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A Computer-Based Course to Teach Speech Acts: Prototype for the Technology Assisted Language Learning Program

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A COMPUTER-BASED COURSE TO TEACH SPEECH ACTS: PROTOTYPE FOR

THE TECHNOLOGY ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING PROGRAM

by

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A project submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a project submitted by

Laura Morales D'Orlando

This project has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the selected project of Laura Morales D'Orlando in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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ABSTRACT

A COMPUTER-BASED COURSE TO TEACH SPEECH ACTS: PROTOTYPE FOR

THE TECHNOLOGY ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING PROGRAM

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Department of Linguistics and English Language

Master of Arts

The following report discusses the design and formative evaluation of a prototype for a

computer-based course to teach speech acts as part of the Technology Assisted Language

Learning (TALL) program. The report includes a literature review on speech acts and

current methods and strategies for language teaching and instructional design. Next, there

is a description of the lessons and the design process, as well as a summary of the

formative evaluation. Following is the prototype of the lesson on apologies. The report

concludes with a discussion of the project's limitations and suggestions for future

research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

To become fully proficient in a second language, learners must achieve

communicative competence. As described by Hymes (1972), communicative competence

entails four aspects that speakers must master in order to be able to communicate

effectively in a given language: grammatical competence, discourse competence,

sociocultural competence, and strategic competence. Grammatical or linguistic

competence is the ability to use the syntactic, lexical, phonological, and morphological

aspects of the language effectively. Discourse competence is concerned with the cohesion

and coherence of utterances, written words, and texts as a whole. Sociocultural or

sociolinguistic competence refers to the ability to communicate appropriately depending

on the social context. Strategic competence is the ability to recognize and repair

communication breakdowns.

An important part of the process of gaining sociolinguistic competence is learning

to recognize and perform speech acts (i.e. apologies, compliments, requests, invitations,

etc.) appropriately. Though somewhat ignored in language instruction, sociolinguistic

competence is vital to effective communication and inclusion in a second language (L2)

community. As noted by Gass and Selinker (1983, p. 12), when non-native speakers

make pragmatics mistakes, they may be perceived as "rude or uncooperative, …or,

arrogant or insincere." Immigrants and international students often face communication

challenges, not because of the language itself but because of being unaware of how native

speakers use the language in pragmatic contexts. For example, I got a very high score on

the TOEFL test. However, when I first moved to the U.S., I failed to understand preludes

to invitations because they were not phrased in a "textbook" manner. Rather, they often came in vague references, such as "What are you up to?" While taking a class on language acquisition, I learned about speech acts. After the professor talked about invitations and gave some examples, I started paying attention at my own interactions with native speakers. I soon realized that every time I answered the preludes to invitations by mentioning I was reading or studying, I did not receive any subsequent invitations.

A number of studies suggest that exposure to L2 culture and to its pragmatic norms alone does not guarantee acquisition of such norms (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1986, Hinkel 1996, 1999) and that explicit instruction may be necessary. In order to be prepared to face the large variety of L2 interactions to which they are exposed, learners need to be provided with tools that allow them to become aware of the pragmatic norms used by the L2 community and to distinguish them from separate individual behaviors (Hinkel 2001).

The purpose of this project is to develop prototype lessons for a computer assisted language learning (CALL) program, which may help learners to see how certain speech acts are used in American culture. This CALL program is named TALL, which stands for Technology Assisted Language Learning. TALL is a computer software application that was developed at the Provo Missionary Training Center for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. It has been used for several years to teach a number of languages, as part of a system that also includes classroom instruction and opportunities to interact with native speakers of the target language (Elzinga, 2000).

Even though the content of the present project will not represent every speech act in every possible situation, it aims at providing examples of authentic interactions as a trigger for learners to acquire more through further study on their part and careful observation of native speaker behavior. Thus, it is intended to familiarize students with certain speech acts, to make them aware of the existence of many of the pragmatic functions of those speech acts and to train learners to become "astute and consistent people-watchers" (Hinkel 2001) so that in the future they will be able to distinguish culturally determined linguistic behaviors in their interactions with native speakers.

