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The Pragmatics of Greetings: Teaching Speech Acts in the EFL Classroom

When Taro's name was called, he stepped away from the tired and disoriented group of Japanese students who had just completed the long flight from Tokyo to Toronto and a bus ride to the University reception where they would meet their Canadian host families. His host mother walked right up to him and gave him a hug.

Taro stood with his arms at his sides looking uncomfortable, if not alarmed. He did not know how to react. Japanese do not touch during an initial greeting. When his host mother ended the hug, he gave a nervous laugh. She smiled to disguise the awkwardness of the moment.

Taro was not the only one in the group unprepared for their initial meeting with a host family. Although they had studied the English language before their trip, the group lacked an understanding of its pragmatics and, in this case, the speech act of greetings.

As a language teacher, I have long realized that knowing the words of a language is only part of speaking it. Knowing how to interpret a communicative act is equally important, and it needs to be taught explicitly. Therefore, I make this learning a regular part of the class experience. As the chaperone for the group of Japanese students in this anecdote, I was able to witness the benefits of pragmatics instruction when a host mother greeted another of the exchange students, a girl who had participated in my class the year before. She knew what to expect through watching videos and participating in class discussions on the speech act of greetings. When her host mother gave her a hug, she hugged back with a smile on her face. She also knew that the appropriate response to her host mother's greeting of "Nice to meet you" was a reply of "Nice to meet you, too."

Greetings are one of the few speech acts that children are taught explicitly in their native language (Kakiuchi 2005). Yet, the communicative function that greetings serve is usually understood as subordinate to other purposes in the ultimate goal of communication (DuFon 1999). In the language classroom, this subordinate position often means that teaching greetings is neglected; too little attention is paid to the roles that greetings play in various cultures and how these roles may affect the ultimate goal of communication. This article will provide background information on this important speech act and instructional strategies for use in the classroom to help teachers equip their students with a critical component to successful interactions. This article also describes four awareness-raising tasks that introduce the greeting speech act

as a cycle of explicit pragmatic instruction, including keeping a greeting journal, watching contemporary TV shows, using discourse completion tasks (DCTs), and participating in role plays and mingles.

THE PRAGMATICS OF GREETINGS

When most people think of a greeting, they consider it as the first words spoken in a turn-taking routine used to acknowledge the presence of another person or persons (Goffman 1971). A greeting can be as simple as a nod of the head or a wave of the hand. It also can be a statement that forms an *adjacency pair*, in that there is an initiation of contact followed by a response, both of which can be either verbal or nonverbal and may conclude with a warm embrace (Omar 1991). Greetings appear to be a universal construct in that all languages engage them in some form. Even animals have some kind of greeting, as found by primatologist Jane Goodall in her work with chimpanzees (Goodall 2007) and as evidenced by watching common pets greet other animals—including humans.

The form a greeting takes, as with all speech acts, depends mostly on the context of the encounter (Ellis 1994). Context considers the relationship of the people—are they friends, acquaintances, or perfect strangers? Is there a power difference, as with a boss and employee? What is the degree of imposition, which includes both temporal and spatial concerns: Are they in a hurry, or is the distance between the two people somehow constraining? Maybe the relationship has certain rules that make an overly friendly greeting seem inappropriate at the time. For English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, the ability to make an appropriate greeting is often the first opportunity to demonstrate communicative competence.

Although greetings may seem simple and formulaic in their wording, they are culturally saturated speech acts that can determine the course of an encounter well past the initial exchange (DuFon 1999). For example, both the Japanese boy and his host mother in the opening anecdote experienced discomfort that may have stilted the early days of an important relationship. The content and delivery of a greeting influences a first impression and can also create a lasting one.

TEACHING GREETING PRAGMATICS

According to Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor, "The chief goal of instruction in pragmatics is to raise learners' pragmatic awareness and give them choices about their interactions in the target language" (2003, 38). It may not seem obvious to language learners how native speakers navigate through these choices. Indeed, even though instructors cannot teach students how to act in every given context, they must provide students with a number of choices in a variety of contexts to enable them to develop a bank of potentially useful options. The typical second language (L2) classroom may provide too few examples of this extremely important phase of communication. As a remedy, instructors should assess the types of situations students encounter and give them a variety of examples within each situation. With some knowledge of the most useful greeting routines and the variety of greetings one might encounter, students can begin to make their own choices and create their own greeting routines, moving them closer toward communicative competence in the target language. The goal is to provide input and an environment for interpreting the communicative act (Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor 2003). Although providing more than one or two greeting options may seem like a lot of work, most students will encounter only

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a few contexts and will not need an unlimited greetings vocabulary.

I use the following four awareness-raising tasks in my first-year speaking courses with college-aged students at a low-intermediate level of English. The students have had very limited experience communicating with native speakers.

TASK 1: KEEPING A GREETING JOURNAL

Journaling is an effective method for self-reflection in language acquisition (DuFon 1999). Asking the students to keep a journal of the greetings they experience in both their own and the target language brings awareness to the function. I begin my classroom instruction on greetings with awareness-raising questions that draw attention to the key points of the greeting speech act by allowing students to reflect on their own experience and knowledge. I ask them to answer three primary questions in a greeting journal:

1. Who are some of the people you greet on a typical day?
2. What expressions do you use when you greet these people?
3. Why do you greet some people differently from others?

These questions prompt students to discuss the kinds of greetings they have experienced with native English speakers and with speakers of their own language. I ask students to (1) observe the many differences in the way one greets in an authentic exchange and (2) compare them with the phrases and routines they have learned from their English textbooks while considering how to apply this comparison to experiences a college-level student might encounter. Thinking of situations in which they would use greetings helps students gain awareness of available patterns and routines and of what is communicated by their use.

In the instructions for this activity, students are asked to observe and address the following three items (based on suggestions made by Brown and Levinson 1987) on a daily basis for one week:

1. The "role" of two speakers who greet each other. Is one in a position of power, or is each of equal status? (Students may need examples of power versus equality status in order to imagine their roles concretely.)
2. The relationship of the two participants. Are they close friends or merely acquaintances?
3. The imposition of the act. Where does it occur? Are there any temporal limits or spatial constraints (e.g., busy hallway, open sidewalk, subway) on the exchange?

Students record this information along with the words that are said and the observed accompanying facial expressions or body language. Over the period of one week, students share one of their observations during each class session. This exercise is language in use, and through this work, the pragmatics of language is laid out for comment and discussion. Two or three examples per student over the week are sufficient for this task. An example of a journal entry might be the following:

> [date]
>
> Two teachers meet in the hallway. Equal roles.

They seem to be friends but not close.

They are waiting for the elevator. The area in front of the elevator is small.

Hey Jim, how's it going?

Good. How was your weekend?

Great. Did you read that email from the Dean?

Yes. I will come to your office later to talk about it.

OK. See you later.

A key part of this task is the accompanying class discussion, in which I ask students questions such as, "How could the greeting be done differently?" or "What might create awkwardness or cause problems with this type of greeting?"

TASK 2: OBSERVING AND DOCUMENTING GREETINGS ON TV SHOWS

TV shows present a variety of greeting situations. One series that works well for my students is the American high school drama *The O.C.*, which aired on network television from 2003 to 2007 and follows the life of an economically disadvantaged boy who is taken in by a family living in the affluent Southern California suburb of Orange County (or OC, for short). I use this series to discuss the following types of conversations: intimate greetings within families (such as one might have during a homestay experience), conversations with peers (such as one might have with another student or when making a new friend), and serious interactions (such as one might have with a person of authority, as in a job interview).

As an in-class activity, I show parts of an episode, stopping at key points to discuss the interaction. For example, in Episode 3 from Season 1 of *The O.C.* (called "The Gamble"), the main character, the high school boy, meets for the first time the mother of a girl he likes. The mother greets him with her full name and "I've heard so much about you." He responds with, "Nice to meet you, too." I pose a series of questions to my students about the exchange: What are some other possible responses? What effects might a different response have on the boy and girl's relationship? What does the boy's response of "Nice to meet you, too" communicate to the mother? We end the discussion of this scene by examining the boy's response of "Nice to meet you, too" that implies the mother said, "Nice to meet you," which she did not. It is clear in the context of the scene that his response of "Nice to meet you, too" was conciliatory. We discuss why he would want to be as nice as possible.

Addressing what is inferred from the way something is said versus just translating the words and grammar of the sentences makes this type of analysis more pragmatic. Studies have shown that EFL students without the chance to experience the culture firsthand tend to focus on the grammar and vocabulary and are not aware of the way language is used (Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei 1998). Observing and documenting a speech act in a TV show brings culturally relevant experience into the classroom.

My school library bought multiple copies of the first season of *The O.C.* so that students could watch nearly 12 hours of English spoken by native speakers. Originally, the series served as a representation of American teenage life through clothing, music, slang, and age-specific concerns. What once made it contemporary now dates it. But the basis of the situations for language instruction purposes still holds.

Comedies often provide examples of people using language awkwardly. One of my favorite comedies to demonstrate such awkwardness is *The Big Bang Theory*, which follows a group

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of four male scientists at a Southern California university. The characters are "geeks" and often make inappropriate comments in social situations. In Season 2, Episode 9 (called "The White Asparagus Triangulation"), the main characters meet a beautiful, blond female character. Because of their inexperience speaking to women and general discomfort in new social situations, the greeting speech act appears unnatural; native English speakers tend to find it quite funny. In this episode, the only greeting word that is used is "Hello," but it is said with many different intonations that cause the woman to be noticeably uncomfortable and to leave abruptly, an outcome that was not the intention of the characters. In this example, students witness how greetings do not always go well even for native speakers and that the inappropriateness is expressed with facial expression and tone, not just word choice. Looking at aspects such as intonation, stress, and facial expressions in communication is new to many students but essential for language competence.

Another topic that works well for classroom lessons is the physical touching involved in greetings. In many American TV shows, one finds examples of hugging, kissing, and handshaking. Students see how physical touching in greetings changes based on relationships and situations; one character may be greeted with a hug and another may receive a handshake. Variety TV, such as talk shows or shows where the host interviews a guest, is a great source for demonstrating variations in the physical nature of greetings. The host might hug some guests and shake hands with others. For this topic, the discussion can focus on the levels of intimacy of the physical action and what this says about a relationship. We also discuss whether a handshake rather than a hug could be a practical decision; for example, the person being greeted might be rather tall and a hug around the neck would be difficult. I find it particularly insightful when students volunteer what was wrong or different from what was expected.

American television programs like *The O.C.* and *The Big Bang Theory* are generally available for purchase and download on Amazon, iTunes, Vudu, and YouTube (for example, see www.youtube.com/show/theoc and www.youtube.com/show/bigbangtheory).

TASK 3: USING DISCOURSE COMPLETION TASKS (DCTs)

A DCT is a form-focused task that gives students an opportunity to record language reviewed in a contextual format. It can be used for more than merely focusing attention on a given speech act or event. A typical DCT will name actors and a situation that a student considers in order to fill in or select language that is appropriate for the interaction. One exercise I use has two parts. First, I provide students DCTs with five greeting contexts and ask them to work in groups to decide what would be the most appropriate language to use in each given context. I then choose one scenario and ask them to respond as quickly as possible with a written answer. Here are five scenarios I have used successfully with my students:

1. You are a student of XYZ University. You are back in your hometown during winter vacation. In the supermarket, by chance you see a teacher of yours from high school. Provide an appropriate greeting.

2. Your good friend has been studying abroad in the United States. You decide to meet her at the airport when she returns home. You have not seen her for a year. She comes out of the gate. Provide an appropriate greeting.

3. You and a friend are walking down the hallway at your school. Your English teacher enters the hallway and says hello. Provide an appropriate greeting.

4. You are working in an office. One day, an important person comes to your office to have a meeting with your boss. The person makes eye contact with you. Provide an appropriate greeting.

5. You are walking downtown on your way to meet a friend at a coffee shop. You are late. As you turn a corner, you come face-to-face with an older woman who is your neighbor. She has lived in your neighborhood for many years and is friends with your mother. Provide an appropriate greeting.

I have found that making this lesson a competition works well to engage my students and reinforce the purpose of the activity. The first group to finish is given the highest score regardless of the content. This teaching strategy rewards quick response and choice rather than contemplation, given the need for relative speed in actual language use. In any speech act, making a choice is half the battle. When each group is finished, a representative writes the group's answers on the board. Once we establish a few appropriate and polite greeting patterns, the students perform role plays using the target language.

TASK 4: PARTICIPATING IN ROLE PLAYS AND MINGLES

Role plays

Once students have an understanding of the greeting as a speech act, I focus instruction on role-playing activities that challenge them to consider how they would respond in situations

ROLE PLAY 1

1A. Your good friend has been studying abroad in the United States. You decide to meet her at the airport when she returns home. You haven't seen her for a year. She comes out of the gate.

You should:

a) Greet
b) Show concern
c) Ask follow-up questions

1B. You have been studying abroad in the United States and are returning home. At the airport, you will be meeting your good friend after not seeing him or her for a year.

You should:

a) Greet
b) Show concern
c) Ask follow-up questions

ROLE PLAY 2

2A. You are invited to your friend's birthday party. There are a few people there you don't know. Everyone who was invited to the party is about the same age as you. You want to make new friends.

You should:

a) Open a conversation
b) Exchange pleasantries
c) Introduce yourself

2B. You are a guest at a party. Someone approaches you.

You should:

a) Exchange pleasantries
b) Introduce yourself

Figure 1. Greeting role plays

with verbal interaction. This verbal activity complements and supports the written DCT. One role play that my students favor is the scenario described above for the DCT where the student unexpectedly sees a former teacher. This time, when students are told to provide an appropriate greeting, they are asked to do the following:

1. Greet ("Hello, Mr. Smith.")
2. Give context ("My name is [First Name and Last Name]. I am your student from XYZ High School.")
3. Share information ("I haven't seen you since graduation.")

