



## A cross-cultural investigation of the effect of situational context on politeness strategies in greetings of native speakers of English and EFL learners

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### ABSTRACT

As a cross-cultural study, the present study investigates politeness strategies that native English speakers and EFL learners employ for exchanging greetings in different situational contexts. Data includes responses elicited through an open-ended Dramatic Written Discourse Completion Task (DWDCT). In order to control the effect of students' proficiency level, an advanced test of Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to select among 73 senior students of English literature and translation at Isfahan University. Sixty female undergraduate EFL learners with an age range of 21-24 at Isfahan University in Iran and 60 native English learners with an age range of 23-37 studying Medical Laboratory Technology at Dalton State College in Dalton, Georgia, USA participated in the present study. The findings present that EFL learners are not linguistically competent in English greetings in different situations. It also suggests that EFL learners use inappropriate politeness expressions in their English responses, as they do not have the ability to express greetings according to the situational context and native culture. Therefore, it may be necessary to adopt systematic, appropriate and situationally contextualized greetings in the Target Language (TL) in second and foreign language teaching.

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### Introduction

Studying pragmatics helps learners to become more native-like in appropriate use of language in different situations and to build relationships with members of the TL's culture (Trosborg, 1995). Even though pragmatic competence has been recognized as one of the vital components of communicative competence (e.g., Bachman, 1990), there is a lack of a clear and widely accepted definition of pragmatic competence. Barron (2003) claims that pragmatic competence is the knowledge of the linguistic resources available in a given language for realizing particular illocutions, knowledge of the sequential aspects of speech acts, and finally, knowledge of the appropriate contextual use of the particular language's linguistic resources. Kasper (1997) defines it as the ability to comprehend and produce a communicative act which includes the knowledge about the social distance, social status between the interlocutors, the cultural knowledge such as politeness, and the explicit and implicit linguistic knowledge. Research into the pragmatic competence of adult foreign and second language learners has convincingly demonstrated that the pragmatics of learners and native speakers (NSs) is quite different (Kasper, 1997). Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989) state "Even fairly advanced language learners" communicative acts regularly contain pragmatic errors, or deficits, in that they fail to convey or comprehend the intended illocutionary force or politeness value" (p.10).

The present study adopts Kasper 1997 definition of pragmatic competence as they concern comprehension and production of a communicative act which focus on the interlocutors' social distance, social status, and the cultural knowledge of politeness.

### Review of Literature

Politeness is an important principle in the area of pragmatics. According to Mills (2003, p. 6), "Politeness is the expression of the speakers' intention to mitigate face threats carried by certain face threatening acts toward another". Being polite therefore consists of attempting to save face. Politeness theory formulated in 1987 by Brown and Levinson expanded academia's perception of politeness. It states that some speech acts may threaten face needs of the speaker or hearer. Brown and Levinson (1978-1987) distinguish two kinds of face; positive face and negative face. But these terms, positive and negative face can be misleading; instead, Hudson (1996) calls them solidarity-face and power-face to show the close link to the important concepts of power and solidarity. Solidarity-face is respect as in I respect you for..., i.e. the appreciation and approval that speakers show for the kind of person we are, for our values and so on. Power-face is respect as in I respect your right to... which is a negative agreement not to interfere. Therefore there are two kinds of politeness; solidarity-politeness, which shows respect for the addressee and power-politeness, which shows respect for the rights of the addressee.

In addition to politeness, speech acts have been claimed by some to operate by universal pragmatic principles (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969, 1975; Brown & Levinson, 1978). Others have shown they vary in conceptualization and verbalization across cultures and languages (Wong, 1994; Wierzbicka, 1985). Although this debate has been continued more than three decades, only the last 15 years marked a shift from an intuitively based approach to an empirically based one, "which has focused on the perception and production of speech acts by learners of a second or foreign language (in the most cases, English as a

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second or foreign language, i.e., ESL and EFL) at varying stages of language proficiency and in different social interactions" (Cohen, 1996, p. 385). Blum Kulka et al. (1989) argue that there is a strong need to complement theoretical studies of speech acts with empirical studies, based on speech acts produced by native speakers (NSs) of individual languages in strictly defined contexts.

