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Abstract:

The current work explores the generalizability of a revised analysis of face and facework (Wilson, Aleman, & Leatham, 1998) by investigating the potential face threats that concern young adults as they seek to initiate, intensify, or end romantic relationships. Participants in Study 1 (N = 141 students) read three hypothetical scenarios in which they might attempt to (re)define a romantic relationship, and responded to open-ended questions regarding both parties' identity concerns and emotions. Emergent themes were utilized to develop a questionnaire assessing the extent to which participants in Study 2 (N = 274 students) associated unique potential face threats with initiating, intensifying, or ending romantic relationships, and varied what they said when pursuing these three goals in light of relevant potential face threats. Results indicated that people associate very specific sets of potential face threats with each of the three romantic (re)definition goals. This research advances understanding of how individuals utilize face-management strategies in romantic relationships and offers directions for future research.

Text of paper:

RUNNING HEAD: Identity Implications

Identity Implications of Influence Goals:

Initiating, Intensifying, and Ending Romantic Relationships

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Persuading others to enact desired behaviors often involves the pursuit of multiple, and sometimes conflicting, goals (O'Keefe, 1988; Schrader & Dillard, 1998). In order to account for the potential complexity of compliance-gaining interactions, scholars often utilize Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. According to politeness theory, convincing another person to alter his or her own behavior is inherently face threatening; thus, people use politeness strategies to try to balance the competing goals of persuading the other and supporting the other person's face. Regrettably, politeness theory falls short in its ability to explain how compliance seekers must contend with multiple potential face threats to both their own and the target person's face (Craig, Tracy, & Spisak, 1986; Wilson, Kim, & Meischke, 1991/1992).

Wilson et al. (1998) have constructed a revised analysis of face and facework to foster understanding of how pursuing common influence goals raises multiple potential threats to both parties' identities. Research forged within this revised analysis has demonstrated that specific influence goals entail distinct potential threats to both parties' face, and these potential concerns generalize across sex and several relational and cultural contexts (Cai & Wilson, 2000; Wilson et al., 1998; Wilson et al., 1991/1992; Wilson & Kunkel, 2000). These studies typically have examined three specific influence goals (i.e., giving advice, asking favors, and/or enforcing obligations). This focus has been justified as

these three goals are pursued frequently within a variety of roles and relationships (e.g., college roommates, workplace employees) and differ in ways that have potentially significant implications for face concerns (see Wilson, 2002).

In this research, we extend prior work by showing how the revised analysis of face and facework can be applied to other important influence goals that involve explicit attempts to bring about relational (re)definition. Specifically, we compare potential face threats as young adults seek to initiate, intensify, or end romantic relationships. Wilson et al.'s (1998) revised analysis of face and facework is briefly reviewed to contextualize this research prior to a discussion of the goals of initiating, intensifying, and terminating romantic relationships and the presentation of hypotheses posed about face threats and facework associated with each of these goals.

A Revised Analysis of Face and Facework

According to politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), face, or the "conception of self that each person displays in particular interactions with others" (Cupach & Metts, 1994, p. 3; also see Goffman, 1967), is comprised, in any culture, of two basic wants. Positive face is the desire to be approved of by significant others, whereas negative face is the desire for autonomy and freedom from unnecessary constraint. Individuals often strive to simultaneously manage both their own and their partner's interactional face, but this balancing act is complicated by the inherent face-threatening nature of speech acts. Drawing on speech act theory (e.g., Searle, 1969, 1976), Brown and Levinson argue that many actions intrinsically threaten the speaker's or hearer's face. For example, a speaker who makes a request by definition presumes both that the target person was not going to perform the desired action already (otherwise there is no need to request) and that the target might be willing to perform the desired action if asked (otherwise there is no sense in requesting). According to Brown and Levinson, presuming that a target person might be willing to perform an action he or she had not planned on performing intrinsically constrains the target person's autonomy (negative face). Thus,

speakers frequently use politeness, or linguistic features that redress threats to the target person's face, as a way of balancing their desires to gain compliance while also maintaining the target's face.

Although providing part of the picture, politeness theory does not adequately explain why speech acts such as requests often create multiple potential threats to both the speaker's and target's face. In their revised analysis, Wilson et al. (1998) argue that speakers, when seeking a target person's compliance, rely on two sources of implicit knowledge to anticipate multiple potential face concerns. The first source comprises common understandings of the constitutive rules for performing requests, the speech act that lies at the heart of any attempt to alter a target person's behavior (Searle, 1976; Tracy, Craig, Smith, & Spisak, 1984). The second source is knowledge about specific influence goals, or common reasons for trying to change another's behavior (e.g., asking a favor, giving advice). Influence goals frame actors' interpretations of their own efforts to achieve a target person's compliance (Dillard, Segrin, & Hardin, 1989), as well as their expectations for the target's concerns and reactions. By assessing what is implied when the rules for requests are framed by a particular influence goal, predictions about potential face threats associated with that goal are possible (see Wilson et al.). For example, speakers do not always appear to be "nosy" when giving advice, nor do they always make the target of then advice appear to "lack foresight" about his or her own affairs, but these face concerns have potential relevance to advice situations in a way that they do not when speakers pursue other influence goals (e.g., asking favors). Thus, speakers frequently use facework, or actions designed to make what they are attempting to do consistent with both parties' face, to redress unique face threats associated with particular influence goals.

The current study addresses the applicability of Wilson et al.'s (1998) revised analysis to influence goals associated with the development, maintenance, and dissolution of romantic relationships. Much existing research on the strategies employed by relationship partners proceeds without theoretical explanation for why people use different strategies when pursuing different goals

(e.g., why people are more likely to give reasons when ending a relationship than when initiating one). It seems likely that people's strategic choices are guided and constrained, in part, by the face concerns that they infer from particular relational influence goals. For example, revealing a crush with the hopes of initiating a romance involves the potential for rejection or being judged as foolish and unrealistic (i.e., a threat to the person's own positive face). Likewise, attempting to disengage from an ongoing romantic relationship potentially involves seeming indifferent and uncaring (a different threat to one's own positive face).

Although the application of politeness theory might indicate that relational (re)definition always implicates the parties' face, the revised analysis highlights how attempting to initiate, intensify, or disengage from romantic relationships each may be associated with unique potential face threats that are both predictable and widely understood. The following section reviews pertinent research related to the relational goals of initiating, intensifying, and terminating romantic relationships, as well as recent scholarly interest in the face implications of each goal.

Initiating, Intensifying, and Terminating Romantic Relationships

Some research has examined the communication processes through which partners initiate, intensify, or end relationships as specific relational goals. In fact, the relational goals of initiation, intensification or escalation, and termination or de-escalation have appeared in influence goal typologies (e.g., Cody, Canary, & Smith, 1994). In addition, research examining these relational (re)definition processes has noted the existence of various strategies that individuals utilize to indicate willingness or desire to initiate or intensify (e.g., Bell & Daly, 1984) and disengage (e.g., Baxter, 1982, 1985; Cody, 1982) from a particular romantic relationship. For example, Bell and Daly suggest that in the process of trying to initiate or intensify relationships, individuals often engage in affinity-seeking behaviors (e.g., being polite, expressing concern for the other, presenting oneself as trustworthy) to enhance their liking and attraction levels with partners.

Unfortunately, much early work examining initiation, intensification, and termination as relational goals simply compiled ad-hoc lists of strategies for (re)defining relationships without organizing strategies around a theoretical framework. More recent work has suggested that theories of politeness or facework may be applied to foster understanding of how people regard and respond to the relational goals of initiation, intensification, and termination (Cupach & Metts, 1994). Cupach and Metts note that while individuals attempt to project and maintain desired identities during everyday interactions, “the management of face is particularly relevant to the formation and erosion of interpersonal relationships” (p. 15).

