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Disentangling face, facework and im/politeness

Desentrañando la imagen social, la actividad de imagen y la (des)cortesía

Abstract: It is generally assumed in pragmatics that face is essentially a "socially attributed aspect of self", and that politeness is one kind of facework, alongside other forms of facework such as impoliteness, mock impoliteness, mock politeness, self politeness and so on. In this paper, the assumed necessary link between face and im/politeness is questioned. Drawing from emic studies of face and im/politeness, it is argued that face and im/politeness should be studied, in the first instance, as distinct objects of study in their own right. It is also suggested that drawing from a wider range of emic conceptualisations of face and im/politeness opens up aspects of interpersonal phenomena that have been relatively neglected in pragmatics to date, namely, the importance of relationships as well as the sets of expectancies that underpin evaluations of im/politeness, as distinct areas for theorisation and analysis. It is concluded that while the Goffmanian face(work) paradigm has proven very productive in pragmatics, drawing from various other emic understandings affords further hitherto relatively under-explored analytical opportunities in the study of interpersonal phenomena.

Keywords: face, facework, im/politeness, emic, relationships

Resumen: En general, se supone en pragmática que la imagen social es en esencia "un aspecto del yo atribuido socialmente", y que la cortesía es un tipo de actividad de imagen, junto con otros tipos como la descortesía, la (des)cortesía simulada, la autocortesía y demás. En este trabajo, se cuestiona la asunción de un vínculo necesario entre imagen social y cortesía. A partir de los estudios émicos sobre imagen social y (des)cortesía, se argumenta que la imagen social y la (des)cortesía deben ser estudiadas, en primer lugar, como objetos de estudio distintos por sí mismos. También se sugiere que una base más amplia de nociones émicas sobre la imagen social y la (des)cortesía presenta aspectos sobre fenómenos interpersonales que, hasta la fecha, han sido relativamente desconsiderados en la pragmática, tales como la importancia de las relaciones y los conjuntos de expectativas que sustentan las evaluaciones de (des)cortesía, como áreas diferenciadas para la teorización y el análisis. Se con-

cluye que, si bien el paradigma goffmaniano de (actividad de)imagen social ha demostrado ser muy productivo en la pragmática, otras consideraciones émicas, hasta ahora relativamente poco exploradas, ofrecen también oportunidades de análisis en el estudio de los fenómenos interpersonales.

Palabras clave: imagen social, actividad de imagen, (des)cortesía, émico, relaciones

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1 Introduction

We owe an enormous debt in pragmatics to the work of a sociologist, Erving Goffman. In two seminal papers originally published in 1955 and 1956, and subsequently republished as the first two essays in an edited collection in 1967, he introduced a rich and nuanced set of analytical observations about what he termed "interactional ritual", namely, the micro-sociology of interpersonal interactions, and how we strive to maintain a sense of the individual as "sacred" within those interactions (Goffman, [1955]1967, [1956]1967). In doing so, he set the stage for much of the research on interpersonal interaction that has subsequently followed in pragmatics and related disciplines. Indeed, two key assumptions drawn from his work (although not necessarily intended by Goffman himself), have proven particularly enduring. The first is the observation that participants in interpersonal interactions are often oriented to what others think of them, and it is this socially constituted self (or what Goffman termed "face") that regulates, in part, the behaviours of participants in social encounters. The second is the assumption that im/politeness phenomena are instances of facework, and thus concerns about face ultimately underpins all instances of im/politeness. The aim of this paper is to critically examine these two assumptions.

As Arundale (forthcoming) points out, "a researcher's conceptualization of a phenomenon both affords and constrains his or her choices in observing that phenomenon, in generating and analyzing data regarding it, and in interpreting the results of research". In relation to im/politeness (or facework) research, then, this means "how a scholar conceptualizes face, politeness, communication, and more, constrains the questions he or she addresses in research on discourse, the interpretations he or she creates, and the applications of his or her findings" (Arundale, 2012, p. 10). In much of the research in pragmatics on face-

work to date, from both Brown and Levinsonian (1978, 1987) and post-Brown and Levinsonian perspectives, for instance, a common thread can be detected, namely, a focus on the "looking-glass self" where the primary focus is on the individual self vis-à-vis others, or groups of individuals vis-à-vis groups of others. A second common thread is that while politeness is no longer considered the only form of facework, the assumption that face underpins politeness, impoliteness, self-politeness and the like, which can be traced back to Brown and Levinson (1987), has nevertheless been maintained. In other words, while there are differences amongst the various frameworks on offer (many relating to preferred methodologies or modes of analysis), almost every approach in the field, with just a few exceptions (e.g. Arundale, 2009), now adheres to a broadly Goffmanian understanding of face and facework as involving a "socially attributed aspect of *self*" (Watts, 2003, p. 125, emphasis added), and also maintains the assumption that what underpins various forms of im/politeness is ultimately always face.

In this paper, it is suggested, perhaps somewhat provocatively, that the received view of face and facework, while affording a rich and nuanced range of research, nevertheless also constrains the questions we tend to address in observing interpersonal phenomenon. More specifically, it is argued in section 2 that this conceptualisation of face as a "socially attributed aspect of self" (which in some cases may be shared across a group of individuals), and the presumed seemingly unbreakable link between face(work) and im/politeness, has (inadvertently) backgrounded the study of other important interpersonal phenomena in interaction. It is thus suggested in this paper that face and im/politeness be studied, at least in the first instance, as distinct objects of study in their own right, and theorised as such (Haugh and Bargiela-Chiappini, 2010; Harris, 2011; O'Driscoll, 2011). It is argued that face is more productively conceptualised as *interpretations* of persons-in-relationships as well as relationships-in-interaction by participants, with an interpretation referring to a representation of the interpersonal *significance* of that understanding for which participants can be held accountable. Im/politeness, in contrast, can be more constructively theorised as *evaluations* of persons and relationships vis-à-vis the taken-for-granted sets of expectancies of participants, where evaluations refer to the casting of persons and relationship into particular valenced (i.e., positive-neutral-negative) *categories* according to some kind of perceived normative scale or frame.