Greeting as a speech act is an important discourse function that learners are likely to encounter in a variety of situations. Eisenstein, Bodman, & Carpenter (1995) stated that greeting is among the first speech acts that are learned by children in their native languages. Dogancay (1990) identifies greetings among the routines explicitly taught to children. Eisenstein et al. (1995) point out that greetings commonly appear in the speech of American English-speaking children between the ages of nine months to eighteen months. Greeting rituals have been found in nearly all cultures (Levinson, 1983) and they are important in developing and maintaining social bonds in all age groups.

Every language has a range of forms to use as greetings and farewells because of social importance of entries and exits (Hudson, 1996). Goffman (1995), the originator of face-work suggests that a greeting is needed to show that the relationship which existed at the end of the last encounter is still unchanged, in spite of the separation, and that a farewell is needed in order to sum up the effect of the encounter upon the relationship and show what the participants may expect of one another when they next meet.

A more general claim made by Goffman (1995) about greeting that is important for people, is to know how they stand in relation to others before they start to talk. Simplified greetings are introduced early in most L2 courses and are often included in texts on cross-cultural communication (Chan, 1991; Jupp & Hodlin 1983; Morgan, 1990). Research shows that greeting is complex, involving a wide range of behaviors and sensitivity to many situational and psychological variables. Greeting is made up of linguistic and non-verbal choices which may include a simple wave or smile, a single utterance or a lengthy speech act set which can involve complex interactional rules and take place over a series of conversational turns. Nevertheless the greeting rituals are critically important and have to be performed in the finest detail if we are to avoid embarrassment, offense or ridicule which should be concerned by learners of a second or foreign language.

Researchers working in the field of sociolinguistics generally look for some extra linguistic factors that may help to identify features of speech characteristic of groups of speakers. It is not surprising that situational context can be one of the factors to examine in sociolinguistic investigations. Widdowson (2007) defined context as situations in which we find ourselves, the actual circumstances of time and place, the here and now of the home, the school, the work place, and so on.

Despite the wealth of empirical studies conducted about speech acts in general, some studies were done focusing on greetings in the different languages such as comparing natives and non-natives greetings by Eisenstein & et al., (1995), universal and culture specific properties of greetings by Duranti (1997), the socio-pragmatics of greeting forms in English and Persia by Salmani-Nodoushan (2007), linguistic politeness and greeting rituals in German-speaking Switzerland by Rash (2008), and the functions and use of greetings by Wei (2010). But few studies have focused on the choice politeness strategy among Persian EFL learners in the speech act of greeting in

different situational and social context. Concerning politeness in general, greetings can be analyzed within the framework of theories of politeness such as Hudson's politeness theory that is power-politeness and solidarity-politeness. In this study, situational context is considered explicitly and specifically as the main variable in manifestation of politeness in greetings. Therefore, the research question and hypotheses of the present study are:

What is the effect of situational context on choice of politeness strategy in EFL learners and native speakers' English?

**H1:** Situational context does not affect EFL learners' choice of politeness strategy in English language.

**H2:** Situational context does not affect native English speakers' choice of politeness strategy in English language.

### **Methodology**

#### **Participants**

In order to control the effect of students' proficiency level, an advanced test of Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to select among 73 senior students of English literature and translation at Isfahan University. Sixty female undergraduate EFL learners with an age range of 21-24 at Isfahan University in Iran and 60 native English learners with an age range of 23-37 studying Medical Laboratory Technology at Dalton State College in Dalton, Georgia, USA participated in the present study.

#### **Instruments and Materials**

An Oxford Placement Test (OPT), two Dramatic Written Discourse Completion Tasks (DWDCT) in Persian and English and Chi-square test were administered to obtain the results. The DWDCT authors utilized in this study was based on the Discourse Completion Tasks (DCT) developed in the area of cross-cultural pragmatic studies, e.g., House and Kasper (1987) and Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). This kind of questionnaire tailored for the specific purposes and it provides a wide variety of possible formulaic sequences in a number of controlled situations.