As a result of this practice, students become aware of the difficulty if the teacher fails to recognize or remember the student, which creates a face-threatening act (Brown and Levinson 1987). A popular variation of this lesson is a turnabout scenario where the student plays the teacher who runs into a former student. In this case, the student who plays the teacher is asked to:

1. Greet ("Hello, [First Name or Mr./Ms. Last Name].")
2. Show concern ("How have you been?" / "Did you find a job?" / "Are you going to college?")
3. Ask questions ("What have you been doing since you graduated?")

I pair the students and give them a time limit to take notes and write up a simple script. The time limit varies depending on the level of the students and the stage of the lesson we are in. In the beginning stages, I allow more time for reflection and consideration of phrases and structure. But as we move through the practice over time, I encourage making decisions more quickly to reflect what it means to participate in the actual speech act. Figure 1 demonstrates two role-play activities that can be used for this purpose.

To make the activity self-reflective, I ask students to role-play the situation first in their native language and then in English; this provides perspective by revealing differences between the conversations in terms of both language and customary practices. We then discuss these differences to draw attention to phrases and actions that are important to the appropriate performance of the act. Depending on class size and time frame, I ask a few groups to act out their role plays for the class.

Mingles

Another awareness-raising task is an information exchange, sometimes called a *mingle* (Borzova 2014), which is a type of open role play. More specifically, this activity is a "form-focused" (Kasper and Rose 2001) mingle, or one that emphasizes particular language structures. I give students two strips of paper and ask them to write a sentence using simple past tense about what they did over the weekend. The papers are collected and redistributed. I then ask the students to read the sentence and refer to it by writing a question on the back of the paper using question words (e.g., *what, where, when, who, how long*). For example, a student might write, "I went shopping." The second student might write, "What did you buy?" or "Where did you go shopping?" The students fold the paper and put it into a hat. They again choose a paper and—using the opening, closing, and other dialogue in Figure 2 to help them participate appropriately—go around the room having conversations with the goal of finding the person who did the activity described on the paper. If students find a match, they ask the student the question on the back. Advanced students develop other follow-up questions. I move around the class, observing and helping the conversations along.

There are many other ways to choreograph this activity. One option is to have the students line up in two rows facing each other. The students have a conversation with the person across from them. Then, at a designated point, one row moves down to establish new pairs and the activity repeats.

Part 1: Opening Dialogue

(Hello) _____. How's it going?
(Great!) And you?
I'm (fine.)

Part 2: Social Function Dialogue

(By the way) My name is _____.
I'm _____.

(I don't think we've met. I am _____.)
(Nice to meet you.)
(Nice to meet you, too.)

(I'm sorry. What's your name again? I'm _____.)

(Good to see you again. Long time no see.)

Page 3: Transitions

(So, …) (By the way, …) (Well, …)

Page 4: Question–Response Dialogue

How was your weekend? (week?) / Do you have any plans for this weekend?
(It was good.) / I (will) _____ and _____.
That's great. (That's too bad.)
How about your weekend? / Do you have any plans?
(It was great.) / I (am going to) _____ and _____.
Oh yeah? (Question)
(Answer)

Page 5: Closing Dialogue

(Well, …) (So, …) / Hey, what time is it?
It is _____.
I'm sorry, but I have to go. It was nice talking to you. Talk to you later, OK?
Sure. Take it easy. Good-bye.
Good-bye.

Figure 2. Dialogue for short form-focused role plays

Another format is to have the students form concentric circles. Using a structured rotating pairs sequence encourages the mingling aspect of this activity.

The examples in Figure 2 are appropriate for initial class sessions with students who meet only once a week; however, as the students develop relationships within the classroom, they need to create more appropriate exchanges. To help students practice switching from casual to more formal greetings, I conduct simple activities, such as distributing a VIP badge to random students within a group and instructing them to wear the badge, as it signifies a change in social status for the

role play. This exercise effectively generates more varied conversations.

INTERACTIONAL ACTS

When students do these four awareness-raising tasks, questions concerning interactional acts emerge: turn-taking rules, negotiation, and the fact that a greeting accompanies an opening and often includes a closing. When teaching greetings, I especially like to bring awareness to the initial interaction of opening a conversation. Since a handshake often functions as an opening (and a closing as well), one of the first activities I use is to teach students how to shake hands like a Westerner. Students stand up, face each other, and practice shaking hands. It is easy to teach an appropriate handshake with timing and grip as key factors. Proper timing and a confident grip are important when performing a handshake, just as timing and position are to a hug.

Pragmatic norms related to greetings also include nonverbal behavior (e.g., eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, and physical contact), spatial association, and relational responsibility. Greeting contexts often are found near elevators, in hallways, and in places where people are moving. As such, proper etiquette is harder to define because time constraints play a major role in greeting acts. What constitutes a successful greeting act depends largely on contextual information and on the interlocutors themselves. Some greetings might be accomplished very quickly, while others might need more extensive verbal exchanges.

ASSESSMENT

Although evaluating an understanding of language functions can be challenging for any teacher, assessment is an important part of teaching the greeting speech act. Because the purpose of explicit pragmatic instruction is to prepare students for the variability of discourse, I pair the assessment tool with the objective of the awareness-raising tasks. No one type of assessment meets all the needs.

For assessing performance, as is required when evaluating conversations in pairs or groups of three or more, oral or written feedback works well. The feedback can include comments on key phrase use as well as tonal quality and awareness of hesitations and nonverbal cues.

Discourse completion tests can aid in assessing L2 pragmatics. In this article, for example, I have discussed DCTs where the "T" represents "task." The "T" can just as easily be used to represent "test." This change of focus simply involves re-tasking the examples used into a testing environment with timed responses.

A scaled assessment also can be used to evaluate students' awareness of an answer's appropriateness in a written example of a greeting exchange. For instance, one might use a scale from "most appropriate" to "least appropriate" below a written greeting; the students are asked to rate the example on that scale and their responses are assessed (Ross and Kasper 2013).

Finally, a rubric is a helpful tool for both the students and teachers to break down functions involved in greetings. My rubric for role plays and mingles focuses on four key functions:

1. The speed with which the speaker can produce the target structures.
2. The target structure accuracy of grammar and vocabulary.
3. The *prosody*, or stress, intonation, and tone of the exchange.

What constitutes a successful greeting act depends largely on contextual information and on the interlocutors themselves.

4. The listener's understanding of the purpose of the exchange.

The final item on the rubric is a commenting space where the teacher can offer general reflections on the speech act's success.

CONCLUSION

The Japanese exchange students whom I chaperoned in Canada may have appeared awkward or even rude by their responses to their host families' welcomes; however, what appeared to be inappropriate behavior actually was response illiteracy. Giving EFL students the skills they need to understand language cues from the moment they meet someone in another culture can help them create a lasting relationship, as well as avert difficult situations with potentially negative results.

Success in delivering greetings can be taught and assessed in a classroom setting, but the real test comes from future unscripted interactions with the students and their performance of greetings as they pass me in the hallway and how they interact in unexpected situations in the real world. Teaching and assessing greetings and other speech acts is unique because the only way to know whether a student "gets it" is to see him or her use it in an unplanned, unprepared context.

When it comes to greetings, a practical way to prepare students for what happens outside the classroom environment is through explicit pragmatic instruction. Such instruction should become a regular part of language study classes regardless of the native and target languages. Quite simply, the stakes are high when greetings may result in lasting impressions. Students who receive explicit instructions through the awareness-raising tasks described in this article develop an enhanced ability to participate appropriately and increase their chances of communication success.

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Pragmatic Activities for the Speaking Classroom

Being able to speak naturally and appropriately with others in a variety of situations is an important goal for many English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. Because the skill of speaking invariably involves interaction with people and using language to reach objectives (e.g., ordering food, making friends, asking for favors), it is crucial for teachers to explore activities that help students learn the typical ways to express these and other language functions.

To interact successfully in myriad contexts and with many different speakers, learners need to develop a repertoire of practical situation-dependent communicative choices. The study of how language is used in interactions is called *pragmatics*, and while appropriate interactions come naturally to native speakers of a language, EFL learners need to be aware of the many linguistic and strategic options available to them in certain situations. Though pragmatics is an extensive field within linguistics, much pragmatic research has focused on speech acts performed by learners and the linguistic and strategic choices they employ (Mitchell, Myles, and Marsden 2013).

To use pragmatically appropriate speech, EFL users must account for not only the form and function of a second language, but the context as well (Taguchi 2015). In doing so, they will be more comfortable speaking to interlocutors who may vary in age, gender, social class, and status (Kinginger and Farrell 2004; Ishihara and Cohen 2010). Special conversational choices are also required based on the relationship between speakers—whether they know each other and for how long. In addition, conversational expectations and desired objectives can influence linguistic and strategic choices of what to say. The ability to account for and adjust to these variables when speaking English defines one's pragmatic competence.

Despite its importance in EFL communication, the teaching of pragmatics is often overlooked in the classroom and underrepresented in teaching materials and teacher education courses. Reasons include insufficient class time, lack of interest, or inadequate recognition of its importance in interpersonal communication. There may also be a shortage of practical and achievable activities for the classroom that introduce and promote the development of such nuanced language use. While teachers may recognize the importance of pragmatics and want to use it in their lessons, many are unsure how to select and incorporate pragmatic teaching activities in EFL classes. This seems to be the case in Japan, where I teach, and I suspect the situation is similar in other EFL contexts.

The purpose of this article is to demonstrate how to identify pragmatic teaching points, to introduce related activities, and to generally

encourage attention to pragmatic speaking ability in language classrooms. This article promotes the idea that pragmatic skills identified and developed in EFL settings contribute to communicative success. It begins by discussing pragmatics as a general field within EFL education before moving on to present the notion of *speech act sets* (SASs), which are step-by-step conversational options normally used to successfully communicate a variety of language functions. SASs are considered valuable tools for examining language and strategic choices made during speech production, and they also provide useful templates for language teachers who want to add a pragmatic element to their speaking lessons; as such, the concept of SASs is promoted in the literature in an effort to advance pragmatic studies through a speech act perspective (Ishihara and Cohen 2010). Through comparisons of student output from two SASs for the language functions of apologizing and requesting, this article demonstrates how to identify specific pragmatic teaching points and use them to inform pragmatic instruction. This article also suggests classroom activities that teachers can use to help learners develop and refine their pragmatic abilities in English.

PRAGMATIC DEVELOPMENT

Pragmatics has been defined as "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially the choices they make … and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (Crystal 1997, 301). The aspects of "choice" and "effect" are particularly relevant for achieving desired outcomes during interpersonal communication. In terms of pragmatic choices, EFL learners need to be aware of the many linguistic and strategic options they can use in certain circumstances. The linguistic options will likely differ from their first language (L1); depending on the L1 and/or cultural background, the strategic alternatives in English may also be different (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984).

Regarding "effect," learners need to understand the ramifications of utilizing different linguistic options in certain situations and contexts. Speakers are required to consider options and select among alternatives to produce contextually appropriate speech (Kasper and Rose 2002). For instance, speaking to a friend in a cafe about a low test score may necessitate different language and strategies than talking about the same topic to the instructor who graded the test. Apologizing about forgetting a meeting with a potential employer would likely involve a different level of formality than if the meeting were with a close friend. Complaints to a colleague of the same rank about working conditions would probably come out differently if made to the manager. Such situations call for the ability to operate within pragmatic norms, which are a "range of tendencies or conventions for pragmatic language use that are … typical or generally preferred in the L2 community" (Ishihara and Cohen 2010, 13).

Failure to adhere to these norms may lead to unintended consequences and unequal treatment of the speaker. On the other hand, culturally appropriate choices when interacting with different subgroups will potentially lead to more positive experiences, increased motivation, and appealing outcomes for learners. Based on this line of thinking, the following questions may be of interest to educators involved in intercultural communication and speaking classes:

- Do students have an appropriate linguistic and strategic range to vary their speech depending on context?
- Do they understand the consequences of using one utterance or strategy over another?
- How can pragmatic instruction be implemented in second language (L2) classrooms?

It is important for students to be conscious of their options and the consequences that result from appropriate and inappropriate choices. Even though L1 patterns for language functions may differ from L2 patterns,

Given the importance of pragmatics, educators teaching spoken interaction may want to include pragmatic elements in lessons.

learners will benefit from familiarity with appropriate L2 SASs. This awareness will allow them to communicate within standard organization patterns that native language users expect, although language learners may not always have the goal of attaining native-like fluency, and the relevance of "native speaker" norms is changing (McKay 2003). However, given the importance of pragmatics, educators teaching spoken interaction may want to include pragmatic elements in lessons. SASs offer a straightforward way of identifying specific areas in need of development and assessing pragmatic output.

SPEECH ACT SETS (SASs)

As noted earlier, an SAS is a group of possible strategies that speakers may employ when performing a speech act. For instance, there is a specific SAS for apologizing, another for requesting, and another for thanking. These SASs include strategic options, linguistic moves, and semantic formulas that allow users to accomplish a given function. They consist of patterns of output in an effort to establish frameworks and options typically employed for specific purposes. As this article relates to EFL learners and teachers in particular, English-based SASs are used; however, SAS patterns may vary by language and culture.

