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Audience design and pragmatic conceptions of moves and upvotes during advice-giving on Reddit

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ABSTRACT

Turning to the internet to seek and give advice has become increasingly widespread. One of the most popular online sites where advice interactions routinely occur is Reddit. As a public-oriented site, it is important to understand advice interactions on Reddit not only from a descriptive perspective, but also how other audiences might perceive or interact with the advice, which may be evidenced by the platform's mediated features (e.g. Reddit's upvote system). Thus, this project investigates Reddit advice-giving and its relationship with Reddit's upvote system, and how the suitability of the advice might be perceived, and evidenced, on the platform.

I adopt move analysis (c.f. Swales, 1981, 1990) to explore the types of moves used in Reddit advice-giving. I also extend the theoretical conception of the move onto Spencer-Oatey and Kádár's (2021) pragmatic notion of the interactional goal, in addition to exploring the association between moves and upvotes using Poisson regression modeling.

My results provide a granular and empirical understanding of both the association between upvotes and moves, along with how different advice-giving moves affect our perceptions of advice. I also advance our understanding of Reddit as a site for computer-mediated communication and our understanding of advice as an interactional process.

1. Introduction

Research on advice pragmatics is extensive, dating back to Searle's (1969) seminal classification of advice as the directive speech act of telling someone what is best for them. Subsequent definitions of advice have tried to account for more interactional considerations. For instance, Heritage and Sefi (1992, p. 368) claimed that advice is an activity where the advice-giver "describes, recommends or otherwise forwards a preferred course of future action", while Hudson (1990) defined an advice interaction as a situation where individuals take on the role of advice-giver and/or advice-seeker, and the subsequent interactions between these two parties. While these definitions describe advice-giving as an interactive process that takes on many forms, they also raise questions about the patterns and preferences of advice-giving, along with the contexts in which advice-giving might occur.

Now, many researchers (e.g. Locher, 2013; Stommel, 2016; Waring, 2005) have begun to see advice not as a "textual artifact" that is performed and used for a set of fixed functions (e.g. a speech act), but instead as a negotiated interaction that is also highly context-sensitive. At the same time, most advice research to date has limited their scope of investigation to

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particular offline settings like health institutions (e.g. Bloch and Antaki, 2022; Heritage and Sefi, 1992; Silverman, 1997), and education institutions (e.g. Bademi-Korkmaz et al., 2022; Koshik, 2002; Limberg, 2010; Vehviläinen, 2012; Waring, 2005, 2007; Zhang and Hyland, 2021). These studies have provided continued evidence that interactional patterns and preferences of advice forms are often associated with an array of contextual factors in offline environments.

Moreover, although much good work has been done on advice in online contexts (e.g. Kouper, 2010; Lindholm, 2017; Locher, 2006; Morrow, 2006, 2012; Placencia, 2012; Stommel, 2016), Feng et al. (2018) have also noted that the work done has been predominantly descriptive. In other words, the current body of pragmatic research on online advice has mostly paid attention to analyzing the linguistic and interactional elements as seen within a body of data, with little attention paid to how the online environment might constrain or facilitate these elements. Put simply, there needs to be more work done on understanding not only the relationships between user interaction and language choices, but also the online environment where these interactions take place (e.g. Reddit).

1.1. Reddit

In 2023, Reddit was the 8th most globally visited website (Statista, 2023). However, compared to other popular online platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) Reddit is still relatively understudied from a linguistic perspective (for a recent exception see the studies in Rüdiger and Dayter, 2020). Reddit is most analogous to online discussion forums (Unger, 2020) and can be described as a collection of discussion forums, or subreddits, each with their own focus or theme. Within each subreddit, users of Reddit (henceforth redditors) mainly interact by posting, commenting and importantly, upvoting or downvoting.

The feature of upvoting and downvoting on Reddit can be conceptualized as a paralinguistic digital affordance (PDA), a term used to describe "lightweight acts of communication" (Hayes et al., 2016). Examples of PDAs include Facebook 'reactions' and Twitter 'retweets'. As the main mediated response mechanism on Reddit, upvoting and downvoting a post or comment is akin to demonstrating whether you feel positively or negatively toward that contribution. Thus, this opens interesting avenues for investigating correlations between this PDA and the linguistic elements within the posts and comments it is used to react to on Reddit.

It has also been argued that the characteristics of Reddit have made it a welcoming site for advice exchanges (Carpenter et al., 2018). Advice is currently one of the most popular types of interactions on the platform (for instance, the subreddit 'relationship_advice' has over 10 million subscribers as of 2023). Although advice is so ubiquitous on Reddit, there is still little known about how it operates within the site (except see Vepsäläinen, 2022; Vepsäläinen et al., 2022).

I therefore respond to Feng et al.'s (2018) call for more work that highlights the relationship between language use and technological functionality through an in-depth examination of Reddit's interactional structure, linguistic forms of advice at the level of the move (c.f. Swales, 1981, 1990), and Reddit's upvote system. To do this, I first attempt to identify the different moves that occur within a subreddit. Second, I analyze the patterns and distributions of these moves using a series of multivariate statistical modeling techniques.

2. Literature review

2.1. CMC

Recent work on computer-mediated communication (CMC) has shown increasing interest in algorithms and how they affect our online experiences. Rieder (2017, p. 113) has claimed that algorithms play a crucial role in "how information circulates, how people find and relate to each other, and how conduct is conducted", while Massanari (2017) has argued that Reddit's algorithms have at least a partial impact on how activities and ideologies are propagated on the site. This underscores the importance of understanding how the algorithmic features that underlie different sites and platforms might influence our conduct. Reddit's upvote system is also algorithmic, in which the use of this feature is linked to algorithms of visibility and popularity.

Work done on CMC has also often discussed how users often negotiate their status within online communities through the use of language (e.g. Sindoni, 2020; Stommel and Koole, 2010), highlighting the importance of the wider online audience. If we take this together with Nielsen's (2006) 90-9-1 rule of participation inequality; where it is theorized that 90 % of online users only observe and do not contribute, then understanding this majority group of online users is all the more important. At the same time, it has been difficult in the past to capture empirical evidence of how these wider audiences might feel, think, or influence CMC practices. Here, I argue that we can turn to PDAs in order to understand this group better, for example, tapping into the upvote patterns of these audience types. Yet, with very few exceptions (e.g. Page et al., 2013; West 2015 have explored motivations for using the Facebook 'like'), there has been little work that explores the relationship between language choices and PDAs.

2.2. Advice

Most of the work done on advice pragmatics has been from a conversation analytical perspective (e.g. Connabeer, 2021; Leppänen, 1998; Pudlinski, 1998; Shaw and Hepburn, 2013; Silverman, 1997; Stommel, 2016; Vepsäläinen, 2022). Work done within this tradition has provided many important insights into the forms, sequencing, and organization of advice

interactions as they unfold amongst interlocutors. More recent work has seen a turn towards exploring advice uptake and resistance as indexed through explicit reactions from the advice recipient (e.g. Badem-Korkmaz et al., 2022; Bloch and Antaki, 2022; Leyland, 2018; West, 2023). Thus, we still have much space to explore advice from other perspectives, in particular, methods that also account for indirect participants of the interaction, (i.e. the hypothetical 90 % of online users that observe, but do not contribute).