Twelve greeting scenarios in DWDCT focus on one gender to control the effect of gender on greetings. The questions (1, 2 and 3) include scenarios of encountering three different power relationships, that is, higher (professor), equal (colleague) and lower (pupil). The next three questions (4, 5 and 6) include scenarios of encountering three different degrees of solidarity relationships that is high (close friends), fair (classmates), and low (acquaintances). The same procedure is used for situations 7-12 but in another situational context. Regarding the social distance between the interlocutors, participants were supposed to interact with people who were familiar with. To achieve better responses in all situations from participants the interval between previous greetings were kept fairly long. In addition, an effort was made to select situations that were cross culturally appropriate in both Persian and English.

Although naturalistic data are desirable for the study of speech acts few studies employ this method of data collection. The main reason might be that naturalistic data do not always allow for researchers to control the relevant social and contextual variables, thus making the findings less comparable. On the other hand, it is not easy to gather a large enough corpus of data for comparison in this way.

Discourse Completion Tasks (DCT) questionnaire tends to be effective in gathering a large amount of data in a short time. But it is believed that they cannot represent authentic speech in terms of response lengths, turn-taking, chance for opting out,

and actual wordings (Rintell & Mitchell, 1989; Yuan, 2001). Therefore, in this study an open-ended DWDCT questionnaire was prepared and used to provide turn-taking in greeting situations.

Parvareh and Tavakoli (2009) found that DWDCT is a valid collection instrument of sociolinguistic study to this nature. The data collected by DWDCT aimed to represent and to exemplify complete greetings in the controlled situations considering the variables that are the focus of the present study.

In this study, Chi-square test (KHGR2) was used for statistical analyses. This test is the most commonly used method for comparing frequencies or proportions. It is a statistical test used to determine if observed data deviate from those expected under a particular hypothesis. Chi-square analysis belongs to the family of univariate analysis, i.e., those tests that evaluate the possible effect of one variable (often called the independent variable) upon an outcome (often called the dependent variable). The chi-square analysis is also used to test the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>), which is the hypothesis that states there is no significant difference between expected and observed data (Grant & Ewens, 2001).

#### Procedure

At first, an OPT was administered to select the advanced level students among EFL learners. Learners with scores above 80 in this test were participated in this investigation. Then the DCT questionnaires were completed by advanced EFL learners and native English speakers. The participants were encouraged to write down their spontaneous reactions and were also told to feel free to opt out when they wished to.

#### Data analysis

The responses were divided based on two kinds of politeness: power-politeness and solidarity-politeness in EFL English and native English data. To apply power-politeness in American English language, greeters use a) short-lengthened greetings; b) fixed greeting expressions; and c) formal and full form of words and greeting expressions. a) Short-lengthened greetings; the following greeting is in native American English between a male professor (P) and a male university student (S) in a formal situational context, the professor's office.

S: Good morning professor Jones.

P: Hi James, how are you?

S: Fine, thanks.

b) American English speakers usually use fixed greeting expressions like "Good evening, Dr. Jones" "Professor Jones, hi, how are you", "Nice to see you" and "Good morning Dr. Smith" in formal situations. c) In American English, speakers use the full form of words like written language like "Good morning", "see you" and "see you later" instead of "morning", "see ya" and "later". They use titles in English to address the hearer i.e. "Mr, Mrs, Ms, Miss, professor, sir and doctor".

To apply solidarity-politeness in American English language, greeters use a) lengthy greeting, b) contextualized greeting, c) personalized greeting and d) contracted greeting expression. a) Lengthy greeting; The following greeting is between two male friends in the morning on the sidewalk in American English; Morning!