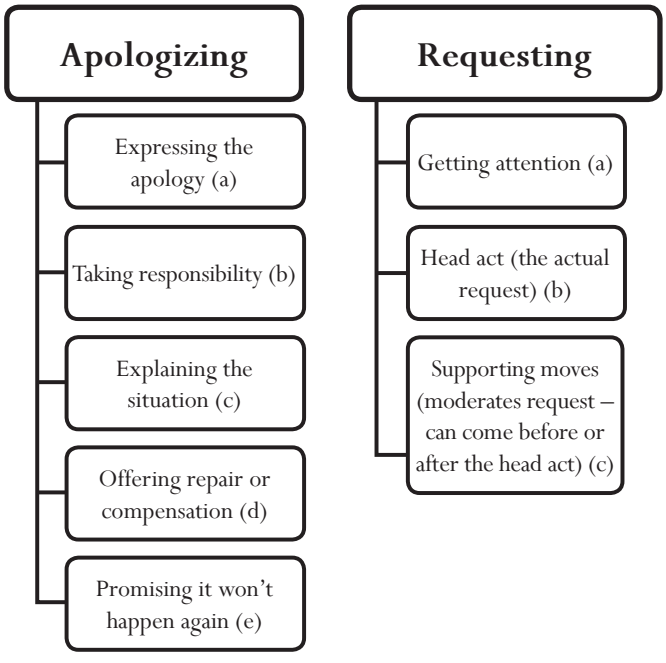

Figure 1. Speech act sets for apologizing and requesting

The linguistic moves for two SASs displayed in Figure 1—apologizing and requesting—are based on Ishihara and Cohen (2010) and the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (2015). (Note: Letters in parentheses are referred to in the analysis and discussion.)

These formulaic groups of pragmatic routines provide language educators with practical, research-based archetypes with which to compare their students' output. Teachers can research the pragmatic routines and conduct needs analyses (Brown 1995) to both inform their instructional decisions and elucidate the pragmatic evolution of learners. For example, a small-scale research project I conducted with Japanese EFL learners revealed where to focus attention on their pragmatic speaking ability. For the study, learners responded to situational prompts to apologize to a friend and request a ride from someone. Based on findings from that study, I identified certain linguistic and strategic options that were missing from student responses and used that data to incorporate speaking activities that targeted pragmatic competence.

Similar activities are presented in Table 1 (apology output) and Table 2 (request output). Potential teaching points and pedagogic options for the classroom follow each table. Lowercase letters after each step correspond to the SASs depicted in Figure 1.

Example A: I'm sorry I forget my note at my house (a). If we have time for project mm, ah, meeting, I'm sorry I come back to my house (possibly d).	**Example B:** I'm so sorry I left my note in my house (a). If you have time today, I can I back to my house and bring my note? (d) Or if you don't have time, can I change meeting schedule? (d)
Example C: I'm sorry I forget my notes (a), so could you take me some notes?	**Example D:** Ah, I forget my notebook. Sorry (a), ah please give me just a moment, so I go back to ah, classroom last classroom, classroom to get, to get to bring the my notes (d). I'll be back soon.

Table 1. Students' apology speech samples

APOLOGY SCENARIO

The students' pragmatic ability to apologize is depicted in Table 1. According to the scenario, the speaker must apologize to a classmate because the speaker forgot to bring a notebook to a study session. Here is the prompt (adapted from Taguchi 2014):

> *Apology scenario:* You and your friend, Jessica, are working on a class project together. You meet Jessica at a school cafeteria to talk about the project. You forgot to bring the notes that you promised to bring to the meeting. What do you say to Jessica?

PRAGMATIC ACTIVITIES BASED ON STUDENT APOLOGIES

When examining student responses, teachers may find a number of relevant teaching points to incorporate in their classes. One straightforward classroom activity is to ask learners to make the necessary grammatical corrections to the output and have them practice the revised response. This activity could be done with stock samples like those in Table 1 or, preferably, with output from the learners themselves. The former option may be easier for classrooms without recording equipment for individual students, but the latter would allow learners to identify and self-correct their own mistakes. Video recordings of student output also provide options for peer- and/or teacher-review. The sample SASs in Figure 1 could be used as checklists for this type of evaluation. Alternatively, teachers could create their own basic evaluation checklists that might include points for "Appropriate Greeting," "Use of Taking Responsibility," "Appropriate Grammar Choices," and so on.

Another teaching point relates to the student's question "can I change meeting schedule?" in Example B. Teachers may wish to introduce grammatical options such as "could I" or "would I possibly be able to" instead of "can I." By adjusting the formality of the situation, which effectively modifies the scenario to a less abrupt apology or elevates the status of the interlocutor, students practice more formal grammar and make the apology more acceptable. Further, teachers can present alternatives for the "so" in "I'm so sorry" (e.g., "very" or "really") and discuss which option is most appropriate under certain circumstances. One may also note that the speaker does not begin the apology with any kind of pre-apology signal, such as "Listen, … " or "You won't believe this, but … ." Teachers can introduce these signals to learners and then encourage their use in subsequent role-play activities.

By comparing these speech samples to the SAS for apologizing, teachers can assess whether learners are effectively accomplishing the desired conversational steps. Another step (offering repair or compensation) is successfully employed in both Examples B and D. However, the other three steps in the apology SAS (i.e., taking responsibility, explaining the situation,

and promising it won't happen again) are not attempted. It could be that the learners were aware of these options and chose not to incorporate them or that they felt the situation did not warrant their use. However, another possibility is that learners were not able to attempt them in English. As such, learners may benefit if teachers focus on the omitted steps in speaking classes. This can be done in a few ways. Teachers can prepare apology scripts that illustrate each of the five SAS steps for apologizing shown in Figure 1, as in the following:

1. *Expressing the apology:* "Listen, I've got some bad news. I'm really sorry, but I got into an accident with your bike, and the frame is broken."

2. *Taking responsibility:* "It was totally my fault. I should have been more careful."

3. *Explaining the situation:* "You see, it was raining, and the road was slippery. I lost control of the bike and I crashed."

4. *Offering repair or compensation:* "Of course, I'll pay to have it replaced."

5. *Promising it won't happen again:* "It'll never happen again."

After teachers cut these speech samples into single strips, the learners mix them up and then reorder. In doing so, they are exposed to alternate options for apologizing that they may not have realized were steps of the apologizing SAS in English. As there is not always a standard order for SASs, teachers can also discuss possible variations and implications of those options. Such an activity helps raise awareness of pragmatic options and targets pragmatic knowledge at a receptive level.

At the productive level, students then create their own apologies based on prompts from the teacher (e.g., "You bumped into an elderly person on the train" or "You spilled coffee on a work computer and have to explain it to your boss"). Building on this type of controlled practice, teachers personalize the activity by asking learners to brainstorm and write down apology scenarios and SASs, which they then exchange with classmates for apology practice. The teacher should ensure that each situation has specific elements (e.g., age, context, past relationship) to help students understand the pragmatic dimensions.

REQUEST SCENARIO

The students' pragmatic ability to make a request is depicted in Table 2. In this scenario, the speaker needs to ask an eight-year-old sibling to turn the TV volume down so the speaker can study. By noting the utterance length, politeness, and sophistication of the request examples in Table 2, teachers can identify appropriate responses. Here is the prompt (adapted from Taguchi 2014):

> *Request scenario:* You are doing homework in your host family's house. Your host brother, Ken, is an eight-year-old boy and you often play with him. He is watching TV, and it is very loud. It distracts you from your study. You want Ken to turn down the volume. What do you say to Ken?

PRAGMATIC ACTIVITIES BASED ON STUDENT REQUESTS

These extracts show that in Example C, the learner omitted the attention getter (a), an element of the SAS that when left out makes the request seem unduly harsh; this indicates that learners should be informed of this important component of the request SAS. In Examples A, B, and D, learners were able to incorporate all three parts of the request SAS—getting attention (a), actual request (b), and supporting moves (c)—though to varying degrees. Example A is very brief and direct. There is a noticeable difference between Examples B and D in terms of supporting moves (c), both before and after the *head act* (b), the actual request. What is more, the opening question of Example B ("What are you watching?") is particularly noteworthy, as the learner is able to strategically and indirectly address Ken and his TV viewing. To

Example A: Ken (a), can you turn down? (b) It's noisy (c). I want to study (c).	**Example B:** Ken (a), what, what are you watching? (c) It's good, ah, so actually, I study, I'm studying (c). I'm doing homework (c), so could you could you turn, turn down volume a little bit? (b) I ah, after that I, when I finish the homework, ah, I want to watch with you (c).
Example C: I'm doing my homework now, but I can't focus on that because TV is noisy (c), so would you turn down the volume? (b)	**Example D:** Eh, Ken (a), I want to study (c). So the room is too loud (c), so could you turn down the TV volume? (b)

Table 2. Students' request speech samples

build on the linguistic and strategic knowledge students have exhibited, teachers may wish to focus on incorporating native-like expressions for the actual request (b), such as "Would you mind … ?" or "Do you think you could … ?"

The use of softeners

Teachers may also wish to focus attention on *softeners*, which make a request more polite and are largely missing from the rather direct responses above. Instead of an abrupt "It's noisy," teachers can introduce softening modifiers such as "a bit," "kind of," or "a little" and encourage learners to incorporate them in role plays. These softeners can also be used in controlled practice in which the teacher makes a direct statement (e.g., "It's chilly in here. Close the window.") that students must soften and make more polite (e.g., "It's a bit chilly in here. Would you mind closing the window?"). After some controlled examples, students work in pairs to create and practice with their own conversations, including both a less formal and a more formal version. Pairs then exchange dialogues and practice with their classmates' original materials. Feedback from the teacher and other students helps learners refine their linguistic choices.

A range of interlocutors

Another lesson is to ensure that learners are able to make a request to a range of interlocutors by adjusting age, position, and social status in role plays. For practice in the classroom, the teacher creates a list of people and writes it on the board as follows: Person 1 = an elderly man; Person 2 = a woman in a business suit; Person 3 = a boy younger than you, etc. The teacher also writes a scenario on the board; for example, "You have your hands full of shopping bags. You drop one and can't pick it up by yourself. Ask (another person) to help you." In pairs or small groups, students then roll a die or choose a number to determine which person they will talk to. Depending on which person they are asking for help, their output should be altered accordingly. The teacher may need to demonstrate. For example, a response to Person 1, "an elderly man," might be, "Excuse me, sir. Sorry to trouble you. Would you be able to pick up my bag for me?" For Person 3, "a boy younger than you," it might be, "Hey, can you do me a favor and hand me that bag?" The teacher and other students provide feedback on strategic and linguistic choices.

After some controlled examples, students work in pairs to create and practice with their own conversations, including both a less formal and a more formal version.

Pragmatic appropriateness

Another classroom activity is for teachers to engage students in discussions about pragmatic appropriateness, which hinges largely on the person being addressed (requesting something from a close friend or a new classmate), the situation at hand (requesting a ten-minute car ride or a two-hour car ride), time constraints (asking an employer for a letter of reference with a three-day deadline or with a one-month deadline), and so on. Question prompts may include the following:

- How might your approach change depending on the person you are speaking to?
- In what type of situation might you use _____ (a given strategy or utterance)?

Teachers can provide any related feedback or suggestions.

ADDITIONAL SPEECH ACTS

The previous paragraphs have demonstrated how a needs analysis can inform pragmatic speaking instruction for language classrooms using the SASs for apologies and requests. The same approach can be used with other language functions, such as these:

- *Complimenting:* You are taking an American literature class. A good friend of yours, Kathy, has made an excellent presentation in class today. After class, you want to compliment her on her performance.
- *Inviting:* You are interested in trying a new Italian restaurant that opened near your campus. You know your friend Andy likes Italian food, too. Invite him to the restaurant.
- *Thanking:* Your bicycle had a flat tire, and you could not ride home after school. It would have taken you one hour to walk. Your teacher gave you a ride, along with your bicycle, back to your house. Thank your teacher.

The specific activities described earlier can be adapted and used in relation to these speech acts as well. The staples of adjusting interlocutor factors, introducing a range of sentence stems, and practicing softening or intensifying language can be applied to these and other language functions.

ADDING BACKGROUND TO ROLE PLAYS

One obstacle to pragmatic practice in language classrooms is the important element of previous experience and personal history. When learners role-play scenarios in class, the relevance and stakes that are involved in a real-life situation are absent. As such, it can sometimes be challenging for learners to adopt a role and ask a friend to borrow money, for instance, because they are not able to draw on or refer to any previous relationship between them and their "friend." If teachers notice a lack of contextual information becoming a hindrance, they could either supply extra information in the role-play setup or encourage students to imagine the background.

Another solution is to use pictures (for example, from magazines or the Internet) to illustrate who the interlocutors are. Visual images stimulate learners' schema and make the interaction more interesting. From a stack of pictures face down, students select their own "character" prior to role-playing, thereby adding an element of spontaneity to the conversation. By augmenting role plays in such ways, teachers increase awareness and encourage discussion about how past interactions, relationships, and first impressions affect how we strategize and say things to people.

CONCLUSION

This article has suggested a number of classroom activities that can be incorporated into speaking lessons to target pragmatic development and prepare students to interact with a range of interlocutors and within varying contextual factors. As illustrated above,

using SAS analysis of language functions such as apologizing and requesting informs pragmatic speaking instruction, ensuring that teachers are identifying and targeting areas their students have not yet acquired, an approach to curriculum planning that aligns with needs analysis principles (Brown 1995). When patterns of general student performance are identified, such analysis provides empirical data from which to identify students' pragmatic needs, a course of action preferable to relying on intuition. Once underdeveloped linguistic and strategic areas are identified, they can be used to develop exercises in the EFL classroom. In cases where individual student output varies noticeably, teachers may tailor instruction to meet specific student needs, either by making the content more challenging or by emphasizing SAS steps that students may be unaware of or underutilizing.

This type of informed instruction lets students know what their options are in various situations, so that they can communicate and express themselves in the manner they intend rather than being vulnerable to undeserved consequences due to low pragmatic speaking ability. Through informed teaching practices, learners will expand their range of pragmatic choice and then exercise that range to achieve intended interpersonal effects, thereby addressing two cornerstones of pragmatic ability.

