationale behind the data selection is that this episode has attracted wide attention and reached a very high

view count, being viewed more than 12000 times on the official TV channel (i.e., China Jiangxi Radio and Television Network) and more than 5,000 times on YouTube. Both the content and audience response ensure that this episode is an effective data set.

Most importantly, this episode echoes the foci of this study as 'conflict in mother-daughter relationship' and 'impoliteness in family communication'. The mother, Ms. Zhang, and her eldest daughter, Ms. Yuan, in the case have long been in a state of conflict because of issues of elder care, financial disputes, and accumulated misunderstandings among many trivial matters in their everyday interactions. During the on-site mediation process, the mother and the daughter both exposed the other's mistakes, offensive expressions, and inappropriate behaviors, which can be accounted for as causing impoliteness (Culpeper, 2011). Therefore, this case would allow a pragmatic discussion from critical perspectives. It is henceforth selected as the representative case to uncover the impoliteness, both verbal and non-verbal, occurring in the mother-daughter relationship.

Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical frameworks for this study are grounded in two pragmatic perspectives: Conversation Analysis and Impoliteness Realizations. These frameworks are essential for understanding the communicative dynamics in mother-daughter conflicts and will be used to analyze the speech acts that contribute to causing conflicts.

(a) Conversation Analysis

Conversation Analysis (CA) "is a qualitative, bottom-up, and data-driven approach to social science research that enables researchers to characterise social interactions in terms of how the participants themselves display their understanding of what is happening (Nguyen & Mushin, 2022, p. 1539). This approach emphasizes the systematic ways in which participants initiate and

maintain intersubjectivity. CA has been widely adopted as a qualitative research tool for examining a variety of social settings that involve complex human relationships (Waring et al., 2012; White, 2019). Nonetheless, CA has not been utilized to analyze conflict communication in terms of the family relationship. To fill up this gap, in this study, CA will be employed to analyze the specific mother-daughter conflict featured in the selected episode of *Jin Pai Tiao Jie*. The analysis will focus on identifying and interpreting speech acts and conversational strategies used by both parties (namely the mother and the daughter). By analyzing the interactional processes in the naturalistic context, CA provides valuable insights into how negative reactions and offensive acts arise and how they can potentially be mitigated through effective communication strategies.

(b) Impoliteness Realizations

Early systematic works consider impoliteness as entailing the notion of intention because the common impoliteness phenomenon forms when 'the speaker communicates face-attack intentionally, or the hearer perceives behavior as intentionally face-attacking, or a combination of both' (Culpeper, 2005). To understand how impoliteness manifests in a family context, i.e., marital relationship, Li and Wu (2023) have proposed a model on impoliteness realizations based on their critical case study (as shown in Table 1). Li and Wu's (2023) framework provides an inclusive categorization of impoliteness realizations, which was initially concluded by analyzing marital communication. The identified strategies are particularly relevant in analyzing speech acts within the mother-daughter interactions, as they enable to identify of how certain utterances, or conversational tactics, contribute to the escalation of family conflicts. Based on their case analysis, it shows that when verbal and non-verbal cues align, the sense of impoliteness would be strengthened. This perspective is essential for understanding how impoliteness constructs within the dynamics of familial communication, where

power relations and emotional bonds often influence the perception and impact of impoliteness. In addition, Li and Wu's (2023) initially adopted studies of Bousfield (2008) and Culpeper (2011) were also referenced in this study to identify impoliteness realizations and understand the conversation. In applying these theoretical insights to the analysis of mother-daughter conflicts in the selected episode, this study will identify specific instances of impoliteness, examining how they are realized in the conversation and how they result in conflict effects. The fundamental aspect of the identification process is directed towards speech acts that threaten face, disrupt interactional harmony, or challenge each other between the mother and the daughter.

Table 1. Realizations of Impoliteness in Martial Relation (Li & Wu, 2023, p. 29)

Impoliteness Realizations	Description
Challenge	Unpalatable questions
Seek disagreement	Refute the interlocutors' argument.
Be unconcerned	Do not care about recipients' feelings.
Snub	Ignore the recipient and tend to cease the communication.
Sarcasm	Speak sarcastically or ironically.
Disassociate	Deny association or avoid being related.
Scorn or ridicule	Despise others
Threaten	Implicate the speaker's intention to cause dangers.
Criticize	Dispraise the recipient's actions, characteristics, etc.
Hinder	Interrupt the recipient's speech.
Withhold	Not expressing affection/attitude.
Use taboo words	Use disrespectful or cruel language.
Misbehave	Incorrect or shameful behaviors

RESULTS

Identification of Impoliteness Realizations

Based on the thorough examination of the accusations between the mother (Ms. Zhang) and the daughter (Ms. Yuan), as well as the emotional expressions and reactions at the scene, the impoliteness realizations were first categorized (see Table 2). Overall, 18 instances with impoliteness effects, causing hurt, offense, and embarrassment, were identified during the whole interaction between the mother

JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS RESEARCH

(Ms. Zhang) and the daughter (Ms. Yuan). Based on the analytical model of Li and Wu (2023), these instances were categorized into 8 types of impoliteness realizations: Insult, Deception, Sarcasm, Rudeness, Threat, Disassociation, Challenge, and Criticism.