- Hi, How's it going?
- pretty good thanks- how're ya doin'?
- yeah, fine.
- anything new with you?
- not much.

b) Contextualized greeting; greetings are contextualized according to the situation that speaker (S) and hearer (H) are in. When the H and S meet each other after a break, vacation or a trip, they usually use contextualized greetings like "How was your break? I'd love to hear about your vacation". c) Personalized greeting: the greeting questions changed into personal greeting questions like "Sarah! Hey, what's up? How're things between you and that boyfriend of yours?" and, d) Contracted greeting expression: short, contracted form of words, pronouns and informal language are used in greeting expressions "how ya doing?" or "Hey, Ben! Whatcha doin'?". Regarding situational context as one of the social variables that affects politeness, the twelve situations are divided to two main situational contexts. The collected data were codified based on the kind of politeness: power and solidarity. To control the effect the situational situation for the other two variables, the first six situations were selected to analyze power and solidarity effect in greetings.

#### Result

Situational context is an effective factor in determining the level of speech formality. The DCT data for situational context were collected in two situational contexts which are office as a formal setting and sidewalk as an informal one.

English speakers' greetings. Native English speakers applied 39.7 % power-politeness strategy. But there was an increase (57.5 %) by changing the situational context from informal to a formal one. So there was a significant difference in applying power politeness strategy by the change of situational context among native English speakers' greeting. The same difference was seen in applying solidarity politeness strategy accordingly. But EFL learners applied power politeness strategy more in both situational contexts in English than native English speakers that is 63.3% in informal situational contexts and 65% in the formal situational context; therefore, there was a significant decrease 36.7% in using solidarity politeness strategy in an informal situation and 35% in a formal situational context.

The statistical comparison in table 2 also supports the significant difference in applying politeness strategies by EFL learners in comparing to native English speakers by the change of situational context. The significance is less than .05 (.001 < .05) in native English greetings which indicates the difference is considerable while the difference is not significant in EFL English greetings that is more than .05 (.799 > .05) by changing the situational context.

It is observed that EFL learners can greet well in the formal situational contexts and even overuse the power-politeness strategies in greeting. But they are not competent in applying politeness strategies by the change of situational context. The most important reason is lack of linguistic competency in informal greetings in English. They cannot greet in the informal situational context as they are not able to employ solidarity-politeness well linguistically. So, EFL learners are not linguistically sensitive to situational contexts as they have learnt some fixed and memorized greeting expressions and they have used them in every situation without contextualization.

The following greetings represent a greeting between two teachers who are colleagues, with the same age, gender and position in the institute. The greetings presented in native English and EFL English in two situational contexts (SC), informal and formal settings.

In Native American English, the difference between the two situational contexts is manifested well by using solidarity-

politeness strategy on the sidewalk and power-politeness in the office. The greeting on the sidewalk is friendly, informal and long but greetings in the formal situational context are formal and short in length.

**SC: Sidewalk**

- Hi Amanda, how was your break?
- Hey, Sarah! It was fabulous! I spent a week at the beach.
- lucky you! I stayed in town, but did get to see some good movies and a play you should have come with me! The weather as perfect, and the nightlife was busy. We ate in a different restaurant every night.

Ok, I'll make a deal with you; next vacation I go with you and you make the plans.

- Deal! If we survive the semester that is.

**SC: Office**

- Hello Ms. Taylor, I hope to with you later when you're not busy.
- Hi to you too, Ms. Jones, I look forward to that.

Most EFL learners applied the same politeness strategy in both greeting situations as shown in greeting. This greeting is on the sidewalk in which the first names of the greeters are used, but the greeting is formal and not as friendly as native English speakers' greetings in the previous situations.

Greeting is in the office, but there is no major difference in the formality between the previous situations that is on the sidewalk; just the greeters have addressed each other by last names and titles. The length of greeting and the level of formality in both situations do not change as native English speakers' greetings.

**SC: Sidewalk**

- Hello Amanda, nice to see you.
- Hello, Nice to see you too, how are you?
- A very good, thanks

**SC: Office**

- Hello Ms. Taylor, how are you?
- Hi Ms. Jones, pretty good, and you?
- Fine, thanks.