Teachers interested in addressing pragmatics in their classrooms may wish to consult the following websites for additional lesson ideas and resources:

- americanenglish.state.gov/resources/teaching-pragmatics (includes practical classroom-based lesson plans for pragmatics)
- www.ello.uos.de/field.php/Pragmatics/Exercises (has sections targeting various types of pragmatic competence, including speech acts, politeness, and conversation structure)
- www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/index.html (includes descriptions, examples, and background reading on several speech acts)

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This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 2677020.

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Publish, Don't Perish: Ten Tips

Going public with our research is an important part of the research process. Besides the intrinsic value of sharing our experience and our insights with a community of peers, in higher education, publishing is vital for job security and promotion. Despite these forces encouraging us to publish, few academics actually do.

Reports from all over the world reveal that the publication rate among scholars is low. Academics in South Africa and Australia, for example, publish an average of 0.4 articles per year (Gevers 2006; McGrail, Rickard, and Jones 2006). The importance of publication compared to the relatively small numbers of teachers and scholars who publish, however, is an issue not only for tenure-track professors at universities; kindergarten through twelfth-grade (K–12) teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL), EFL administrators, and TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) professionals have experience and ideas that could be more broadly shared in outlets from newsletters to academic research journals.

Researchers have identified a number of explanations for why publication rates are so low, including time constraints, inadequate skills, and lack of institutional support. Among academics for whom English is an additional language, the challenges of writing for publication are even more complex (Benfield and Feak 2006; Uzuner 2008). English as an additional language (EAL) students and academics face difficulties because of unfamiliarity with genre patterns and the structure of articles in English journals that are generated in cultural contexts different from their own (Hyland 2003). EAL scholars must learn the unwritten "rules of the [publishing] game" as it is played in academic journals of the English-speaking world (Gosden 1992, 136).

The purpose of this article is to provide an introduction to identifying the hidden rules and explicating the sometimes intimidating world of publishing. It focuses on the journal article genre, but the insights and advice are useful for teachers and scholars both inside and outside the university. For example, K–12 teachers who wish to share lessons from their classroom experience or EFL administrators who want to publish their observations and practical solutions will find helpful suggestions. The article presents a tool for teaching about publishing in a way that can benefit teachers and scholars who are interested in getting their ideas into print. It will assist younger academics who have never published before and will serve as a refresher course for senior academics who have already published. The article begins with an overview of the literature on obstacles to writing that academics face. We then offer ten practical tips for overcoming these barriers in order to get articles published.

WHAT GETS IN OUR WAY?

Many obstacles to writing and publishing have been identified, including the difficulty of scheduling time for writing within a busy schedule, internal critics, and perfectionism

(Kwan 2008; McGrail, Rickard, and Jones 2006). Most research finds that additional responsibilities of teaching and administration are the most formidable barriers to writing (McInnis 1999; Milem, Berger, and Dey 2000). Boice (1990) is one of those who found that lack of time due to these responsibilities gets in the way of writing; however, Boice also discovered that nearly all academics, even those with heavy teaching loads, have a 15- to 60-minute block of time available per day for writing. But how many of these time slots have we all spent on other time-devouring tasks such as posting on Facebook, checking email, or reading the news instead of writing (Narcisse 2014)? Boice (1990) found that most academics do not write in these smaller blocks of time because they believe that writing can be accomplished only in large chunks of two hours or so. Boice argues that this belief is not valid and that if we wish to increase our writing, we must understand that even busy weeks in the semester contain short periods of time that when added together can produce a significant amount of writing. Identifying these small blocks of time and using them to write rather than spending them on less critical activities is our challenge.

Internal critics and fear of failure also erect barriers that prevent writing (Lee and Boud 2003). Negative thoughts about our writing capability can block our confidence. Our internal editors can prematurely shut down thinking, resulting in staring at a blank page, unable to begin. Perfectionism is a related factor. Perfectionists want to be seen as brilliant writers churning out solid papers without any mistakes. Perfection may be our goal, but it is not a hallmark of the process of writing that gets us to that goal (Boice 1990).

FROM THE PERIPHERY

People for whom English is a second language face all the barriers to writing articles for publication mentioned above, but their experience is further complicated by a number of additional factors. Not only are many academics in the periphery writing in a second language, they also face other serious issues such as lack of resources and difficulties accessing scholarly networks.

Studies from Sri Lanka, Mexico, and South Africa have described the challenges experienced by scholars from countries of the Global South (Canagarajah 2003; Hanauer and Englander 2011; Kapp, Albertyn, and Frick 2011). Canagarajah (2003) provides a particularly vivid description of the hurdles he encountered when trying to conduct and publish his research on education from Sri Lanka. Foremost, he could not interview his students as he had planned because his university abruptly closed due to internal fighting between rebel groups. Canagarajah also describes the difficulties he faced in trying to engage with his disciplinary community, which he believed had little interest in publishing. He asserts that his isolation caused him to be unable to learn the unwritten rules of academic publishing, such as the importance of targeting particular journals depending on one's research. In addition, he outlines the hidden rules in the process of submitting and revising articles for journals and being cognizant of the character of the current discourse within the journal and among its readers.

Besides feeling isolated and lacking a writing and publishing community, Canagarajah (2003) had few material resources at his disposal. Having access to only a handful of journals meant he could not compose a well-informed introduction or literature review. Canagarajah was therefore unable to follow a fundamental step specified by Swales and Feak (1994)—establish a research territory that shows knowledge of the latest scholarship and indicate a potential gap that the work addresses.

Based on reading reflections by scholars such as Canagarajah, our interactions with lecturers in Namibia who were seeking to boost their publishing records, and our own successes and mistakes in publishing, we developed ideas about how to identify barriers to publication

and how to address them. Eventually we created a list of our top ten steps for writing and publishing. The strategies draw on semester-long writing workshops that the first author facilitated for academics in Namibia in 2013 and 2014 as well as the literature on publishing journal articles (Belcher 2009; Boice 1990; Goodson 2013). Much has been written about various barriers and solutions to publishing. This article consolidates those insights and advice in a presentation that is useful for those who are teaching others how to write and publish. For you and those you teach, the objective of these ten steps is for you to send your article off and get published or for you to help others get their work published.

STEP 1: MAKE DAILY TIME FOR WRITING AND RECORD IT ON A WRITING CALENDAR.

Since procrastination is a common obstacle in writing, we suggest that you start by writing regularly, in small amounts. Strive to spend 20 minutes a day writing, five days a week. Once you have made it into a daily habit, you can increase the time to 30 or 40 minutes per session. It is also helpful to set realistic and specific deadlines to accomplish your writing goals (Morss and Murray 2001). For example, "By the end of this week, I will draft a detailed outline of the paper." "By the third week, I will read and summarize five articles." "By the sixth week, I will _____."

In addition to making daily time for writing, record your writing sessions on a calendar—a grid that lists the days of the week above seven columns and lists the hours of the day to the left of those columns, with one row for each hour of the day from the hour you get up until the hour you go to bed. On the grid, put an X during the times that you will be sleeping, teaching, going to work, taking your children to school, and other times when you cannot write. Plan for the times during the week when you *can* write. At the end of each writing session, record what you accomplished and how much time you spent writing (Belcher 2009; Goodson 2013).

Now you have a writing plan; however, sometimes the best plans do not materialize. If you can predict those things that get in the way of your writing, you can meet them head-on. Consider the following three common obstacles and some possible strategies to overcome them (Belcher 2009):

- *Preparing for classes takes up all my time.* Juggling the teaching of classes, conducting research, and providing service to your school or university is a difficult balancing act. In addition, many first- and second-year teachers or faculty members tend to overprepare for lessons and lectures—rewriting and rethinking the presentation in ways that do not add much to the final product but use up a lot of time. One solution might be to restrict the amount of time that you spend preparing for lectures. In addition, plan to have your writing session *before* your teaching preparation time. Write for 30 minutes and afterwards organize your lesson. Then you will be able to get some writing in during a busy day of classes (Belcher 2009).

- *I will write just as soon as I _____.* Do you ever hear yourself saying, "I will get to my writing just as soon as the semester has ended, when I finish grading these tests, when summer vacation begins"? A year passes, and you notice no writing has taken place. We have experienced this procrastination ourselves! One strategy to prevent procrastination is to start small. Make your 20-minute writing session a habit, like flossing your teeth. Before long, the writing session will become a natural part of your daily work routine. Remember, we do not need a large chunk of time of two hours to write. We need to write a little bit every day (Belcher 2009).

- *I have to read just one more book.* Many of us get caught up with online scavenger hunts for the perfect article and then read for months without completing any writing. Doctoral candidates, for example, have

been found to spend a large amount of time reading while delaying the writing for the last stage of their dissertation (Kwan 2008). One solution to this problem is to read and write at the same time. Read an article and then write a one-paragraph summary. Then read a second article and write a one-paragraph summary. When you read, look for the article's argument. The argument is the article's single significant idea. Start your summary with, "This article argues that … " (Belcher 2009). Reading and writing together in this way helps to synthesize the work, and it produces a written product that can be transferred to those blank pages when you begin to write a draft of the article.

STEP 2: MAKE YOUR WRITING SOCIAL.

From the beginning to the end of the research process, talk with colleagues, advisors, or friends about why you are conducting the research and what you are learning. Their comments and questions may help you develop your ideas. We should aim to think of writing as social—sharing it with others in order to receive additional ideas and better direction. Perhaps ask a senior or more experienced colleague to co-write an article with you. Find a writing partner and meet weekly to share successes and challenges and to get feedback on your topic and written drafts. Regular meetings act as motivators, and receiving and using feedback is a critical step in becoming a good writer (Belcher 2009; Goodson 2013).

The value and necessity of building a community in which to do our writing was the main discovery we made in our research of semester-long writing workshops in Namibia. When we asked participants what they found most helpful about the 12-week workshops, they described the building of a community of scholars at their institution and the camaraderie they gained from the experience as essential to continuing their work as teachers, researchers, and writers.

Talking through the difficulties of writing with our partner can help us overcome some of the problems associated with procrastination and perfectionism. Remember, even the best writers in the world do not write a perfect paper the first (or often even the tenth) time. Even the best writers in the world at times experience procrastination and anxiety, and even they need to edit and revise numerous times before they have a paper ready to submit for publication. Maintaining the energy and motivation to do this work is greatly enhanced by interaction with others who share the experience.

Now you have a plan to write, you have scheduled your sessions on your daily calendar, and you are meeting weekly with your writing partner. How do you write an academic article and get it published? This brings us to Step 3.

STEP 3: CONDUCT A GENRE ANALYSIS OF WELL-WRITTEN ARTICLES IN YOUR FIELD.

Genre analysis of texts focuses on the way language is used to create meaning (Cope and Kalantzis 1993). In the journal article genre, scholarly language is used to create meaning, particularly in the Introduction section (see Step 6). One technique used to guide academic writing is "rhetorical consciousness raising" (Hyland 2007, 154)—directing learners to discover genre characteristics and patterns of texts and using this understanding in writing their own texts (Kuteeva 2013). In other words, carefully examine how academic articles are put together. Study and discuss the structure, language use, and specific sections including abstracts, introductions, and conclusions (Cope and Kalantzis 1993; Samraj 2002). Then look to see where you can make revisions to your article (Cargill and O'Connor 2006).

The following advice is focused on one genre, that of academic journals. The principle of identifying the genre of the publication for which you want to write, however, is true for any genre. Before you

write, think about what you have read in the newsletter or magazine to which you plan to submit your article. What articles did you find interesting? What kind of language did they use? What sorts of examples did they provide? What audience was implied by the way each article was written?

STEP 4: CHOOSE THE RIGHT JOURNAL AND THOROUGHLY UNDERSTAND THAT JOURNAL.

Choosing the right journal for submission is one of the most important decisions throughout the writing and publication process (Belcher 2009). Some successful academics do not begin writing an article until they have chosen a journal for submission. Only after they have observed what kinds of topics, evidence, and perspectives are currently part of the journal's offerings do they begin to frame their own work for submission (Silverman and Collins 1975).

Once you select a journal, try to gain a thorough understanding of the type of articles the journal tends to publish, especially the articles that are currently being published. After all, journals are not just random collections of papers. They reflect the views and interests of the current editors and their audience. Your article should not only fit within the journal's framework, it should also describe how it fits in the context of articles previously published in that journal relating to your topic (Belcher 2009). For example, *English Teaching Forum* is a journal that publishes articles on

> principles and methods of language teaching; activities and techniques for teaching the language skills and subskills; classroom-based studies and action research; needs analysis, curriculum and syllabus design; assessment, testing, and evaluation; teacher training and development; materials writing; and English for Specific Purposes. (americanenglish.state.gov/submission-guidelines)

English Teaching Forum emphasizes practicality and seeks articles that can be clearly implemented in the English language classroom. In addition, articles submitted to *English Teaching Forum* should be applicable to readers worldwide, rather than presenting an issue that is country specific. In order to decide whether to submit to *English Teaching Forum*, you would need to consider how well your article fits the focus of the journal. Even the most eloquent and creative manuscript will not be accepted if it is outside the parameters of the journal you have chosen.

STEP 5: STATE YOUR ARGUMENT EARLY AND CLEARLY.

Create a clear, coherent argument and include it early in the paper. In a quick survey of *TESOL Quarterly*, for example, we found that authors typically present their argument in the first page or two; see, for example, Lam (2015) and Nelson and Appleby (2015). *TESOL Quarterly* authors announce, in the beginning, where they will take the reader with the article. *TESOL Quarterly* is not unique in this regard (see also *ELT Journal* and *TESOL Journal*). All publications have limited space, and most readers have limited time. Authors must be quick to make their point in order to fit into these constraints.

STEP 6: ACKNOWLEDGE AND ENTER THE CONVERSATION.