As shown in Table 2, the identified impoliteness realizations vary in frequency of use. 'Insult' is the most frequently used, occurring six times in total. 'Sarcasm' was used by the mother and the daughter twice for each, in a total of four times. In contrast, 'deception' occurred twice, while 'rudeness', 'threat', 'disassociation', 'challenge', and 'criticism' were observed only once during the mediation process. According to Li and Wu (2023), the impoliteness realizations of 'insult' and 'sarcasm' were considered 'low optionality' with high percentage proportions, 33.33% and 22.22% respectively. 'Deception' was classified as the only realization with medium optionality (11.11%). The other realizations, with only a single occurrence (5.56%), were discussed as the highly optional impoliteness realizations in the mother-daughter conflict.

Table 2. Impoliteness Realizations in the Mother-Daughter Conflict Communication

Speech act type	Explanation	Frequency	Negative value (sum)	Negative value (average)	Negative value (each)
Mother's					
Insult	Use offensive, demeaning language to attack others	5	-44	-8.8	-2 -12 -13 -9 -8
Deception	Exaggerate or misrepresent oneself to gain sympathy	2	-8	-4	-2 -6
Sarcasm	Speak sarcastically or ironically	2	-10	-5	-5 -5
Threat	Use words to express bad intentions to others	1	-11	-11	-11
Criticism	Negative evaluation and belittling of the other's behavior, etc.	1	-10	-10	-10
Challenge	Unpalatable questions	1	-6	-6	-6

JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS RESEARCH

	Daughter's				
Sarcasm	Speak sarcastically or ironically	2	-7	-3.5	-2 -5
Insult	Use offensive, demeaning language to attack others	1	-5	-5	-5
Threat	Use words to express bad intentions to others	1	-6	-6	-6
Disassociation	Deny association or avoid being related	1	-8	-8	-8
Rudeness	Use rude and unsparing language	1	-5	-5	-5

Table 2 continued

As mentioned above, 'insult' is the most observable conflict trigger between the mother and the daughter. In pragmatics, the term 'insult' refers to a speech act that embarrasses or shames others. It is characterized by a strong verbal attack on other persons regarding appearances, characteristics, or behaviors, usually in a derogatory and innocuous manner. In social conflicts, 'insult' is often employed to express anger or dissatisfaction and to achieve emotional catharsis through verbal attacks (Mateo & Yus, 2013). In this study, the mother was engaged in more 'name-calling' towards her daughter. In the five instances of insult, the mother displayed a series of pragmatic features including emotional extremes, directness in attack, moral judgement, verbal repetition, and boldly threatening positive face. She often used typical expressions such as "*you are shameless*", "*you are not human*", and "*you are only good at hitting*", to straightforwardly demean her daughter regarding multiple perspectives, including personalities, abilities, and behaviors. Such insulting speeches mirror the mother's inappropriate communicative style and lack of constructive dialogical attitude. It not only hurt the daughter's feelings and self-esteem, but also undermined the trust and harmonious relationship between them.

As seen in Figure 2, the mother came to ask for the house property, yet the daughter refused her. The mother lashed out with the insult "You are shameless". By saying this, the mother was directly attacking the moral characteristics of the daughter. 'Shameless' (不要脸: 'no face' literally in Chinese) is not a simple

expression of annoyance as the refusal in Chinese social culture; it serves to declare someone as lacking the basic social and moral decency. It implies that, in the mother's eyes, the daughter's act of not giving the house reflects her immoral nature. Such a condemnation casts a shadow over the daughter's social standing within the family, making her feel ashamed and undermining her 'face' in family-based social interactions.

Fragment Example	Translated verbalization
 [05:08-05:50] [Part I]	The mother came to ask for the house property, yet the daughter refused to give it. And the mother scolded the daughter: "……Is this house yours? You are shameless!".

Figure 2. Excerpt of 'insult'

The realizations of 'sarcasm' appeared four times in the mother-daughter conflict interactions. The mother and daughter coincidentally chose to use 'sarcasm' as a verbal weapon during the mediation interaction, worsening the already tense relationship. The popular understanding of sarcasm in the field of linguistics connects with verbal irony, i.e., "we understand something which is the opposite of what is actually said" (Camp, 202, p. 587). In conversational scenarios, this sarcasm tends to wrap impoliteness in the sugar coating of 'false praise' by deliberately distorting facts and devaluing the other party (Li & Wu, 2023).

From the mother's perspective, her sarcastic expression, for example, "*Her ways are so powerful!*" functioned as a criticism of the daughter's 'overreaching' in the family issues. The real intention was that the daughter's concerns for the family were not only excessive but also unwarranted, to the point where the mother felt that the daughter was 'too powerful to be required'. The daughter also used sarcasm. For example, she sneered her mother's two-faced attitude in her interpersonal

relations. As also seen in Figure 3, the eldest daughter stated that "*When my mother thinks I am good, I am the baby; while when she thinks I am bad, I am the bastard*". Here, she was emphasizing her mother's inconsistent attitude towards others. This sarcastic remark was a way of expressing her frustration and the unfair treatment she felt she had received.