**SC: Sidewalk**

- Hi Amanda, pleasure to see you.
- Hi, pleasure to see you too, are you fine?
- I'm ok, thanks

**SC: Office**

- Hello Ms. Taylor, how do you do?
- Hi Ms. Jones, thanks, and you?
- pretty good, thanks

**Conclusion and Discussion**

The question is, whether the situational context affects politeness in greetings of native English speakers and EFL learners. The results of this study indicate that there was a great difference in applying politeness strategies between native English speakers and EFL learners. The EFL learners were not able to show the differences in different situational contexts linguistically. Generally it seems that they were not equipped with appropriate tools to express greeting according to the situational context and native culture.

The results show that there was a great difference both in native English speakers' greetings by the change of situational context, but there was no difference in EFL English greetings. This difference was rooted in the problem that EFL learners are not linguistically sensitive to the differences in situational context. EFL learners were competent in formal greetings and

they greeted well in formal situational context but they cannot greet warm and friendly in informal situational context.

In applying power-politeness strategies, English greeters use short-lengthened greeting, fixed greeting expression and formal and full form of words in greeting. To apply solidarity-politeness, American English language greeters use lengthy greeting, contextualized greeting, personalized greeting and contracted greeting expression. Considering above findings, EFL learners use short, fixed, formal and full-form of words in greetings. Their greeting expressions are not well-contextualized, personalized and contracted as Native American English speakers. Present study has found that EFL learners are not competent in polite greetings. They could not apply solidarity-politeness and they overuse power-politeness in different situations.

Therefore, the first hypothesis that situational context does not affect EFL learners' choice of politeness strategy in EFL English greetings was proved in this study. But the second hypothesis that situational context does not affect native English speakers' choice of politeness strategy in English greetings was rejected. In short, EFL learners greet formally as they are not pragma-linguistically and socio-culturally competent in English greetings.

This study suggests that for EFL learners' linguistic competence is not enough. Therefore, it might be necessary for EFL learners to develop socio-cultural competence, to understand the frames of interaction and to know rules of politeness within the target language. Successful greetings may be simple or complex, phatic or meaningful, formulaic or creative. This study shows that even relatively advanced EFL learners experience difficulty in English greetings on productive level. Challenges range from lexical choices to substantial differences in cultural norms and values; thus, pragma-linguistic or socio-pragmatic failure may occur in cross-cultural greeting encounters (Eisentein et al. 1995).

In this investigation, EFL learners intended their responses to be polite but they were not appropriate to the social norms of American society (Eisentein & Bodman's, 1986; Wolfson, 1989). For example, their expressions for greeting their close friends and greeting a professor are quite similar both in terms of politeness. Generally it seems that they were not equipped with appropriate tools to express greeting according to the status of the interlocutors, situational context and native culture.

Native speakers of English exhibit a greater variety in the types of greetings and creative language used in producing the greeting. This was particularly evident when NSs engaged in informal or intimate exchanges. Persian EFL learners tended to follow rather ritualized routines and remain formal in L2 greetings; they lacked the repertoire for imitating informal repartee so common in native English greetings ((Eisentein, et al. 1995).

Based on the findings of this study, a number of pedagogical implications can be drawn for language learners and language teachers: Although advanced Persian EFL learners have good command of English grammar and vocabulary, they did not produce target-like responses to situations that required appreciation. It is important to provide learners with knowledge of the linguistic forms which are appropriate to convey the intended meaning in different contexts or situations in the target culture.

Teachers and syllabus designers should examine learners' needs considering the understanding and production of speech

act of greeting in the TL. Learners should be aware of NSs usage of the variety of greeting expressions and realize their function. Eliciting greeting expressions from learners' own culture, and presenting them in the target culture can help EFL learners. Instructors should provide a clear explanation of the possible cause of miscommunication in two culture and language in class and in textbooks. Teachers should prevent learners from saying something inappropriately or misunderstanding the cultural value of the target language they are learning.