For good reasons, we expect the consideration of face to play various and vital roles in the strategic pursuit of each of the relational development and dissolution goals. Cupach and Metts (1994) note that the “fear of rejection and fear of imposition” (p. 41) are two primary ways that seeking to initiate a romantic relationship may threaten face. Although the threat to the initiator’s positive face is obvious, if the other person “has to adjust his or her schedule, or feels obligated to go, that person has experienced threat to negative face” (p. 41) as well. As relationships develop, both partners acquire “specific information regarding what each other finds particularly face-threatening or face-enhancing” (p. 99). Thus, intensification of intimacy may entail even more intense deliberation upon face issues. Finally, the act of disengagement by one party may threaten his or her own negative face via the constraint of intentions and actions while, of course, threatening the other party’s positive face with the deterioration of self-esteem and feelings of worthiness. Thus, Cupach and Metts argue, “[e]nding a relationship is perhaps one of the most face-threatening situations we encounter” (p. 81).

Cupach and Metts (1994) have made important theoretical connections between politeness theory, facework, and specific relational goals, but no one has yet provided an in-depth analysis of why unique sets of potential face threats might be associated with the specific goals of relational initiation, intensification, and termination. Hence, the current work addresses that initiative.

Research Hypotheses

Although prior research has not focused on particular face threats that distinguish initiating, intensifying, and terminating relationships, strides can be made by framing constitutive rules for requests in light of each of these goals. Table 1 presents our initial attempt to undertake such an analysis and suggests that unique face threats may be associated with each goal. Some of the rules in Table 1 involve assumptions that a message source, when requesting, makes about the target individual's psychological states (e.g., willingness), whereas others involve assumptions about the source's own psychological states (e.g., sincerity) or the existing state of affairs (e.g., need for action; see Searle, 1969). When contextualized by particular goals, these assumptions create different implications for both parties' face. As one example, consider the message source's (speaker's) own desire for approval (positive face). With regard to initiating, questions about whether the target person is willing to "go out" with the message source suggest that sources may have concerns about appearing attractive or desirable when pursuing this goal. With regard to intensifying, questions about whether the message source sincerely wants to and needs to seek increased relational commitment at this time suggest that sources may have concerns about appearing overly fearful or dependent in situations defined by this goal. With regard to terminating, questions about whether the source has the "right" to unilaterally end the relationship suggest that sources may have concerns about appearing selfish or unjust when pursuing this goal. Similar inferences can be made about potential threats to the message target's (partner's) desire for approval as well as to both parties' desire for autonomy (negative face).

We chose to combine this theoretical analysis with an inductive, empirical analysis of specific potential face threats associated with each goal. Specifically, we conducted Study 1 to gather open-ended reports of face concerns in situations defined by each goal. From these data, we selected eight specific threats to the message source's and/or target's positive or negative face and constructed closed-ended scales assessing the likelihood of each threat. We conducted Study 2 to assess whether

participants who imagined initiating, intensifying, or terminating a romantic relationship differed in terms of the degree to which they perceived that each of the eight threats were likely to occur in their situation. Based on the revised analysis of face, we predict that:

H1: Participants will perceive different potential threats to their own positive and negative face, as well as to the other party's (partner's) positive and negative face, depending on whether they imagine initiating, intensifying, or terminating a romantic relationship.

As it presumes that unique potential threats to face are expected to be associated with initiating, intensifying, or terminating romantic relationships, the revised analysis also implies that message sources will use different types or amounts of facework when pursuing each of these three goals. In Study 2, we investigate three types of facework. First, we asked participants whether, if their hypothetical scenario were a real situation, they would confront the target person and attempt to (re)define the romantic relationship. If participants perceive that pursuing a particular goal could create a great deal of face threat, they might choose not to perform the face-threatening act at all (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Second, we asked participants whether, if the target in the hypothetical scenario resisted their initial attempt to (re)define the relationship, they would drop their request rather than persist. If participants perceive that pursuing a particular goal could create a great deal of face threat, they might choose not to persist after encountering resistance as a way of saving both parties' face. Finally, we asked participants to write out exactly what they would say to the target person in their hypothetical scenario and assessed the directness of their written message (i.e., message explicitness). Dillard et al. (1989) found directness to be one of a small set of critical "perceptual dimensions" of influence messages across several influence studies. Dillard et al. define directness as "the extent to which a message makes clear the change that the source is seeking in the target" and suggest that, "directness is a central feature in theories of language use" (p. 30). Similarly, Solomon (1997) characterizes message directness or explicitness as a fundamental dimension of compliance-seeking

behavior and defines it as “the clarity with which an individual indicates what he or she wants a message target to do” (p. 99). We believe that the extent to which participants utilize direct or explicit messages will reflect their considerations of face threats and facework and will likely vary depending on the relational goal they are pursuing (i.e., initiating, intensifying, or terminating). Indeed, Brown and Levinson (1987) identify directness as an important element of politeness (other-oriented facework). Based on the preceding analysis, we predict that:

H2: Participants will vary the degree to which they: (a) confront the message target (partner), (b) seek relationship change directly, and (c) persist in the face of resistance depending on whether they imagine initiating, intensifying, or terminating a romantic relationship.

Finally, if participants employ different types of facework in light of the unique threats to face associated with each relationship (re)definition goal, then levels of perceived face threats should predict use of facework as participants pursue each type of goal.

H3: Levels of perceived face threats will be associated with the degree to which participants: (a) confront the message target (partner), (b) seek relationship change directly, and (c) persist in the face of resistance.

Study 1

A qualitative study was conducted to gain important information about the ways in which college students think about and deal with romantic relationship (re)definition processes.

Method

Participants and Procedures

One hundred and forty-one undergraduates (69 men and 72 women) enrolled in lower and upper-division communication courses at a large midwestern university participated in Study 1. Twelve percent of the sample was between 18 and 19 years of age, 27% of the sample was 20, 21.3% of the sample was 21, and 39.7% of the sample was 22 and over. Participants completed a “romantic

relationships goals questionnaire" during class time. Participation lasted approximately one half hour.

Some students fulfilled a research requirement for participation; others received extra credit. After preliminary instructions were provided, each participant received an informed consent form, as well as a packet of materials.

Instrumentation

The packet included a Romantic Relationship Goals Questionnaire. Participants were asked to answer some basic demographic questions (e.g., age, sex) and then responded to three separate hypothetical scenarios in which they might attempt to initiate, intensify, and terminate a romantic relationship. The three scenarios were as follows:

Initiation Situation: You have been interested in one of your classmates for a while. In fact, you are sure that you would very much like to ask this person out on a date. At this point, you are not even sure that this person knows your name or even who you are. The semester is almost over and you are realizing that if you are going to ask this person out, you had better do it soon. So, you finally have the courage and you are ready to try to initiate this relationship.

Intensification Situation: You have been casually dating someone for several months. You are beginning to realize that you really like being with this person. In fact, you are starting to think that you may be falling in love with him or her. You would really like to try to formalize your commitment and intensify your current relationship. At this point, however, you are unsure if he or she feels the same way about you. So, you finally have the courage and you are ready to try to intensify this relationship.

Termination Situation: You have been seriously dating someone for several months. You are starting to realize that things are not the same as when you started dating. In fact, you are very unhappy with how the relationship has been going. Every time you talk to him or her, you find the conversations uninteresting and boring. Lately, you have been trying to avoid contact with him or her and it's starting to get very awkward. It seems like it might be time to end this relationship. So, you finally have the courage and you are ready to try to get out of this relationship.

For each scenario, participants were asked to write out, in detail, what they would do and *exactly* what they would say to the other person in trying to deal with the situation. Following each written narrative, participants responded to a series of open-ended questions regarding both parties' identity concerns and feelings. Specifically, participants were asked: (1) What kinds of *concerns* would

you have about seeking to *initiate* (or *intensify* or *terminate*) this relationship? (2) Would you have any *specific concerns* about how you might appear to the other person in this situation? (3) Would the *other person* have any such *concerns*? (4) How would it make *you feel* to attempt to *initiate* (or *intensify* or *terminate*) this relationship? and (5) How do you think the *other person* would *feel* about your *initiating* (or *intensifying* or *terminating*) this relationship? For Study 1, only responses to the open-ended questions were examined.

Thematic Analysis

Five broad categories were generated based on the questions delineated above: (1) General concerns, (2) Concerns about how you would appear, (3) Other person's concerns about how she or he would appear, (4) Own feelings, and (5) Other's feelings. Responses to each question were examined for interpretive themes separately for each situation (i.e., initiation, intensification, and termination). Following guidelines described by Owen (1984), we identified interpretive themes based on words or phrases that were used repeatedly across respondents (i.e., whenever two or more participants used near-verbatim words to express the same idea).