Perhaps because most work has focused on a particular advice setting, the question of whether topic also influences the advice interaction has not been extensively examined. Digital contexts, including online discussion forums like Reddit, allow for a wide range of advice topics; from extensively studied topics such as health and educational matters, to more niche topics such as pet care. Thus, it is possible to explore advice topic variation within Reddit and make a contribution to this understudied aspect of advice as well.

More research on how advice is perceived, along with understanding what dimensions these evaluations take place, are also sorely needed. Although descriptive analyses of advice forms are very useful, they fall short of helping us understand how these forms affect our perceptions of the appropriateness, usefulness, or value of the advice itself.

Herring (2004, 2007) has argued that it is imperative to explore connections between interaction and online context. More research is still required that explores how the online environment (for example Reddit and its features) might constrain or facilitate advice interactions. This pressing demand also extends to (and is complicated by) the fact that online advice is becoming ever more popular, where PDAs might also influence and provide evidence of perceptions. Therefore, not only do we need an approach that helps us capture and understand the perceptions of advice in a more precise and systematic manner, but we also need an approach that accounts for PDAs.

2.3. Move analysis

Developed by Swales (1981), move analysis is a research framework that explores discourse structures and organization. Swales (1990, 2004) argues that there are sets of 'moves' that constitutes and are exhibitive components of different genres, with each of these moves carrying its own communicative function. Examining a text at the level of the move helps the researcher better understand how a text is structured. The main unit of analysis, the move, is identified as a unit of text with variable linguistic realizations which has its own communicative function (Swales, 1990, 2004). Namely, a move represents a semantic and functional unit of a text that carries a distinct purpose (Biber et al., 2007). Swales (1990, p. 58) has argued that these moves "shape the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style". Theoretically, these moves come together to form the communicative purpose of the whole text.

Due to its tremendous diversity, it has been noted that CMC data pose its own set of analytical challenges (Bolander and Locher, 2014). Nevertheless, move analysis has been successfully used to annotate and describe online advice as well (e.g. Kouper, 2010; Locher, 2006; Morrow, 2012; Placencia, 2012). Although limited in number, these studies serve as a good basis for examining advice on Reddit.

3. Methods

Discussions about online research ethics have generally proposed assessing ethical considerations on a case-by-case basis while bearing in mind the uniqueness of each research setting, design, methods, and local laws (see Hine, 2005; Page et al., 2022; Rüdiger and Dayter, 2017; Tagg and Spilioti, 2022; Whiteman, 2012). Moderators act as gatekeepers for many online forums, and because of this role, Page et al. (2022) have noted a more ethical approach would be to first contact them for consent. My data is thus drawn from one subreddit where moderator approval was granted on the condition of keeping the subreddit anonymous.

Within this subreddit, I adopted a stratified sampling approach to collect 300 threads in total. I identified the top 100, the middle 100, and the bottom 100 most upvoted threads as the target data to collect. From these threads, I gathered all the accompanying comments and their respective upvote scores. The number of comments in each thread varied considerably, from one or two comments up to hundreds of comments. Excluding contributions from the advice-seeker (i.e. the OP), there were 6621 advice comments in my corpus. Data collection, compiling, sorting, and cleaning was conducted between the months of January and February 2019. Examples drawn from this advice corpus are unedited (including spelling and punctuation), save for removing or anonymizing any identifying information.

This subreddit did not restrict what types of advice interactions were allowed. Therefore, categorizing the data by advice topic would also provide an opportunity to further our knowledge of potential topic-level variations in advice-giving. As there has been little work in this direction, I considered an emergent coding approach as the most suitable method. I thus analyzed the data without any preconceived notions of how many topics there were, nor how they should be categorized. For instance, I noticed that many advice topics were interpersonal in nature, in that it involved other people in the advice scenario. Within the interpersonal categorization, I also observed that many of the advice posts specifically involved family members, which was then also categorized as its own topic. I also acknowledge the limitations of such an approach, such as the influence of the researcher's own subjectivities and potential overlaps between categories that require the researcher to make tough decisions during the creation of the taxonomy.

I ultimately settled upon six advice topic categorizations: work and school advice [n = 992], personal advice [n = 1901], family advice [n = 967], interpersonal (i.e. excluding family related) advice [n = 1130], pet advice [n = 357], and miscellaneous

(i.e. an open category of less frequent advice topics that did not fit into the other categories) [n = 1274]. My analysis does not explore the miscellaneous advice topic, as the themes and topics within that category were too broad and varied to approach systematically.

The coding scheme developed for my data consisted of 14 moves. In contrast to the emergent approach used for classifying topic categories, I based these codes on Locher's (2006) work due to similarities between our data, such as the fact that both of our datasets come from asynchronous online platforms. Nevertheless, there were also differences between our data sources that required the reformulation and adaptation of the codes to better fit my data, such as the fact that Reddit allowed for more varied types of interactions and comment structures. Locher's (2006) *list*, *explanation*, *farewell*, *metacomment*, and *open category* moves were not used in my study. New moves were also added to my own codes, namely *agreement*, *background*, *consolation*, *encouragement*, *seeking information*, *solidarity*, and *thanks*. The final move coding scheme for this subreddit, with explanations of each code and corresponding examples from the data, can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1
List of moves on advice subreddit.

Moves	Explanation	Examples from the data
Advice request	When commenter solicits additional advice outside of the OP's original advice-seeking post.	*"What about certificate programs offered by nearby Community Colleges? Are any of those truly worth looking at?"*
Agreement	When commenter agrees with advice that someone has previously given in the thread.	*"Great advice already here."* *"That's a really great suggestion!"*
Assessment	When commenter provides evaluations of the information given in the advice post.	*"that's horrible that they've put you in that position …"* *"There are too many details left out in this post to pick sides, but at [age] years old your parents should not be running your life."*
Background	When commenter provides descriptive information about themselves.	*"Source: I work in disaster response and recovery."* *"As a straight Christian man …"*
Consolation	When commenter expresses sympathy.	*"I am so sorry. Internet hugs"* *"I'm so sorry you are going through this too"*
Disclaimer	When commenter provides a warning or caution message for their given advice.	*"I don't know your experiences personally, and I have no expertise on OCD …"* *"I'm no professional but …"*
Encouragement	When commenter gives compliments and encouragement.	*"I'm proud of your effort and know you got this!"* *"I wish you the best of luck, life is what you want it to be so go make it happen!"*
Experience sharing	When commenter shares either their own experience or the experience of someone else. These experiences can be either specific or habitual.	*"I took it for a while, trying to quit smoking, and... had the most messed up night terrors imaginable."* *"I like riding my bike on the weekends. And after work when it's still light out. Once you get into it you can ride for hours, it's quite nice."*
Explicit advice	When commenter provides suggestions or invites action, consideration, or introspection.	*"Look up Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Or find a therapist in your area that specializes in CBT."* *"My advice to you would be to get involved in some charity work."*
Information giving	When commenter gives general information. This information is not specific to the particular advice situation. The only possible link is that the advice topic is relevant to the information given.	*"The parent/child relationship is very unique in that it's always inherently unequal."* *"For most parents, their child will always be their baby."*
Referral	When commenter encourages the advice-seeker toward another source of information for help. A specific type of advice.	*"Probably a good question for/r/askscience."* *"Try http://solutionfocusedbriefftherapy.com and click on the blue caption that says "click here to find a solution focused therapist near you"."*
Seeking information	When commenter solicits more information from the OP.	*"i gotta ask, what is it about this woman that they are so dead set against? Do they lack understanding or have a warped perspective of her?"* *"Are you in the UK?"*
Solidarity	When commenter uses language that show they are in the same boat as another person; an awareness of shared situation.	*"You don't need to feel bad, I felt the same last year too"* *"I legitimately have the same problem."*
Thanks	When commenter expresses gratitude.	*"Thank you for the advice and the encouragement."*

Adapted from Locher (2006, p.62).