In support of this claim, it is first established through a brief overview of Goffman's work on face(work) (Goffman, [1955]1967) and presentation rituals (Goffman, [1956]1967), and work that has subsequently built on it, how face, facework and im/politeness have progressively become inextricably linked in

pragmatics. It is then argued, in section 3, drawing from studies of emic first-order understandings that face is an important object of study in its own right, and it should be theorised as such, not simply as part of a theory of im/politeness. In other words, face should be studied without requiring that it necessarily be used to ground the analysis of politeness, impoliteness, self-politeness and so on. It is subsequently claimed, in section 4, that the overwhelming emphasis on the attributes of individuals that permeates most approaches to research on face(work) has inadvertently neglected the critical importance of relationships in interpersonal interactions, including the inherent relationality of face itself. It is next argued in section 5, drawing from studies of emic first-order understandings of politeness, that not only face, but also im/politeness, should be examined as an object of study in its own right, in other words, without necessarily making recourse to a theory of face(work). In particular, it is claimed that other potentially productive analytical metaphors for examining im/politeness, such as 'place' or 'heart-mind', for instance, have been largely neglected. It is also suggested that an exclusive focus on face(work) in studies of im/politeness has led to the relative neglect of (emic first-order understandings of) the moral order, namely, the set of (inter)subjective background expectancies through which participants interpret and evaluate linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour, as an object of study in its own right. The overarching thesis of this paper is thus that the potential of various distinct emic understandings of interpersonal phenomena, namely "insider perspectives" which are formulated in "in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories regarded as meaningful and appropriate by native members of the culture whose beliefs and behaviours are being studied" (Lett, 1990, p. 130), has not yet been fully explored in pragmatics. It is suggested that it is only through recourse to these emic understandings that face and im/politeness can be disentangled and productively approached as important areas of research in their own right.

2 Face, facework and im/politeness

Goffman ([1955]1967) is credited, on the one hand, with introducing the notions of "face" and "facework" to (western) academic discourse (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003). Face was defined as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact", where a line refers to that individual's "pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he expresses his view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself" (Goffman, [1955]1967, p. 5). In other words,

face involves "a socially attributed aspect of self that is temporarily on loan for the duration of the interaction in accordance with the line or lines that the individual has adopted" (Watts, 2003, p. 125), where a line refers to the speaker's "own evaluation of the interaction and all of its participants" (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003, p. 1458). This means that Goffman's notion of face (henceforth referred to as Goffmanian face) involves, at heart, an interactant's (socially-dependent) idea of him/herself (Goffman, [1955]1967, p. 43), although he acknowledged this social image could be shared with others in a group (p. 42). Facework was thus defined as "the actions taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face" (Goffman [1955]1967, p. 12). In other words, facework involves the verbal and nonverbal acts through which an individual expresses evaluations of himself and others that results in the lines underpinning the face of the speaker and others being "maintained", "lost", "saved", or "given" (pp. 8–9). In particular, facework was claimed to centre on instances where interactants through such lines "counteract" the "symbolic implications" of "incidents" or "events" that "threaten face" (p. 12). "Avoidance facework" was said to encompass instances where such lines neutralise a potential face threat and thereby avoid "disputing the relationships of the participants" (p. 41), while "corrective facework" encompasses cases where the line "re-establish[es] an equilibrium in face which has been upset by some face-threat" (p. 19). Goffman also pointed out that in cases of "aggressive facework", face threats are deployed by speakers in order to gain face for themselves (p. 24).

On the other hand, Goffman ([1956]1967) also stimulated a long and productive line of research on self and other presentation. He proposed that interactional ritual involves two key components, demeanour and deference. The former involves behaviour through which a speaker "express[es] to those in his immediate presence that he is a person of certain desirable or undesirable qualities" (p. 77). The latter involves behaviour through which a speaker conveys "appreciation" of others, either through deferential avoidance (i.e. "forms of deference which lead the actor to keep at a distance from the recipient", p.62), or through deferential presentation (i.e. "acts through which the individual makes specific attestations to recipients concerning how he regards them", p. 73). He also noted the interaction rituals underpinning "proper ceremonial conduct" can also help create "ideally effective forms of desecration" (p. 86), among which he included (perceived) misidentifying of acts of deference or demeanour, unserious profanation of rituals, serious aggression or hostility, and self-profanation (pp. 85–90).

Much of this work, both on facework and on presentational rituals, now comes under the rubric of im/politeness research. Goffman himself, however, made no explicit connections between his paper on face/facework (Goffman,

[1955]1967) and that on self/other presentation (Goffman, [1956]1967) despite them being published just one year apart. The only clue we have of any underlying connection between them is his assertion that both deference and demeanour cannot be claimed by an interactant but rather involve "attributes derived from interpretations others make of the way in which the individual handles himself during social intercourse" (Goffman, [1956]1967, p. 78). In other words, what face/facework and self/other presentation have in common is an underlying concern with what Cooley (1964) – drawing in turn from Adam Smith's (1759) essay on *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* – termed the "looking-glass self", namely, what an individual thinks (i.e. assumes) others think of (i.e. evaluate) him or her; or to put it more simply, a deep-rooted concern with what others think of us.

Yet while Goffman himself was rather circumspect in his views on the possible connections between these two (distinct) lines of analytical inquiry, they were nevertheless subsequently brought together – or even conflated, or so it shall be argued here – in the formation of the field of im/politeness research. Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) claimed face (defined as the interactional wants of individuals towards their public social images) underpins two key forms of politeness, namely, negative politeness, which involves the avoidance of imposition on the face wants of others (cf. avoidance rituals), and positive politeness, which involves approving of the face wants of others (cf. presentational rituals) (Brown and Levinson, 1987, pp. 61–62). It was claimed that negative and positive politeness could either counter a potential face threat (cf. avoidance facework), or balance out a face threat that has already arisen (cf. corrective facework).

Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness as face-saving has subsequently been criticised for the way in which it neglected Goffman's much richer notion of face, and also neglected various other forms of facework and presentational rituals (among other things). This has prompted two important moves in the field. First, Brown and Levinson's notion of face has been abandoned by many, in pragmatics at least, in favour of Goffman's original approach to conceptualising face. Second, the focus has shifted from a narrow analytical focus on politeness to facework - and one might add presentational rituals - more broadly. Indeed, much of the past decade in pragmatics has arguably involved catching up with what Goffman originally observed more than fifty years ago, namely, that face is a rich, nuanced analytical metaphor, and that politeness is just one of the many dimensions of facework worthy of further research.