Themes from the participants' responses for each situation were entered into the categories wherever they best fit. For example, if a participant was asked if he or she would have any *specific concerns* about how he or she might appear to the other person in the initiation situation and the participant indicated that he or she would "*feel embarrassed*," then this response was placed into the "Own feelings" category for the initiation situation even though it wasn't an answer to that specific question. Similarly, if a participant was asked about how it would make him or her *feel* to attempt to *terminate* this relationship and the participant indicated that he or she would be worried about possibly "*looking mean*," then this response was placed into the "Concerns about how you would appear" category for the termination situation.

The four researchers for this project examined participants' responses to the open-ended questions for themes. The second and third authors worked together to identify themes in data from participants 1-50, while the first and fourth authors examined data from participants 51-121. The first author combined themes identified by each pair of authors, and then assessed whether any additional themes were mentioned in the last 20 surveys (122-141). Responses were combined or collapsed into a single theme if two or more participants used the exact same language or if the intended meaning of two similar phrases was determined to be the same.

Results

Table 2 presents a summary, in descending frequency of occurrence, of the six most common themes to open-ended responses for all 141 participants. Participants expressed unique concerns about their own positive face as they imagined pursuing each goal. Common concerns about initiating mentioned in response to question #2 included appearing "attractive," not appearing to be "coming on too strong," and not appearing "desperate." When intensifying, participants also were concerned about not appearing to be "coming on too strong" and not appearing "desperate," but they also worried about not appearing "too needy" as well as not looking like they were "moving too quickly." When terminating, participants were concerned about appearing "heartless," being viewed as a "jerk," and appearing "uncaring" or "insensitive."

Although mentioned in less detail, participants also recognized unique potential threats to the other party's positive face in situations defined by each goal. When participants imagined terminating, for example, common responses to question #3 included that the other person might worry that he or she would look "weak," "like a loser," or "inadequate." Participants also mentioned concerns about both their own and the other party's negative face in response to questions about general concerns and feelings. Regarding their own autonomy, participants in response to question #1 worried that they did not want to "feel trapped" when seeking to intensify their relationship, whereas they worried whether

they were making a decision they would later “regret” when terminating a relationship. Regarding the other’s autonomy, participants in response to question #5 imagined the other party might feel “pressured” or “obligated to say yes” when they intensified, whereas the other party might feel “put on the spot” when they initiated.

Discussion

Results from Study 1 provide initial insight about the specific face concerns that college students associate with the goals of seeking to initiate, intensify, and terminate romantic relationships. Participants perceived multiple potential threats to their own as well as the other party’s positive and negative face when pursuing each goal, the exact nature of which depended in part on the particular goal.

When designing Study 2, we built on findings from Study 1 in several respects. We relied on themes mentioned frequently in Table 2 to identify eight specific face threats that were then assessed in Study 2:

- (1) pressuring the other party (partner) to comply (target’s negative face);
- (2) precluding future relationships with different partners (own negative face);
- (3) losing a desirable current relationship (own negative face);
- (4) making the other party appear inadequate (target’s positive face);
- (5) not appearing physically attractive to the other party (own positive face);
- (6) looking too forward (own positive face);
- (7) looking overly dependent (own positive face); and
- (8) looking insensitive (own positive face).

Though not the only potential face threats mentioned in the scenarios, these eight include threats to both parties’ desires for approval as well as autonomy. We relied on the wording of themes mentioned in Study 1 when writing multiple items to tap each of these eight face threats. As one example, items

used to tap the sixth face threat include being worried that the other party would see the participant as being “too forward,” “overbearing,” and “too strong,” all of which were adapted near verbatim from language used by participants in the first study.

Study 2

Themes that emerged from Study 1 (Table 2) informed a questionnaire that assessed the extent to which college-age women and men associate unique potential face threats with initiating, intensifying, or ending romantic relationships, and vary what they say when pursuing these three goals in light of relevant potential face threats.

Method

Participants

Participants in Study 2 were undergraduates enrolled in lower- and upper-division communication courses at a large midwestern university ($N = 274$; 129 men, 144 women, one no response). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 53 with an average age of 21.87 ($SD = 4.06$). Ten (3.6%) of the participants were first-year students, 31 (11.3%) were sophomores, 85 (31%) were juniors, 145 (52.9%) were seniors, two (0.7%) were graduate students, and one (0.4%) did not specify his or her year in school. A majority of participants indicated they were European-American ($N = 178$; 65%). Twenty (7.3%) participants were African-American, nine (3.3%) were Native-American, 14 (5.1%) were Asian-American, seven (2.6%) were Hispanic-American, one (0.4%) was a Pacific-Islander, 35 (12.8%) indicated that their ethnic heritage did not match the designated categories, and 10 (3.6%) chose not to specify their ethnic heritage.

Procedures

Participants completed a “romantic relationships goals questionnaire” during class time. Participation lasted between forty minutes and one hour. Some students fulfilled a research requirement for participation; others received extra credit. After preliminary instructions were provided,

each participant received an informed consent form, as well as a packet of materials. Each participant imagined that he or she was initiating, intensifying, or terminating a romantic relationship; that is, goal type was a between-groups factor in Study 2. Questionnaires were randomly distributed so that an approximately equal number of participants completed each version: 92 (33.6%; 34 men, 58 women) received the initiation version, 91 (33.2%; 46 men, 45 women) received the intensification version, and 91 (33.2%; 49 men, 41 women, and one person who did not specify his or her sex) received the termination version.

Instrumentation

The Romantic Relationship Goals Questionnaire was divided into three separate sections: general background items, relationship goals, and face threats. We also collected data on attachment orientations, though these data will be examined in a future study.

General background items. The general background items obtained demographic information about the participants, including participants' sex, age, year in school, and ethnicity.

Relationship goals. Depending on the version of the questionnaire that participants received (i.e., initiation, intensification, or termination), participants were asked to respond to one of three hypothetical scenarios in which they might attempt relational (re)definition. The three hypothetical situations, which were adapted slightly from the situations used in the first phase of this research, were as follows:

Initiation Situation: You and Chris both are students in a class of about 50 students. You have been interested in Chris for a while. In fact, you are sure that you would very much like to ask Chris out on a date. At this point, you are not even sure that Chris knows your name or even who you are. The semester is almost over and you are realizing that if you are going to ask Chris out, you had better do it soon. So, you finally have the courage and you are ready to try to initiate this relationship. You speak to Chris.

Intensification Situation: You have been casually dating Chris for several months. You are beginning to realize that you really like being with Chris. In fact, you are starting to think that you may be falling in love with Chris. You would really like to try to formalize your commitment and intensify your current relationship. In fact, it seems like the time is right for you and Chris to

agree to date exclusively (i.e., not date anyone else). At this point, however, you are unsure if Chris feels the same way about you. So, you finally have the courage and you are ready to try to intensify this relationship. You speak to Chris.

Termination Situation: You have been seriously dating Chris for several months. You are starting to realize that things are not the same as when you started dating. In fact, you are very unhappy with how the relationship has been going. Every time you talk to Chris, you find the conversations uninteresting and boring. Lately, you have been trying to avoid contact with Chris and it's starting to get very awkward. It seems like it might be time to end this relationship. So, you finally have the courage and you are ready to try to get out of this relationship. You speak to Chris.