Some scholars (e.g. Fuoli, 2018; Fuoli and Hommerberg, 2015) have been proponents of adopting coding manuals and intercoder reliability checks more widely in qualitative research, yet the use of coding manuals is largely absent in research using move analysis (for an exception see Moreno and Swales, 2018). To this end, I also created a coding manual to ensure my codes were transparent and replicable. Fuoli (2018) has also stressed the importance of both testing the robustness of our codes and further refining these codes to achieve maximum reliability. Admittingly, the lack of a standard unit which delineates moves may contribute to the difficulty of integrating intercoder reliability checks more widely in move analysis. Nevertheless, I believed it was important to adopt some type of agreement measure, as it still serves as an indicator of coding robustness.

A second coder independently coded a random sample of 20 % of the data using my initial coding framework. This round of coding yielded unsatisfactory agreement scores. Thus, I had lengthy discussions with the second coder, which resulted in recoding of errors and making revisions to my coding manual. The second round of coding using my revised coding manual yielded an interrater Kappa score of 89.6 %; indicating a very high level of coding agreement according to Landis and Koch's (1977) widely accepted thresholds. The final coding manual can be found in appendix A.

3.1. Data quantification

I also quantified the results of the move analysis into a format conductive to statistical analyses. For each thread, I recorded the upvote score and which move was present in each advice comment into a contingency table. The vote score was recorded as the raw numerical value, while a zero was used to indicate the move being absent, and a one to indicate the move being present. The advice topic of each thread was also noted down. A partial screenshot of the contingency table can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2
Sample quantification of move analysis results.

Comment	Upvotes	Advice Request	Agreement	Assessment	Background	Consolation	Disclaimer	Encouragement	Experience Sharing	Explicit Advice	Information Giving	Referral	Seeking Information	Solidarity	Thanks	Topic	Thread
1	19	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	Family	B1
2	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	Family	B1
3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	Family	B1
4	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Family	B1

Table 2 shows four comments, all within the same thread (labeled as B1), while the topic of the thread is family advice. Comment 1 had an upvote score of 19 and contained the *assessment*, *explicit advice*, *information giving*, and *seeking information* moves.

3.2. Quantitative analyses of moves and upvotes

The Chi-squared ($\chi 2$) test and the Pearson residual analysis were used to examine the dataset. The Chi-squared test was used to explore if the presence of a move and the advice topic are significantly associated to each other. For the Chi-squared test, a p-value >0.05 would indicate that move and topic are not significantly associated, whereas a p-value <0.05 would indicate the opposite.

The data was also further explored with Pearson residual analysis, a common post-hoc test that ascertains the strength of an association (Desagulier, 2017), to obtain z-scores. The Pearson residual analysis allows me to see if the observed move frequency is significantly higher or lower than statistically expected, in addition to the strength of this effect. Running statistical tests to obtain Chi-squared p-values and Pearson residual z-scores are key measures to exploring move variation, as the p-value let us know if the observed categories (move and advice topic) are associated, while z-scores indicate the direction and magnitude of those relationships.

The final step in the move analysis was to explore the relation between moves and upvotes through Poisson regression linear modeling. Outside of linguistics, Poisson regression is the standard technique for modeling countable data, which Reddit upvote scores can be considered. Winter (2020) has argued that although Poisson regression is not prevalent in linguistics, it is a useful technique due to the predisposition of countable data within the discipline. Poisson regression modeling can discern statistical relationships between a comment's upvote score and the presence of each move in the comment.

Poisson regression analysis does have some limitations. Firstly, the model does not handle negative values, which Reddit does allow for (−1 votes, etc.). It was found that only 1.67 % of my data was unusable. This was deemed small enough, so comments with negative upvote scores were removed from the analysis.

Secondly, Poisson regression assumes that the values of the data are not overdispersed (Winter, 2020). Unfortunately, my data did have slight overdispersion. Thus, the negative binomial model, a variation of the Poisson regression that allows for overdispersion (Bentz and Winter, 2013; Ismail and Jemain, 2007), was instead used. With the limitations and assumptions accounted for, seven regression models were fitted: one for the entire corpus, and one for each of the six advice topics.

4. Results

4.1. Advice moves on Reddit (raw and percentage frequency)

My data is visualized in Table 3. White cells depict the raw count of the moves, while the percentage frequency of these moves is depicted in the style of a heat map. Relative to either the advice topic or the entire corpus, colors in shades closer to red indicate a relatively lower percentage frequency of occurrence, while colors in shades closer to green indicate a relatively higher percentage frequency of occurrence.

Table 3
Advice moves on Reddit (raw and percentage frequency, by advice topic).

	Advice Request	Agreement	Assessment	Background	Consolation	Disclaimer	Encouragement	Experience Sharing	Explicit Advice	Information Giving	Referral	Seeking Information	Solidarity	Thanks	Total Moves by Topic
Family (n=967)	0.00%	2.90%	25.74%	1.71%	4.82%	1.40%	1.71%	9.17%	29.47%	14.55%	1.81%	4.66%	1.09%	0.98%	
	0	56	497	33	93	27	33	177	569	281	35	90	21	19	1931
Interpersonal (n=1130)	0.00%	3.18%	26.95%	1.68%	1.54%	0.80%	2.11%	10.53%	31.87%	14.09%	1.22%	4.35%	1.31%	0.37%	
	0	68	576	36	33	17	45	225	681	301	26	93	28	8	2137
Miscellaneous (n=1274)	0.00%	2.69%	23.23%	2.51%	0.98%	1.12%	1.39%	12.09%	30.30%	17.23%	1.92%	4.88%	0.72%	0.94%	
	0	60	519	56	22	25	31	270	677	385	43	109	16	21	2234
Personal (n=1901)	0.08%	2.20%	16.04%	1.57%	1.82%	1.01%	2.03%	18.98%	28.98%	17.51%	2.10%	3.52%	3.67%	0.48%	
	3	87	633	62	72	40	80	749	1144	691	83	139	145	19	3947
Pet (n=357)	0.00%	2.76%	16.21%	1.76%	8.29%	1.38%	0.63%	22.74%	26.51%	13.82%	1.26%	2.39%	2.14%	0.13%	
	0	22	129	14	66	11	5	181	211	110	10	19	17	1	796
Work & School (n=992)	0.15%	1.98%	22.12%	2.78%	0.69%	0.69%	0.89%	13.44%	29.71%	18.85%	1.19%	5.16%	1.54%	0.79%	
	3	40	446	56	14	14	18	271	599	380	24	104	31	16	2016
Total Moves by Percentage of Corpus	0.05%	2.55%	21.44%	1.97%	2.30%	1.03%	1.62%	14.34%	29.71%	16.45%	1.69%	4.24%	1.98%	0.64%	
	6	333	2800	257	300	134	212	1873	3881	2148	221	554	258	84	13061

4.2. Statistical analysis

The results of the Chi-squared test performed on Table 3 were: $X^2(65, N = 13{,}061) = 731.97$, $p = <0.01$. The p-value of <0.01 confirms with strong confidence that move occurrence and the advice topic are associated with each other.