In regards to the relationship between politeness and facework, it is now widely acknowledged that politeness constitutes just one form of facework (or relational work) among a range of various kinds of interpersonal phenomena, including impoliteness, mock impoliteness, and self-politeness/self-facework

(Bousfield, 2008; Bravo, 2002, 2008a, 2008b; Chen, 2001; Culpeper, 1996, 2011; Hernández-Flores, 2002, 2008; Locher and Watts, 2005; Watts, 2003). Hernández-Flores (2008), for instance, argues that self-facework can be distinguished from politeness in that the former involves "focusing on one's own face without directly affecting the addressee's face" (pp. 694–695), while the latter involves "achieving an 'ideal' balance between the addressee's face and the speaker's face by confirming their own face wants" (p. 693). This move in im/politeness research has been mirrored, at least to some extent, in other approaches to interpersonal dimensions of communication, where politeness is seen as just one part of a much larger tapestry, for instance, in Rapport Management theory (Spencer-Oatey, [2000]2008, 2005, 2007), and Face Constituting theory (Arundale, 1999, 2006, 2010a). The scope of facework – or related notions such as relational work, rapport management, face constituting – is, by definition, however, determined by the notion of face that underpins it, and so any discussion of facework necessitates a consideration of face itself.

In relation to the conceptualisation of face, then, while some have proposed a straightforward move back to Goffman's original formulation of face (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003; Locher and Watts, 2005; Watts, 2003), others have proposed extensions of it. Locher (2008) and Spencer-Oatey (2007, 2009), for instance, propose that the "positive social value" underpinning Goffmanian face be "filled out" drawing from social identity theory, and so in their view face essentially "references the socially situated identities people claim or attribute to others" (Tracy, 1990, p. 210). Bravo (1993, 1996, 2008a, 2008b), on the other hand, drawing from research in sociopragmatics, proposes that face be re-conceptualised as involving two basic, universal wants, autonomy and affiliation. Autonomy involves "all those behaviours related to how a person wishes to see him/herself and be seen by others as an individual with a contour of his/her own within the group", while affiliation involves "all those behaviours through which a person manifests how he/she wishes to see him/herself as regards those characteristics that identifies him/her with the group" (Bravo, 2008a, p. 565), with these wants being realised relative to different social roles (Bravo, 2008a, p. 567). She claims, however, that autonomy and affiliation are defined and realised in different ways in different cultures. For example, in Peninsular Spanish, "in the case of autonomy, the most relevant content seems to be a *positive self-affirmation*, while for affiliation it seems to be an interpersonal *confianza* ('mutual, interpersonal trust')" (Bravo, 2008b, p. 588).[1] It is also sug-

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[1] This claim was developed in earlier work (Bravo 1996, 1999), which was subsequently adapted and published in English by Hernández-Flores (1999).

gested these wants may be relevant to both the face of an individual and that of a group, suggesting that we can talk of both individual face and group face (Bravo, 2008a, p. 567). These various approaches, which build, in turn, on Goffman's original insights, thus represent an important step forward in addressing important sociopragmatic differences in the ways in which facework is conceptualised and realised across cultures.

Clearly the field is moving forward and expanding in productive ways. A range of different analytical frameworks and methodologies are now on offer that treat interpersonal phenomena, not just politeness, as an important area of study in pragmatics. However, it is perhaps worth taking stock at this point in time to consider some of the basic analytical assumptions underlying such work. We now move to consider the first key assumption underlying much of the research on face, facework and im/politeness to date, namely, the treatment of face as a technical or scientific tool for analysing im/politeness, which more often than not is conceptualised as a "socially attributed aspect of self" or "looking-glass self" à la Goffman. In this section, however, it is argued that face constitutes an important object of study in its own right.

3 Emic perspectives on face

While it is now well appreciated that the "scientific" study of politeness necessarily has its roots in the understandings of participants themselves, and that a distinction needs to be made between first-order (i.e. participant/emic) and second-order (i.e. analyst/theoretical) understandings of politeness (Eelen, 2001; Haugh, 2007b, 2012; Watts, Ide and Ehlich, 1992), the same cannot be said to the same extent for face.[2] Although it is often claimed that face contains "culture-specific elements" (Arundale, 1996; Bogdanowska-Jakubowska, 2011; Bravo, 1993, 1996, 2008a, 2008b; Hernández-Flores, 2002, 2008; O'Driscoll, 1996), or that an abstract notion of face is locally instantiated (Terkourafi, 2007, 2009), it is generally assumed that ultimately face is a "a term that can be used by

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2 Haugh (2009, 2012) makes a distinction between first order participant understandings and first order emic understandings, where the former refers to the interpretations and evaluations made by interactants relative to their respective participation footings (Haugh, forthcoming), while the latter refers to interpretations and evaluations made by participants or non-participants relative to their (presumed or perceived) "insider" perspective, or member's view, on the moral order (Haugh, 2010b). Although in practice participant and emic understandings may (often) coincide, there are also cases where they are clearly distinct (see Kádár and Haugh, forthcoming, for further discussion).