After participants read one of these scenarios, they were asked five questions to assess the "realism" of their situation. Specifically, participants indicated on seven-point semantic differential scales the extent to which they thought the situation was: unrealistic--realistic, difficult to imagine themselves in--easy to imagine themselves in, unreasonable--reasonable, something that could never happen to them--something that could easily happen to them, and unbelievable--believable. Cronbach's *alpha* revealed an internal consistency rating of .85 across the five items. Responses to the five questions were summed and divided by the number of items to retain the original 1-7 scale, with higher scores indicating greater perceived realism. Across scenarios, participants felt that their situation was realistic ($M = 5.45$ on the seven-point scale).¹

Facework. After responding to the "realism" items, participants were asked to write out in detail what they would do and *exactly* what they would say to "Chris" in trying to deal with the situation. To assess message directness, the first and fourth author independently read each of the 274 messages and rated the extent to which the message source made explicit what he or she wanted the other person to do. In addition, a third trained coder (masked to the research hypotheses) also read and coded the first and last 30 messages (60 messages total). Each message was rated for its overall level of directness. Similar to previous conceptions (e.g., Dillard et al., 1989; Solomon, 1997), we defined message directness as the extent to which participants pursued the relational (re)definition task (i.e., initiating, intensifying, or terminating) explicitly as opposed to avoiding the situation or hinting, and the degree to

which they pursued it immediately as opposed to leading up to it with other “preliminary” information in their message. Message directness was evaluated on a five-point scale with a similar coding scheme for each relational goal [i.e., 1 = avoid mentioning relational goal, 2 = very inexplicit, using mild hints, 3 = inexplicit, using strong hints, 4 = explicit, with request following preliminary information, and 5 = very explicit, with request appearing immediately in dialogue] (see Table 3 for a summary and examples of directness coding categories).

Following a training session where coders worked together to analyze a subset of messages ($n = 24$, eight from each goal), all three coders independently coded another subset of the messages ($n = 30$, 10 from each relational goal) for directness. The three coders achieved intercoder agreement for the first 30 independently coded messages, with Cronbach's alpha = .95 (treating the three coders as “items” in a scale) and correlations between pairs of coders ranging from $r = .84$ to $r = .90$. Both primary coders then independently read and rated each of the remaining messages ($n = 244$), including messages used in the training session. The two primary coders achieved intercoder agreement across all 274 messages, with Cronbach's alpha = .93 and a correlation of .87. As a check on coder drift, the third coder independently rated the last 30 messages. The three coders achieved intercoder agreement on the final 30 independently coded messages (Cronbach's alpha = .87, correlations between pairs of coders from $r = .58$ to $r = .81$). Directness scores for each message were computed as the average of the two primary coder's ratings on the 1-5 scale.

After completing their written message, participants completed dichotomous ratings of *confronting* the target (partner) and *persisting* after encountering resistance. Specifically, they circled “No” or “Yes” in response to the following question: “If this were a real situation, would you actually confront Chris (the target) and talk to him/her about the situation?” Participants circled “Drop it” or “Persist” in response to the question: “If Chris initially refused your request, would you drop the issue or

persist in trying to persuade Chris?" After each of these questions, participants were given 10 lines to explain why they would (not) confront the target/persist after resistance.

Face threats. As noted above, the themes that emerged from Study 1 informed a questionnaire designed to assess the extent to which participants associate unique potential face threats with initiating, intensifying, or terminating romantic relationships. Participants responded to a total of 40 seven-point Likert scales, with five items tapping each of the eight threats to face. Specifically, each participant evaluated the degree to which seeking compliance had threatened: (1) the target's negative face, whereby he or she might be concerned that he or she was pressuring the other party (partner) to comply (e.g., "Chris would feel strong pressure to agree with what I've asked in this situation," $\alpha = .86$), (2) the message source's own negative face, whereby he or she might be concerned that he or she was precluding future relationships with other partners (e.g., "By making this request, I am limiting my ability to date others in the future," $\alpha = .88$), (3) the message source's own negative face, whereby he or she might be concerned that he or she was losing a desirable current relationship (e.g., "By saying this now, I could end up regretting the loss of this relationship," $\alpha = .82$), (4) the target's positive face, whereby he or she might be concerned that he or she was making the other party appear inadequate (e.g., "Saying what I did in this situation might make Chris look inadequate," $\alpha = .89$), (5) the message source's own positive face, whereby he or she might worry about appearing physically attractive to the other party (e.g., "I would worry about whether Chris finds me physically attractive," $\alpha = .94$), (6) the message source's own positive face, whereby he or she might be concerned that he or she was looking too forward (e.g., "I would worry that Chris might see me as overbearing for making my request in this situation," $\alpha = .82$), (7) the message source's own positive face, whereby he or she might be concerned that he or she was looking overly dependent (e.g., "By saying something in this situation, I could appear to be too dependent on Chris," $\alpha = .88$), and (8) the message source's own positive face, whereby he or she might be concerned that he or she was looking insensitive ("Chris may think I am a jerk for doing what I did in

this situation," $\alpha = .93$). All seven-point Likert scales were bounded by the endpoints "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (7), such that a higher score indicated a higher perceived face threat. The subscales tapping different face threats were randomly ordered. Responses to items constituting each scale were summed and averaged by the number of items (5) to retain the 1-7 scale.

To further assess the unidimensionality of each measure, eight separate confirmatory factor analyses were conducted (one for each type of face threat) using LISREL (version 8.51). Models revealed Goodness of Fit Indices (GFI) for these measures ranging from .90 to .99 and averaging .96, Root Mean Square Errors of Approximation (RMSEA) ranging from .02 to .09 and averaging .04, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Indices (AGFI) ranging from .69 to .97 and averaging .88, and Relative Fit Indices (RFI) ranging from .76 to .99 and averaging .93.3

Results

Predictions Regarding Goals and Face Threats

Hypothesis 1 predicted that participants who imagined pursuing one of three different goals involving relational (re)definition—initiating, intensifying, or terminating—would vary in their ratings of eight specific types of face threats. Table 4 provides means and standard deviations for each of the eight types of face threat within each of the three relationship (re)definition goal conditions as well as across goals.⁴

An 8 (Type of Face Threat) x 3 (Type of Goal) mixed-model ANOVA with repeated-measures on the first factor was conducted to assess Hypothesis 1.5 Degree of face threat served as the dependent variable. The ANOVA revealed a large, significant main effect for Type of Face Threat, $F(7, 1897) = 108.08, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .28$, indicating that, across goals, some types of face were threatened to a greater extent than other types. Inspection of Table 4 reveals that participants, in general, perceived the greatest risk that they might be pressuring the target ($M = 4.07$). This finding is consistent with Brown and Levinson's (1987) claim that seeking compliance inherently constrains the target's autonomy.

However, mean scores for three other specific types of face threats were 3.50 or higher across both goals and participant sex, indicating that participants typically saw some potential for multiple face threats.

A significant main effect also was obtained for Type of Goal, $F(2, 267) = 17.67, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .12$, indicating that, across types of face threat, participants perceived greater total face threat when pursuing some goals than when pursuing others. A Tukey post-hoc test revealed that participants who initiated a romantic relationship perceived less total potential face threat than did those who intensified or terminated relationships, while the latter two groups did not differ significantly from each other (see Table 4). More importantly, the ANOVA detected a sizable, significant Type of Face Threat x Type of Goal two-way interaction, $F(14, 1897) = 87.86, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .38$. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, degree of threat to specific types of face varied substantially depending on the type of relationship goal being pursued.

To interpret the significant two-way interaction, ONEWAY ANOVAs and Tukey post-hoc comparisons were conducted to explore the effects of relationship goals separately on each of the eight types of face threat (see Table 4 for a summary of results). Type of Goal exerts a large, statistically significant effect on ratings of seven of the eight face threats; indeed, goal type explains 16-48% of the variance in participants' ratings for these seven face threats. Although seeking to initiate a romantic relationship, in general, is characterized by lower levels of threats to both parties' face compared to the other two goals, participants are highly concerned about whether they appear physically attractive to the other and also perceive moderate risk of looking too forward when pursuing this goal. Seeking to intensify a romantic relationship, in general, is characterized by moderate risk to both parties' negative face—participants perceive that the other party may feel pressured and also worry both that they are precluding other possible future relationships (if the partner does wish to intensify too) as well as jeopardizing their current relationship (if the partner does not wish to intensify). Participants also see

moderate risk that they could appear too forward or overly dependent when seeking to intensify their current relationship. Finally, seeking to terminate a romantic relationship, in general, is characterized by threats to both parties' positive and negative face. Specifically, participants perceive moderate risk that: the partner will feel pressured to comply (target's negative face), they could later regret having ended the relationship (own negative face), the target may appear inadequate (target's positive face), and they themselves may appear insensitive (own positive face).