The results of the Pearson residual analysis are depicted in the form of an association plot in Fig. 1. White colored bars mean there was no significance detected. If the residual value is 2 or larger, the move is regarded as significantly over-represented, and is depicted in shades of pink. If the residual value is −2 or smaller, the move is considered significantly underrepresented and is depicted in shades of blue.

62.5 % of the moves appeared within expected levels. In particular, the *agreement*, *disclaimer*, *explicit advice,* and *referral* moves are neither overrepresented nor underrepresented across any advice topic. These findings will not be discussed because they were statistically insignificant. As the focus of this work is advice-giving moves used by advice-givers, I exclusively focus on moves that both display statistical significance and are mainly used by advice-givers. Moves that were predominately used by advice-seekers (e.g. the *thanks* move was used by advice-seeker 85 % of the time), or were extremely infrequent (e.g. the *advice request* move was only used six times by advice-giving redditors) will not be examined.

Instead, the focus of the analysis will be on the eight moves that displayed topic-level statistical variation, were overwhelmingly used by advice-givers, and made up a large amount of the corpora. These eight moves are: *assessment*, *background*, *consolation*, *encouragement*, *experience sharing*, *information giving*, *seeking information*, and *solidarity*.

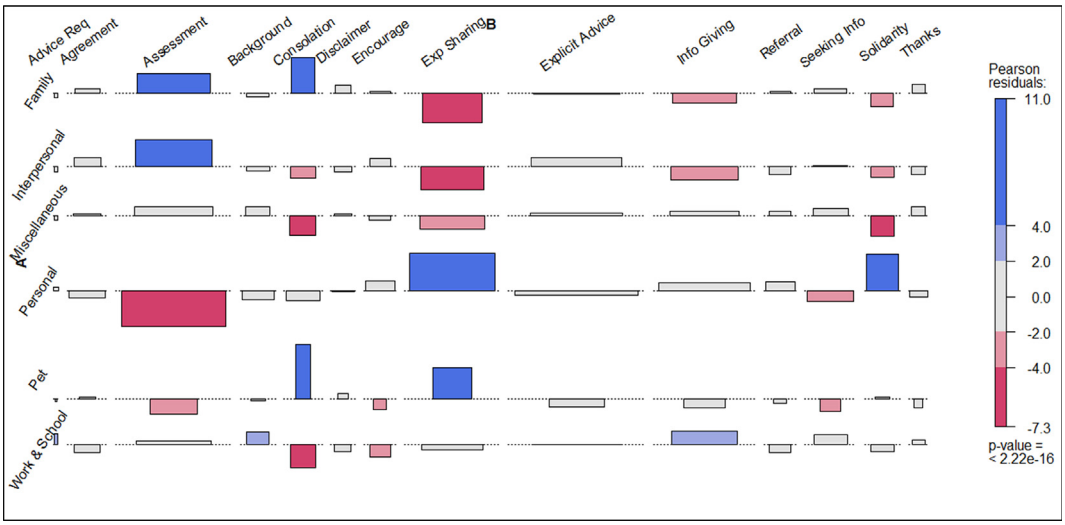

Fig. 1. Association plot of significant move variations by advice topic.

4.3. Results — interactional goal orientation of moves

Although several pragmatic models have been used to explore advice (e.g. Brown and Levinson, 1987; Locher, 2006), I draw from Spencer-Oatey's (2005, 2008, 2015) and Spencer-Oatey and Kádár's (2021) work on rapport management and politeness evaluations to understand my data, as it not only accounts for politeness phenomena, but also how our goals and social and moral matters might also influence the interaction.

I focus specifically on one aspect of their model, the interactional goal. Spencer-Oatey and Kádár (2021) believe that during interactions, we often have a specific interactional goal in mind, which is crucial for interpersonal dynamics (Kim and Spencer-Oatey, 2021). Some interactions are transactional, or task-focused; something specific needs to be achieved. Others are relational, aiming to smoothen relations, foster relationships, and build trust. These two goals are occasionally interconnected, so to accomplish the transactional goal we might need to also cater to the relational goal. Emerson et al.'s (2020) work has also implied that there are pragmatic competencies involved with being able to understand the extent we should or should not orient toward each of these goals within different circumstances.

I believe that there are strong affinities between moves as a linguistic unit of analysis and the interactional goal. This is because identifying the communicative function of moves (c.f. Swales, 1981, 1990) is analogous to identifying the purpose (i.e. the goal) of that particular stretch of text. Identifying the different communicative functions at the micro level of the move can therefore be reflected in the more macro level of the interactional goal of the entire utterance itself.

Theorizing advice in terms of interactional goals, scholars have tended to define advice as purely transactional. For instance, Haugh and Chang (2015) separate advice from emotional support. Although advice is frequently defined in scholarly work in this manner, early work (e.g. Jefferson and Lee, 1981) has also demonstrated that emotional support is commonly observed alongside advice. Moreover, users visit online advice forums not only for advice, but also often for support (Harvey and Koteyko, 2013; von Rohr, 2015). Locher and Limberg (2012) have also discussed the conceptual ambiguity of what constitutes advice. Perhaps because of this, some scholars (e.g. Bates, 2021; Smithson et al., 2011) have argued that emotional support can also be considered aspects of the advice interaction itself.

Like these scholars, I believe we should conceptualize advice as an interactive event, where advice and emotional support can, in some cases, both appear. In other words, I argue that the specific act of advising, as well as acts of emotional support, should both be considered 'advice' as well. These two aspects of advice can therefore be neatly mapped onto Spencer-Oatey's (2008) two dimensions of interactional goals: transactional (offering information) and relational (offering emotional support). I further argue that the interactional goal of advice is a range that slides between the transactional and relational, whereby the advice topic may influence where the interactional goal falls along the range. Both the choice and the propensity of certain moves being under or overutilized in my dataset can therefore be explained by which of the two interactional goals these moves tend to orient toward, and what the advice-giver perceives as the interactional goal. I therefore approach my move analysis from this perspective.

The interactional goal categorizations I adopt for these moves are based on the moves propensity to demonstrate relational or transactional properties. I also admit that the dichotomy of transactional and relational goals is not always well defined, and not every instance of the move within a category will display the same goal orientation properties. The proposed goal-orientation of the eight moves are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4
The interactional goal orientation of each move.

Move	Interactional goal orientation
Assessment	Transactional
Background	Transactional
Consolation	Relational
Encouragement	Relational
Experience sharing	Relational
Information giving	Transactional
Seeking information	Transactional
Solidarity	Relational

4.3.1. Assessment

The *assessment* move can be face-threatening. Locher (2006) attributes this to the possibility of the advice-giver misinterpreting the situation of the advice-seeker. Additionally, there is a distinct possibility that the advice-seeker may reject the advice-giver's evaluation.

In the following example, the advice-seeker solicits advice regarding "*how to manage time, get good rest, and be productive at work without sacrificing on the personal time*". One redditor's reply is reproduced below, which included an assessment move (underlined).