The remainder of this thesis addresses the design and evaluation of the above mentioned project. The next chapter carefully examines the relevant literature associated with speech acts, methods and strategies for language teaching and instructional design theory. The following chapter outlines the design stages as well as the components and organization of the speech act lessons. Chapter 4 contains the prototype for the lesson on apologies. Chapter 5 describes the evaluation of the lessons and chapter 6 addresses the limitations of the project and suggests future research.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

As mentioned earlier, in order to become fully proficient in a second language, learners must achieve communicative competence, which involves a lot more than grammatical competence. Learners need to achieve sociolinguistic competence, that is, the knowledge of what is "feasible", "possible", and "done" with the linguistic or grammatical forms (Hymes, 1972). As part of this process, learners must learn how to recognize and perform speech acts appropriately. Failure to do so may result in miscommunication and offenses. As noted by Gass and Selinker (1983), when non-native speakers make pragmatics mistakes, they may be viewed as:

> rude or uncooperative, …or, arrogant or insincere. Native speakers
> are much more likely to attribute grammatical or phonological errors
> to a lack of knowledge of the target language… conversational
> features are subtle and not easily recognizable; hence their basis is
> attributed not to the language of the speaker but to the personality of
> the speaker (p. 12).

This review examines the relevant literature associated with the content and the different methodologies and strategies used to create the speech act lessons. This chapter starts with a review of the instructional content, which includes an overview of the speech acts theory, a brief description of data collection methods, and reviews of the particular speech act used in the lessons: apologies, requests, compliments, and invitations. Then it introduces a review of relevant methods for language teaching, more

specifically, Communicative Language Teaching and Computer Assisted Language Learning. Finally, it summarizes certain aspects of instructional design theory, including the design and development process and principles of instructional design.

Instructional Content Review

Speech Act Theory Overview

In his book, *How to Do Things with Words,* Austin (1975), observed that when people speak, they are actually trying to accomplish a pragmatic purpose such as requesting, apologizing or complaining. According to him, the speaker performs three types of acts when engaged in the production of a speech act: the locutionary act of uttering a sentence with a certain meaning, the illocutionary act of performing a particular language function, and the perlocutionary act of producing some kind of effect on the listener. The illocutionary act is what has come to be commonly called the "speech act."

A speech act can be direct, if the relationship between form and function is obvious --as in "Open the window"- or indirect, if its illocutionary force is not derivable from the surface structure--as in the interrogative form: "Can you open the window." The performance of both types of speech acts has to meet a number of conditions to be considered successful. Searle (1969) identifies three kinds of "felicity" conditions: 1) preparatory conditions, which are related to the circumstances in which the speech act is uttered, 2) sincerity conditions, and 3) essential conditions, which require of the speaker an appropriate intention, such as for requests, the intention to get the speaker to do the act. However, even when sincerity conditions may cause the speech act in question to be defective, they "do not impede the act from achieving its conventional effect" (Sbisà, 2002, p. 423). For instance, if when uttering a promise, the speaker has no intention of

keeping it, the promise is defective but not necessarily void.

Another important consideration in speech act performance is the concept of politeness. For most second language learners, it is difficult to learn how to speak politely because it involves not only the knowledge of the language, but also the understanding of the social and cultural values of the community in question. It also requires them to assess more than one dimension at the same time: power, solidarity, social distance, and even formality (Holmes, 1992). The first two dimensions determine the type of strategy to be used, i.e. positive or negative strategies. *Positive politeness* constitutes an attempt to establish solidarity and emphasizes shared attitudes and values. It is most likely to happen when the social distance and the power difference between speaker and addressee are minimal. *Negative politeness*, on the other hand, involves respecting status differences and maintaining social distance. It is generally used when there is considerable power difference between the participants.

Yet another issue to be taken into account when studying illocutionary acts is the competence needed by the speakers to appropriately perform them. Cohen (1996) distinguishes between *sociocultural ability* and *sociolinguistic ability*. The first one refers to the ability of the speaker to choose appropriate speech act strategies (e.g. provision of an explanation for the refusal of an invitation) given the culture and the participants involved, while the latter refers to his ability to choose appropriate linguistic forms to express the chosen strategy. Similar concepts are found in the works of other authors. Canale (1983) talks about appropriateness of meaning, that is, the knowledge of when to perform a particular speech act, and appropriateness of form, or the knowledge of the proper verbal or non-verbal forms to be used in a certain situation. Thomas (1983)

also distinguishes between sociopragmatic failure (i.e. failure to perform the illocutionary act required by the situation) and pragmalinguistic failure (i.e. deviation from the proper linguistic form).