During their exchanges, the eldest daughter mentioned that she was kind to her younger sister and sent her to school to get a good education. But the mother retorted that the youngest daughter did not have a good relationship with them and did not talk to her husband (i.e., the brother-in-law). This response from the mother might also imply a sarcastic undertone. It could be seen as her way of downplaying the eldest daughter's efforts and suggesting that her actions were ineffective in terms of educating the youngest daughter to gain good manners. In Chinese family communication, such sarcastic remarks with harsh and negative tones could deeply wound the relationship among family members, which would create a rift in their emotional connection and cause long-lasting negative impacts on their family bonds.

Fragment Example	Translated verbalization
 [23:38-23:46] [Part I]	In the mother's description of her eldest daughter, she said, "What is impressive is this. It is really amazing! Her ways are so powerful! She completely ignored me, her mother. She took care of every aspect of my youngest daughter's wedding arrangements all by herself. I did not receive anything at all."
 [04:45-04:53] [Part II]	The eldest daughter said that she was kind to her younger sister and sent her to school. However, the mother said, "……The youngest daughter did not have a good relationship with them, and she did not talk to her husband (brother-in-law)."

	After hearing the mother's evaluation on the eldest daughter, the eldest daughter sobbed and said, "……When my mother thinks I am good, I am the baby, while when she thinks I am bad, I am the bastard."
[09:54-10:04] [Part II]	

Figure 3. Excerpts of 'sarcasm'

The speech acts revealing 'deception' appeared twice from the mother's side in the process of on-site mediation. Although its frequency of occurrence is lower than that of 'insult', it is also a crucial impolite realization that greatly affected the mother-daughter relationship in this case. In this study, 'deception' refers to the deliberate misleading and cheating utterances or actions that would cause hearers to have false perceptions or wrong judgements in communication. Such speech acts often undermine the trust relationship, which ultimately results in feelings of hurt, offense, and embarrassment for the person deceived (Dynel, 2016).

As seen in the scenario in Figure 4, when the host asked the mother what had happened, the mother began to play the victim and exaggerated her suffering and misfortune to gain sympathy from the on-site mediators. This act was not merely an expression of sadness but a deliberate attempt to manipulate the narrative and elicit support by distorting the reality of the situation. By repeatedly stating, "*I do not want to talk about it. You ask them what I did to them*", she tried to convince the host and mediators that she was mistreated by her eldest daughter, and she tried to portray herself as an image of a victim who cannot voice her suffering. Regarding the ownership of the property, as the biggest trigger of their conflict, the mother insisted that she owned the house. Nonetheless, after the eldest daughter presented the property ownership certificate, the mother began acting clueless by stating, "*I do not remember. It is all a bit fuzzy*". This statement was an explicit deception. People frequently perform deceptions, or just lie, by denying or acting as though

JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS RESEARCH

they have forgotten it. People do 'deception' or 'lie' to avoid taking responsibility or to get extra advantages. This mother's words and actions showed that deception could damage family relationships by breaking truth and trust. This could prevent people from talking openly and frankly with each other.

Fragment Example	**Translated verbalization**
[03:14-03:40] [Part I]	The host asked the mother, "What's going on between you and your daughters, which made you so emotionally unstable?" The mother buried her head in her hands and burst into tears, then said, "I do not want to talk about it. You ask them what I did to them". She put on an act of being extremely aggrieved, as if she had been treating her daughters well. However, from the subsequent conversation of the daughters, it was found that the mother had not been treating her daughters nicely at all.
[11:30-12:16] [Part I]	The mother has always claimed that the house belonged to her, yet the property ownership certificate clearly stated the daughter's name. Facing the proof, she brushed it off and said: "I do not remember. It is all a bit fuzzy".

Figure 4. Excerpts of 'deception'

Impoliteness is commonly concerned with "the use of communicative speech act designed to attack face, and thereby cause social conflict and disharmony" (Culpeper et al., 2003, p. 1545). Speeches (and behaviors) like threats or warnings also undermine the face of interlocutors because such (verbal) actions always go against the wishes of the hearer, and thus threats or warnings are very face-attacking realizations of impoliteness (Bousfield, 2008). As shown in the following Figure 5, the mother initiated physical aggression by giving the daughter a thrust.

The eldest daughter strongly retorted, "*You hit me, did not you? I will bury you today*". The daughter used the word 'bury'. In Chinese society, it is not normal to say anything like '*I will bury you*'. It means that the speaker might do something dangerous or criminal, even killing. When the daughter was angry, she thought her mother had done something so wrong that she could not forgive it. That is why she made such a serious threat against her mother. This kind of direct and strong threat brings about fear and hostility between the mother and the daughter. The daughter's threat, revealing possible violence and crime, undermined the sense of safety and cast a 'dark cloud' over the mother, and potentially other family members, to feel deeply uneasy and dangerous. The mother also made a 'threat' to her daughters. The youngest daughter was in a vulnerable state due to a high level of depression.