In conclusion, greetings have a high perceptual saliency as they often open conversations in every language. But most EFL learners are consciously aware of only a small number of high-frequency, ritualized semantic formulas that contribute to greetings. There is a significant need for a more effective teaching on how greetings are truly performed and prevent impolite, ineffective, or otherwise inappropriate behavior on the part of the learner.

#### Limitations and Direction for Future Research

There were some problems with the methodology of this study that might affect the results and findings. The DWDCT questionnaire was used to collect data and these tests presented the specific task of reading a situation and reacting. The true nature of the learners' pragmatic competence may not be revealed through the utterances elicited by DWDCT. The number of situations in questionnaire is limited due to focusing on the determined variables and also including situations appropriate for both Persian and American culture.

Another shortcoming of this study was that only pragmatic aspect of responses was analyzed and grammatical or morphological problems of EFL learners of English were not taken into account. Finally, the results must be viewed with caution for making generalizations about the pragmatic competence of L2 learners. The findings are limited by the population of learners participating in this study. Other populations involving participants of different social classes, age groups and specific cultural associations may lead to different results.

Finally, communication is not just restricted to the linguistic aspect. Paralinguistic features and the non-verbal aspect such as tones, pitches, intonations and gestures can play a significant role in everyday interactions during the production of greeting speech act. How to teach linguistic and non-linguistic features of language more effectively can be the focus of future studies in the area of pragmatics.

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**Appendix A.** English Dramatic Written Discourse Completion Test (DWDCT)

#### Age

Please read the following situations. After reading each scenario write whatever you would naturally say in that situation. Please write as much or as little as you feel appropriate for each situation.

You are a university student. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester, you see your professor, aged 45-50, who has a special and important position at university while walking on the sidewalk of University Street in the evening. You have not seen each other during break. Sidewalk is not crowded and you want to stop and to greet.

If your professor is a woman (Dr. Alice Jones) and the university student is a girl (Sarah Powell) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

University student (girl):.....

.....

Professor (woman):.....

.....

You are an English language teacher in an institute. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester, you see your colleague who is a teacher in that institute while walking on the sidewalk to go to work, your colleague is in the same age and the same position as you, your relationship is limited to the workplace. You have not seen each other during break. The sidewalk is not crowded. You want to stop and to greet.

If your colleague is a Woman (Amanda Taylor) and the English teacher is a woman (Sarah Jones) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

English language teacher (woman):.....

.....

Your colleague (woman):.....

.....

You are an English language teacher in an institute. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester. You are going to the institute for the first day of work in new semester. While walking on the sidewalks to go to work, you see your student aged 17, who doesn't notice your presence, and walking on the sidewalk that is not crowded. Last week, your students had an important exam to enter university. You have not seen each other during break. You want to ask your student about exam, and open conversation.

If your student is a girl (Anna Davies) and the English language teacher is a woman (Sarah Jones) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

English language teacher (woman):.....

Student (girl):.....

.....

You are a university student. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester, you see your best friend who is very friendly with you and you are in the same age, while walking on the sidewalk. You have not seen each other during break. You want to greet your best friend.

If your best friend is a girl (Sarah Wilson) and the university is the girl (Marry brown) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

University student (girl):.....

.....

Your best friend (girl):.....

.....

You are a university student. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester, you see your classmate who is in the same age as you, while walking on the sidewalk of University Street. You have not seen each other during break. You want to stop and to greet your classmate.

If your classmate is a girl (Helen Johnson) and the university student is a girl (Marry brown) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

University student (girl):.....

.....

Your classmate (girl):.....

.....

You are a university student. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester, you see one of the students in the faculty that you are not well acquainted with, while walking on the sidewalk of University Street. You have not seen each other during break. You want to stop and to greet. If this acquaintance is a girl (Jessica Robinson) and a university student is a girl (Marry brown) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

University student (girl):.....

.....