As with other areas of communicative competence, there is often a mismatch between learners´ receptive and productive abilities. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1985, 1986) found that although it takes immigrants in Israel approximately eight years to acquire native-like perception of speech acts, they may never achieve native-like production. Moreover, Kachru (1994) recognizes learners' need to understand and be aware of cultural differences, including the performance of speech acts, but questions the advantages of indiscriminately adopting culturally different patterns of behavior, since language use is intimately connected with individuals' identity and culture. Both arguments suggest that as long as learners' requests have illocutionary force and are perceived as polite and acceptable by native speakers, they should be considered successful even when they do not match native patterns exactly. Therefore, research on the present topic should focus not only on cross-cultural differences in speech act performance, but also on native speakers' judgments of the appropriateness of learners' productions. Only then, can it claim to have practical and realistic applications to the ESL classroom.

The Acquisition of Sociolinguistic Competence

Regarding the way learners acquire appropriate pragmatic rules, a number of studies suggest that exposure to L2 culture and to its pragmatics norms alone does not guarantee acquisition of such norms. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) found that even high-intermediate and advanced L2 learners produce more verbose requests than did

native speakers. In addition, it has been found that even advanced second language learners make errors when it comes to the level of politeness or the illocutionary force of their utterances (Francis 1997, Hinkel 1996, 1999). Hymes points out that non-native speaking students in American, Canadian, and other English speaking universities do not always follow the norms of politeness accepted in the L2 communities despite having lived there for several years. These findings suggest that explicit instruction seems to be necessary in order for learners to develop the subtleties of native-speaker pragmatics.

Methods of Researching Speech Acts

Before going into the specific speech acts included in this project, it seems relevant to consider the data collection methods used in research in this area. According to Cohen (1996, p. 25), the best way to reach useful and reliable data about speech act behavior would be a combination of several methods. He proposes that researchers:

> …start with the generation of initial hypotheses based on ethnographic data collection of natural speech. Then they would continue to simulate speech such as role-plays which can serve to test the initial hypotheses. From there, they could go to a paper-and-pencil written completion test in order to focus specific realizations and manipulate the social and situational variables. (…) Finally, it is advisable to validate findings by means of further ethnographic data.

However, researchers tend to use only one or at most two methods in a single study. The reason for this is that each method has its advantages and disadvantages, which makes them more or less suitable to the study at hand. There are basically three

data collection methods, each of which has its own variations: discourse completion tasks, role plays and ethnographic observation. At first sight, ethnographic methods, which involve the collection of naturally occurring speech, may seem to be the best option. Nevertheless, they are time consuming and not very productive, and it is virtually impossible to control all variables that the other two methods can build into their design. In addition, data collected in this way can be unrepresentative of the population under investigation, since it is quite difficult to gather a sufficiently large corpus of data from ethnographic observation. Role plays include a brief description of the situation either in the native or the target language, followed by an oral response on the part of the students. Discourse completion tasks differ from role-plays in that the students' response is done in writing, and they have the advantage that they allow for large amounts of data to be collected quickly. Significant disadvantages, however, are that written responses tend to be shorter and less complex than spoken ones (Beebe & Cummings 1996), that they differ from natural speech in terms of the wording and the semantic formulas used (Ellis 1994), and that information like prosodic and nonverbal features cannot be appreciated. But despite their weaknesses, discourse completion tasks have been extensively used in speech act research.

Speech Acts Included in the Project

A number of speech acts have received a great deal of attention in the literature on second language acquisition. After careful study of these speech acts, it was decided that this project would focus on requests, apologies, compliments, and invitations. There are several reasons to include requests in this course: they are face-threatening acts, they are widely used by speakers of all ages and status, and they differ cross-culturally in

interesting ways. In addition, they pose special difficulties to learners since the

performance thereof involves psychological, social and cultural factors, as well as

linguistic ones. Likewise, apologies are crucial because of their face-threatening nature

and because the lack of an apology, when perceived as necessary, may cause

miscommunication and resentment on the part of the offended party. As for

compliments, they are important because failure to conform to native speakers'

complimenting norms may deprive learners of opportunities to establish relationships

with native speakers and of the input they need to develop their linguistic and

sociolinguistic competence (Wolfson, 1989). Finally, the rationale behind the inclusion

of invitations is comparable to the one used for compliments: the use of appropriate

strategies to make and respond to invitations will likely increase the opportunities for

social interactions with native speakers.

