

Homework 8

Due Wednesday, October 5

Consider the invitation below, then answer the questions that follow.

Two women have run into each other in a coffee shop. Both are mothers of children of similar ages. Paula has two children and Julie has one child, Emma, and is quite obviously pregnant with her second child. The following exchange takes place near the end of their short conversation:

Paula:

(to her son) Maybe Emma can come over to our house and play sometime this week.

(to Emma) Would that be OK? Would you like that Emma?

(to Julie) Would you like to do that?

Drop Emma off for a while and you can have a rest?

Julie: Oh, yeah, that would be great.

(They then negotiate trading phone numbers).

1. Note that we can consider that she actually issues several versions of the same invitation with varying politeness strategies. Explain what strategies she uses. Don't forget to address whether giving an invitation is inherently positively or negatively polite.
2. What strategies does Julie use in her response?
3. Think back to the unit on the macro organization of discourse. How does macro organization (speech activities, institutions, etc.) make gender relevant to this invitation?
4. How is Paula using strategies that project (a particular kind of) femininity?
5. Does the gender of each interactants make a difference in the interpretation of this exchange?