scholars from all over the world to denote the same concept whatever their origin or specifics of their empirical application of it" (O'Driscoll, 2011, p. 23). In other words, a second-order notion of face (or face$_2$) currently predominates in pragmatics. The main justification for this emphasis on a universal, abstract conceptualisation of face$_2$, albeit incorporating culture-specific elements, rests on the assumption that "the salience of the term 'face'...appears to be very crossculturally limited" and that "even when comparable lexemes *are* salient, they do not appear to capture quite the same phenomena" (O'Driscoll, 2011, p. 22, original emphasis). Such a claim appears curious, however, when one considers that there are, in fact, a lot of languages where folk terms for face *are* highly salient. Face could hardly be said to be "crossculturally limited" in Asia, for instance, where nearly 60% of the world's population resides (*miànzi/liǎn* and related terms in Chinese: Chang and Holt, 1994; Earley, 1997; Gao, 1996; 1998, 2009; Haugh and Hinze, 2003; Hinze 2005, 2012; Ho, 1976; Hu, 1944; Hwang, 1987, 2006; Qi, 2011; *kao/mentsu* and related terms in Japanese: Haugh, 2005b, 2007a; Haugh and Watanabe, 2009; Lin and Yamaguchi, 2007, 2011a, 2011b; Morisaki and Gudykunst, 1994; Sueda, 1995; Yabuuchi, 2004; *che-myon/chemyeon* and related terms in Korean: Choi and Lee, 2002; Choi and Kim, 2004; Lim, 1994, 2009; Lim and Choi, 1996; *nâa* in Thai: Ukosakul 2003, 2005). And the salience of first-order notions of face extend well beyond Asia to the Middle East (*yüz* in Turkish: Ruhi, 2009; Ruhi and Işık-Güler, 2007; Ruhi and Kádár, 2011; *tæ'arof* and *ehteram* in Persian: Koutlaki, 2002, 2009), Southern Europe (*prósopo, mútra* in Greek: Sifianou, 2011), and Africa as well (including Akan, Zulu, Igbo, and Hamar languages: Agyekum, 2004; de Kadt, 1998; Grainger, Mills and Sbanda, 2010; Nwoye, 1992; Strecker, 1993). It is also worth noting that an emic perspective on face$_1$ is not limited to talk about it using explicit folk terms, as it also encompasses *experiences* of face$_1$(work) where "the emic or folk terms would not normally apply since they lie outside the folk discourse or ideology on face in that culture" (Haugh, 2012, p. 121; see also Chang and Haugh, 2013).

One of Eelen's (2001) main arguments in this respect is thus worth repeating here:

> A situation in which the scientific account contradicts informants' claims and dismisses them as being 'wrong' does not represent a healthy situation. Such a practice immediately leads to a rupture between scientific and commonsense notions, causing the theory to lose its grasp on the object of analysis. In an investigation of everyday social reality informants can never be 'wrong', for the simple reason that it is their behaviour and notions we set out to examine in the first place. (Eelen, 2001, p. 253)

While this was formulated within the context of a critique of politeness research, exactly the same argument applies to the study of face. To deny what a

significant proportion of the population, albeit not primarily based in the "west", believes about face (i.e. face$_1$) hardly represents a healthy situation for the academic study of face (i.e. face$_2$). It is also problematic to neglect emic understandings of face (i.e. face$_1$) given that such vernacular words are "usually ambiguous and may reaffirm the status quo" (Scheff, 2006, p. 48), a problem that applies just as much to the theorisation of face$_2$ as it does to theorising politeness$_2$.

An important reason for treating face as an object of study in its own right is that studies of emic first-order understandings of face (face$_1$) have thus far resulted in a number of important findings, only some of which feature in second-order theories of face (face$_2$) (Haugh, 2009; Haugh and Bargiela-Chiappini, 2010). The first key finding is that face$_1$ can be associated with groups as well as individuals (Haugh, 2005b; He and Zhang, 2011; Ho, 1976; Nwoye, 1992; cf. Bravo, 1993, 1996, 2008a, 2008b; Hernández-Flores, 2008). The association of face$_1$ with groups (including perceived national groups), for instance, can be a critical source of inter-group conflict according to a recent study of aggression in computer-mediated contexts between Mainland Chinese and Taiwanese (Kádár, Haugh and Chang, forthcoming). In other words, face$_1$ is arguably not only a concern in interpersonal interactions, but also in intergroup settings as well.

A second key finding is that not only can face$_1$ be saved or lost, it may also be given and sacrificed, and indeed may be the subject of a whole range of interpersonal processes (Ervin-Tripp, Nakamura and Guo, 1995; Gao and Ting-Toomey, 1998; Hinze, 2005; Watanabe, 2011), a point which was alluded to by Goffman ([1955]1967), but the implications of which have never been fully worked through in subsequent approaches to face$_2$. Theories of face and facework thus need to move beyond a narrow focus on saving, losing, and threatening face (although cf. Bravo, 2008a, 2008b, Bayraktaroğlu, 1991 and Hernández-Flores, 2004, on "enhancing face").

A fourth key finding is that face$_1$ can involve an awareness of one's position within a network of relationships with others (Haugh, 2007a; Hu, 1944; Koutlaki, 2002; Lin and Yamaguchi, 2007, 2011a; Ruhi and Işık, 2007; Ukosakul, 2003, 2005). In Japanese, for instance, maintaining face$_1$ (*kao*, *mentsu*) involves one's assumed responsibility to meet the expectations of others towards one's fulfilling one's social position. However, this social position does not just relate to one's position within some social group as a doctor or patient, teacher or student, mother or daughter, for instance (cf. Bravo, 2008a, 2008b; Hernández-Flores, 1999), but also to those relationships themselves, that is, the relationship between the doctor and patient, the relationship between the teacher and student, the relationship between the mother and daughter, and indeed any relationship between persons. The importance of the distinction between identi-

ties rooted in relationships or "relational identities" (i.e., a person-centred view of relationships) (Spencer-Oatey, 2007, 2011), and relationships themselves (i.e., a social-interactional view of relationships) (Arundale, 2006, 2010b), is one that that is arguably missed in an account of face$_2$ as a "socially attributed aspect of self".

In the following example, for instance, it is apparent that one cannot reduce relationships to relational identities in analysing face$_1$ without a loss of significant explanatory power (cf. He and Zhang, 2011).

(1)

At the reception held to welcome the college graduate, Yŏngqiáng, the village director's daughter, Xiāngxiu, was proposing a toast to him. Yongqiang is regarded as a "high status" person since he is a college graduate, while Xiāngxiu is perceived as occupying a "lower status". The conversation happened on this occasion.[3]

1 Xiāngxiu:	*Yŏngqiáng, wǒ gěi nǐ dào bēi jiǔ.*
	Yongqiang I for you pour cup beer.
	(Well, Yongqiang, let me pour you some beer.)
2 Yŏngqiáng:	*bú yòng, bú yòng, wǒ zhēnde bú huì hē jiǔ.*
	no need no need I really not can drink beer.
	(No, thanks. I really cannot drink.)
3 Xiāngxiu:	*lái, lái, bù gěi miànzi, shì-bú-shì?*
	come come not give face right-not-right
	(Come on. You mean you won't give me face?)
4 Yŏngqiáng:	*búshì bù gěi miànzi, wǒ zhēnde bú huì hē jiǔ.*
	no not give face I really not can drink beer.
	(It's not that I won't give you face. I really can't drink.)