> *Embrace the struggle until you develop something worth while. Your brain doesn't want to do someone else's work, it wants to create it's own shit. Obviously we all need money so you can't just quit your day job, but with your skill set, you should be working on developing something extraordinary. If not, you will go on being a worker bee until the end. I say fuck that. Build something. Fail. Build something else. Fail again. Maybe on your 3rd try you will create something everyone must have. Until then, find the strength to push through the hard shit.*

In a reply to this, the advice-seeker notes that this redditor has mis-evaluated their situation.

> *That's very helpful and motivating but the real issue is efficiency. I mean due to this over exhaustion, the efficiency of my work is getting hurt. Isn't this a lose lose situation.*

While potentially risky, I believe that the *assessment* move is usually transactionally-oriented. Looking back at the previous example, we can note that the *assessment* move is being used by the advice-giver to 'diagnose' the problem of the advice-seeker, paving the way for them to advise.

4.3.2. Background

The *background* move has face-threatening potential, especially if the move emphasizes that the advice-giver has greater knowledge or expertise than the advice-seeker. I believe the *background* move is usually transactionally-oriented. This move serves to help legitimize advice by revealing certain aspects of the advice-giver deemed relevant to the advice situation. For instance, the advice-giver in the below comment has revealed an aspect of their identity by using the *background* move (underlined).

> *Call the cops! HR is not necessarily there for employees, they often want this kind of stuff swept under the rug so as to not sully their public image (from my experience working retail for many years). It is the cops job to care about people and pursue this matter, not get rid of it*

The fact that the advice-giver has revealed themselves as an experienced retail worker serves to legitimize the *explicit advice* move used earlier in their advice comment ("*Call the cops!*").

4.3.3. Consolation

Emotional support is often seen as a common and important dimension of advice interactions (e.g. Harvey and Koteyko, 2013; Miller and Gergen, 1998; Placencia, 2012; von Rohr, 2015), and it would seem that the *consolation* move is a face-enhancing move that taps into this important dimension to build rapport. Therefore, the *consolation* move is a clear example of a move that is relationally-oriented.

4.3.4. Encouragement

The *encouragement* move has been regarded as face-enhancing (e.g. Brown and Levinson, 1987; Locher, 2006) due to its explicit rapport building intention. The *encouragement* move is one strategy that can help fulfill the supportive aspect of advice and is thus a relationally-oriented move.

4.3.5. Experience sharing

Sharing experiences has been noted in many types of online advice interactions (e.g. Kouper, 2010; Locher, 2006; Morrow, 2006; Page, 2012; Placencia, 2012). Locher (2013, p.343) has even argued that peer support websites "thrive on the benefits of shared experiences". The sharing of an experiences may facilitate rapport building between the advice-giver and advice-seeker by reinforcing similar or core values (Page, 2012). Thus, the *experience sharing* move generally orients toward the relational goal of advice-giving.

4.3.6. Information giving

In my data, the *information-giving* move is often used to legitimize more context-specific advice. Therefore, I believe that this move is transactionally-oriented. For example, in response to an advice-seeker asking about what to do about the lack of quality employee's in their uncle's small business, an advice-giver responds with an *information giving* move (underlined) followed immediately by an *explicit advice* move, as shown in the extract that follows.

> *In business, you have to do what's right for the company to be successful. And what's right is very often not easy. If you have the ability to, ask him if you can set up a advertisement online for applicants.*

In this example, the assumption of what it takes to have a successful business is used to validate the advice that this advice-giver provides in the final sentence.

4.3.7. Seeking information

This move often occurs with the advice-giver believes that the advice-seeker has not provided enough information about their advice situation. The *seeking information* move may impact the advice-seeker's face by requesting them to disclose more information. This might be seen as an imposition, as the advice-seeker may have already disclosed the amount of information they think is necessary or they are comfortable with. I believe that this move is transactionally-oriented because it is often used to gather more information which the advice-giver perceives is necessary before advice can be adequately given.

4.3.8. Solidarity

Solidarity can create or enhance positive rapport (Locher, 2006). An example of how alignment is constructed through *solidarity* in advice can be seen in the comment that follows. This comment is a reply to the advice-seeker's request on how to communicate effectively while being in a highly emotional state.

> *I feel like I'm the same - I can either be silent or so overwhelmed that I can only cry.*
>
> *Maybe try communicating through text? As weird as that sounds, I've always found that I can rant and express myself if I can type it out on my phone, review it, and send it. This way you can allow yourself to cry/be silent, type all that is racing through your mind, and then filter before hitting send.*
>
> *Next time you're in a heated argument with someone face to face, walk to the next room, and text them saying "I'm too overwhelmed to speak it out, how I feel is …"*

By aligning with the advice-seeker using the solidarity move (underlined), the advice-giver has attempted to build rapport with the advice-seeker. Thus, this move is relationally-oriented in its interactional goal.

4.4. Results — interactional goal orientation of advice topics

It is also important to look at how these moves might work together at a higher (i.e. topic) level, as a subsequent understanding of the potential topic-sensitivity of moves would bear implications on how advice may be better formed to suit different requirements. Furthermore, as moves usually do not work by themselves, it is also important to understand when and why do moves co-occur with each other. I believe that the co-occurrence of moves, namely the frequency (and infrequency) of the types of moves that tend to occur within a topic, reflect the advice-givers' perception of the interactional goal of the advice.

In the next sections, I will report the co-occurrence of significant moves within each advice topic and discuss how these co-occurrences might reflect the interactional goal orientation of the advice topic. I focus on the five thematic topics in my dataset: family, interpersonal, personal, pet, and work and school.

In the figures that follow, moves placed on the left side of the continuum are statistically significant and generally related to the transactional goal, while moves placed on the right-hand side are statistically significant and generally related to the relational goal. A '+' symbol next to the move indicates significant overrepresentation, while a '-' symbol next to the move indicates significant underrepresentation.

4.4.1. Family advice

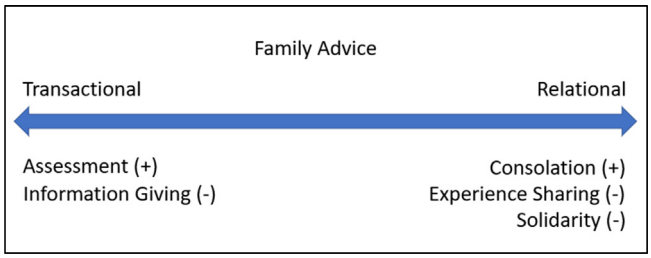

Fig. 2. Interactional goal of family advice.

Fig. 2 suggests that family advice is not particularly polarized on the interactional goal continuum. Although *experience sharing* and *solidarity* are underrepresented, advice-givers still tend to work toward the relational goal through the *consolation* move. At the same time, although *information giving* is underrepresented, advice-givers still work toward the transactional-goal of advice by utilizing *assessment* moves. Based on these findings, it would seem that the topic requirements of family advice require both transactional and relational elements.

4.4.2. Interpersonal advice

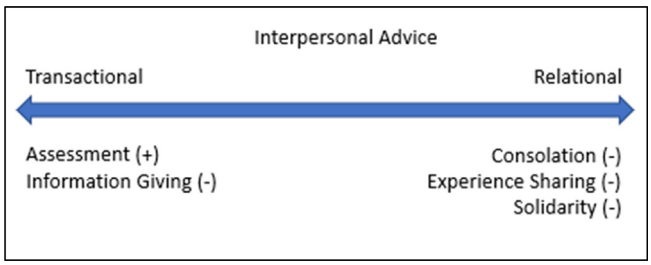

Fig. 3. Interactional goal of interpersonal advice.