While the mother, upon learning of this, locked the daughter in the room and issued the threat act, "*Do not take any medicine, and do not say you are ill. Otherwise, you will not be allowed to get out of here.*" The mother prevented her youngest daughter from getting proper treatment for her mental illness. This suggests that the mother was more concerned about her reputation of having a 'healthy family' rather than her daughter's real health condition. This threatening act consequently made the youngest daughter feel even more fragile at home, both physically and psychologically, which caused a long-term impact on the daughter's mental health recovery and her sense of belonging to her family.

Fragment Example	**Translated verbalization**
[05:23-05:36] [Part I]	During the quarrel, the mother shoved the eldest daughter. In response, the daughter said viciously, "You hit me, did not you? I will bury you today".
[07:15-07:24] [Part II]	The youngest daughter suffered from depression. After learning about it, the mother locked her in the room and threatened her, saying, "Do not take any medicine, and do not say you are ill. Otherwise, you will not be allowed to get out of here."

Figure 5. Excerpts of 'threat'

Although the frequency of 'rudeness' is low in the current mother-daughter case, it is significant to their conflictual relationship. 'Rudeness' in this study refers to words or behaviors that violate acceptable social norms and cause offence in communication. As seen in the scenario (Figure 6), the mother came here to demand the house belonged to the eldest daughter, and the daughter replied, "*GET OUT of here!*". By saying this, the daughter directly dismissed the mother's request in a highly confrontational and disrespectful manner. In Chinese family culture, respecting the eldership is an important part of life. Saying something like this is more than just disagreeing. It goes against family tradition and good behavior. It shows that the daughter thought that her mother's demand was so unreasonable that she did not even want to talk about it. The argument got worse when the

daughter said, '*GET OUT*' (滚: 'gun' in Chinese). The mother felt that the daughter did not respect her and did not think she was superior in the family.

Fragment Example	Translated verbalization
  [05:22-05:25] [Part I]	The mother came here to demand the house belonged to the eldest daughter, and the daughter yelled: "GET OUT of here!" in a loud and furious voice.

Figure 6. Excerpt of 'rudeness'

'Disassociation' is an act of cutting off contact with each other and refusing further communication or emotional interaction through words or behaviors (Li & Wu, 2023). In human communication, speech acts related to 'disassociation' frequently show dissatisfaction, disappointment or rejection to avoid establishing contact with other people or straightaway deny interpersonal association among them. This kind of speech and behaviors usually has an emotional sense of 'distance', which would establish a psychological barrier and hinder further emotional bond. In this study, when the mother's company went bankrupt, she borrowed a large amount of money from the bank. Regarding this loan issue, the eldest daughter said, "*I have been burying these things deep down. I feel like I came into this world as a miserable person and utterly miserable*" (see Figure 7). The daughter's words implied that she has repressed her feelings for a long time. She seemed to think that no one in the family cared about her feelings. Holding back was not just her way of dealing with things. It also showed how broken and disconnected their relationship was. Li and Wu (2023) asserted that when family members feel disconnected, it undermines the emotional bond of their relationship. In this mother-daughter relationship, this 'disassociation' speech prevented sharing and processing mutual understanding.

Fragment Example	**Translated verbalization**
[12:45-13:00] [Part I]	When the mother's company went bankrupt, she borrowed a large amount of money from the bank. Recalling the experience of borrowing money for her mother, the eldest daughter said, "I have been burying these things deep down. I feel like I came into this world as a miserable person and utterly miserable."

Figure 7. Excerpt of 'disassociation'

The impoliteness realization of 'challenge' appeared once in the interaction between the mother and the daughter. According to Bousfield (2008), challenges in communication refer to asking the hearer some challenging questions that critically doubt the hearer's position, stance, beliefs, etc. During the on-site mediation, the mother felt dissatisfied with the eldest daughter's action of buying a dowry for her younger sister. The mother began questioning the eldest daughter in an aggressive tone, "*You bought a dowry for your younger sister. What have you bought for me? Ask yourself. Have you ever given me even a penny? Do you have a clear conscience?*" This revealed a straightforward and forceful 'challenge tone' to the daughter. For the mother's side, she used continuous questions to impose social judgment and interactional demands on her daughter. This instance revealed the overload of information (query and blame) from the mother. In pragmatic studies, the speaker may act as a questioner who uses continuous questions to assert control, as seen in conflict communication, to make hearer feel pressured and face threatened.

In Chinese family culture, which places great emphasis on filial piety (孝道：*xiao dao*—a core virtue in Confucian ethics highlighting respect, obedience, and care for parents and ancestors) and the sense of family responsibility, this kind of challenge on family responsibly was a significant matter (Bedford & Yeh, 2019). By asking these pointed questions, the mother was challenging her daughter's sense of moral obligation to her as a mother. This challenge put the daughter in a difficult

position, forcing her to defend her choices within the context of traditional family values. As a result, it had a significant impact on their relationship, creating a rift and increasing the emotional distance between them. If these challenges were not properly addressed, they would certainly undermine the intimacy that should exist in a close mother-daughter relationship.

Fragment Example	Translated verbalization
[20:48-21:01] [Part I]	Being dissatisfied with the eldest daughter's action of buying a dowry for her younger sister, the mother began questioning the eldest daughter in an aggressive tone, "You bought a dowry for your younger sister. What have you bought for me? Ask yourself. Have you ever given me even a penny? Do you have a clear conscience?"