In sum, the data are consistent with Hypothesis 1 since type of relationship (re)definition goal exerted sizeable main effects on ratings of nearly all face threats.

Predictions Regarding Goals and Facework

Hypothesis 2 predicted that participants who imagined pursuing one of three different goals involving relational (re)definition—initiating, intensifying, or terminating—would vary in the degree to which they would: (a) confront the message target (partner), (b) seek relationship change directly, and (c) persist in the face of resistance. Overall, most participants (81%) indicated they would confront the target if the scenario had been a real situation, whereas slightly less than half (42%) said they would persist if the target resisted their initial request. Across the three goals, participants displayed moderately high levels of directness in pursuing the desired relationship change ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.81$ on the five-point scale).

Because Confronting the Target and Persisting were measured dichotomously (No, Yes), separate $3 \times 2 \chi^2$ analyses were conducted to assess whether the percentage of participants who indicated that they would confront the target as well as persist varied across the three goals.

Regarding Confronting the Target, the percentage of participants who would have talked to the other party (partner) differed significantly across the three goals, $\chi^2(2) = 47.44$, $p < .001$. Although the majority of participants in all three conditions were willing to confront the target, all participants (100%)

in the terminating goal condition and most (86%) in the intensifying condition were willing to do so, whereas less than two-thirds (61%) were willing in the initiating condition.⁶

Regarding Persisting after Initial Resistance, the percentage of participants who indicated that they would have persisted once again differed significantly across the three goals, $\chi^2(2) = 111.65, p < .001$. The majority of participants in both the initiating (18%) and intensifying (29%) goal conditions indicated that they would drop the issue if the target (partner) initially refused their request, whereas most (86%) in the terminating goal condition indicated they would persist.⁷

To assess the effects of goals on message directness, a ONEWAY ANOVA was conducted. Directness of the message was the dependent variable. Consistent with Hypothesis 2, a significant, though modest-sized, main effect was obtained for goal type, $F(2, 267) = 5.40, p < .005$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$, indicating that participants in the three goal conditions wrote messages of varying directness. A Tukey post-hoc test revealed that messages in the intensifying ($M = 3.85$) and terminating ($M = 3.79$) conditions were significantly more direct than messages in the initiating condition ($M = 3.41$).⁸

In sum, the data are consistent with Hypothesis 2a-c since all three forms of facework differed across relational (re)definition goals. Participants initiating a romantic relationship displayed some hesitation about confronting the target and little willingness to persist after encountering resistance; they also wrote the least direct messages. Those intensifying a relationship displayed high levels of willingness to confront and directness, though most would not persist if they encountered resistance. And, finally, participants terminating a relationship all were willing to confront the target; they also displayed high levels of directness as well as persistence.

Predictions Regarding Face Threats and Facework

Hypothesis 3 predicted that levels of perceived threat to both parties' positive and negative face would be associated with participants' willingness to: (a) confront the target (partner), (b) pursue relationship change directly, and (c) persist in the face of resistance. Because confronting the partner

was measured dichotomously (No, Yes), we conducted an 8 (Type of Face Threat) x 2 (Not Confront/Confront) mixed-model ANOVA with repeated measures on the first factor to assess Hypothesis 3a. Degree of face threat was the dependent variable. This analysis allowed us to assess whether participants who were not willing to confront the target perceived greater levels of overall face threat compared to those who were willing to do so, as well as whether this depended on the specific type of face threat under consideration. Because different face threats were implicated by each of the three relationship change goals (see above), separate ANOVAs were run within each goal condition (initiating, intensifying, terminating).

In the initiating condition, the 8 x 2 ANOVA revealed main effects for both Type of Face Threat, $F(7, 616) = 127.40, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .59$, and Confronting the Target, $F(1, 88) = 8.64, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .09$. The former main effect, as noted above, indicates that participants in the initiating condition saw some types of face threats as more likely to occur than others (see Table 4). The latter main effect reflects that participants who were not willing to confront the target ($n = 35$) perceived higher levels of overall face threat ($M = 3.20$) than did those who were willing to confront the target ($M = 2.68, n = 55$). The two-way Type of Face Threat x Confronting the Target interaction was not significant, $F(7, 616) < 1.00$, reflecting that this general pattern did not vary depending on the type of face threat under consideration. Follow-up t -tests comparing participants who would not versus would confront the target revealed that the former group perceived significantly higher levels for four of the eight types of potential face threats: looking too forward ($M = 3.79$ vs. 2.98), $t(88) = 2.68, p < .05$, looking overly dependent ($M = 2.77$ vs. 2.08), $t(88) = 2.56, p < .05$, losing a desirable potential relationship ($M = 3.39$ vs. 2.70), $t(88) = 2.49, p < .05$, and precluding future relationships ($M = 2.64$ vs. 2.13), $t(88) = 1.98, p = .051$. In the intensifying condition, the same 8 x 2 ANOVA revealed a significant main effect for Type of Face Threat, $F(7, 623) = 43.55, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .33$, as well as a marginally significant main effect for Confronting the Target, $F(1, 89) = 3.32, p = .07$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$. The Type of Face Threat x

Confronting the Target two-way interaction also was significant, $F(7, 623) = 2.06, p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$ suggesting that differences between those who would not confront the target ($n = 13$) and those who would ($n = 78$) depended on the specific type of face threat under consideration. Follow-up t-tests revealed that those who would not confront the target, when compared to those who would, perceived greater potential for two specific face threats: looking overly dependent ($M = 5.08$ vs. 3.99), $t(89) = 2.86, p < .01$, and looking too forward ($M = 4.60$ vs. 3.61), $t(89) = 2.82, p < .01$. The parallel 8×2 ANOVA could not be conducted in the terminating condition since 100% of these participants indicated that they would confront their partner. Consistent with H3a, participants who would not confront the target (partner) perceived greater potential face threats than those who would, especially for threats to their own positive face.

To assess whether Persisting after Encountering Resistance also was associated with potential face threats, we conducted an 8 (Type of Face Threat) \times 2 (Drop It/Persist) mixedmodel ANOVA with repeated measures on the first factor separately in each of the three goal conditions. Although these analyses revealed significant main effects for Type of Face Threat, neither the Persistence main effect nor the Type of Face Threat \times Persistence interaction were significant in any of the three goal conditions. Unlike the decision to confront the target, whether participants believed they would persist if their partner resisted the desired relationship change was not associated with perceived levels of face threat. These findings run contrary to H3c.

Because directness was coded as an ordered variable, we conducted hierarchical multiple regression analyses to assess the effects of perceived face threats on message directness. Separate analyses were conducted within each of the three goal conditions (initiating, intensifying, terminating). In each case biological sex was entered as a control variable at Step 1 (see Note 8), and then the eight specific face threats were forced simultaneously as a set into the equation at Step 2. Within the initiating and intensifying conditions, face threats as a set did not explain unique variance in message

directness above the effects of biological sex. Within the terminating condition, however, the eight face threats as a set did account for unique variance at Step 2, overall $R = .44$, $R^2\Delta = .19$, $p < .03$. Message directness was inversely associated with the degree to which participants perceived that terminating their current relationship might preclude future relationships (perhaps with others who knew their current partner), $\beta = -.48$, $p < .01$, and marginally with imposing on their partner's autonomy, $\beta = -.20$, $p = .09$. These findings offer some support for H3b, since participants wrote more indirect messages seeking to terminate a romantic relationship when they perceived greater threat to both parties' negative face.

Discussion

Study 2 revealed that participants associate specific sets of potential face threats with each of the three goals of initiating, intensifying, and terminating romantic relationships. Relationship goal accounted for substantial variance in seven of the eight threats to both parties' positive and negative face. Results also indicated that the extent to which participants were willing to confront their message partner, seek relationship change directly, and persist if their partner initially resisted their persuasive appeal were affected by the type of relational goal pursued, and that variations in two of these three types of facework were associated with perceived face threats.