Writing and publishing journal articles resembles an ongoing conversation about significant issues in a field. Before joining the conversation, authors must acknowledge those teachers and academics who are already participating in the conversation. When we fail to acknowledge the scholarly conversation regarding relevant literature, the editor may conclude we have not been reading the latest scholarship, a faux pas in research and writing (Belcher 2009; Worsham 2008). Consider this analogy:

> If you imagine your article as entering into a conversation, it makes perfect sense

> that you wouldn't just walk into a room and start talking about your own ideas. If there were people already in the room, you would listen to them for a while first. If you decided to speak, you would do so because you agreed or disagreed with something someone else said. If the conversation went on for a long time without addressing some topic dear to you, you might say, 'I notice that we haven't talked about such and such yet.' In all cases, you would acknowledge the conversation and then make your point. (Belcher 2009, 150–151)

We enter the conversation by informing our readers where the article is situated in previous literature on the topic. In practical terms, include three "language moves" in your Introduction, as presented by Swales (1990). (See also Miller and Parker 2012.) These moves can take the form of a few sentences or a few paragraphs.

Move 1: Establish a research territory.

- What is the broad topic? What is the problem or the issue?
- Review and acknowledge the work of others (mention what has been done before in relation to your topic).
- An example of a statement that establishes the research territory is, "Much has been written about _____" (Miller and Parker 2012, 21).
- You might also say, "Several studies have explored the issue of _____" (and cite those studies).

Move 2: Establish a niche.

Here is where we indicate a gap in the relevant literature.

- Sample statements: "No studies have looked at _____." "Over the past ten years, several studies have focused on _____ (and cite those studies) while neglecting the issue of _____."
- Instead of indicating a gap in the literature, you may want to raise a need: "Further investigations are needed to confirm _____" (Swales 1990).
- Alternatively, you might address a contradiction in the relevant literature, question a policy or practice, or extend previous research (Belcher 2009).

Move 3: Occupy the niche.

Explain how you will fill that gap or need and state the purpose of your research. Tell the reader exactly what you are going to do, as in the following examples:

- "The article begins with _____. It continues with _____. And it concludes with _____" (Chinnery 2014, 2).
- "Our intent in writing this article is to _____" (Salas et al. 2013, 13).

Additional information to include in the Introduction is the "what," "where," "why," "who," and "how" regarding your academic research or classroom action research. Describe the context, place, and/or population that was studied. The Introduction should start with general information on the broad topic and then become more specific as it relates to your case study. Start with an attention-grabbing first sentence or a thought-provoking question. Consider these strong starter sentences in articles recently published in *TESOL Quarterly*:

- "Over the past decade, military spending worldwide has more than doubled, to an astounding US$1.75 trillion in 2012 … " (Nelson and Appleby 2015, 309).
- "Over the last two decades the redirection of migration flows has caused Latino population growth of unprecedented proportions to new immigrant communities in the United States" (Colomer 2015, 393).

See also articles in *ELT Journal* and *TESOL Journal* for examples of strong starter statements.

STEP 7: ARTICULATE ORIGINALITY.

"Tell me something I don't know so I can understand better what I do know" (Booth, Colomb, and Williams 1995, 18). It is a fundamental rule that articles submitted to academic journals must contribute something new to the field. But all publications seek new ideas and new ways of thinking about old ideas. Tell the reader what is unique about your perspective, principles, methods, or techniques. What is different about your work? What will readers find out that they did not already know, or how will it make them think differently about something with which they are familiar? How does the article contribute in important ways to our knowledge? If you are unsure of the uniqueness of your ideas, ask colleagues or advisors what they think is new about your article.

STEP 8: MAKE YOUR THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK CLEAR.

The theoretical framework is the theory or theories you apply to discuss your topic. A theoretical framework is important in most peer-reviewed journals, but theory is not necessarily *required* for all publications. Be sure you know whether this is an essential factor for the journal to which you are submitting your work. If the journal requires or emphasizes the importance of the theoretical analysis, you will need to articulate which approach you are using and why. For example, Samuels (2013) presents humanistic theory in his article; Zhang and Gao (2014) discuss input hypothesis in second language acquisition as their framework; and MacDuff, AlHayki, and Linse (2010) apply scaffolding theory and constructivist theory of proximal development to promote learner confidence in writing. Other major theories in English language teaching include linguistic theory; critical literacy theory; cultural studies; critical pedagogy; developmental psychology; cognitive learning theory; theory of multiple intelligences; and Bloom's taxonomy of learning domains. Ask your advisor or a colleague for advice on your theoretical approach. In your article, briefly explain how the theory you chose relates to your topic (Goodson 2013).

STEP 9: DO SOME HOMEWORK ON THE PUBLICATION TO WHICH YOU ARE SUBMITTING YOUR ARTICLE.

Before sending your article to an editor, consult the journal's website and review its submission guidelines. Does the journal have length limits for articles? Does the journal use a particular style manual? What is the average time between submission and the editor's decision? Will you receive the editor's decision in three, six, or twelve months? The answers to these questions may affect your decision about which journal to choose. An important caveat to remember is that you can submit to only one journal at a time. No academic journal will consider a manuscript that is submitted to another journal at the same time. When you submit your article, tell the editor that you are not submitting your article to another journal.

STEP 10: HAVE PATIENCE AND PERSISTENCE!

Submitting an article for publication and receiving a rejection go hand in hand. The authors of this article have received many rejections, although we have also had many acceptances and publications. The most famous writers in the world received *harsh* rejections—such authors include Judy Blume, William Golding, Jack Kerouac, James Joyce, J. D. Salinger, D. H. Lawrence, and J. K. Rowling (Vincent 2012). If your article is rejected, you will typically receive about four sets of comments: one from the editor and three or four from reviewers. The purpose of these comments and suggestions is to explain why your article is not a fit for that journal and to improve your article. Based on the comments, revise your manuscript and send it to another journal that you think is a good fit for your article. Keep submitting the article to different journals, one at a time, until you find a journal that will accept it.

Alternatively, you may receive a "revise and resubmit" decision with specific recommendations on ways you must revise. It may seem overwhelming to be instructed to revise your article for the one hundredth time, but a revise and resubmit decision is a great response. The paper has not been rejected, and in fact it is nearly unheard of for a journal to publish an article "as is." A revise and resubmit decision gives you one more chance to revise and improve your article. Try to follow as many of the suggestions as you can and then submit to the editor when it is ready. In your cover letter accompanying your revised article, outline the changes you have made and the changes you chose not to make with an explanation of your rationale for rejecting any suggestions. When you change the article based on the reviewers' suggestions and resubmit, there is a good chance that it will get published.

CONCLUSION

For teachers and administrators in the field of English language teaching, getting published is not easy, but it is possible. One starting place can be your local TESOL association newsletter. Develop your ideas with your colleagues and attend workshops to gain knowledge. As you read more and become more familiar with TESOL journals, consider submitting your piece to an academic journal. The first author of this article, for example, was first published in a local women's magazine in 1998. She wrote about her experience as a tourist in Nepal. Ten years later, she had published a book and journal articles.

Getting published in a TESOL association newsletter or in an academic journal is personally and professionally rewarding. The knowledge that you gain about your topic through the writing and publishing process can be shared and developed with aspiring writers in staff meetings, teaching/learning workshops, and even TESOL conferences. This collaborative and supportive approach is essential in the sometimes intimidating world of publishing. Now, let's get back to our writing!

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READER'S GUIDE

This guide is designed to enrich your reading of the articles in this issue. You may choose to read them on your own, taking notes or jotting down answers to the discussion questions below. Or you may use the guide to explore the articles with colleagues.

For example, many teachers discuss *Forum* at regularly scheduled meetings with department colleagues and members of teachers' groups, or in teacher-training courses and workshops. Often, teachers choose an article for their group to read before the meeting or class, then discuss that article when they meet. Teachers have found it helpful to take notes on articles or write a response to an article and bring that response to share in a discussion group. Another idea is for teachers to try a selected activity or technique described in one of the articles, then report back to the group on their experiences and discuss positives, negatives, and possible adaptations for their teaching context.

The Pragmatics of Greetings: Teaching Speech Acts in the EFL Classroom (Pages 2–11)

Pre-Reading

1. Have you heard of pragmatics before? What does it mean? What are some examples of pragmatics when using English?

2. What might be some examples of pragmatic "mistakes"? Can you think of a verbal or nonverbal pragmatic mistake you have made when speaking English or your native language? If you were in the same situation again, what, if anything, would you do or say differently?

Post-Reading

1. Think of the standard greetings (verbal and nonverbal) in your native language. How are they similar to or different from the greetings discussed in this article? Would your students potentially make mistakes with any of these greetings in English? Which techniques from this article would you use to help your students make these greetings in English?

2. In the section called "Task 3: Using discourse completion tasks (DCTs)," the author provides several situations that can prompt students to practice English in various social contexts. Can you think of other situations, perhaps at your school, that would work well for discourse completion tasks? Try writing some and using them with your students.

3. The author recommends asking students to keep greeting journals. Before you do that, try keeping a greeting journal yourself for a week. What does keeping the journal help you notice? What might you tell your students about your experience before you give the greeting-journal assignment to them?

Pragmatic Activities for the Speaking Classroom (Pages 12–19)

Pre-Reading

1. Imagine that you are at a meeting at school. Your supervisor makes an announcement that worries you. What do you say in the meeting? What do you say to a coworker after the meeting? How are the things you say in each situation the same? How are they different?
2. You are going to explain to a friend how to make a special kind of food from your country. Which would be easier, explaining how to make it in your friend's kitchen or explaining over the phone? Why? Which would require more detail and explanation? Why?
3. You need to make a request to a colleague at school. What do you say to get the colleague to agree? How do you say it? Think of things such as words, phrases, idioms and other expressions, and intonation.

Post-Reading

1. Look at the speech act set (SAS) for apologizing in Figure 1 on page 14. Imagine that you borrowed a coworker's book and spilled coffee on it by mistake. How do you apologize? Use the SAS to write an apology.
2. What are some good attention getters for apologizing? For requesting? Write two lists.
3. What is a softener? Why are softeners important? What are some good softeners for apologizing?
4. Look at the SAS for requesting in Figure 1 on page 14. Which parts of it are easiest for your students? Which parts are hardest? Why? How can you help your students learn to make effective requests?

Publish, Don't Perish: Ten Tips (Pages 20–28)

Pre-Reading

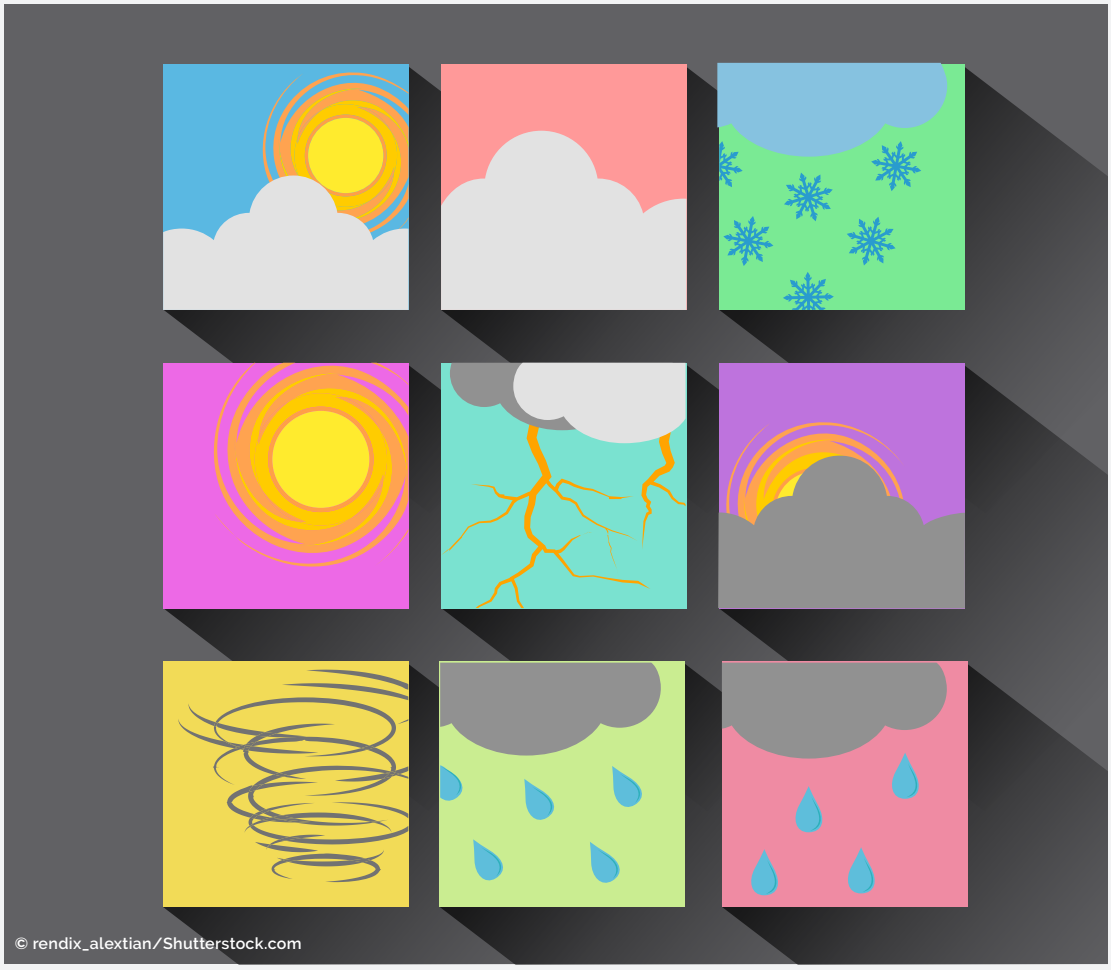
1. What English language teaching journals and publications do you like to read? Why do you like them?
2. Have you ever written an article for publication? If yes, describe your experience in a few sentences. What did you learn from your experience? What would you do differently next time?
3. Do you want to write something for publication? Why or why not? What questions do you have about how to get your ideas published?