The interactional goal orientation of interpersonal advice is visualized in Fig. 3. Family advice is thematically similar to interpersonal advice since they both involve advice scenarios concerning other people. Perhaps because of these parallels, there are also some overlaps between their advice move distributions. For example, in both these topics, the only significant overrepresented move is *assessment*. The over-expected frequency of the *assessment* move bears some similarity to other studies that have also at least partially explored interpersonal advice. For instance, Locher (2006) observed that the relationship subcategory of her dataset had the highest proportion of assessment moves, at 20 %. My findings also display similarities to Morrow's (2012) study of online advice-giving within a Japanese divorce discussion forum. Divorce as an advice topic can also be considered interpersonal and family related, and in Morrow's (2012) study, it was noted *assessment* was the most frequent move, at 40 %. These previous studies, along with my own findings, indicate that the use of the *assessment* move seems to be preferred for giving advice on topics involving other people.

4.4.3. Personal advice

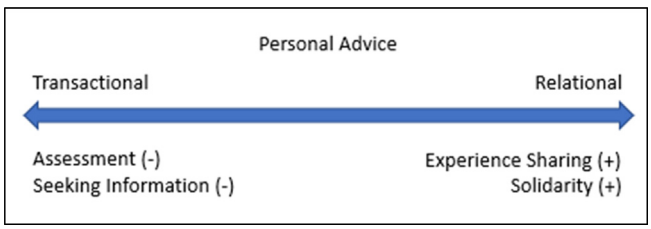

Fig. 4. Interactional goal of personal advice.

The interactional goal orientation of personal advice is visualized in Fig. 4. Personal advice seems to be strongly inclined toward the relational goal. Transactional moves are either statistically irrelevant or underrepresented, pointing to the possibility that transactional moves are dispreferred. On the other hand, the overrepresentation of the *experience sharing* and *solidarity*

moves signify that rapport building is important for this topic. An example can be seen in the following reply to a personal advice topic concerning how to be less of a mean person (*experience sharing* move underlined, *solidarity* move bolded):

> ***You know - at some level I'm doing exactly the same thing*** *... in my case it's underlying stress, anxiety, exhaustion ... it has very little to do with the people I'm directing it to but has everything to do with my own beleaguered state of mind. Also at some point fakery just seems useless like you've lost that protective step where you hold back and instead are just unleashed and say exactly what's on you mind (unfiltered).*
>
> *I guess .. if your case is anything like mine it's time to take a step back and try to reduce some stresses in your life. Easier said than done I know.*

This example shows how these two overrepresented moves are used to build rapport between the advice-giver and advice-seeker, while at the same time helping to orient toward the advice in the latter part of the comment.

4.4.4. Pet advice

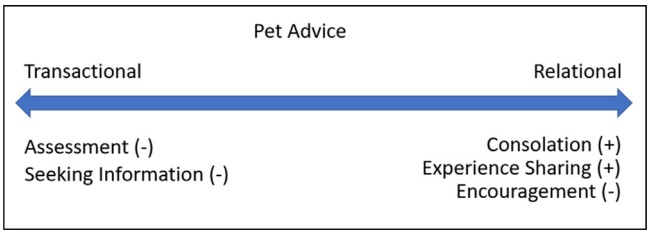

Fig. 5. Interactional goal of pet advice.

The interactional goal orientation of pet advice is visualized in Fig. 5. One salient feature of pet advice is the common usage of *experience sharing* moves. Statistically, this move was overrepresented by a large margin in relation to other advice topics, at 22.74 % of all the moves used in pet advice.

Another distinguishing attribute of pet advice is the overrepresentation of *consolation* moves. This may be attributed to the fact that many pet advice topics were about a dying or the death of a pet. An example advice comment in reply to the death of a pet is seen below (*consolation* move underlined):

> *I'm so sorry for your loss. When my dog was put down we wrapped him in his favourite blanket and buried him with it. It was a really tough time so I hope you're doing okay*

Because *experience sharing* and *consolation* are both overrepresented relational moves, it seems that pet advice is more relational in its interactional goal.

4.4.5. Work and school advice

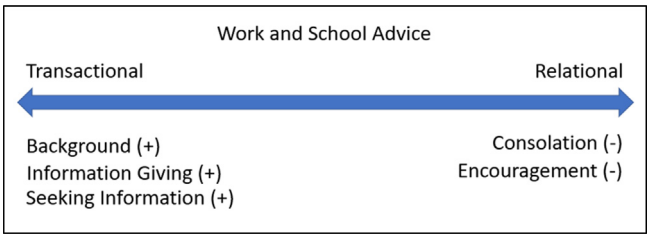

Fig. 6. Interactional goal of work and school advice.

The interactional goal orientation of work and school advice is visualized in Fig. 6. Work and school advice orients strongly toward the transactional goal. For instance, work and school is the only advice topic where the *background* move, a transactional move, is significantly overrepresented in my data. Most instances of the *background* move were related to the advice-giver indexing their expertise. In the following example, the advice-seeker asks for advice on whether it would be a good idea to join the army to develop their career. One user's response is reproduced in the following (*background* move underlined):

> *Can confirm. I am prior Air Force, served 4 years Active Duty as an enlisted person.*
>
> *I've dealt with my share of bullshit while I was in which led to my decision to voluntarily separate. A lot of politics and favoritism which I know exists in the private sector, but in the military it's like it's part of the program, which is unfortunate.*
>
> *I do suggest the Air Force, though, as it is better quality of life, try to get a specialty code (job) that translates well outside. Plus you get the GI Bill to add on to your education if you plan to get out.*

The overt statement of occupational expertise in the *background* move is making explicit a knowledge asymmetry between the advice-seeker and advice-giver.

4.5. Advice topic interactional goal continuum

Based on these results, the interactional goal of these five advice topics can be categorized somewhere along the interactional goal continuum. My proposal for how these five topics sit on this scale, in relation to one another, is visualized in Fig. 7. These placements are based on the amount of observed significant move types and whether these moves were overrepresented or underrepresented.