Apologies

Along with requests, apologies are one of the most studied speech acts in

descriptive, cross-cultural, and interlanguage pragmatics. They are an important part of

discourse because the lack of them, when perceived as necessary, can create interpersonal

communication breakdowns. Linnell (1992) points out that after interacting with native

speakers, many adult language learners have the impression that their intentions or

motives have been misjudged, even though they have used the right words. On the other

hand, native speakers may perceive learners as rude, slow, or difficult.

An apology is a face-threatening speech act that requires the speaker to admit

responsibility for having done (or having failed to do) something that offended, harmed,

or affected the hearer in some way. Some studies suggest that apologies can be

considered a pragmatic universal. In a 1989 study that was part of the Cross-Cultural

Speech Act Realization Project, Olshtain researched the strategies used by speakers of

four languages to perform apologies. From the results of the study, she concluded that:

given the same social factors, the same contextual factors, and the same

level of offence, different language will realize apologies in very similar

ways (1989, p. 171).

Despite the above, some other authors affirm that L2 learners have difficulties

performing apologies in the target language (Ellis 1994) largely because the conditions

that call for an apology are definitely not universal (Maeshiba et al., 1995). There are

cross-cultural differences in what constitutes an offense, the perceived severity of the

offense, the social distance between interlocutors, and the appropriate compensation. In

addition, learners have to learn what strategies are used by the target community and how

to choose from those strategies the appropriate ones for any given context.

According to Olshtain and Cohen (1983), there are five principal strategies or

semantic formulas to express an apology. Those formulas, in turn, consist of a number of

subformulas. Table 1 contains the semantic formulas, subformulas, and examples

described in their work.

The first formula can be realized as an expression of regret, an offer of apology,

or a request for forgiveness. These three subformulas consist of direct apologies. They

use apology verbs, such as "apologize," "be sorry," "forgive," excuse," or "pardon." In

English, the most commonly used subformula is the first one, "an expression of regret."

The second formula is an explanation of the situation that indirectly caused the

offense. It can be used in addition to the first formula or instead of it.

The third formula can take the form of accepting the blame, expressing self deficiency, recognizing the other person as deserving an apology, or expressing lack of intent. It is used when the offender recognizes his responsibility for the offense. Only the first subformula is direct, while the other three are indirect acknowledgements of responsibility.

Table 1

Semantic Formulas and Subformulas for Apologies (from Olshtain & Cohen, 1983)

Formula	Subformula	Example
An expression of an apology	An expression of regret	I'm sorry.
	An offer of apology	I apologize.
	A request for forgiveness	Excuse me.
An explanation or account of the situation		The bus was delayed.
An acknowledgement of responsibility	Accepting the blame.	It is my fault.
	Expressing self-deficiency.	I was confused./ I wasn't thinking.
	Recognizing the other person as deserving apology.	You are right!
	Expressing lack of intent.	I didn't mean to.
An offer of repair		I'll pay for the broken vase.
A promise of forbearance		It won't happen again.

The use of the last two formulas will heavily depend on the situation. An "offer of repair" will only be appropriate if the offense has resulted in injury or other damage. A "promise of forbearance" is generally used when the offender could have avoided the situation or when the offense has occurred more than once in the past.

In most cases, just one of the above formulas is enough to perform an apology, but it is common to combine two or three to increase the intensity of the apology. Apologies can also be intensified by adding words such as "very," "really," "terribly," "deeply," etc. (Olshtain and Cohen 1990). Other strategies to increase intensity include comments with added concern for the offended party and the tone of voice.

Also, the intensity of an apology can be downgraded by comments that minimize the severity of the offense or the damage caused by it. However, downgraded apologies may seem insincere and may not be accepted.

The speaker's selection of formulas from the speech act set is determined by context-internal and context external factors (Maeshiba et al., 1995). Examples of context-internal factors are the severity and the nature of the offense. Bergman and Kasper (1993) found that native speakers of American English intensify apologies depending on the severity of the offense. As for what is considered severe, the study found that minor inconveniences, such changing an order in a restaurant, are perceived as light offenses. Offenses are labeled as being of "Medium Severity" when the material cost involved is low, when the offenses constitute inconveniences –as opposed to infringements of rights, or when they are mishaps that occur as part of a job. In other words, those offenses represent "minor impositions on somebody's time, money, physical space, energy, or face-wants." "High Severity" offenses are those involving inconveniences that can not be easily repaired or having major consequences. For example, illegal actions, high material costs, professional negligence, etc.