Figure 8. Excerpt of 'challenge'

The last impoliteness realization identified in this case was 'criticism', which was verbally realized by speakers to dispraise others' actions or characteristics, etc. The mother criticized her daughter regarding the house issue, as shown in Figure 9. The mother verbally dispraised her daughter's actions of 'not visiting her'. By making this criticism, the mother directly negated the daughter's responsibility as a child and her moral duty of caring for her parents. As mentioned above, the norm of filial piety (*xiao dao*) is deeply ingrained in the Chinese family culture (Bedford & Yeh, 2019), however, such criticism on the child's lack of filial piety is not merely a personal reproach but an invocation of cultural expectations. What the mother criticized highlighted her daughter's perceived failure to meet these expectations in terms of being a 'good' child, but rather she was an irresponsible child not fulfilling familial obligations.

Fragment Example	Translated verbalization
 [11:20-11:45] [Part I]	When talking about the house that only has her daughter's name on it, the mother said, "I had been paying off the mortgage for this house all along. My daughter is unfilial. She has never come to visit me even once. Since you are unfilial, why should I give this house to you?"

Figure 9. Excerpt of 'criticism'

Severity of Impoliteness Realizations

Overall, the above analyzed speech acts from both the mother and the daughter indicate different perspectives and distinct communicative modes of both sides in the family conflict. We also use the 'Negative values' to measure the impoliteness degree of the identified realizations. Based on the 'Negative values (each)' column in Table 2. The lower the score, the more hurt/damaging the words/behaviors are to the hearer's dignity and to the relationship.

For the mother, the most severe impoliteness manifestation was 'threat' that was evaluated as '-11' for the only instance. The typical exemplification of this was the very harmful behavior. The abusive action, like 'locking her depressed daughter away without necessary medicine'. Such a threat directly violated the basic care expected in the mother-daughter relationship and might cause lasting psychological trauma for children. Close behind is 'insult' (average negative ratio: -8.8), which had been used five times to humiliate the daughter. The negative scores of these five insults showed differences. Some were very harmful as low as '-13'. The assigned values of other realizations were lower than 'insult', with the lowest '-2'. All of these 'insult' speech acts attacked the eldest daughter's moral value and social image. The score for 'sarcasm' was '-5' for each instance. 'Deception' was observed twice, with an average score '-4'. The mother used both deceptive actions

and speeches to act as the victim and deny the fact. 'Criticism' happened once, with a negative score of '-10', where the mother accused her daughter in relation to an economic conflict and a moral judgement, which invoked traditional Chinese filial piety culture to deny her daughter's personality and morality. The 'challenge' also happened once, with a negative score of '-6'. These low-frequency impoliteness realizations from the mother, though not as frequent as 'insult', still have a deep and lasting harmfulness to the daughter and constitute a multi-perspective erosion of the mother-daughter relationship.

Regarding the daughter, the severest speech act showing impoliteness effects was 'disassociation' (negative value: -8). The above results already show that the eldest daughter's types and frequency of impoliteness realizations were fewer than her mother, with most types occurring only once. Concerning the severity of these impoliteness realizations produced by the eldest daughter, there was no noticeable difference observed. However, when contrasting the impoliteness realizations between the mother and the eldest daughter, it was evident that the mother not only displayed a greater quantity of impoliteness speech acts but also significantly exceeded the eldest daughter regarding the level of impoliteness effects. For example, for the daughter's side, only 'disassociation' reached a mildly high degree of impoliteness (negative value: -8). Moreover, the mother displayed three types of speech acts, namely 'threat', 'criticism' and 'insult', with negative values below '-8'.

This indicates that in this parent-child relationship, the mother bore greater responsibility for their communicative conflicts. Not only did the mother hurt her daughter in various ways and across multiple aspects, but the severity of her speech acts far exceeded that of her daughter's. Therefore, it suggests that people, in a close relationship, should not only focus on how often they hurt others, but also pay attention to how much harm their speeches or acts cause to others' feelings.

JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS RESEARCH

DISCUSSION

In general, this study has identified multiple impoliteness phenomena in a very significant family relationship, parent and children, which are straightforwardly connected to offence, disharmony, hurt, and ultimately cause communicative conflicts. Close findings have been reported in previous studies in different family contexts (Djurdjevic & Roca, 2016; Li & Wu, 2023) that family members might encounter familial differences of habits, beliefs, and demands, and thus struggle with various communicative challenges from different speeches and behaviors. The evidence from this study aligns with the assumption that a problematic parent-child relationship seems to be signaled in certain practices of impoliteness.

The findings of this study first reveal that the impoliteness realizations, in the mother-and-daughter communication, are highly in accordance with the previously acknowledged models of impoliteness (e.g., Bousfield, 2008; Garrido Ardila, 2019; Li & Wu, 2023). In this case study, a total of eight types of impoliteness were identified, which were similar with Li and Wu's (2023) model of impoliteness realizations in the marital relationship. The eight impoliteness realizations in the present mother-daughter relationship were 'insult', 'deception', 'sarcasm', 'threat', 'criticism', 'challenge', 'disassociation', and 'rudeness'. These speech acts are considered as common triggers to create impoliteness effects between the parents and children, e.g., the mother and the daughter.