General Discussion

In this research, our primary aims were to: (a) extend Wilson et al.'s (1998) revised analysis of face and facework beyond the three influence goals explored in past studies (i.e., giving advice, asking favors, and enforcing obligations), and (b) analyze potential face threats associated with other important influence goals that involve explicit attempts to bring about relational (re)definition. Specifically, we compared potential face threats as individuals sought to initiate, intensify, and end romantic relationships.

To identify potential face threats relevant to each relational goal, we analyzed what is implied when the constitutive rules for requesting are framed by each goal (see Table 1). In addition, we combined this theoretical analysis with an initial study that assessed open-ended responses of face concerns in situations defined by each relational goal (see Table 2). From these open-ended responses, we developed scales to measure eight specific threats that might arise in initiating, intensifying, and terminating situations.

In Study 2, we hypothesized that participants would perceive different potential threats to their own and their partner's positive and negative face (H1) and use different types of facework (H2) depending on whether they were initiating, intensifying, or terminating a romantic relationship. We also hypothesized that levels of perceived face threat would be associated with different types of facework (H3) depending on the relational goal that was being pursued.

Overall, the study's findings are largely consistent with predictions informed by Wilson et al.'s (1998) revised analysis of face. Participants associated specific sets of potential face threats with each of the three goals of initiating, intensifying, and terminating romantic relationships. In addition, in some cases, different types of facework were more or less relevant, and were associated with different types of face threat, depending on participants' relational (re)definition goals.

Although participants who imagined initiating a romantic relationship perceived less overall threat to both parties' face as compared to participants in the other two conditions, initiating participants were highly concerned about appearing physically attractive to the potential partner and perceived moderate risk of seeming too forward. Participants in the initiating condition were less willing to confront the target, and they tended to write the least direct messages, as compared to the intensifying and terminating conditions. Further, almost all initiating participants indicated they would not persist if the target turned down their initial date request. When examining relationships between facework and face threat, results indicated that initiating participants who would not be willing to

confront their partner tended to perceive higher levels of overall face threat when compared to initiating participants who would be willing to confront their partner.

Attempting to intensify a romantic relationship was perceived as more potentially face threatening than was initiating a romantic relationship. In general, participants perceived moderate levels of concern about their own positive face (not looking too forward or appearing overly dependent) and both parties' negative face (thinking that the other party may feel pressured to comply and also worrying that they might be precluding other possible future relationships or jeopardizing their current relationship). Most intensifying participants indicated that they would confront the target, but most participants also said they would not persist if their initial request were refused. Participants in the intensifying condition also tended to write fairly direct messages, at least when compared to participants who were in the initiating condition. In terms of associations between facework and face threat, results indicated that non-confronters were especially concerned about threats to their own positive face (looking overly dependent or too forward).

The relational goal of terminating was also perceived to be more inherently face threatening than was initiating. Terminating participants perceived threats to both parties' positive and negative face. Specifically, for positive face, participants were concerned that they might be perceived as insensitive and that the other person might feel inadequate if the relationship was terminated. In addition, in terms of negative face, participants were worried that they might later regret ending the relationship and that their partner would feel pressure to comply with their termination request. Despite the moderate levels of perceived potential face threat, participants tended to be very direct in responding to the terminating situation. All terminating participants indicated that they would confront their partners, and most said they would persist even if the partner resisted their initial request. In response to an open-ended question about why they would have been willing to persist with their request, terminating participants stated reasons such as to: avoid being "stuck" in an unsatisfying

relationship, maintain their own “happiness,” get “life back on track,” avoid the “worst,” “preserve feelings,” and be “consistent” with their original plan. When examining relationships between facework and face threat, results indicated that terminating participants’ messages were more direct the less they thought that ending the current relationship would preclude future relationships and the less they felt they were imposing on their partner’s autonomy.

The major finding of this study, that individuals tend to associate very specific sets of potential face threats with each of the three romantic (re)definition goals, is consistent with work finding that different face threats tend to be uniquely associated with different influence goals, such as giving advice, asking favors, and/or enforcing obligations (e.g., Wilson et al., 1998; Wilson & Kunkel, 2000). Whereas the goals studied in previous research are not anchored in particular phases of relationships, those studied in the current work are necessarily enacted at different points in relationship development and would be that much more likely to differ in various aspects. Relationships themselves are dynamic and their members evolve and change, as do their perceptions of each other and of their experiences within those relationships. Moreover, the goals investigated in the current study inherently represent different types of face threats (e.g., intensification implies further commitment, the virtual definition of negative face). It is not surprising then that our participants perceived, and were able to identify and discern, the existence of discrepant face threats among the relational (re)definition goals.

We believe that our findings have important heuristic, theoretical, and pragmatic implications for how people utilize “facework” strategies to manage both their own and their relational partner’s positive and negative face in light of the unique potential face threats that may arise with the (re)definition of romantic relationships. In future research efforts, we should seek insight regarding how romantic relational partners communicatively navigate the face-threatening difficulties they perceive. This would entail examining other features of messages beyond directness, such as number and composition of reasons, sensitivity to others’ loss of face, and application of pressure to comply. For

example, an individual may not provide as many reasons when asking a new person out on a date as when he or she wants to intensify or terminate an existing romantic relationship. In addition, terminating has the potential to threaten both parties' desires to be approved of by significant others in the larger social network. Hence, participants at times may give sensitive face-saving accounts when explaining to mutual acquaintances their decision to terminate a romantic relationship (e.g., "We've just grown apart," or "I care for him very much, but I am just not ready to settle down"). Future research might explore whether particular types of facework vary in response to different types of face threat. In the current study, confronting the target was associated most strongly with threats to the message source's own positive face, whereas directness varied with threats to both parties' negative face.

Some may object that the view of relationship (re)definition emerging from this study is overly "mindful" or "strategic." Episodes of initiating, intensifying, and terminating romantic relationships are significant turning points that may entail some conscious planning. Still, we do not claim that young adults consciously analyze all the potential face threats that might arise or mindfully consider the costs and benefits of phrasing their requests directly before seeking relationship change. Awareness of face threats probably occurs fleetingly as conversations unfold, and message planning at the level of request directness may take place entirely outside of awareness (Greene, 2000). Despite this, the language features we characterize as facework may be patterned and responsive to momentary concerns and emotions associated with face maintenance. Communication may be purposeful and yet largely automatic (Kellermann, 1992).

As with all research, there are limitations that must be taken into consideration. First, the generalizability of our research findings must be considered. The current study relied exclusively on a sample of college students, who were relatively homogeneous in ethnicity, level of "life" experience, and other demographic variables. It would be interesting to examine how a more diverse sample (e.g., older, more experienced, adults) dealt with the relational goals of initiating, intensifying, and

terminating. Nonetheless, the fact that the college years foster much experimentation in the dating realm warrants examination of how undergraduate students contend with relational (re)definition goals.

A second limitation concerns our use of hypothetical initiating, intensifying, and terminating scenarios. Having future participants respond to multiple scenarios instantiating each goal would strengthen generalizability. It also would be useful to have participants recall actual situations from their own relational experience or keep diaries over time to assess differences in perceived potential face threats. This might clarify how romantic relationship goals can get (re)defined through the course of conversation. For instance, an individual might seek to "intensify" his or her romantic relationship after only a few weeks by proposing to date exclusively, only to find that the partner is hesitant and uncertain about this request. However, after a series of exchanges, the partner might convince the source that agreeing to spend more time together in mutual activities would be a more fitting way to intensify their relationship at the present time. Rather than saying "yes" or "no," the partner might (re)define the source's initial request in a way that maintains both parties' desires for approval and autonomy while also enabling greater interdependence. Future research should explore the dynamic nature of goals involving relational (re)definition.

In sum, the area is ripe for research. We feel that our study provides further support for Wilson et al.'s (1998) revised analysis of face, while also providing insight into the "complex" nature of (re)defining romantic relationships.

Notes

¹To assess whether perceptions of realism varied across scenarios instantiating the three goals, we conducted a ONEWAY ANOVA with realism scores as the dependent variable and goal type (initiating, intensifying, terminating) as the independent variable. Type of Goal did exert a statistically significant effect on realism ratings, $F(2, 271) = 9.71, p < .01, \eta^2 = .07$. A Tukey post-hoc test revealed that participants who imagined intensifying ($M = 5.61$) or terminating ($M = 5.86$) perceived their

scenario as more realistic than those who imagined initiating ($M = 5.16$). Despite this effect for goals, participants in all three conditions perceived their scenario as realistic. As one example, 86% (79 of 92) of participants in the “initiating” condition rated their scenario at the scale midpoint (4.00) or higher on the seven-point realism scale.