Regarding the nature of the offense, Borkin and Reinhart (1978) noted that the formulas used to apologize vary according to this. A good example is the use of "I'm

sorry" and "excuse me," and they suggest that:

"Excuse me" is more appropriate in remedial exchanges when

the speaker's main concern is about a rule violation on his or her part,

while "I'm sorry" is used in remedial interchanges when the speaker's

main concern is about a violation of another person's rights or damage

to another person's feelings; in other words, the basic concern behind

"excuse me" is "I have broken or am in danger of breaking a social

rule," and the basic concern behind "I'm sorry" is "You are or you

may be hurt." (1978, p. 61)

Also, it is worth mentioning that "I'm sorry" is often used when there has been no

offense or violation of a social norm, for purposes other than apologizing –e.g. to show

sympathy.

As said before, apologies can also vary according to context-external factors such

as power and social distance. While Bergman and Kasper (1993) found that social power

does not influence the choice of strategy among native English speakers, a study by

Holmes (1989) showed that social power does have an impact on the offender's readiness

to apologize. Most apologies are offered when the offender and the offended party are of

equal status. Lower status offenders apologize second most, and higher status offenders

apologize the least.

As for the impact of social distance in apology performance, Bergman and Kasper

(1993) found that the closer the relationship between the parties, the more likely the

offender is to assume responsibility and apologize. However, Wolfson, Marmor, and

Jones (1989) found that most apologies are offered between acquaintances and that the

likelihood of an apology decreases toward both ends of the social continuum.

Requests

Requests have received considerable attention in illocutionary act research for several reasons. First, they are face-threatening and inherently imposing acts. Therefore, they require a fair amount of "face work." The speaker has to take into account social factors associated with the relationship between the participants and the perceived degree of imposition before choosing the most appropriate linguistic way to realize the request. Sometimes, the effectiveness of a speech act is in conflict with politeness. Since a speech act is considered effective when the addressee clearly recognizes the speaker's intent, the more direct the request, the easier it is recognized as such. Imperatives are undoubtedly the most direct form of request, but only low-proficiency learners tend to use them (Scarcella, 1979; Tanaka & Kawade, 1982) evidently because of their lack of knowledge of the target culture's politeness strategies. Second, they are easily recognized and their performance often follows clearly identifiable formulas. Lastly, requests differ cross-linguistically in interesting manners. As stated above, the speaker choices when requesting depend on social factors involved and on the degree of imposition. Research has shown that the perception of social context and the degree of imposition varies across cultures. For example, what may appear to be an obvious power-/familiarity+ relationship to a native English speaker might be perceived somewhat differently by a non-native speaker. Mir (1995) found that native Spanish, native English, and non-native English speakers ranked the social variables of familiarity and power rather similarly, but they differed significantly in their evaluations of the degree of imposition variable. In

situations where the speaker had power over the addressee, Spanish speakers perceived the actions being requested as more imposing than English speakers did. Conversely, Spanish speakers perceived the requested actions as less imposing than English speakers did in situations where the speaker was in a powerless position.

Table 2

Request strategies (from Ellis 1994)

Level of Directness	Strategy	Characteristics	Examples
Direct	Mood-derivable	The grammatical mood of the verb signals the illocutionary force	You shut up!
	Performative	The illocutionary force is explicitly named	I am telling you to shut up.
	Hedge performative	The illocutionary force is modified by hedging expressions	I would like to ask you to shut up.
Conventionally indirect	Locution-derivable	The illocutionary force is derivable directly from the semantic content of the request	I want you to shut up.
Conventionally indirect	Suggestory formula	A suggestion to do the action	Let's play a game
	Query-preparatory	Reference to preparatory conditions such as the ability or willingness	Can you lend me your book?
Non-conventionally indirect	Strong hint	Partial reference to the object or element needed for implementation of the act or no reference but still interpretable as a request through context	This game is boring.
	Mild hint		We've been playing this game for over an hour now.

Request performance may vary in a number of ways: it can differ in the level of directness, it might be subject to internal and external modifications, or it can be encoded from several perspectives. Requests can be classified into three categories: direct,

conventionally indirect, and non-conventionally indirect. Requests are said to be direct

when their meaning can be directly determined solely on the basis of their linguistic

content. Conventionally indirect requests are those whose meaning has to be interpreted

from both their linguistic content and contextual cues. Non-conventionally indirect can

be defined as those whose illocutionary force can only be inferred from contextual cues.