(adapted from He and Zhang, 2011, p. 2370)

He and Zhang (2011) equate *miànzi* (face$_1$) here with Spencer Oatey's relational identity face$_2$, which "rests not on an individual's attributes, but on those of people to whom an individual is closely related" (p. 2364). Here, Yongqiang is a "high status" person who has a lot of face$_1$ (*miànzi*), while Xianxiu is a "lower status" person with less face$_1$ (*miànzi*) relative to Yongqiang. However, these relational identities do not in themselves readily explain why having Yongqiang accept Xiangxiu's offer of a drink would be interpreted as "giving face$_1$" (*gěi miànzi*) to her in the first place. In fact, it appears here that the assumption that Yongqiang accepting this drink from Xiangxiu would be interpreted as "giving face$_1$" to Xiangxiu arises because the person with more face$_1$ (*miànzi*) would be

3 The Chinese data is presented in three lines. The first line in italics is the original Chinese (in pinyin), the second line is a word-by-word morphological gloss, while the third line in brackets is a free translation into English.

demonstrably valuing his *relationship* with the lower-status person doing the offering by accepting it. In other words, this instance of face$_1$work needs to be explained with recourse to not only a "socially attributed aspect of self" that is derived through one's relational identity within a group (i.e. Yongqiang's higher status relative to Xianxiu), but also with reference to the relationships between those persons. In other words, face$_1$ can involve not only an awareness of one's position within a network of relationships with others, but also *those relationships in themselves* (Chang and Haugh, 2011, 2013). This means that face, at least from an emic perspective, is not limited to the social attributes of individuals (or even groups).

A fifth key finding from previous studies is that face$_1$ is often understood as a kind of "individual's possession (with group repercussions) and as a pre-existing (though not static) entity" (Sifianou, 2011, p. 42). Qi (2011), for instance, argues that in some societies, "face is an explicit object of social relations, rather than simply a means through which social relations are conducted", which means that "facework becomes more or less disengaged from the everyday and normal exchanges between individuals and becomes instead a matter of primary concern; rather than an effect of social interactions it becomes the purpose of social engagements" (p. 292). In that sense, perceptions of face$_1$ can be understood as not only arising through interactions but also, at times, constitutive of interaction in and of in itself (Haugh, 2009). Chang and Haugh (2013), for instance, have found that in reflecting on business negotiations, participants explicitly refer to a "dynamic tension" between face (*miànzi*) and pursuing profits (*lǐzi*) underpinning those negotiations. In the following excerpt from an interview with a business person working in the insurance industry in Taiwan, the informant makes explicit reference to face$_1$ as something which they bear in mind in the course of those negotiations.

> (2) For us, there are two aspects [of business negotiations], *miànzi* [face$_1$] and *lǐzi* [profits]. We want to make a profit from each other. Sometimes I only care about my own *miànzi* rather than making money. However, sometimes I might weigh up [the situation and] if there's a lot of money involved, sometimes I only care about *lǐzi* not *miànzi*, as long as he [the customer] doesn't go too far. If he goes too far, I don't think anyone can put up with it. Then [I'll] choose *miànzi* rather than *lǐzi*. (Chang and Haugh, 2013, p. 137)[4]

Here we can see the informant is treating face$_1$ as something tangible that she possesses apart from the interaction at hand, which influences the way in which she negotiates (i.e., it is real world consequential), although she nevertheless acknowledges what happens in the interaction can also influence her face$_1$. As

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4 For the original data in Chinese see Chang and Haugh (2013, p. 137).

Sifianou (2011) goes on to argue, since "lay people conceptualise face as a kind of possession, then a related theory should be able to incorporate this conceptualisation as an option" (p. 55). This means incorporating an understanding of $face_1$ as constitutive of interaction alongside the view of $face_1$ as arising through interaction (Haugh, 2009). We need to be careful not to reify $face_1$ in doing so, however, as what informants claim about $face_1$ can, of course, diverge from actual face practices at times (Chang and Haugh, 2013).

Thus, although it has been claimed that "an abstract, higher level, universal theoretical construct" of face can legitimately "ignore lay people's notions of lay terms in use" (Sifianou 2011, p. 55; see also O'Driscoll, 2011, pp. 22–23), such a theorisation is likely to end up offering an inadequate or only partial explanation of emic perspectives on face. This is inherently problematic since, repeating Eelen's (2001) earlier critique of politeness theories, "such a practice immediately leads to a rupture between scientific and commonsense notions, causing the theory to lose its grasp on the object of analysis" (p. 253). It is now well accepted that the analysis of im/politeness should not neglect the perspectives of users themselves. It is thus arguably long overdue that the same logic be applied to the theorisation and analysis of face. This means, among other things, taking emic perspectives on $face_1$ much more seriously. In the next section, the implications of one just one of these findings for theorising $face_2$, namely, that $face_1$ is inherently relational, are briefly explored. It is argued that conceptualising face primarily in terms of a "socially attributed aspect of self" has resulted in it being conflated with identity. This, in turn, has resulted in relationships themselves being neglected as an object of study in their own right in the analysis of interpersonal interactions.

4 Face and relationality

The received view of $face_2$, inherited from Goffman, is that it essentially involves a "socially attributed aspect of self" (which can be extended to groups). One problem with conceptualising $face_2$ in this way is that the line between face and identity becomes blurred to the extent it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between the two of them (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, forthcoming). This move to reducing $face_2$ to a kind of interactionally realised identity is also not consistent with emic first order understandings of $face_1$, as was pointed out in the previous section. In this section, it will be further argued that conceptualising $face_2$ as a "socially attributed aspect of self", which involves identifying oneself as autonomous from and affiliated with others (e.g., Bravo, 2008a,

2008b), or with "positively valenced identities" (e.g. Locher, 2008; Spencer-Oatey, 2007), neglects interpersonal relations as an object of study in their own right in the analysis of interpersonal interactions.