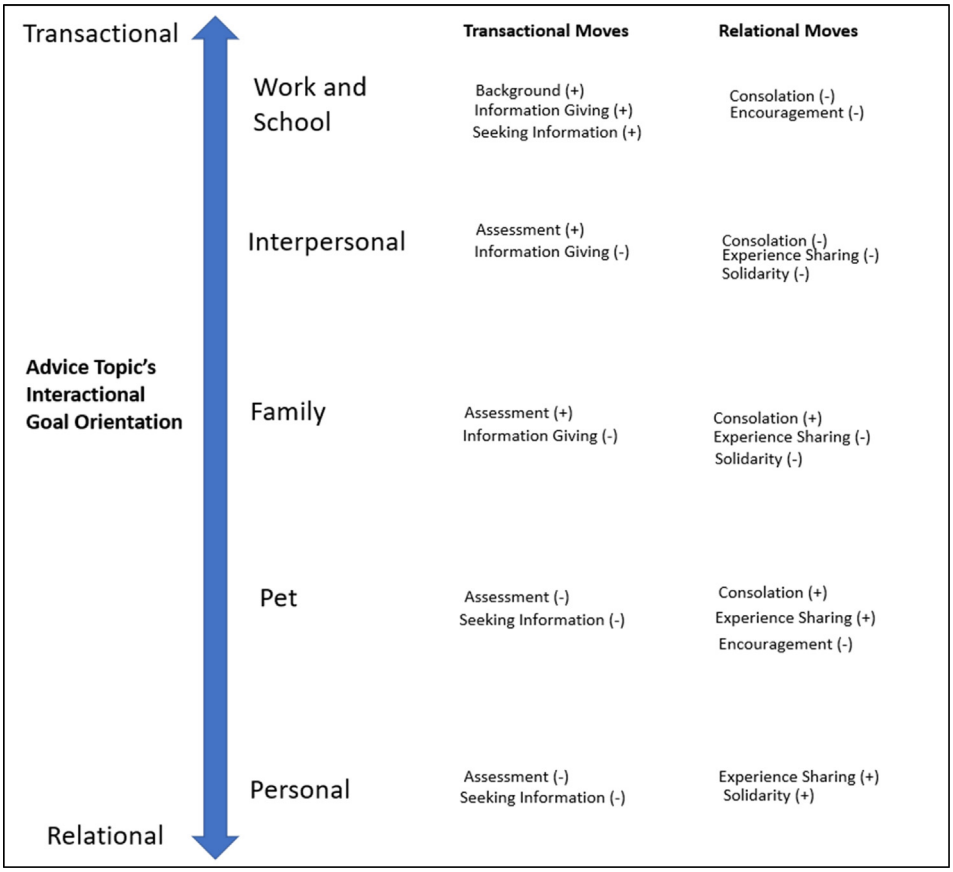

Fig. 7. Advice topic interactional goal variation.

Theoretically, I have further argued that these move variations are related to the perception of the interactional goal of the advice interaction from the viewpoint of the advice-giver. Overall, categorizing advice in this manner is useful because it allows us to develop a more fine-grained and nuanced understanding of the varying pragmatic concerns that underlie advice-giving, which ultimately helps us move further away from a uniform view of advice.

4.6. Upvotes and audience design

Drawing from Bell's (1984) terminologies regarding audience design, I have claimed that statistically under and over-represented moves in my corpus serve as indicators of how the advice-giver (i.e. speaker) orient toward what they believe is the interactional goal of advice on Reddit. At the same time, the potential audiences of advice on Reddit extend beyond solely the advice-seeker (i.e. addressee), as the targets of online advice messages on discussion forums are "virtually unlimited" (Feng et al., 2018, p.4).

Potential audience types of Reddit advice interactions can also include auditors (listeners who are not directly addressed but are known and ratified) and even overhearers (non-ratified listeners who the speaker has an awareness of). These

audience groups may have their own perceptions of the advice's interactional goal requirements, which might differ from the addressee. At the same time, although they might not explicitly contribute linguistically to a public advice interaction on Reddit, auditors and overhearers can also use and evaluate advice that has been given on the platform (e.g. by upvoting).

Although lay and scholarly discussions have suggested many possibilities for the pragmatic meaning behind the upvote, (e.g. I can upvote a contribution to show that the content is something interesting to me, I want to see more of, I like, that furthers the discussion, I value, or I agree with), a similarity between all of these potential meanings is that an upvote signals positive alignment, while a downvote signals negative alignment. With this admittingly simple dichotomy in mind, we can therefore understand moves statistically associated with more upvotes as garnering more positive alignment from redditors, and vice versa.

I believe that auditor and overhearer perceptions of the interactional goal of advice are at least partially evidenced in upvote patterns. In other words, a move statistically associated with more upvotes indicates that the move is generally perceived by the auditors and overhearers as more appropriately positioned to the interactional goal of that advice interaction. Thus, I base my interpretations of the Poisson regression models as evidence of auditor and overhearer perceptions of the interactional goal, and the move analysis results as evidence of the speaker's (i.e. advice-giver) perceptions of the interactional goal, and compare both results.

Table 5 provides an overview of my regression analyses results. A star (*) next to the number indicates moves that significantly affects the upvote score (with a significance level set at $p < 0.05$). The number indicates the effect size, with a positive number indicating a higher upvote count associated with a move (highlighted in blue), and a negative number indicating the opposite (highlighted in red). The higher the positive number, the stronger the effect on increasing upvote count, while the lower the negative number, the stronger the effect on lowering the upvote count. 'N/A' indicates that the move was not present.

Table 5
Overview of the seven regression models.

	Advice Request	Agreement	Assessment	Background	Consolation	Disclaimer	Encouragement	Experience Sharing	Explicit Advice	Information Giving	Referral	Seeking Information	Solidarity	Thanks
Entire Corpus	0.3907	0.17700*	0.15529*	0.77676*	0.051	-0.028	0.34811*	0.04013*	0.40970*	0.0277	0.26712*	-0.13607*	-0.20450*	-0.36392*
Family	N/A	0.65480*	-0.117	1.27010*	-0.39690*	0.0641	-1.00372*	-0.095	0.50825*	-0.32645*	0.1603	-0.162	-0.227	-0.93845*
Interpersonal	N/A	0.1567	0.1137	0.60069*	-0.48804*	-0.63999*	1.13291*	0.0177	0.49211*	-0.169	0.88928*	-0.42022*	-0.491	0.3876
Miscellaneous	N/A	-0.137	0.28786*	0.86508*	0.68895*	0.95849*	0.72371*	-0.29771*	0.44480*	-0.036	0.36937*	-0.36415*	-1.03370*	0.021
Personal	0.9179	-0.029	0.20462*	0.26015*	0.1109	-0.40259*	-0.06338*	0.18995*	0.29729*	0.25225*	0.0831	-0.062	-0.077	-0.585
Pet	N/A	0.2731	-0.032	0.1258	0.2576	-0.805	-0.215	0.0862	0.55651*	0.30938*	1.13061*	0.2536	-0.80117*	0.0861
Work and School	-0.995	0.1227	0.30766*	0.40246*	0.0942	0.056	-0.84257*	-0.20459*	0.34589*	0.0918	-0.81973*	0.0218	0.0616	-1.10794*

To better understand these findings and to compare to my move analysis results, I categorized the regression results in regard to the interactional goal orientation of the moves. I again do not focus on the miscellaneous advice topic as that category was too broad and too varied to approach systematically. Additionally, I focus only on the eight moves analyzed in the move analysis (*assessment*, *background*, *consolation*, *encouragement*, *experience sharing*, *information giving*, *seeking information* and *solidarity*) to serve as direct points of comparison. These results are shown in Table 6. In the first column, moves that are shaded in green are transactional moves, while moves shaded in orange are relational moves. For the other columns, a (+) symbol indicates that the move is correlated with an increased frequency of upvotes, while a (−) symbol indicates that the move is correlated with a decreased frequency of upvotes. No symbols indicate no correlation.

Table 6
Relationship between moves, advice topic, and upvotes.