As for this matter, the work by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989b), as cited by Ellis

(1994), identified eight "strategy types"(see Table 2.)

Requests may be internally modified by elements that are linked to the head act

(i.e. the smallest unit of an utterance which conveys a request). These elements are not

essential for the utterance to be understood as a request, but they can affect its social

impact (Eslamirasekh 1993). Internal modification can be done to mitigate or to intensify

the force of the act. In the fist case, the modifying element is called *downgrader* and in

the second *upgrader*.

Requests can also be externally modified. This can be done through supportive

moves, which are elements that do not affect the utterance used for performing the speech

act, but that affect the context. Kim (1995) makes a classification of supportive moves,

which is based on a previous work by Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (see Table 3.)

Finally, requests can differ in the perspective from which they are encoded. A

speaker can perform a request from his own perspective (e.g. "Give me the book."), from

the perspective of the addressee (e.g. "Could you give me the book?"), from a joint

perspective (e.g. "Let's read a book.") or from a neutral perspective (e.g. "It would be

nice to read a book.")

Table 3

Classification of supportive moves (taken from Kim 1995)

Supportive move	Characteristic	Examples
Preparator	The speaker prepares the addressee for the request	I have to ask you something…
Getting a precommitment	To avoid refusal, the speaker tries to commit the addressee before making the request	Can you do me a favor?
Apology	By apologizing, the speaker acknowledges he is making an imposition and expresses his regret	I'm sorry, but…
Grounder	The speaker gives reasons, explanations or justifications for the request	I'm really tired and I'm tying to rest.
Disarmer	The speaker tries to remove addressee's potential objections	I know you don't like this, but…
Promise of reward	The speaker promises a reward upon compliance with the request	I'll make it up to you.

As for the request behavior of American English native speakers, it shows all the elements illustrated in the tables above. However, there is a relative lack of research that focuses specifically on this topic, and thus, findings about it should be extracted from cross-cultural studies. Most of the studies cited in the literature reviewed compare either request performances by speakers of two (or more) languages or second language learners' and native speakers' utterances. Studies by Kim (1995), Eslamirasekh (1993), and Rintell (1979) indicate that Americans seem to favor query-preparatory strategies, especially when the speaker is in a position of lesser power compared to the addressee. Direct requests are more likely to be produced in situations where the speaker in a powerful position, but even in these situations, they are often modified to downgrade their illocutionary force. Hints are used mostly (and almost exclusively) when the

familiarity between participants is considerably high.

Along with the relationship between participants, another significant variable in request performance is the perceived degree of imposition. As noted before, this perception varies cross-culturally, and it is therefore important to make learners aware of such differences. Mir (1995) found that Americans perceive requests involving significant demands on their possessions and time as most imposing. As for the role played by the degree of imposition in the request behavior of American English speakers, a study by Kim (1995) suggests that the higher the perceived degree of imposition, the more supportive moves are likely to be used. Apologies and grounders are often used in conjunction in situations where the degree of imposition is very high.

Compliments

Giving Compliments. Most of the research in the area of compliments has been carried out by Nessa Wolfson (1981, 1983) and Joan Manes (1983). From their findings, we can identify four aspects that are relevant to the speech act of complimenting: topic/object of the compliment, lexical and syntactical patterns, function performed, and participants involved.

As for the first aspect, the topic or object of the compliment, Manes argues that compliments reflect cultural values, and that they express approval of something that both the speaker and the addressee consider of worth. Since individuals differ greatly in their tastes and interests, the object of the compliment must be one that can be recognized as positive by any member of the speech community. For instance, Wolfson (1981) cites an example of complimentary interaction between Japanese native speakers:

S: Your earrings are pure gold, aren't they?

A: Yes, they are. They must be pure gold when you put them on.

S: Money is a necessary condition to become attractive, indeed.

A: I think so too.

She points out that suggesting that someone's attractiveness depends on having money is very unlikely to be perceived as a compliment by native speakers of American English.