Previous studies have examined impoliteness as both rhetorical (verbal) and behavioral (non-verbal) modes. Although impoliteness tends to appear when speakers communicate face attack intentionally through speeches (Culpeper, 2005, p. 38), some non-verbal acts contribute to causing impolite results as well, which finally results in face-threatening and conflicts in the family relationship (Li & Wu, 2023). Nonetheless, based on the current case study between the mother and her daughter, most of their impoliteness was realized though verbal acts (speech)

rather than behaviors (e.g., violence, misbehavior). This finding does not refute the fact that both verbal (linguistic) and non-verbal (behavioral) practices can be markedly impolite to hinder a relationship; however, at least for this mother and her daughter, speeches with impoliteness are the root cause of the hostile state in their relationship. In the Chinese context, parents' verbal acts often cause significant impoliteness towards children due to three key notions combined in the parental communication: power, informality and affect (Blum-Kulka, 1990).

The asymmetrical power relation between Chinese parents and children licenses the high level of directness of speaking. Chinese parents would take informality as non-offensiveness when they talk to children. And positive affect might not be considered important in the eyes of many Chinese parents (Kuang, 2011. Therefore, many Chinese parents would like to construct lots of verbal impoliteness directly, casually, without caring, even turning into a communicative habit. This preference of verbal impoliteness in this study reflects the linguistic variation in human communication and interpersonal relationships; in other words, the language use and communicative practice can vary greatly among different speakers, relationships, and contexts.

The last finding in the study is related to status variation regarding their practices of impoliteness. Many linguistic examinations have found that speakers at different social statuses would apply different speech forms in their conversation. The present case study brings up a particular status, namely, family status. It is evident that the mother has displayed more impolite signs than her daughter during their daily interactions. Besides, as discussed above, both the 'quantity' (frequency) and the 'quality' (degree) of the impoliteness from the mother surpassed the daughter. Generally, the mother in this relation has performed more impoliteness through direct and severe realizations, such as insulting personality and criticizing behaviors badly. Moreover, comparatively speaking, the daughter's verbal attacks were less frequent and severe; rather, she tended to adopt some avoidant strategies

(indirectness) when facing her mother in conflicts. Chinese is noted for its linguistic indirectness in expression, especially when expressing face-threatening acts in power asymmetrical settings (Zhao & Wahid, 2024). In Chinese communication, the indirectness is always attributed to the performance of maintaining politeness rather than being overtly hostile. Obviously, the mother as the parent in this study exhibited a greater tendency towards direct impoliteness that contrasts with the traditional Chinese family culture of harmony (Chen, 2019), whereas the daughter seemed to maintain a commitment to the harmony principle and consequently engaged in fewer direct impoliteness.

Such a difference of practicing impoliteness is not merely reflecting how the mother as the parents and the daughter as the child actually talk or behave, but rather, more importantly, it could account for the traditional Chinese family culture that is still influentially dominating the family communication in contemporary China (Zhang, 2007). For instance, a best elaboration of the mother in this case study, based on her words and behaviors, is that she misunderstood the Chinese norm 'filial piety' (or *xiao dao*). This norm is a cornerstone of Confucian ethics that has shaped Chinese family dynamics for thousands of years (Bedford & Yeh, 2019). It refers to "a prominent, family-centered cultural value that adjusts children's attitudes and behaviors towards their parents to ensure parental well-being" (Mao & Chi, 2011, p. 99). Traditional Chinese society has long framed that the parent-child relationship is unquestionably vertical: parents are to be revered (敬: *jing*), while children owe obedience (顺: *shun*). From the traditional view of '*jing*' and '*shun*', Chinese children should pay attention to their parents' emotional and instrumental demands, be respectful and obedient, exhibit supportive behaviors, and express affection towards parents during the daily interactions with parents. In addition to increasing the parental well-being and family harmony, children must provide financial supports, such as meeting parents' housing needs and covering

living expenses, and even making sacrifices to fulfill their parents' wishes (Mao & Chi, 2011).

Therefore, the mother's impoliteness towards her daughter in this study largely stems from her misguided perception of the traditional filial piety: as a mother, she should have absolute authority, while her daughter has no right to question it. Her impoliteness was mostly caused by her implied intention of showing familial authority. Also, a notable trigger of their conflict was homeownership, which reflects the elders' belief that giving financial and material support is a retaliation of filial value (Zhang et al., 2019). In communication, the mother believed that her direct criticism, unreasonable demand, or harsh aggression are justified as 'tough love' and 'parental rights' rather than 'hurt'. However, nowadays young generations in China, influenced by individualism, modernization, and equality, are increasingly rejecting the status and power imbalance in the family to seek for self-independence, right of speech, and self-identity (Kuang, 2011). Thus, there is a filial piety dilemma among nowadays parent-child relationships in Chinese society (Zhang et al., 2019). The young generations, such as the eldest daughter in this study, are challenging to traditional familial hierarchy and filial piety. The daughter in this study has also performed linguistic responses (e.g., sarcasm) to her mother's impoliteness. By doing so, she was rejecting passive obedience and unconditional compliance. Nonetheless, the daughter's more frequent 'indirectness' and less 'severity' of impoliteness could be read as that filial piety is still a 'root' of perfect virtue for children (Wang, 2016) who tend to hold back their speeches and acts when in conflicts with their parents. In conclusion, the rigid mindset of Chinese tradition norms (filial piety), status and power imbalance, and lack of communicative skills contribute to the impoliteness and conflict among today's parents and children, which is imperative to be discussed and solved from a pragmatic-based perspective.