This acquaintance (girl):.....

.....

You are a university student. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester, you see one of the students in the faculty who is in the same age as you in your professor's office, you see this student sitting in the office and you first greet your professor and then you want to greet that student whom you have not seen each other during break.

If your professor is a woman (Dr. Alice Jones) and the university student is a girl (Sarah Powell) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

University student (girl):.....

.....

Professor (woman):  
 .....  
 .....

You are a university student. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester, you are going to visit your professor, aged 45-50, who has a special and important position at university in his office to ask a question. There is another professor whom you do not know well in the office sitting over there. You have not seen each other during break. You want to greet your professor.

If your colleague is a Woman (Amanda Taylor) and the English teacher is a woman (Sarah Jones) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

English language teacher  
 (woman):.....  
 .....

Your colleague  
 (woman):.....  
 .....

You are an English language teacher in an institute. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester, you see your colleague who is a teacher in that institute. Your colleague is in the same age and position as you in the institute. Your relationship with your colleague is limited to the workplace. In the first day of your work in the new semester while you are entering into the teachers' room, you see your colleague who is talking with one of the students about a lesson. You have not seen each other during break. You want to greet your colleague.

If your student is a girl (Anna Davies) and the English language teacher is a woman (Sarah Jones) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

English language teacher  
 (woman):.....  
 .....

Student  
 (girl):.....  
 .....

You are an English language teacher in an institute. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester. You are going to the institute for the first day of work in new semester. While you are entering teacher's room, you see your student aged 17, standing in the entrance of teachers' room. Other students are also standing over there. Your student had an important exam for entering university last week. You have not seen each other during break. You want to open conversation and to ask your student about exam and have your student to notice you.

If your best friend is a girl (Sarah Wilson) and the university is the girl (Marry brown) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

University student  
 (girl):.....  
 .....

Your best friend  
 (girl):.....  
 .....

You are a university student. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester, you see your best friend who is very friendly and in the same age as you in your professor's office, you see your best friend sitting in the office and you first greet your professor and then you want to greet

your best friend whom you have not seen each other during break.

If your classmate is a girl (Helen Johnson) and the university student is a girl (Marry brown) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

University student  
 (girl):.....  
 .....

Your classmate  
 (girl):.....  
 .....

You are a university student. It is after break between semesters and the beginning of new semester, you see your classmate who is in the same age as you in your professor's office, you see your classmate sitting in the office and you first greet with your professor and then you want to greet your classmate whom you have not seen each other during break.

If this acquaintance is a girl (Jessica Robinson) and a university student is a girl (Marry brown) please write a dialogue for greetings in this situation:

University student  
 (girl):.....  
 .....

This acquaintance (girl):  
 .....  
 .....

**Appendix B.** One complete sample of native English data collected by Dramatic Written Discourse Completion Test (DWDCT)

**1)SC: Sidewalk**

Student: Professor Jones, hi, how are you?  
 Professor: Hi, Sarah, nice to see you! I'm fine, how are you?  
 Student: I'm doing great, Professor. Did you enjoy your vacation?  
 Professor: Yes, Sarah, very much. Are you ready for classes starting back?  
 Student: Oh yeah, I can hardly wait!  
 Professor: I'll see you in class then. Have a nice evening!  
 Student: You too!

**7) SC: Office**

Student: Excuse me, Dr. Jones, I just wanted to say hello after the break.  
 Professor: Well, hi Sarah, this is Dr. Smith. How are you doing?  
 Student: I'm great, thank you, and glad to be back. Nice to meet you, Dr. Smith.  
 Professor: I'll see you in class, Sarah, thanks for dropping by.  
 Student: It's good to see you again, Professor.