²The original measure assessing the message source's own positive face—being concerned that he or she might appear too forward—actually contained six rather than five items. For purposes of enhancing reliability, one item (i.e., “I could come off looking like ‘a player’ by saying what I did in this situation”) was dropped from the final scale, thus creating a five-item scale. A copy of all of the face threat items is available from the authors upon request.

³Readers may wonder whether our eight specific types of face threat can be reduced to a more parsimonious number. To assess one possibility, we assessed the fit of a four-factor model in which the 40 scale items were seen as indicators of four underlying factors: the target's (partner's) negative face (imposing on target), the target's positive face (looking inadequate), the participant's own negative face (losing a desirable current relationship, precluding future relationships), and the participant's own positive face (not appearing attractive, looking overly dependent, looking too forward, looking insensitive). This four-factor model provided a poor fit with the data, Goodness of Fit Indices (GFI) = .38, Root Mean Square Errors of Approximation (RMSEA) = .24, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Indices (AGFI) = .31, and Relative Fit Indices (RFI) = .79. An eight-factor model, though still not meeting conventional levels for good fit, provided a much better representation of the data, GFI = .78, RMSEA = .09, AGFI = .71, RFI = .93. Given our theoretical rationale for distinguishing specific types of positive and negative face associated with each relationship (re)definition goal, we retained eight types of potential face threat.

⁴The sample sizes vary slightly from the original number of participants who completed each version of the questionnaire in Study 2 (i.e., 92 initiators, 91 intensifiers, and 91 terminators) and Table 4 due to missing data.

⁵We expected that biological sex would not qualify which potential face threats are associated with the goals of initiating, intensifying, and terminating romantic relationships. More specifically, the rank ordering of these three goals with regard to each type of face threat would not differ for men *versus* women. In order to assess our expectation, an 8 (Type of Face Threat) x 3 (Type of Goal) x 2 (Sex) mixed-model ANOVA with repeated-measures on the first factor was conducted. Results indicated a small, but statistically significant, main effect for Sex, $F(1, 267) = 9.52, p < .01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03$. Across goals and types of face, males ($M = 3.54$) perceived greater total potential face threat than did females ($M = 3.14$). More importantly, however, none of the two-way or three-way interactions involving participant sex were statistically significant, even though statistical power exceeded .80 for detecting any interaction of medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .06$). Thus, biological sex did not qualify whether participants associated unique face threats with each goal.

⁶Given that we expected men and women to associate the same potential face threats with each of the three romantic (re)definition goals, we also expected that biological sex would not qualify the effects of romantic (re)definition goals on facework. In order to assess our expectations, χ^2 analysis were run separately for men and women to see if the effects of goal type on confronting differed depending on participant sex. Results indicated that the percentage of participants who would have confronted the other party differed significantly across the three types of goals when run separately for women, $\chi^2(2) = 24.76, p < .001$, and for men, $\chi^2(2) = 20.50, p < .001$, and the same rank-order was obtained for both sexes. Specifically, the percentages of participants willing to confront the target in the initiating, intensifying, and terminating scenarios were 57%, 80%, and 100% for women, and 68%, 91%, and 100% for men.

⁷Results indicated that the percentage of participants who indicated that they would have persisted differed significantly across the three types of goals when run separately for women, χ^2

(2) = 75.66, $p < .001$, and for men, $\chi^2(2) = 38.41$, $p < .001$. Most women in the initiating (9%) and intensifying (16%) conditions indicated they would not persist, whereas nearly all women (88%) persisted in the terminating condition. Most men in the initiating (18%) condition said they would not persist, whereas slightly less than half (42%) in the intensifying and nearly all (85%) in the terminating condition said they were willing to persist. In sum, the same rank-order of goals was obtained for men and women, but men were more likely than women to indicate that they would persist if their partner resisted their initial request to intensify a relationship.

⁸To assess whether the effects of goal type on directness varied depending on biological sex, we conducted a 3 (Type of Goal) x 2 (Sex) ANOVA with directness as the dependent variable. Main effects were obtained both for Type of Goal, $F(2, 267) = 7.20$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .05$, and for Sex, $F(1, 267) = 5.01$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. Males on average ($M = 3.80$) wrote more direct messages than did females ($M = 3.43$) though the size of this effect was small. More importantly, the Type of Goal x Sex interaction was not significant, $F < 1.00$, indicating that the effects of goal type on directness was not moderated by biological sex.

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Table 1

Constitutive Rules for Requests and Potential Face Concerns Associated With Three Goals

Rules	Initiating	Intensifying	Terminating
Need for Action	Is there a "real" need to start a relationship at this point in time? Why? How does this reflect on the message source and/or potential partner?	Is there a "real" need to formalize the relationship at this point in time? If not, how does this reflect on the message source?	Is there a "real" need to end the relationship at this time? Why? How does this reflect on the message source and/or partner?
Need for Directive	Why did the message source need to say this now? Does/should the potential partner already know about the source's desire to date? How does this reflect on both parties?	Did the source need to say this? Would it have just happened "naturally?"	Did the source need to say this? Why isn't the partner already aware of the problems?
Ability	Is the potential partner able to get involved in a relationship at this point in time? If not, what does this say about the potential partner's feelings about the source and/or relationships?	Is the partner able to formalize the relationship? If not, what does this say about the partner's anxiety about relationships?	Is the partner able to end the relationship now? If not, how will the source and target look?
Willingness	Is the potential partner willing to go out? If not, how does this reflect on the source and/or target?	Is the partner willing to formalize the relationship at this point? If not, how does this reflect on the source and/or target?	Is the partner willing to end the relationship? Is the partner "heroically committed," "delusionally committed?"
Rights	Does the source have the right to ask out this potential partner? Does doing so violate organizational or cultural rules?	Does the source have the right to formalize the relationship at this point in time?	Does the source have the right to unilaterally "end" the relationship?
Sincerity	Does the source really want to go out? Too much so? If so, why? [e.g., Is he or she lonely or desperate?]	Does the source really want to formalize the relationship? Too much so? If so, why? [e.g., Is he or she insecure?]	Does the source really want to end this relationship? If so, what does this say about the source and/or target?

Table 2

Summary of Themes in Open-Ended Responses for Study 1 (N = 141)

Category	Initiating	Intensifying	Terminating
1. General concerns	1) Rejection 2) Other person already in relationship/Interested in someone else 3) Not knowing other/Only knowing by looks and personality in classroom/ Unsure of other's likes/dislikes 4) Worried other doesn't feel same way/Other not interested 5) Being together in class if things went badly/Awkward 6) Other not attracted to me/Appearance issues	1) Other might not have same feelings/Lack of reciprocation 2) Might lose other person altogether/ Being dumped/Scaring other person off 3) Rejection/Denial 4) Hurt relationship/ Getting hurt/Things will take turn for the worse 5) Rushing things/ Jumping the gun/Other not ready to commit/ Coming on too strong/ Freak other out 6) Might not be what I want/Feeling trapped/ Restricting own autonomy	1) Hurting or upsetting other/Making other feel bad/Breaking other person's heart 2) Concerned about other's reaction/Other may go "psycho"/Things could get "heated" or overly emotional/Other may yell or get angry or cry or try to hurt me 3) Worried about making right choice/Doing the right thing/Regret 4) Maintaining/Losing friendship 5) Other may hate me or think poorly of me/Never talk to me again/Gaining an enemy 6) Uncertainty – Does he or she feel the same way?
2. Concerns about how you would appear	1) Outward appearance/ "Good looking"/Attractive/ Smelling nice 2) Appearing pushy/Too forward/Overbearing/ Aggressive/Coming on too strong/Overzealous 3) Appearing desperate/ Looking too interested or needy 4) Appearing like a psycho"/ Crazy/Weirdo/Strange/Creep 5) Looking like an idiot or fool/Say something or look stupid 6) Appearing like a loser/ Pathetic	1) Appearing needy/Too attached or involved/Clingy 2) Appearing Pushy/Too Forward/Coming on too strong 3) Moving too quickly/ Impatient 4) Appearing desperate 5) Other might not have same feelings 6) Taking the relationship too seriously	1) Appearing hurtful/ Harsh/Hateful/Mean/ Heartless/Cold 2) Being viewed as a "dickhead," "dick," "bitch," "asshole," "jerk," or "the devil" 3) Appearing uncaring/ Ungrateful/Inconsiderate/ Insensitive 4) Selfish 5) Looking like the bad guy/girl 6) Rude
3. Other person's concerns about how they	NOTE: Several people said since they were doing the initiating, the other didn't have many concerns about	1) Unsure/Depends/ Perhaps/Probably 2) Differences in opinion	1) Unsure/Depends/Maybe 2) "Why is other person doing this to me?"/"What