CONCLUSION

The primary contribution of this study was to expand the limited body of knowledge about family communication. It is hoped that the findings in this study could contribute to guiding parents and children to understand their impoliteness performances and avoid unnecessary conflicts in their daily communication. Based on the research analysis, this study proposes some practical strategies to resolve communicative conflicts between parents and children. First, the traditional cultural norm 'filial piety' must be reshaped in contemporary Chinese society. The Confucian filial piety's core, such as respect, gratitude, and harmony, remains greatly valuable, but its authoritarian enforcement undermines its original intent. Confucius himself emphasized 'mutual righteousness' between parents and children, rather than 'blind submission'. Therefore, modern socio-cultural education should align with this balance. In the family context, parents should abandon the misguided notion of 'filial piety' that underscores parental authority and absolute obedience. Instead, they should foster a relationship built on mutual respect. Parents should be aware of their impolite speech acts and avoid the direct verbal harm, e.g., insult. Second, although children may exhibit less impoliteness than parents, they should still work on strengthening their communicative skills with parents. For example, children could replace avoidant speech acts with proactive communication methods including articulating needs clearly, attempting empathetic listening, introducing third-party mediation like *Jin Pai Tiao Jie*. By implementing these strategies and considering the impoliteness realizations identified in this study, both parents and children could transform conflicts into opportunities for deeper understanding.

The limitation is that this study has selected one on-site mediation as the case data. Despite this study has brought insightful understanding of the parent-child relationship, impoliteness, and conflict, a larger corpus of data is recommended to be adopted in future investigations to conclude more findings. Future studies are

recommended to explore impoliteness in more parent-child relationships, for example, fathers and sons, to conclude more pragmatic findings of different family relationships. Further studies in this topic could incorporate more observations of naturally occurring conflict practices in the family relationships to enhance the validity and generalizability of findings.

Acknowledgement

Research statement

REFERENCES

Antonio, J. (2023). Effective communication: A cornerstone of successful management. *Journal Dimensie Management and Public Sector*, *4*(3), 001-006. https://hdpublication.com/index.php/jdmps

Arendholz, J. (2013). *(In)Appropriate online behavior: A pragmatic analysis of message board relations*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Bedford, O., & Yeh, K. (2019). The history and the future of the psychology of filial piety: Chinese norms to contextualized personality construct. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*, 100. 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00100

Blum-Kulka, S. (1990). You don't touch lettuce with your fingers: Parental politeness in family discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *14*(2), 259-288. https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166(90)90083-P

Bousfield, D. (2008). *Impoliteness in interaction*. Philadelphia and Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge university Press.

Camp, E. (2012). Sarcasm, pretense, and the semantics/pragmatics distinction. *Noûs*, *46*(4), 587-634. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0068.2010.00822.x

Caughlin, J. P., Koerner, A. F., Schrodt, P., & Fitzpatrick, M. A. (2011). Interpersonal communication in family relationships. In M. L. Knapp, & J. A. Daly (eds.), *The Sage handbook of interpersonal communication* (pp. 679-714). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Chen, X. (2019). 'Family-culture' and Chinese politeness: An emancipatory pragmatic account. *Acta Linguistica Academica*, *66*(2), 251-270. https://doi.org/10.1556/2062.2019.66.2.6

Culpeper, J. (2005). Impoliteness and entertainment in the television quiz show: *The Weakest Link*. *Journal of Politeness Research*, *1*(1), 35-72. https://doi.org/10.1515/jplr.2005.1.1.35

Culpeper, J. (2010). Conventionalised impoliteness formulae. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *42*(12), 3232-3245. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2010.05.007

Culpeper, J. (2011). *Impoliteness: Using language to cause offence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Culpeper, J., Bousfield, D., & Wichmann, A. (2003). Impoliteness revisited: With special reference to dynamic and prosodic aspects. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *35*, 1545-1579. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(02)00118-2

Djurdjevic, M., & Roca Girona, J. (2016). Mixed couples and critical cosmopolitanism: Experiences of cross-border love. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *37*(4), 390-405. https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2016.1190695

Dynel, M. (2016). Comparing and combining covert and overt untruthfulness on lying, deception, irony and metaphor. *Pragmatics & Cognition*, *23*(1), 174-208. https://doi.org/10.1075/pc.23.1.08dyn

Garrido Ardila, J. G. (2019). Impoliteness as a rhetorical strategy in Spain's politics.

Journal of Pragmatics, *140*, 160-170. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2018.11.017

Guerrero, L. K., Andersen, P. A., & Afifi, W. A. (2021). *Close encounters: Communication in relationships*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Jumanto, J. (2011). *Pragmatics: Linguistic world is broad*. Semarang: WorldPro Publishing.