Post-Reading

1. Imagine you are going to write an article (or a Teaching Technique) for *English Teaching Forum*. What successful English teaching experience, special knowledge, or expertise do you have to share with other teachers? Brainstorm a list of ideas and topics that you could use in an article. You might check the *English Teaching Forum* submission guidelines (americanenglish.state.gov/submission-guidelines) to help you think of ideas.
2. Are any of the factors discussed in the article holding you back from writing for publication? Which ones? What suggestions in the article can help you move forward?

Physical Vocabulary in the Beginner-Level Classroom

by JONATHAN MAIULLO



After having success with this warm-up activity in my theater classes, I adapted it for my beginner-level English classes, knowing my students would appreciate the opportunity to move around. The activity allows students to create their own physical interpretation of a vocabulary word, which increases their ability to remember it (Asher 1996). I introduce the activity with a class and then use it frequently as a warm-up to review vocabulary. The activity requires little preparation and few materials: just something to play music with and cards for introducing vocabulary terms. Best of all, the activity incorporates movement in a way that is easy for students to understand.

INTRODUCING PHYSICAL VOCABULARY

The entire class walks in a circle throughout the activity. Each student changes the nature of his or her walk (rhythm, gait, pace, etc.) in response to vocabulary prompts.

The activity is best suited to beginner classes in which students are learning basic vocabulary, but both older and younger students enjoy the activity. And, while the activity is easiest to use in classes with fewer than 30 students, it can be adapted to larger classes by having one group walk at a time, with the other groups taking turns calling out the prompts.

Because this type of physical activity may be unusual for some students, allow them to acclimate to using movement in the classroom. I recommend using music. Moving to music comes naturally to most learners. Try to play four or five genres with different tempos; choices can range from somnolent background music to something more energetic, like punk rock or heavy metal. You don't need to play an entire song—just enough to allow the students to react to it. For this activity, lyrics are not important, as students will be responding only to the music.

The Free Music Archive (freemusicarchive.org) has music in nearly every genre imaginable, available for play or download.

PART 1: WALK, LISTEN, AND SHOW

Arrange the desks or chairs in a large circle, or, if the classroom is small, push them to the walls to make space in the middle of the classroom. Keep in mind that the students will have to return to their seats during the class, so the desks should be out of the way but still accessible.

Write the words *walk, listen,* and *show* on the board. Ask the students what *walk* and *listen* mean. If they can't explain, ask them to show each action by pointing to the word *show* on the board. If no one knows these words, demonstrate each of them yourself while repeating the word. To check comprehension, repeat the word and ask students to demonstrate (that is, "show") the meaning. Encourage students to "show" you the word rather than calling out a translation.

After students understand the concept, ask them to form a circle in the middle of the room. Say "Walk," point to the word *walk* on the board, and motion for the students to walk in a circle. Then say "Listen," point to the word *listen*, and play a relaxing song. Now, ask the students to "show." Demonstrate by joining the circle and walking with the rhythm of the music, swaying, using your hands or doing anything you like, but continue to walk in a circle. Encourage the students to do the same. After they have found their rhythm, change the genre of music and encourage the students to move differently. Start from slower selections and move to faster tempos.

While there may be a little embarrassment at first, students should overcome their hesitation when they realize they are moving more as a group responding to the music than as individuals. Adolescents, in particular, may be reluctant to "show" the music. You can deal with this reluctance by asking students a few days before about their favorite music. Usually when they hear familiar selections, they are more inclined to "show" the music.

It is best to limit this activity to around five songs; about 30 seconds per song is sufficient. After students have "shown" you a sufficient variety of music, have them return to their seats.

PART 2: WALK, LISTEN, SHOW, AND SAY

One way to transition to the language function of this activity is by using weather-related adjectives (e.g., *hot, cold, windy, rainy, stormy, snowy*). Introduce these terms by using labeled pictures on cards. (If you are not a great artist, clip pictures out of a magazine and add your own labels.)

With students seated, show them a card, point to the picture, say the word (for example, "cold"), and then point to the word *show* on the board. Show "cold" to students by wrapping your arms around your body and shivering. Say the word while you show it. Present more cards, again saying each word and pantomiming an action; then go back to your card for *cold* and ask the students to show the word. Let them look at the picture and react. They don't have to repeat the word yet. Continue in this way until the students have "shown" all the adjectives.

Return to the board and write *say*. Hold up the *cold* card again, say "Cold," and then point to the word *say* and repeat "Cold." Gesture for students to say it as well. Then point to *show* again and pantomime shivering. Gesture for students to do the same. Start from the beginning with the cards. Go through them one at a time. This time, students say the word and show it. If students forget to "say" or "show," point to those words on the board.

Because one goal of this activity is to allow students to find their own physical understanding of the adjectives, encourage them to show the words in their own way. If you have a particularly expressive class, consider letting them show all the words without help after you provide the first example.

PART 3: BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

After students have demonstrated their understanding, have them return to the middle of the classroom. Point to the word *walk* on the board and pantomime the action so students will know to walk in a circle. Now, instead of playing music, you can hold the cards up and call out each word while pointing to *show* on the board. As students walk in a circle, they must "show" the adjective. Most of them will naturally incorporate this into their walk, but if they are having a difficult time, demonstrate how their walk would adjust to the adjective. If you feel comfortable, give a theatrical performance of someone walking in a frigid blizzard for *cold*, but allow students to interpret the other adjectives on their own. Instruct students to say the words as they show them by pointing to *say* on the board again if necessary. Remember to reorder your cards so you are not reading them in the same order every time.

After students feel comfortable with the activity, you can change the length of the pause between cards so that students have to quickly change the way they are walking. You could also call out two adjectives at once so that the students have to try to show them simultaneously (which is always funny).

CONTINUING PHYSICAL VOCABULARY

Initially, this activity can be limited by students' experience. That is why I recommend starting with the simple weather vocabulary. Students may have never experienced cold weather, but they usually know how to show it. They may not have any idea how to show concepts such as "humid" even if they understand them. In exploring these concepts by relating them to known vocabulary, students find ways to respond to vocabulary that is more complex. *Humid*, for example, could be shown as a combination of *wet* and *hot*, once those terms are understood.

After the initial class, I continue to use this activity as a warm-up to review the previous lesson's vocabulary. If the class learns other weather adjectives, the students find ways to show the new words like *misty* or *icy*.

The activity helps students explore and personalize many beginner vocabulary sets. For example, "feelings" vocabulary sets are also easily shown. The reason I don't start with feelings is that the whole body reacts to weather, but when I have started with feelings, students have had a hard time giving more than facial expressions. For "rooms in the house" vocabulary, students can show what they do in each room, and the same approach can be used for "places around

town." Rather than physically reacting to a command ("Stand up," "Sit down," etc.), students are reacting to their *interpretation* of a concept. As a result, vocabulary sets related to family members, food items, clothing, and even colors can be used (see the suggestions below).

As a warm-up, this activity serves the functions of refreshing students' knowledge of a word and allowing them to have fun interacting with it. Encourage them to interpret each term for themselves when they "show" it. If students feel that they are only copying the teacher or other students, the activity ceases to be enjoyable. As long as students feel free to react personally to the word, they will continue to enjoy the activity.

SELECTED PHYSICAL VOCABULARY TOPICS

1. *Clothing.* Sweaters are heavy; formal clothes are stiff; casual clothes are loose; footwear changes the way students walk (everyone loves showing high heels or a "slippers shuffle"). With less obvious articles of clothing like hats and socks, students can pantomime putting them on or adjusting them.

2. *Family members.* Students usually agree on universals such as mothers hold babies, sons jump around, daughters skip, fathers have a dignified walk, grandparents hobble, and aunts and uncles take on idiosyncratic actions (ask students about their aunts and uncles to discover these characteristics).

3. *Rooms in a house.* This topic is usually appropriate to include after students have learned common action terms such as *eat, sleep, drink, read,* and *watch TV.* Students pantomime each action depending on what they usually do in each room: they watch TV in the living room, eat in the dining room, and sleep in their bedroom. The garage usually suggests a driving pantomime; for basements, students start at full height and "walk downstairs," bending their knees as they go.

4. *Colors.* It is important to have already studied feelings before using colors in this activity because the two are linked. Students determine for themselves how certain colors make them feel. I ask them this and write feelings on the board next to each color in a mind-map cloud. After we have explored the emotional range of each color, students walk and show these colors.

5. *Food.* Students respond to food items usually by showing a pleased or disgusted overall appearance, varying in terms of severity. I introduce the scale of preference (hate, dislike, like, love, etc.) as part of this lesson, and students explore in advance ways of showing varying degrees of preference for food items.

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Give or Take? Test Review in the ESL/EFL Classroom

by AARON DAVID MERMELSTEIN

"Give or Take?" is a fun game that teachers can use to review vocabulary in the English as a second language or foreign language (ESL/EFL) classroom. This game is easy to prepare, and it is a fun and efficient way to review for quizzes or larger midterm or final exams. It can be adapted to almost any grade level or ESL/EFL classroom as long as there are a sufficient number of vocabulary items to review. In my experience, adults love playing this game as much as children do. While this game is not intended for new English language learners (ELLs), it may be used with low- to advanced-level ELLs as long as they have a basic understanding of the vocabulary being used. As with any game of competition, some caution is advised for using this game with young learners or learners with low maturity levels.

The game takes about five minutes to prepare and can last for about 30 to 40 minutes. You will need a whiteboard and pens, a chalkboard and chalk, or a piece of paper big enough to be seen by all the players in the game and pens to write

on it. You will also need one bell or noisemaker for each team, although when I have forgotten my noisemakers, I've substituted old dry-erase marker pens and instructed the students to tap them on the desks to make sounds. For environments with limited resources, recycled paper can be used, and students can raise their hands instead of making a sound.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE GAME

1. Prior to the class, you must have at least 25 to 30 vocabulary words to review, along with their English definitions. Also, you need to create an Answer Key Grid with at least 25 spaces and fill in the spaces with various points to be scored by the students. (See Table 1 for an example.) Each time you play the game, you should create a new Answer Key Grid so that students cannot memorize point locations on the grid. Don't allow students to look at your answer key, but you will need to look at it throughout the game in order to know how many points you should be writing in each grid space. (Note: Right before the game begins, I quickly flash the students the Answer Key Grid so that they know that all the points are predetermined and that I am not helping any teams. I am usually about two to three meters away from the students, so they can't really see any details, but this step is important so that the students trust the teacher and understand that they are in control of the game.)

2. At the beginning of the game, divide the class into two to four groups and instruct students to move their desks and sit together in a circle with their group members.

3. While the students are moving the desks into group circles, create a large Scoring Grid on the board with 25 spaces (see Table 2). Make sure everyone can see it, and write the numbers or names of each group on the left side of the grid where you can write their team scores later.

4. Explain the instructions for how to play the game (see below).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Prepare students to play the game. You might say something like this: "We are going to play a vocabulary review game called 'Give or Take?' I will say the English definitions of vocabulary words, and you will need to tell me the vocabulary word that best matches the definition. I will give each team a bell or noisemaker, and whoever knows the correct answer should make the sound. I will call on the first person who makes the sound, and that person will give the answer. You should not just shout out the answer if you have not been called on; if you do, you might be giving the answer to another team. Besides being the first person to make the sound, there are a few more rules that determine who gets to give the answer."

Then you can go over the following rules.

Rules

1. Only the person who has the bell or noisemaker and makes the sound can give an answer when called upon.

2. One student cannot make the sound and then ask other members of the group to tell him or her the answer.

	A	B	C	D	E	Extra Round	Bonus Round	Final Round	Secret Round
1	300+	100+	100+	200+	400+	500+	700+	900+	1,000+
2	100-	200+	100+	300+	400-	500+	700+	800-	1,000+
3	200-	200-	400-	200+	500+	500-	800+	800-	N/A
4	500-	100+	300+	500+	100+	600-	800-	N/A	N/A
5	300+	100-	600-	100-	600+	600-	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 1. Sample Answer Key Grid, including extra rounds and scores

3. One student cannot make the sound and then pass the noisemaker to another student to answer.

4. If a student makes the sound but does not know the correct answer or does not give an answer at all, the teacher should read the definition again; then anyone on another team can make the sound and try to answer correctly.

5. There is no penalty for a wrong answer.

6. The teacher will not call on the same student to answer all the questions for a group, even if the student knows all the answers.

Note that you want the students to sit close together in their groups so that they can easily pass the noisemakers—not throw them—to others in their group who know the correct answers.

Scoring

Inform the students that the team with the most points at the end of the game wins. Explain that the student who answers correctly will select a space on the grid and have a chance to score points for his or her team. Here, you should give an example so that students understand how the game is played. For instance, you could select space B4 on the grid and then write in a value of 100 points. Next, explain that after you write in the number value, the person who answered correctly will have to choose whether to *give* the points to another team or *take* the points for his or her own team.

Naturally, the students will be curious as to why anyone would want to give points away to another team if the way to win the game is to have the most points. Here is where the game gets more fun and interesting. Write a plus sign and a minus sign next to the 100 points and explain that sometimes the point values are positive, and sometimes they are negative—but that you will write the plus or minus sign only *after* the students have made their selection of whether to give or take the points. So it is important to let students know that sometimes it is good to take the points, but sometimes it is good to give them away. Further, the person who answers correctly can give the points to any other team.

To make the game even more fun, after the student with the correct answer makes the grid space selection and then answers the question, "Give or take?" I ask the student, "Are you sure?" This often causes both concern and laughter. Usually, at some point in the game, many of the other students will join me when I ask this question.

Scoring for the game just involves filling in the points scored next to the team numbers on the left side of the Scoring Grid by either adding or subtracting.

At this point, you can give each team one noisemaker and begin the game.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

1. It may be necessary to provide the students with multiple English definitions and/or use gestures or body

	A	B	C	D	E
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

Table 2. Empty Scoring Grid

language to assist the students, especially with lower-level ELLs.