Arundale (2012) argues that conceptualising face as "an individually-based social want or aspect of identity" has two important analytical consequences. On the one hand, it "affords one's observing of specific individual persons, generating and analyzing data on their cognitions, and interpreting their utterances in terms of their cognitive states" (p. 9). On the other hand, it "constrains one's recognizing and hence observing specific social relationships among persons, generating and analyzing data on persons as embedded in evolving relationships, and interpreting their utterances in terms of their emerging relational network" (p. 9). Here, Arundale conceptualises persons as individuals in a social environment, namely, individuals as construed by others with whom they are linked in social interaction (Haugh, forthcoming; Haugh, Chang and Kádár, forthcoming), while relationships, following Arundale (2010b), are conceptualised as the "establishing and maintaining of connection between two otherwise separate individuals" (p. 138). In other words, the received view of face$_2$ foregrounds the analysis of persons, while backgrounding relationships as an object of analysis in their own right, perhaps reflecting the broader neglect of relationships in pragmatics to date (Arundale, 2010b; Enfield, 2009).

In Face Constituting Theory, however, persons and relationships are treated as dialectically related (Arundale, 2006, 2009, 2010a, 2010b). In other words, persons are constituted through relationships, while relationships are necessarily constituted by persons in interaction. This has important implications for theorising face$_2$. On the one hand, face can be conceptualised as persons-in-relationships. This involves those aspects of face pertaining to relational separation. For example, face$_1$ (i.e. *miànzi*) in Taiwanese business interactions involves, among other things, claims to a particular social status and accompanying entitlements within particular situated relationships (Chang, forthcoming). These interactional claims to differential entitlements are one way in which persons can constitute themselves as relationally distinct in interpersonal interactions in Taiwan. On the other hand, face can be conceptualised as relationships-constituted-in-interaction by persons. This involves those aspects of face pertaining to relational connection (cf. Arundale, 2006, 2010a). For example, face$_1$ (i.e. *miànzi*) in Taiwanese business interactions involves claims to particular *guānxì*, that is, emotively invested and reciprocal relationships (Chang and Haugh, 2011). Such interactional claims to *guānxì* are one way in which persons can constitute themselves as relationally connected in interpersonal interactions in Taiwan.

Conceptualising face as inherently relational, both in the sense of it being realised through interpretations of persons-in-relationships, as well as in the

sense of it arising through interpretations of relationships themselves, arguably affords considerable analytical potential. It not only allows the analyst to consider relational identities (i.e. persons-in-relationships) in examining facework, but also affords the analysis of relationships themselves. In doing so, we can extend our analysis of interpersonal phenomena that hitherto have been approached primarily from the perspective of individual social wants or identities to a more explicit focus on relationships in interaction.

Haugh (2010a), for instance, argues that a relational focus extends our understanding of a particular type of teasing termed "jocular mockery". Through close analysis of the way in which such mockery is interactionally achieved as jocular in interaction, alongside careful consideration of the affiliative or disaffiliative stances that interactants take towards that mockery in conjunction with their evolving relational history, it is suggested that jocular mockery can be analysed as simultaneously face-threatening and face-supportive. In the following example taken from a recording of interactions between six male friends from the north west of England we can observe an instance of just that.

(3) 12:10:08: 0:46
(James reaches for a biscuit and then consumes most of it in one bite)
33　S:　ba:sically that run you went on this
34　　　morning James you might as well've
35　　　not bothered. ((laughs loudly))
36　M:　((laughs))
37　B:　((laughs))
38　J:　((pulls face, shakes head, then
39　　　shrugs and smiles whilst eating))
40　D:　((laughs))
41　Se:　((laughs))
(Haugh and Bousfield, 2012, p. 1107)

Here Simon offers an ironic evaluation of James having yet another biscuit to eat. The irony stems from the mismatch between what they all know, namely, that James is trying to lose weight, and his current behaviour of eating biscuits. In other words, James is cast as a person who has missed the irony of eating more biscuits than perhaps necessary when he has earlier claimed to have gone on a run to try and lose weight. This tease is interactionally achieved as jocular as both Simon and the other participants laugh, and while James himself initially rejects the tease non-verbally (through pulling a face and shaking his head), he ultimately appears to tacitly accept it (with a shrug and smile), which occasions further laughter. Yet while James' person-in-relationship with the other participants is threatened through this casting, the shared laughter across the group indexes this mockery as occasioning "intimate interaction" (Glenn,

2003; Jefferson et al, 1987), and so relational connection between them is inter-actionally achieved at the same time. Thus, on the one hand, in casting the person of the target into some kind of negatively valenced category through the mockery, his face in the sense of his person-in-relation to the other interactants is threatened. On the other hand, in interactionally achieving relational connection through the mockery, their face in the sense of their relational connection with each other is supported. Treating face as inherently relational thus allows us to account for the fact that jocular mockery is simultaneously face-threatening and face-supportive. Thus, rather than the relational implications being treated as simply an outcome of a non-serious threat to the social wants or identity claims of the target, such as "solidarity" (Boxer and Cortés-Conde, 1997), the tease is analysed as constitutive of their evolving relationships. In this way, it is argued that face is inherently relational, and so should be theorised as such, thereby avoiding the current conflation of face with identity.

It is worth noting at this point that such instances of jocular mockery and the like can also, of course, be evaluated with respect to im/politeness, most prototypically as giving rise to evaluations of "mock impoliteness" in Anglo-Englishes, for instance (Haugh, 2011; Haugh and Bousfield, 2012). However, in the sections that follow it is argued that issues of im/politeness and the like constitutes a distinct locus of analysis that should be distinguished from the analysis of face, at least in the first instance.

5 Emic perspectives on politeness

While it is now commonly accepted that the analysis of politeness, impoliteness, mock impoliteness, mock politeness, self-politeness should take into account the understanding of participants, as was previously noted, the assumption inherited from Brown and Levinson that these are all different forms of facework has been maintained. However, such an assumption does not sit well with emic first order perspectives on im/politeness$_1$ in two key ways.