Koerner, A. F., & Fitzpatrick, M. A. (2002). Toward a theory of family communication. *Communication Theory*, *12*(1), 70-91. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2002.tb00260.x

Kuang, C. H. (2011). The psychology of Chinese behaviour as seen in spoken discourses. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, *21*(2), 286-308. https://doi.org/10.1075/japc.21.2.07kua

Li, S. S., & Wu, Y. Q. (2023). Marriage, conflict, and communication: Pragmatic inquiry into impoliteness in the marital relationship. *Register Journal*, *16*(1), 24–48. https://doi.org/10.18326/register.v16i1.24-48

Mao, W., & Chi, I. (2011), Filial piety of children as perceived by aging parents in China. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, *20*, S99-S108. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2397.2011.00826.x

Mateo, J., & Yus, F. R. (2013). Towards a cross-cultural pragmatic taxonomy of insults. *Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict*, *1*(1), 87-114. https://doi.org/10.1075/jlac.1.1.05mat

Mulholland, M., Robinson, K., Fisher, C., & Pallotta-Chiarolli, M. (2020). Parent–child communication, sexuality and intergenerational conflict in multicultural and multifaith communities. *Sex Education*, *21*(1), 44-58. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2020.1732336

Nguyen, N. T. B., & Mushin, I. (2022). Understanding equivocal feedback in PhD supervision meetings: a conversation analysis approach. *Teaching in Higher*

Education, *29*(6), 1537-1553. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2022.2068348

Risdianto, F., Machfudz, M., Sagimin, E. M., Hanafi, H., & Jumanto, J. (2023). Politeness and Impoliteness Strategies in Lecturer-Student Communication Within Cyberpragmatic Chats. *Journal of Pragmatics Research*, *5*(1), 107-134. https://doi.org/10.18326/jopr.v5i1.107-134

Segrin, C., & Flora, J. (2018). *Family communication* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Shahsavari, S., Alimohammadi, B., & Rasekh, A. E. (2014). Compliment responses: A comparative study of native English speakers and Iranian L2 speakers. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *98*, 1744-1753. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.03.602

Terkourafi, M. (2008). Toward a unified theory of politeness, impoliteness, and rudeness. In D. Bousfield, & M. A. Locher (eds.), *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice* (pp. 45-76), Berlin, New York: De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110208344.1.45

Verma, S. K., & Satyanarayana, A. (2018). *Family dynamics and intergenerational relations: A psycho-social analysis.* New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company Private Limited.

Wang, Q. (2016). The relational self and the Confucian familial ethics. *Asian Philosophy*, *26*(3), 193-205. doi:10.1080/09552367.2016.1200222

Waring, H. Z., Creider, S., Tarpey, T., & Black, R. (2012). A search for specificity in understanding CA and context. *Discourse Studies*, *14*(4), 477-492. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445611433787

White, S. J. (2019). Conversation analysis: An introduction to methodology, data collection, and analysis. In P. Liamputtong (eds), *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences* (pp. 47-490). Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4_107

Yaqin, L. N., & Shanmuganathan, T. (2020). Politeness strategies of the pembayun(s) in the bride-kidnapping practices of Sasak culture. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, *28*(1). 89-102. http://eprints.um.edu.my/id/eprint/24668

Yaseen Hassan, A., Firas Abdullah Al-Rawe, M., Shamel Abdullah, S., & Hlaimi, S. (2023). Analysis of impoliteness strategies used in Putin's speech at annexation ceremony. *Journal of Pragmatics Research*, *5*(2), 153-167. https://ejournal.uinsalatiga.ac.id/index.php/jopr/article/view/166

Zhao, L. (2025). Revisiting respect and politeness: Insights from metapragmatics of *zunzhong* in Chinese public spaces. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *240,* 109-121. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2025.03.001

Zhao, L., & Ran, Y. (2022). Rationalizing impoliteness: Taking offence and providing vicarious accounts in mother-in-law daughter-in-law conflict mediation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *197*, 69-80. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2022.05.015

Zhang, M., Lin, T., Wang, D., & Jiao, W. (2020), Filial piety dilemma solutions in Chinese adult children: The role of contextual theme, filial piety beliefs, and generation. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, *23*, 227-237. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajsp.12395

Zhang, Q. (2007). Family communication patterns and conflict styles in Chinese parent-child relationships. *Communication Quarterly*, *55*(1), 113-128. https://doi.org/10.1080/01463370600998681

Zhao, S., & Wahid, R. (2024). Dear leader!: A look at (in)directness in online complaints in China. *Journal of Pragmatics Research*, *6*(1), 17-37. https://doi.org/10.18326/jopr.v6i1.17-37

JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS RESEARCH

Authors' biography

Yi Ran DUAN and Yang LI earned their Bachelor's degrees in English Language Studies from the School of Foreign Languages at Hebei Minzu Normal University. Their research interests include sociolinguistics and pragmatics.

Ying Qi WU is an associate professor of linguistics at the School of Foreign Languages, Hebei Minzu Normal University, Chengde, China. His major research interests include sociolinguistics, pragmatics, multimodal discourse studies, and multilingualism.