2. Keep an eye on the time and always be aware of how much time you have left to play the game. You don't want to end the game right in the middle of a question, and it is probably best to let the students know when there are only a few questions remaining in the game so that they can be more strategic in the decisions to give or take.

3. Always provide the correct answer for the students if they do not know it.

EXTENDED PLAY

One of the great benefits of this game is that there can be extended play, as long as there is enough time and an adequate number of vocabulary words to be reviewed. I extend the game to include previously learned vocabulary whenever possible. It is quite simple to extend the game: simply make additions to the original grid. I make each addition separately as a surprise, as this tends to add to the fun and perhaps adds a second or third chance for teams to win the game. I also increase the point values in the grid for extended play. Table 1 includes the extended play grid and some of the names for these extra rounds that I've used. Note that the scoring should always be done on the left side of the game grid so that you may add to the right side of the grid to extend play if time allows.

Another method of extending the play of the game is taking moments here and there to discuss the vocabulary words and definitions or provide real examples that connect these words to the students' lives. Basically, create extra learning opportunities wherever or whenever you can.

TEACHER PLAYER OPTION

One option for playing this game is to include yourself as an additional "team." The intent would be to motivate students to attempt to answer the questions or guess when they are not sure of their answers. The way this option works is to allow the students plenty of time or several opportunities to answer the questions, but if they cannot answer correctly, you can chime in with the correct answer. Since you have previous knowledge of the scores on the grid, the students will select which section of the grid you get, and you must always "take" whatever score is revealed, whether it is positive or negative. It adds to the students' enjoyment of the game when the teacher is given a negative score.

EXTENSION

This game could be used for review of any other content, as long as there are enough questions for the spaces on the grid; I've used this game to review grammar as well. Also, the grid can be reduced to 16 or 20 spaces (i.e., 4 x 4 or 5 x 4 spaces on the grid), but I do not recommend reducing the number of spaces below 16, as the game would be over too quickly.

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MY CLASSROOM CHINA

Yu Huang and Yu Zhu are senior high school English teachers at Hezhang County No. 2 Middle School in the province of Guizhou. In China, most middle schools consist of six grades of students; the first three years are considered junior middle school and the latter three years are commonly referred to as senior middle school (or sometimes senior high school). Both Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu are dedicated to helping their students build interest in the English language inside and outside the classroom.

Yu Zhu (left) and Yu Huang in a hallway at their school

Yu Zhu (far right) and Yu Huang (second from right) collaborate with other teachers in the English office.

They work diligently to increase their students' confidence and give them access to more opportunities. For both of these women, communication and professional development are paramount to forming productive relationships with other teachers and the students—which leads to success in language learning.

Hezhang County, tucked away in the mountains of southwestern China, is a lesser-known, rather isolated part of the country. Although there are high-rise apartments in the town of Hezhang, many students come from farming communities outside of Hezhang's small urban area. "Most of my students are from the countryside," said Ms. Zhu. "Their parents go outside of the county to search for jobs, so the students rent apartments near my school and look after themselves."

Despite the challenges in Hezhang, Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu have both chosen to work in their hometown. With highly qualified teachers flocking to the international metropolises of Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, more rural areas, like Guizhou province, are left with fewer educators. Ms. Huang had the opportunity to teach in her provincial capital city but turned it down in order to make a difference in her local community. "Everybody thought I should grasp the chance to work there, but at last, I chose to come back to No. 2 Middle School because I like the atmosphere here and I am used to the way we communicate with each other, and I have a family here," said Ms. Huang.

Specifically, she has become used to the way of communicating with other teachers, including Ms. Zhu. These two women met at No. 2 Middle School as workmates while grading student exam papers. Their work relationship developed into friendship when they discovered they shared the same passion for bettering themselves as teachers as well as empowering their students. "We found that we had many similarities, so we started to cooperate to improve our students' English," said Ms. Zhu.

Another similarity these two teachers share is their educational background. Both Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu studied English with the initial intention of finding a stable job. Ms. Huang was an English major at Guizhou University in the provincial capital of Guiyang from 2002 to 2006 and had dreams of working for an international company. Ms. Zhu studied at Bijie Normal School from 1999 to 2001. After teaching primary school for three years, she decided to go back for another two years of schooling at Guizhou Normal College in Guiyang from 2004 to 2006. In the end, both women decided that working with students was the perfect way to stay fresh. "Young people always have new ideas, and staying with them can help me keep a young state of mind," said Ms. Huang.

Although it is not unusual to find Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu in the same classroom, it is unusual for Chinese senior high school teachers to co-teach. "We are the first partners in our school. We sometimes give class together," said Ms.

Huang. "I don't know of any other teachers in our school who work together in the same way." In order to provide more opportunities for their students, the two teachers spend an average of four hours per week planning together, co-teaching, assisting each other, and even exchanging classes. "We do not share an office, but we make time to meet together, sometimes at a coffee shop," said Ms. Zhu.

Both Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu teach two or three 40-minute classes per day. Each class has about 70 students, whom they see each day of the week. Although this may appear to be a light schedule, both teachers are responsible for designing curriculum and supervising extracurricular activities in addition to their teaching duties. Their students range in age from 15 to 18 years and come to them with a wide range of abilities. Like most teachers, they face various challenges inside the classroom, in addition to mixed ability levels: large class sizes, lack of student motivation, few resources, and so on. Rather than complain about these problems, Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu seek solutions together. According to Ms. Zhu, "The first time we worked together, we were teaching the same grade, so we usually talked about problems we faced in different classes. We discussed and studied these problems and tried to find a better solution for our students."

In addition to problem-solving together, the two teachers visit each other's classes as co-teachers or as teaching assistants. "If I am trying a new strategy, Ms. Zhu will come to observe me and assist the students as needed," said Ms. Huang. "We also will sometimes exchange classes to give the students a fresh perspective." Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu have discovered that working together benefits them as well as their students. "We learn together and motivate each other," said Ms. Zhu, "and our students find it very interesting to experience these new teaching styles."

To stay abreast of new teaching styles, Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu partake in self-study as well as various teacher trainings. According to Ms. Zhu, "Ms. Huang is devoted to studying methodology and trying innovative concepts. She has inspired me to study hard, too." Both teachers have attended trainings offered by U.S. Department of State English Language Specialists and English Language Fellows. "We attended a five-day training in the summer of 2014 and several shorter trainings in 2015," said Ms. Huang, "where we learned many new strategies." Both teachers agree that these trainings have been an invaluable part of their professional and personal growth as teachers. "If I could make any recommendation to current and future teachers, I would tell them to grasp every opportunity for further study or training," said Ms. Zhu, "and to try their best to learn as much as possible."

Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu work together not only in the office, the classroom, and teacher trainings, but also after school hours with their own English club. They quickly realized that 40 minutes per day was simply not enough to accomplish their teaching goals and satisfy the needs of their students. For this reason, along with several other English teachers, they established the "Magic Life English Club." The name was chosen by the student club members to highlight the power of English and its influence on one's ability to travel, navigate the Internet, and live a life that may have seemed possible only in a fairy tale.

The club was started less than one year ago, but it already has over 120 participants from the middle school attending regularly. Because the club is still in its infancy, the leaders hope that even more of the 3,657 students in their middle school will attend. The club meets at the school once every two weeks for at least an hour and is led by different groups of students each session. Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu are there as organizers and facilitators. "The students enjoy being in control and having the chance to share their knowledge with their peers," said Ms. Huang.

For the two teachers, the English club is also the perfect environment for them to try out new strategies. "We tried the running dictation activity that we had learned about in one of our trainings," said Ms. Zhu. "The students seemed to love it—all the members took part and were interested in the activity." Running dictation is a fast-paced interactive strategy that integrates reading, writing, listening, and

Members of the Magic Life English Club engage in a running dictation activity.

speaking. Typically, students are divided into several teams. Each team has "runners" and "writers." The runners must go to various places around the classroom to read and memorize a small passage, which they will dictate to the writers. The teams compete to complete their passage first and also have the most accurate passage. Ms. Zhu reported, "With so many students in our club, it was difficult to control everyone during this activity." So, it was back to the drawing board with Ms. Huang to problem-solve and find possible remedies.

Another challenge that seems ubiquitous among Chinese teachers of English is getting students to speak more. Students' oral competence is often connected to their confidence and self-image, so overcoming such fears among teenagers is not an easy task. However, Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu persist in addressing this difficulty in creative ways; one such way is through music and singing. Ms. Huang's proudest moment as a teacher was noticing the changes in one of her shiest students. At the beginning of the semester, the student timidly muttered the "ABCs" in front of her peers, but by the end, she confidently sang a multi-verse song for the whole class. Ms. Zhu also likes to use music in her classroom. "I use websites, like www.songlyrics.com or www.lyrster.com, to find song lyrics which are appropriate for the lessons I am teaching," she said.

Problem-solving and creativity go a long way in the classroom; so, too, do relationships. Both teachers emphasize the importance of building strong relationships with their students and colleagues by spending time genuinely getting to know others. For example, Ms. Zhu creates an inventory for all her students to fill out on the first day of class so that she can learn more about them and know how to contact them outside the classroom. She typically asks them about their family members, hobbies, dreams and goals, preferred learning styles and habits, email address, and other social media contact information. Likewise, Ms. Huang spends time before and after class talking to her students one-on-one to understand more about their dreams and desires. "I like to talk with them. First, I will be their friend, and then I will be their teacher next," she said.

Both Ms. Huang and Ms. Zhu want their students to use English as a universal language to communicate and access more information and opportunities. They accomplish this goal by cooperating and by communicating openly with each other, their colleagues, and their students. Most importantly, they recognize the importance of professionalism and continuing education. Ms. Huang recently found out that she has been selected by the Chinese national government to participate in a summer exchange program at Georgetown University later this year. She plans to use this opportunity to strengthen her own skills as a teacher and then share them with others through teacher-training workshops. "My goal for this next year is to spread ideas to other teachers—first teachers in my school, and then in my county. I could be a trainer next year," said Ms. Huang.

Already one teacher is inspired by Ms. Huang's work. "She is my hero," said Ms. Zhu.

This article was written by **Rebekah Gordon**, an English language teacher who is currently serving as a renewing English Language Fellow hosted by Southwest University in Chongqing, China.

Photos courtesy of Yu Huang and Yu Zhu

Luck of the Draw (Pragmatics)

LEVEL: Beginner and Upper Beginner

TIME REQUIRED: 30 minutes, plus time for students to present

GOALS: To practice common greetings; to use appropriate greetings with different community members; to understand when to use informal and formal greetings

MATERIALS: Paper cut into strips (enough strips for each group to have four during the activity), two different colors of pens or markers, two large cups or containers, pencils and paper for students

OVERVIEW: This activity will allow students to practice using greetings by creating a brief skit. Students should be familiar with common greetings and know whether they are considered formal or informal. Students should also understand appropriate register, meaning the use of language that is suitable in particular social situations. Creating a skit can be a useful practice activity for students from varying proficiency levels, especially when addressing pragmatics. The procedures outlined below make the task accessible to beginning-level students, but the variations can offer more advanced students a challenge.

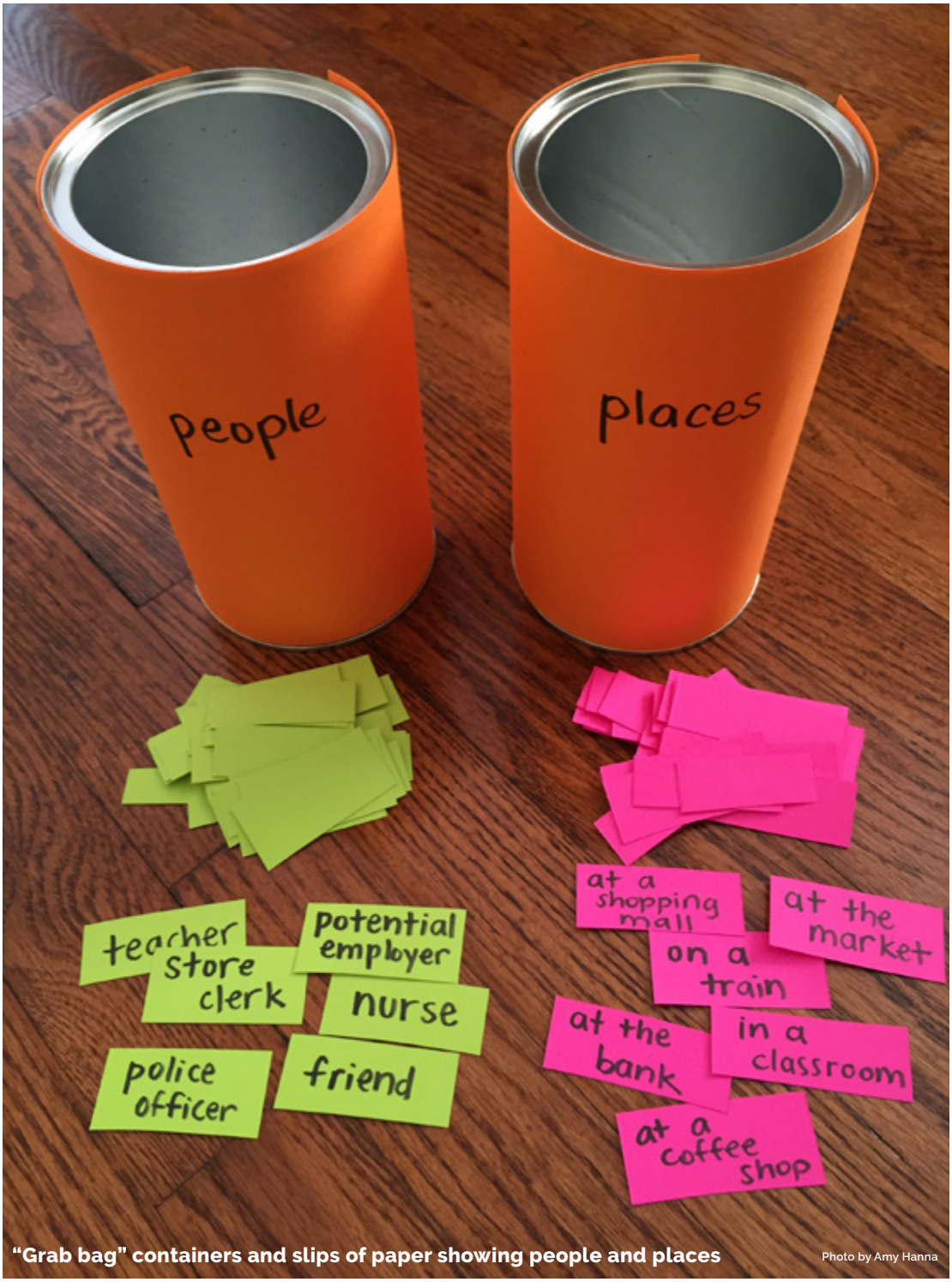
PREPARATION: Find two containers that can be used as "grab bags" for students to draw from. Cut paper into strips, sized so that you can write one word or phrase on each strip. You can use either two different colors of paper or two different colors of markers or pens.