Move	Advice Topic					
	Family	Interpersonal	Personal	Pet	Work and School	Whole Corpus
Assessment			+		+	+
Background	+	+	+		+	+
Consolation	-	-				
Encouragement	-	+	-		-	+
Experience Sharing			+		-	+
Information Giving	-		+	+		
Seeking Information		-				-
Solidarity				-		-

There were 25 instances of a significant move and upvote relationship across the advice topics examined. Furthermore, of the 14 times that moves were associated with an increase in upvotes, 10 were linked to transactional moves, while only three were linked to relational moves. On the other hand, of the 11 moves linked to a lower frequency of upvotes, eight were linked to relational moves, while only three were linked to transactional moves. These results preliminary indicate that transactional moves are more often associated with an increase of upvotes, while relational moves are more often associated with a decrease of upvotes. Potential reasons why this is the case will be discussed further.

4.7. Results — upvotes and audience design

The results indicated that some moves were aligned with the speaker's, the auditors', and the overhearers' perception of the interactional goal. For example, within work and school advice, the *background* move (a transactional move) was over-represented and related to an increased frequency of upvotes when present. Moves that demonstrate this type of relationship are shown in Table 7.

Table 7
Moves that were aligned amongst different audience roles.

Overrepresented moves associated with more upvotes		Underrepresented moves associated with less upvotes	
Advice topic	**Move**	**Advice topic**	**Move**
Personal	*Experience sharing*	Interpersonal	*Consolation*
Work and school	*Background*	Work and school	*Encouragement*

Cases of full alignment amongst all of these audience roles are rare. Conversely, there were also some cases of an inverse relationship, as outlined in Table 8.

Table 8
Moves that demonstrated an inverse relationship.

Advice topic	Move	Move analysis	Regression analysis
Family	*Consolation*	Overrepresented	Less upvotes
Personal	*Assessment*	Underrepresented	More upvotes

For example, personal advice that contains the *assessment* move (a transactional move) is more frequently upvoted, indicating that the *assessment* move tends to align with auditor and overhearers' perception of the interactional goal of personal advice, yet the move was underrepresented, indicating that the *assessment* move does not seem to align with the advice-giver's perception of this same interactional goal.

Finally, it was commonly observed that there might be statistical associations in one analysis, but not the other, which I will call a 'one way' relationship. For instance, within family advice, although the *assessment* move was significantly overrepresented, it had no effect on upvotes when present. The majority of datapoints in my study demonstrated this 'one way' relationship.

Table 9 shows all instances of the 'one way' relationship. The first column indicates the advice topics. In the second column, cells shaded in green are transactional moves, while cells shaded in orange are relational moves. In the third (move analysis) column, a (+) symbol next to the move denotes significant overrepresentation of the move and a (−) symbol next to the move denotes significant underrepresentation of the move. In the fourth (regression analysis) column, a (+) symbol denotes a significantly higher frequency of upvotes when the move is present and a (−) symbol denotes a significantly lower frequency of upvotes when the move is present. N/A denotes no statistical significance.

Table 9
Moves that demonstrate 'one way' relationships.

Advice Topic	Move	Move Analysis	Regression Analysis
Family	Assessment	+	N/A
	Background	N/A	+
	Encouragement	N/A	-
	Experience Sharing	+	N/A
	Solidarity	-	N/A
Interpersonal	Assessment	+	N/A
	Background	N/A	-
	Encouragement	N/A	+
	Experience Sharing	-	N/A
	Information Giving	-	N/A
	Seeking Information	N/A	-
	Solidarity	-	NA
Personal	Background	N/A	+
	Encouragement	N/A	-
	Information Giving	N/A	+
	Seeking Information	-	N/A
	Solidarity	+	N/A
Pet	Assessment	-	N/A
	Consolation	+	N/A
	Encouragement	-	N/A
	Experience Sharing	+	N/A
	Information Giving	N/A	+
	Seeking Information	-	N/A
	Solidarity	N/A	-
Work and School	Assessment	N/A	+
	Consolation	-	N/A
	Experience Sharing	N/A	-
	Information Giving	+	N/A

Table 9 indicates that of the seven times that transactional moves were associated with a statistical effect on upvote scores, six were related to a significant increase in upvotes. In contrast, of the five times that relational moves were statistically associated with a change in upvote scores, four of them were related to a significant decrease in upvotes. These findings yet again indicate that transactional moves are generally more aligned to auditors and overhearer perceptions of the interactional goal. On the other hand, the advice-givers themselves seem to have a more multifaceted attitude toward the interactional goal, through evidence of them using both relational and transactional moves at varying statistically significant frequencies.

Understanding advice through the lens of face sensitivities underscores much work on advice to date (e.g. Feng et al., 2018). My results indicate that perhaps face sensitivities matter differently, and vary in importance, to different participants in the advice interaction. In particular, it would seem that face sensitivities might matter less to auditors and overhearers. As observers and not the direct recipient of the advice message, auditors and overhearers are less prone to have their face directly threatened. Therefore, the potential drawbacks of using transactional moves on face are not strongly considered by the auditor and overhearer when they evaluate advice on Reddit via upvotes.

5. Conclusion

Approximately a decade ago, DeCapua and Dunham (2012, p. 93) observed that advice-giving "consists of various components, the type and frequency of which vary according to topic". Yet, until now, the nature of these components, including the type and frequency, along with how they vary according to topic, has largely been unexplored. The work done here has hopefully enhanced our knowledge in this capacity. Linguistic formulations and their orientation toward topic is an area of advice that sorely lacks investigation, but the results here suggest that it is something worthwhile to explore.

My initial thoughts when embarking on this study was that moves found to be significantly overrepresented in the move analysis would also be statistically associated with higher upvote frequencies in the regression analysis, and vice versa. Thus, it was notable that my results provided weak empirical evidence for this type of relationship. Instead, the overrepresentation of a move does not mean that audiences will upvote the advice more often. My findings suggest that Reddit advice-givers', auditors', and overhearers' perceptions of the interactional goal seem to be mostly misaligned. This also suggests that perceptions of the interactional goals of advice-giving are not only context and topic sensitive, but also role sensitive. Spencer-Oatey and Kádár (2021, p. 124) have noted that "the goals of one participant may be different from those of another". Misalignment of interactional goals amongst different audience types is therefore something that needs to be better understood, especially within online contexts.

Online advice-giving is no longer a one-to-one interaction and audience impressions do matter. Thus, there are extreme complexities involved in becoming an effective online advice-giver, as you potentially need to bear in mind several, sometimes contradicting, factors. When deciding how to formulate advice, effective online advice-givers need to pay attention to the advice topic, face sensitivities, their own perception of the interactional goal, and also the auditor and overhearers perceptions of the interactional goal.

This study has gone beyond a solely descriptive approach to advice by not only incorporating statistical analysis to move analysis, but also employing statistical modeling through Poisson regression. This combination of methods have helped trace whether the interactional patterns and the use of upvotes in the advice-giving are also statistically significant. In this way, this work not only builds on existing pragmatic studies of advice, but also directly addresses Feng et al.'s (2018) call for more non-descriptive work on CMC and advice interactions.

There are some limitations in this project. The statistical methods employed on my dataset do not account for potential synergistic effects of the moves. The results of the Poisson regression analysis only provides statistical evidence of a single move's effect on the upvote score of the comment, when present. The effect of how moves might work in combination with each other to influence upvote patterns is beyond the scope of the model. Moreover, the model also does not account for the positioning or sequencing of the moves within the advice comment itself. Understanding if and how the sequencing and the combination of moves might affect upvoting may be an area of future research.

Declaration of competing interest

None

Data availability

The data that has been used is confidential.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2023.11.006.

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