First, it ignores the fact that emic understandings of face$_1$ generally do not underpin emic understandings of politeness$_1$ in many languages where face$_1$ is a highly salient interpersonal phenomena (Haugh, 2007a; Hinze, 2012; Ye, 2004), a point which potentially contradicts any claim by the researcher to be basing his/her analysis on the understandings of participants. Hinze (2012), for instance, convincingly argues that instances where face$_1$ (*miánzi*) become salient often have little to do with issues of politeness$_1$ (*lǐmào*, *kèqi*) in Chinese. In the following excerpt, a client is talking to a lawyer about al-

lowing an employee who is being fired for serious misconduct to nevertheless "save face".[5]

> (4) We will insist that she agreed to resign. On the one hand we need to give her stairs to leave the stage – we should allow her to save face$_1$ (*miánzi*) (literally, we should give her face$_1$), and on the other hand we must try to avoid the impression that such behaviour is achievable at this company. (adapted from Hinze, 2012, p. 20)

Here, the client's concern for the employee's face$_1$ (*miánzi*) does not occasion any polite$_1$ behaviour: "In this instance, the client did not engage in any language or non-language behaviour that could be evaluated by the participants in the interaction or anyone connected with the interaction as polite (*yǒu lǐmào* or *hěn keqi*), and yet it was clear that the situation involved the 'giving of *miánzi*' to the employee" (Hinze, 2012, p. 20). This is particularly striking given that face-saving is a prototypical instance of politeness-related facework in Brown and Levinson's (1987) model, and indeed in other definitions of polite facework as involving a balance between the face needs of self and other (cf. Hernández-Flores, 2002, 2008), yet it is not polite$_1$ from an emic first order perspective.[6] Once again we are faced with the perennial problem of "scientific accounts" of politeness as facework contradicting the claims of informants, which leads to "a rupture between scientific and commonsense notions" thereby, in turn, "causing the theory to lose its grasp on the object of analysis" (Eelen, 2001, p. 253).

This leads us into the second problem with accounts of im/politeness as forms of facework from an emic first order perspective, namely, that it unnecessarily limits the explanatory apparatus of im/politeness to "an individually-based social want or aspect of identity" (Arundale, 2012, p. 9). This is in spite of the various other analytical metaphors available that arguably offer more sound explanations from an emic first order perspective. It has been proposed, for instance, that the "insider-outsider continuum" (*zìjǐrén-wàirén*) offers a more productive account of at least some dimension of politeness$_1$ in Chinese (Pan and Kádár, 2011; Ye, 2004), while the notion of "place" has also been argued to offer a more sound theoretical foundation for the analysis of important aspects of politeness$_1$ in Japanese (Haugh, 2005a, 2007a; Haugh and Obana, 2011). More recently, Intachakra (2012) has proposed that the emic concept of heart-mind, and the associated emphasis on the "symbolic value" of "feelings", "states of mind" and "emotions", constitutes a useful window into the analysis of polite-

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5 The original Chinese data can be found in Hinze (2012, p. 20).
6 It is worth noting that cases where emic first order notions of face$_1$ have been claimed to underlie politeness (e.g. Ukosakul, 2009), have subsequently been critiqued (Intachakra, 2012).

ness$_1$ in Thai (and indeed potentially other languages). He argues that from an emic perspective

> turning down someone's genuine offer to dinner, giving a student a failing grade and telling someone about a decision to permanently terminate friendship are indications that what is being mistreated is not first and foremost (or, some might say, not in the least) the addressee's image or self-esteem, but rather his/her emotional disposition, negatively experienced in terms of disappointment, distress, agony, exasperation, anger and so on. (Intachakra, 2012, p. 621)

In other words, while the notion of face$_2$ can be useful in explicating some instances of im/politeness$_1$ in Thai, in many cases "consideration for others' feelings" is foregrounded over and above any concern for their personhood or self-image (p. 622). In the following example, the senior officer in a workplace invites a junior colleague to finish work.[7]

> (5) A: It's already 4 o'clock. You may go home now.
> B: That's okay. I don't have any specific plans this evening.
> (adapted from Intachakra, 2012, p. 626)

The junior officer responds, however, that she does not have any plans and stays for an extra half hour despite having prior plans to meet a friend straight after work. Intachakra (2012) suggests this response is occasioned by a concern to show feelings of "loyalty and dedication" to the senior officer and company more broadly. In other words, it is a polite$_1$ response engendered by a "concern for "the feelings, peace of mind, convenience and/or benefit of others" (p. 631). While from an "outsider's" perspective this could be interpreted as an attempt by the junior officer to cultivate a good image in front of the senior officer (i.e., as a form of self-facework), such an account does not accord with the *emic* understanding of the incident defended by Intachakra (2012), which makes recourse to the metaphor of heart-mind rather than social image or reputation

Of course, the argument has been made that Goffmanian face$_2$ is associated with emotions, with it being claimed that threats to face$_2$ can generate negative emotions (e.g. embarrassment, anger etc.), while enhancing face$_2$ can result in positive emotions (e.g. satisfaction, happiness etc.) (Goffman, [1955]1967); see also Spencer-Oatey, 2005, 2007). However, Intachakra (2012) is not focusing on emotions that arise out of enhancement of an individual's social image or reputation in his analysis. He is pointing out politeness$_1$ arises here out of an orientation to emotional disposition (heart-mind) in and of itself. Thus, while Goffman allowed for the association of emotions with his notion of face$_2$, it was

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7 The original Thai data can be found in Intachakra (2012, p. 626).

never meant to encompasses emotional disposition, state of mind and the like per se, and thus it cannot be readily substituted for heart-mind in an analysis of politeness$_1$ in Thai, and more than likely in other languages and cultures as well.

The point being made here is not that other emically-grounded analytical metaphors for the analysis of im/politeness$_1$, such as "insider-outsider", "place", "heart-mind" and the like in any way negate or devalue the considerable body of scholarship on im/politeness that has been undertaken building on the Goffmanian notion of face$_2$. Instead, the intention is to point out the opportunities afforded by a move to allowing greater use of different emic perspectives on im/politeness$_1$. Indeed, in doing so, new insights might be offered on seemingly well-worn areas of analysis in pragmatics.

However, it is nevertheless worth considering the implications for the theorisation of im/politeness that arise from conceptualising im/politeness$_2$ as an essentially individually-based phenomena, given that Goffmanian face$_2$ (and indeed Brown and Levinson's notion of face$_2$) is ultimately centred on the social attributes of individuals (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003). As Arundale (2012) argues, treating im/politeness as a form of facework, where face is conceptualised as either "an individually-based social want" or an "aspect of identity" (p. 9), both affords and constrains the way in which we tackle the analysis of im/politeness. On the one hand, it "affords observing, gathering data, and interpreting a speaker's use of language as a strategic choice on his or her part" (p. 9), or, in other words, as a form of means-to-end rationality (Intachakra, 2012). On the other hand, it "constrains recognizing, observing, gathering data, and interpreting polite behavior as normative practice arising in specific social situations" (Arundale, 2012, p. 9). In other words, it treats the set of (inter)subjective background expectancies through which participants interpret and evaluate linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour as polite, impolite, mock impolite and the like, as something that is simply assumed by the analyst rather than constituting an important object of study in its own right. However, it is only through systematic analysis of these expectancies that we can realistically begin to answer the age old issue of "how to find out how people belonging to the same culture evaluate what is polite or impolite in everyday life" (Bolívar, 2008, p. 611).