PROCEDURES:

1. Ask students to help you brainstorm a list of formal and informal greetings as a warm-up for the activity. If necessary, remind students of the difference between formal and informal greetings by saying, "Remember that formal greetings are those you would use when speaking to someone older or to an important person in the community such as an elder or a professor. Informal greetings are those you would use with friends or close family members. Think about the different ways you can greet these types of people." If students need assistance, you can start the list by providing an example of each type of greeting, such as "Hey" for informal and "Good afternoon" for formal.

2. Ask students to help you brainstorm a list of people they greet in their everyday interactions. These could be members of their family, friends, people at school, or anyone in their community. As your students provide ideas, list them on the board while a few students copy them onto the strips of paper you have prepared. People from the list should all be written on the same color of paper or in the same color ink. Some people your students might come up with are:

   - mother
   - father
   - sister
   - brother
   - grandmother
   - grandfather
   - aunt



"Grab bag" containers and slips of paper showing people and places Photo by Amy Hanna

- uncle
- friend
- teacher
- store clerk
- restaurant worker
- seller at a market
- taxi or bus driver

3. Ask students to think about people they may not interact with often but that they still have to greet sometimes. Students can also list people they have not interacted with before. One option is to provide one or two examples from the list below and then give students

time to discuss their ideas with a partner or small group before asking the whole class to share. Record these people the same way as in Step 2, by writing them on the board and having a few students copy them on the same color paper or using the same color ink. Ideas for people students greet less frequently are:

- doctor
- nurse
- priest/imam
- dentist
- headmaster or principal
- community elder
- government official
- police officer
- the president or prime minister
- movie star/actor
- popular singer
- famous artist
- religious elder/member of the clergy
- judge
- potential employer
- boss or manager
- work colleague (same rank or higher rank)

Note: Be sure that you create enough slips with types of people on them for your whole class. For the skit, each group will draw three slips from the "grab bag" of people, so you may need to create multiples of some types of people in order to have enough slips. For example, you might have three slips with *judge*, three slips with *grandmother*, etc.

4. After you have created slips for many types of people to greet, ask students to think about the places where these interactions might take place. These can be actual places where students have had interactions or their ideas about made-up situations. The goal is to get your class to come up with a variety of places. Some examples are:

- in your home
- in your neighborhood/village
- on the street
- at a market or store
- in your classroom
- in the hallway or around the school
- at the doctor's office
- at a restaurant
- at a shopping mall
- on a bus or train
- at work
- at the bank
- at a coffee shop
- at the post office
- at a place of worship

Create slips for the places the same way as you did for the people in Steps 2 and 3, but use a different color of paper or different color ink.

5. When all of the ideas about people and places have been written on slips of paper, create two grab bags using the containers. Attach a label to each container, marking one "people" and the other "places." Students can assist you by folding each slip of paper and putting it into the appropriate container.

6. Let your class know that you will show them an example of how the activity will work. Ask for three volunteers to act as your group members for the explanation. Then, choose three slips of paper from the "people" container and one from the "places" container. Write the people and the place on the board so that students can see them.

7. Model a discussion with your group of volunteers. For each of the slips you drew from the "people" container, you will need to decide how the person should be greeted. Ask the class and your group of volunteers questions such as:

- How would I greet this person?
- Can I speak to them the same way I would my friends at school?

- Do I need to speak to them in a different way?

Try to get the class to give you ideas about exactly what greetings they would use for each person. Write these on the board under the names of the people.

8. Once you have discussed each of the people and written some ideas, model how to act out a scenario in the place you chose. Assign each volunteer one of the people drawn from the container and explain that the volunteers will have to act out those roles during the skit. You can even create a sign for the students to wear or hold up, or write each student's name next to his or her role on the board so the class will remember who that person is. Tell the volunteers that you will greet each of them as if you are meeting in the place that you have drawn from the container. For instance, if your place is the market, have the group members act as though they are carrying shopping bags and looking for items to buy. If the place is a coffee shop, students might be waiting in line to order or sitting at a table sipping coffee.

9. Act out a quick version of what the skit should look like by encountering each person individually and greeting him or her appropriately. Each student volunteer should respond by returning your greeting accordingly. They can get ideas from the list of formal and informal greetings on the board from Step 1 if needed. The purpose of this example is to model what students should do in the activity and to remind them to use formal and informal greetings appropriately. Once you have completed your fast example, give students time to ask any questions they may have, and offer any further explanation you think is necessary.

10. Inform students that they will be working in groups of four. You can use any method to group your students, or allow them to choose the classmates they will work with.

11. Tell students: "You will draw slips of paper from each of these containers and then use them to plan your greeting skit. You will choose three people and one place. In your group, you will have to assign one person to play the role of a student your age. The other three group members will act as the people you draw from the container. The skit will take place in the location you pull from the other container."

12. Once the students are in groups of four, they will need to choose their people and their place for the skit from the containers. This is probably easiest if each group selects one representative to go to the front of the classroom to make the selections and then return to the group.

13. When all groups have selected three people and one place, give the following instructions: "Think about the three different people you chose from the container. Your group needs to discuss how you would greet each of these people. Remember to think about exactly what you would say to each person if you met him or her in the place that you chose. Think of what the people would be doing in the location of your skit. Are they shopping, eating a meal, or sitting on the bus? Try to show what is happening in the place you chose. Your group can write ideas on paper if you want to."

14. At this point, circulate around the room and listen to the groups' discussions. Answer any questions students may have, or offer assistance if they need it.

15. Once the groups have had enough time to discuss their ideas for how to greet each person in their skit, you can say: "Now you need to decide who will take on each role in your group. One person will be a student like you. The other three will act as one of the roles you

chose from the container. Then, you need to create your skit. Remember, it should happen in the place you chose from the container, and each person needs to be greeted appropriately."

16. Give students time to plan and rehearse their skits. They can write a script if they find it helpful, or if you want to have a written assignment to use for grading purposes. Otherwise, students can perform the skit from memory. Again, move around the room to help groups that need assistance.

17. Before asking students to present their skits, give them guidelines or questions to think about as they watch the different groups. You can say: "As you watch your classmates present their skits, I want you to think about a few things. This way, when everyone is finished, you can give each other feedback or advice about how you used the greetings. I will write questions on the board for you to think about as you watch each other's skits."

18. Write on the board: *Did you think the greetings you heard were good ones to use with the people in the skit? If yes, why? If no, what greetings would you use?* Explain these questions to students, and model how to give feedback to their classmates by saying: "For example, I watch a skit where someone greets the principal of our school at the market by saying, 'Hey, Principal Rousso, what's up?' I do not think this is the right greeting, so I would tell the group, 'I think that you should use a more formal greeting to say hello to the principal,' and give my idea for something different to say." You can also have students write the questions, give a written response to each one, and then hand in their papers at the end of the activity. Or, you could have students use a checklist (see Extensions) to give the groups feedback on their skits.

19. Once all the groups have had time to plan and practice their skits, they can present them in a variety of ways. Depending on the size of your class, one option is to have each group of students present to the whole classroom. Or, if you have a large class, you can split the class in half and have each group present to its half of the class. Another option would be to pair groups and have them present to each other. Depending on how the groups present their skits and how you ask students to provide feedback, you can monitor the presentations and also participate in the discussions.

VARIATIONS

1. This activity can also be used to give students practice with other kinds of speech acts. Using the same procedures, you can assign your students a skit to practice apologies, introductions, closings, or any other speech acts you have been teaching them. To challenge students even more, create a third "grab bag" container and allow the class to brainstorm additional types of interactions they could use to create their skit. Here are some ideas:

   - apologize
   - give advice
   - make a request
   - ask permission
   - order a meal in a restaurant
   - make introductions
   - make an excuse for being late
   - close a conversation and say good-bye

2. For higher-proficiency students, you can assign the skit without going through the brainstorming (Steps 1–7). Instead, allow students to choose any speech act to use in their skit. Tell students that the goal of the skit is to show how one would interact differently, using the chosen speech act, with people in varying roles and relationships. The groups can choose their own people and place for the skit and even create a detailed scenario. As an added challenge, groups can write down

the people in the skit, the speech act, and a short description of the scenario and then exchange their ideas with another group. Then, groups of students would have to act out the skit according to the guidelines they receive. Here are examples of the types of scenarios students might come up with:

- apologizing to your boss, a coworker, and a client for being late to a meeting
- making an excuse to your classmates, your teacher, and the headmaster for missing a group presentation in class
- inviting a coworker, your boss, and your friend to a dinner party

EXTENSIONS

1. Provide a checklist (as mentioned in Step 18) for students to use to assess and give feedback to their peers. Here is an example that you can write on the board for students to copy and use during the activity.

Names of group members:			
	Yes	No	Suggestions
The greeting used with Person 1 was a good choice.			
The reply from Person 1 was a good choice.			
The greeting used with Person 2 was a good choice.			
The reply from Person 2 was a good choice.			
The greeting used with Person 3 was a good choice.			
The reply from Person 3 was a good choice.			

2. If you want to extend this activity, the feedback students give to each group about their skit can play a bigger role. Groups who received suggestions about how to change their skit can use the feedback to make changes and improve their work. If some groups received only positive feedback, they could choose another set of people and a different place to plan a new skit. Then, all the groups can present again, showing either their improved skit or a new one.

3. This activity also allows for some repetition to give students more opportunities to practice and reinforce their skills. For example, groups could keep the same people in their skit but change the location by drawing a different place from the container. Groups can also repeat the process with a different speech act or a different group of four students from the class.

4. As students learn more ways of interacting, they can continue their skit. Because the original activity focuses on greetings, there are many possibilities for adding to the dialogue. If students work in the same groups, with the same people and place, they can add more speech acts to form a full conversational exchange. For example, after students learn about making introductions, they can practice introducing a friend to each of the individuals in the skit. Of course, this will require that students take on multiple roles by acting as the friend when they are not the person greeting or being greeted. Once students learn different ways to end a conversation and say good-bye, they can continue by adding a closing to the interaction. Any of the speech acts listed above in Variations, or others your students are learning, can be used to continue the skit and give students additional practice with using appropriate register in different situations.

This activity was written by **Amy Hanna**, who has taught ESL to students in primary school, university, and adult education classrooms, trained teachers in TESL methods, and developed materials for English language programs in the United States and abroad.

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Three Pragmatics Puzzles

Each group of words below can be arranged to form two utterances. One utterance is more formal than the other. Fill in each blank with one of the words in the group. Use each word only once.

Here is an example of a request that is more formal, followed by one that is less formal:

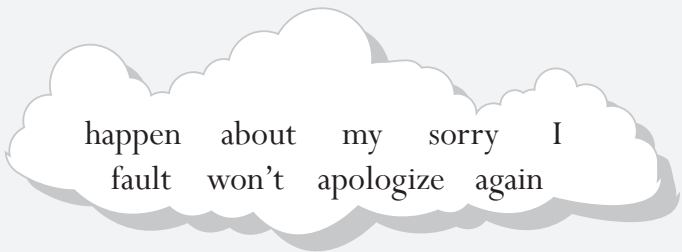
More formal: I'm sorry to trouble you, but would you be able to give me a ride into town?
Less formal: Could you give me a lift?

Now see if you can complete the following greetings (saying hello), apologies (saying sorry), and partings (saying good-bye).

Greetings

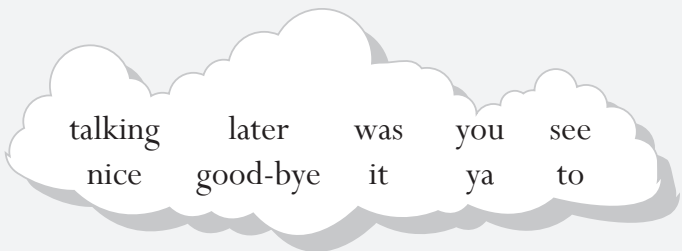
More formal: _____, Ms. Smith. _____ _____ _____ _____?
Less formal: _____, Sam. _____ _____?

Apologies



More formal: _____ _____. It _____ _____ _____.
Less formal: _____ _____ that. _____ _____.

Partings



More formal: _____, Mr. Jones. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____.
Less formal: _____ _____ _____, Charlie!

Answers on page 38

Answers to *The Lighter Side*

Three Pragmatics Puzzles

Greetings
More formal: Hello, Ms. Smith. How are you today?
Less formal: Hi, Sam. What's up?

Apologies
More formal: I apologize. It won't happen again.
Less formal: Sorry about that. My fault.

Partings
More formal: Good-bye, Mr. Jones. It was nice talking to you.
Less formal: See ya later, Charlie!