**2)SC: Sidewalk**

Colleague: Hi, Amanda, how was your break?  
 Colleague: Hey, Sarah! It was fabulous! I spent a week at the beach.  
 Colleague: Lucky you! I stayed in town, but did get to see some good movies and a play.  
 Colleague: You should have come with me! The weather as perfect, and the nightlife was busy. We ate in a different restaurant every night.  
 Colleague: Ok, I'll make a deal with you; next vacation I go with you and you make the plans.  
 Colleague: Deal! If we survive the semester that is. <wink>

**8) SC: Office**

Colleague: Hello, Ms. Taylor, I hope to with you later when you're not busy.

Colleague: Hi to you too, Ms. Jones, I look forward to that.

**3) SC: Sidewalk**

Teacher: Hi, Anna, have you heard about your exam results yet?

Student: Hi, Ms. Jones! No, I haven't heard anything yet.

Teacher: I'm sure you did just fine, but good luck anyway.

Student: Thank you, Ms. Jones, have a nice day.

Teacher: You too, Anna.

**9) SC: Office**

Student: Good morning to you too, Ms. Jones, and I believe I did. I'll let you know when I get my results.

Teacher: I'll keep my fingers crossed. Have a good day now.

Student: Thank you, ma'am, you too.

**3) SC: Sidewalk**

Best friend: Sarah! Hey, what's up? How're things between you and that boyfriend of yours?

Best friend: Hi, Mary, not much. Scott and I are doing just fine; how are you, and when are you going to find a guy for yourself?

Best friend: I'm doing great, Sarah, and if the right guy comes along, I'll grab him, but you know how I am about classes.

Best friend: Yeah, but all work and no play make Mary a dull girl! ;)

Best friend: Well, at least I'll be the one graduating with honors and getting into the good grad programs. I'll have plenty of time to get hooked up later.

Best friend: Or you could say that you're just sitting back to watch golden opportunities fall through your fingers...

Best friend::P

Best friend: So, how was your break, anyway? Please tell me you did something besides study!

Best friend: A bunch of us went camping in the Cherokee National Forest, about twenty of us, guys and girls. We went hiking and canoing and swimming, and we did other stuff

too...but about that--what happens in the woods stays in the woods.

Best friend: Well, thank God you didn't just hang around with your nose in a bunch of books. I'm glad to see you back here.

Best friend: Same here, girlfriend.

**10) SC: Office**

Best friend: Good morning, Professor, I hope you had a good vacation. Hey, Sarah! Let's meet over in the student center after you're through here so I can hear all about your break.

Best friend: Nice seeing you, Mary, I'll look for you there.

**3) Sc: Sidewalk**

Classmate: Hey, Helen, how have you been doing lately?

Classmate: Just fine, Mary, how about you?

Classmate: I can't complain.

Classmate: Have a nice day!

Classmate: You too!

**11) Sc: Office**

Classmate: Good morning, Professor. Hello, Helen, nice to see you.

Classmate: Hi, Mary, nice to see you too. Catch you later.

Classmate: Ok, bye now.

**4) SC: Sidewalk**

Acquaintance: Hey, Jessica, what's up?

Acquaintance: Hey, Mary, nothing much. Anything with you?

Acquaintance: Nope. Vacation was pretty much laid back. Yours?

Acquaintance: Same as. To tell you the truth, I'm glad to be back.

Acquaintance: Me too, have a good semester.

Acquaintance: You too!

**12) SC: Office**

Acquaintance: Good morning, Professor, and hello to you too, Jessica.

Acquaintance: Hi, Mary, nice to see you.

**Table 1 The effect of situational context on the choice of politeness strategy**

Politeness strategies	Power politeness		Solidarity politeness		
	native English	EFL English	native English	EFL English	
The informal situational context	N	143	228	217	132
	P%	39.7	63.3	60.3	36.7
The formal situational context	N	207	234	153	126
	P%	57.5	65	42.5	35

**Table 2. Chi-square result for the effect situational context**

Politeness		Power-politeness			Solidarity-Politeness		
Situational Context		Chi-Square	Df	Asymp. Sig.	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
Native English	Informal-Formal	11.703	1	.001	11.070	1	.001
EFL English	Informal-Formal	.078	1	.780	.140	1	.709