There are various ways in which we might begin to study this underlying set of expectancies, thereby elucidating the emic perspectives that ground evaluations of im/politeness (Haugh, 2010b).[8] Hernández-Flores (2003, cited in Bo-

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8 The treatment of im/politeness as a social practice that arises vis-à-vis such sets of expectancies is developed in further detail in Haugh (forthcoming) and Kádár and Haugh (forthcoming).

lívar, 2008, p. 612) suggests at least three ways, including (1) findings from ethnographic and cultural studies, (2) metadiscursive comments elicited from informants as well as those found in naturally-occurring data, and (3) "tests of social habits", where informants are questioned about some of their underlying cultural premises about $face_1$ or im/politeness$_1$. While such work can be used to justify the analyst's use of "his/her shared knowledge to hypothesise about and interpret the communicative behaviours of the speaker under study" (Bravo, 2008a, p. 568; see also Bravo, 1992, 2002), it is arguably also a worthy object of study in its own right.

6 Concluding remarks

It has been proposed in this paper that face and im/politeness should be disentangled. While there is no doubt face and politeness can be productively related in many ways, it has been argued here that there is much to be gained from first approaching them as distinct phenomena in their own right. On the received view, face constitutes a "socially attributed aspect of self", which can be "maintained", "lost", "saved", "given", "threatened" and so on through the verbal and nonverbal acts by which an individual expresses evaluations of him or herself and others. Politeness arises when face is "maintained", "saved" when otherwise (potentially) "threatened", or "enhanced", while impoliteness arises when face is "lost" or "threatened". These all constitute second-order understandings of $face_2$ and im/politeness$_2$, that is, understandings of analysts who are drawing from various theoretical instantiations of Goffman's basic assumptions about face. However, while this view has been productive in pragmatics, it has (inadvertently) backgrounded the importance of emic first-order understandings of $face_1$ and im/politeness$_1$. When such emic understandings are examined, we find that not only that $face_1$ can arise independently of im/politeness$_1$, and vice versa, but that $face_1$ is tightly interlinked with interpersonal relationships, and that im/politeness$_1$ is often more productively explored through other (folk) analytical constructs, such as "heart-mind" and "social role". What generally underpins understandings of $face_1$, then, are *interpretations* of persons-in-relationships as well as relationships-in-interaction by participants. What generally underpins understandings of im/politeness$_1$, however, are *evaluations* (i.e. valenced categorisations) of persons and relationships vis-à-vis taken-for-granted sets of expectancies by participants. $Face_1$ and im/politeness$_1$ are also arguably important interpersonal phenomena in their own right as they involve recourse to conceptually distinct sets of metalanguage across

different languages and cultures, a point which has only been alluded to in the course of this discussion (see Kádár and Haugh, forthcoming). The challenge for the analyst is to account for this conceptual distinction between face$_1$ and im/politeness$_1$, yet recognize they can be interlinked in interactional practice.

Disentangling face and im/politeness in this way creates problems, however, for those using the term "facework" to refer to politeness, whether it is treated as synonymous with politeness (as Brown and Levinson's work has generally been understood), or more recently as existing in a relationship of mutual hyponymy with politeness (O'Driscoll, 2011, p. 22), where "politeness is a (possible) aspect of facework" (p. 23), among other things (cf. impoliteness, self-politeness/self-facework, mock impoliteness, mock politeness and so on). One possible way of avoiding definitional confusion is to clearly label facework in that latter sense as face$_2$work, specifying that one is dealing with a second-order concept of face (i.e. face$_2$) that focuses primarily on personhood, and acknowledging the inevitable analytical limitations of such a viewpoint (just as the other emic viewpoints discussed here also have their natural limitations).

It has been argued here that while the received view of face and facework inherited from Goffman has clearly been productive, it has also constrained recourse to emic first order understandings in the analysis of face$_1$ and im/politeness$_1$ across languages and cultures. It has also been suggested that persons and relationships be treated as the two most basic analytical loci in pragmatics. This allows for emic understandings of face and im/politeness (i.e. face$_1$ and im/politeness$_1$) to be treated as important interpersonal phenomena in their own right, and also puts the study of interpersonal relationships on par with the analysis of interpersonal identities in pragmatics. It also allows for other neglected analytical metaphors, such as heart-mind to offer alternative analytical windows into the study of interpersonal interactions. In other words, moving towards persons and relationships as analytical foci allows for grounding the analysis of face and im/politeness in a much wider range of emic understandings. The locus of person, for instance, not only encompasses identity and Goffmanian face$_2$, but other notions such as "heart-mind" and "social role". The locus of relationship, on the other hand, not only encompasses relational connection/separation, but also other potentially important dimensions of relationships, such as openness/closedness and certainty/uncertainty (Baxter and Montgomery, 1996). Moreover, in being dialectically related (Arundale, 2009, 2010b), we can also talk of persons-in-relationships and relationships-constituted-in-interaction by persons. This focus on relationships as an object of study in and of themselves constitutes an important move to counter their relative neglect thus far in pragmatics (Arundale, 2010b; Enfield, 2009). It is also argu-

ably only in this latter sense that any theorisation of face$_2$ can become congruent with emic first order understandings of face$_1$.

Finally it is worth reiterating that none of these arguments in any way negates the important and insightful work that has been done using the Goffmanian face(work) paradigm, nor the importance of it in analysing various interpersonal phenomena. Instead, the intent here has simply been to point towards the analytical opportunities afforded by considering other metaphors and theoretical constructs grounded in a broader range of emic understandings of interpersonal phenomena. A socioculturally-enriched approach that draws and builds on emic perspectives arguably gives us a much more nuanced and complex analytical tapestry, which is socioculturally inclusive rather than being overly bound by particular (currently dominant) analytical conceptualisations and paradigms.

Acknowledgments

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