would appear	<p>how they would appear (either the person would want to or not want to). -Others indicated these concerns (or that they were unsure):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Depends/Can't say/Probably/Maybe/Unsure 2) Worried about sharing true feelings/How to react appropriately 3) How to tell you they are not interested 4) Not looking dumb/Like an ass 	<p>about relationship</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Afraid to express true feelings/Worried about how to respond 4) Getting too serious/Moving too quickly 5) Giving wrong impression 6) Readiness for commitment 	<p>is not working?"/Confusion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Concerns about getting dumped 4) Other might want to look strong/Not weak 5) Appearing like a loser/Wimp 6) Appearing inadequate/Unworthy
4. Own feelings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Nervous/Anxious 2) Uneasy/Uncomfortable/Awkward/Weird/Strange 3) Good that relationship was at least attempted 4) Fear/Afraid/Scared 5) Excited 6) Courageous/Taking a big step/Risk taker/Outgoing/Bold/Gutsy/Proud/Out on a limb 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Nervous/Anxious 2) Good/Great (if agree); Bad (if don't agree) 3) Scared/Fearful of reaction/It's a risk 4) Excited 5) Strange/Awkward/Weird/Uncomfortable/Embarrassed 6) Happy if things worked out 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Bad/Terrible/Not good/Awful/Horrible 2) Sad/Unhappy 3) Relieved 4) Nervous/Anxious 5) Good 6)Uncomfortable/Uneasy
5. Other's feelings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Hopefully flattered 2) Either they want to or they don't/Depends/Unsure 3) Surprised/Caught offguard/ Put on spot/Shocked 4) Awkward/Weird/Strange/"Creeped out" 5) Uncomfortable/Uneasy/Apprehensive/Intimidated 6) Good/Great 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Depends on what other person's feelings are 2) Good/Great, if feelings are the same and things worked out 3) Rushed/Pressured/Obligated to say yes/Pushed into it 4) Nervous/Anxious 5) Happy 6) Scared of commitment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Hurt/Upset 2) Depends/Unsure 3) Sad/Miserable 4) Bad/Not good 5) Confused/Wonder what he or she did wrong 6) Relieved

Table 3
Summary of Directness Coding Categories for Study 2 (N = 274)

Category	Directness Level	Verbal Action Taken	Verbatim Example
Initiating	1 = avoid mentioning relational goal	Avoid mentioning initiation.	None.*
	2 = very inexplicit, using mild hints	Asking a general social question about what partner is doing.	"Hey, how are you doing? I wanted to introduce myself before our class is over. My name is _____."
	3 = inexplicit, using strong hints	Providing suggested actions for partner with no specific timeframe.	"Hey Chris, how you doing today? I was just wondering if we could go out sometime. Nothing fancy, maybe just ice cream or coffee or something."
	4 = explicit, with request following preliminary information	After initial dialogue, providing suggested actions for partner with a specific timeframe.	"Hey Chris, how is it going? Do you have plans this weekend? My friend's having a party Friday and I wondered if you'd like to go with me."
	5 = very explicit, with request appearing immediately in dialogue	Expressing request or desire in first sentence.	"What are you doing Friday because my friends and I are going to a Royals game and we're drinking at my place before the game and I was just seeing if you wanted to come."
Intensifying	1 = avoid mentioning relational goal	Avoid mentioning intensification.	None.*
	2 = very inexplicit, using mild hints	Offering general observations or feelings about partner.	"Chris, you are always so nice and sweet. You're always here for me and support me, encourage me. You know I like you a lot, right?"
	3 = inexplicit, using strong hints	Asking general questions about status of relationship.	"Chris I would really like to know where you think our relationship is going."
	4 = explicit, with request following preliminary information	After initial dialogue, asking partner a specific question if they are ready for the next level.	"Chris, I really like you. You are a really cool person and we get along really well. I was wondering whether you would be interested in being exclusive."
	5 = very explicit, with request appearing immediately in dialogue	Expressing request or desire in first sentence.	"Chris, I like you a lot, you are the only person I want to be with, and I would like to take this relationship a little further and make it exclusive."

Category	Directness Level	Verbal Action Taken	Verbatim Example
Terminating	1 = avoid mentioning relational goal	Avoid mentioning termination.	"I would enter the situation prayerfully."
	2 = very inexplicit, using mild hints	Offering general, nonnegative feelings about the relationship.	None.*
	3 = inexplicit, using strong hints	Offering general negative feelings about the relationship with a request to de-intensify.	"Things aren't the same as when we first started dating. I don't think I know what I want right now, so I think it would be best if we spend some time apart for a while. I don't know whether we'll get back together or not, but I need some time to think about things."
	4 = explicit, with request following preliminary information	After initial dialogue, offering a specific request to (re)define or end the relationship.	"Chris, is it just me or do you think things between us have changed? I'm starting to feel that we're in this relationship still because we've been together for so long. I don't feel the same way about you anymore. I think it's time for us to end our relationship now before it gets any worse."
	5 = very explicit, with request appearing immediately in dialogue	Expressing request or desire in first sentence.	"I think we need to split up. We aren't communicating anymore. I used to really like you, but we have grown apart."

Note. None.* = indicates that there were no examples of this category (across coders).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Eight Types of Face Threats Across Three Goals

<i>Type of Face Threat</i>	<i>Relational (Re)Definition Goal</i>				<i>Goal Comparisons</i>		
	Initiating	Intensifying	Terminating	Across Goals	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	partial η^2
(1) Pressure Other	3.31 ^a (1.32)	4.19 ^b (1.34)	4.75 ^c (1.20)	4.07 (1.42)	26.03	.001	.16
(2) Preclude Future Relationships	2.38 ^a (1.25)	4.13 ^b (1.39)	2.36 ^a (1.22)	2.95 (1.54)	54.88	.001	.29
(3) Lose Desirable Current Relat.	2.99 ^a (1.33)	4.28 ^b (1.19)	4.36 ^b (1.34)	3.87 (1.43)	28.98	.001	.18
(4) Make Other Appear Inadequate	1.80 ^a (0.83)	2.05 ^a (1.01)	3.49 ^b (1.51)	2.42 (1.37)	68.71	.001	.29
(5) Appear Attractive	5.22 ^a (1.28)	4.32 ^b (1.61)	2.60 ^c (1.57)	4.06 (1.84)	68.17	.001	.34
(6) Not Appear Too Forward	3.33 (1.45)	3.79 (1.22)	3.37 (1.25)	3.50 (1.32)	4.79	.061	.02
(7) Not Look Overly Dependent	2.37 ^a (1.27)	4.14 ^b (1.32)	2.43 ^a (1.09)	2.98 (1.48)	58.77	.001	.31
(8) Not Look Insensitive	1.84 ^a (0.92)	2.10 ^a (1.04)	4.41 ^b (1.55)	2.78 (1.66)	121.86	.001	.48
Across Face Threats	2.91 ^a (0.87)	3.62 ^b (0.83)	3.48 ^b (0.83)		17.67	.001	.12

Note. *N*'s = 92 for initiating, 91 for intensifying, and 90 for terminating. Means are outside parentheses, standard deviations are within parentheses. Within each row, means with different subscripts differ significantly at $p < .05$ by the Tukey post-hoc procedure.