The three most commonly complimented things in American society are personal appearance, good work / ability, and new acquisitions / possessions. Regarding appearance, it is not natural beauty or attractiveness that are complimented, but aspects of personal appearance that are the results of efforts to make oneself attractive, such as a particular piece of clothing, a hairstyle, or a noticeable weight loss. It is interesting to note that compliments on personal appearance often use the verb "look" (as opposed to "be") and time markers like "today" to imply that the state is not permanent and that it may be the result of deliberate effort. Also, good work or the quality of something produced through effort or skill is also commonly complimented by Americans. In this case, the focus is placed on the result and not on the skill or talent needed to achieve such result. Finally, newness is an important value in American society. Though not complimented directly, its importance is reflected in the fact that any recent acquisition, from a new haircut to a new car, will be complimented as soon as it is noticed. Moreover, not giving a compliment in such cases may be interpreted as a sign of disapproval, or even as an insult or rejection.

Another aspect to take into account in order to understand the speech act at hand is the patterns observed in its production. Unlike what one might expect, most

compliments in American English follow specific syntactic and lexical patterns, which suggest that compliments in American society are formulaic in nature, like greetings for instance. With respect to syntax, approximately 85 percent of all compliments in the data collected by Wolfson and Manes exhibited one of the following patterns:

- NP   is/looks   (really)   ADJ   *(53.6 percent)*

- I   (really)   like/love   NP   *(16.1 percent)*

- PRO   is   (really)   (a)   ADJ   NP   *(14.9 percent)*

It can be observed that the first and third patterns use adjectives to express the positive evaluation of the speaker, while the second one uses a verb to accomplish the same. There were only six other patterns that occurred with any regularity, and together, these nine patterns accounted for about 97 percent of the corpus. From the lexical point of view, five adjectives accounted for two-thirds of the compliments that used adjectives to carry the positive evaluation: "nice" (23 percent), "good" (19 percent), "beautiful", "pretty", and "great". Similarly, in the case of compliments that used verbs, "like" and "love" accounted for almost 90 percent of the data. It was also found that the few compliments that do not use an adjective or a verb make use of either a noun or an adverb –usually "well"– to carry the positive evaluation.

With respect to the function performed by compliments in American English, they are used mainly to establish or reinforce solidarity between the speaker and the addressee. However, they can be used to give admiration or approval, to reinforce certain behaviors, to open conversations, or with other speech acts. For example, compliments are often used as a way to soften criticism, to accompany other speech act such as thanks or apologies, or either as part of or as a replacement for greeting formulas.

Understanding this last aspect is especially important for language learners because it will help them avoid misjudgments and it will better enable them to interact successfully with Americans. Since many cultures use compliments only to express admiration, learners often perceive Americans as insincere as a result of the "excessive amount of complimenting" they do. Wolfson (1981) recounts the experience of an American politician who, while visiting France, complimented his French colleague on the good job he was doing. The French were annoyed and the press attributed hidden implications to the visitor's behavior, but in fact, all he had done was what any American would do when trying to be friendly to a stranger: give a compliment.

As for the relationship between the interlocutors, it was found that most compliments are given to people of the same age and status as the speaker, and that when they are exchanged between status unequals, they are usually given by the person in the higher status. Since interactions between people of unequal status are mainly work-related, most compliments focus on the addressee's ability, and are used to encourage a desired behavior or to soften criticism. Interestingly, when the interaction takes place between people of equal status or when the speaker is of lower status than the addressee, the compliment focus will be appearance or possessions. Also, women were found to give and receive more compliments than men.

With respect to the degree of familiarity between the interlocutors, Wolfson (1988) formulated the Bulge Theory, which says that compliments are more likely to be given to acquaintances with whom the speaker wants to establish solidarity or develop a relationship, rather than to strangers or intimates.

Responding to Compliments. Being able to respond to compliments appropriately can be as crucial as knowing how and when to give compliments. Manes (1983) points out that Americans tend to face a conflict when they receive a compliment: if they agree with the speaker, they may sound conceited, whereas rejecting the compliment outright can be perceived as impolite. To avoid this conflict, they use a variety of strategies that go from responding with a simple "Thank you", through which the speaker accepts the compliment without explicitly agreeing with its content, to denying or playing down the worth of the object of the compliment without overtly denying the compliment. To achieve the latter, the speaker may deny a quality that is valued by both interlocutors, but that it is not the specific focus of the compliment. For instance, if A says, "I love your sweater", B could respond by saying, "It's really old. I've had it for ages."

Invitations

As pointed out by Wolfson (1983) learners acquire the rules for using the language communicatively from their interactions with native speakers. Thus, being able to extend and respond to invitations appropriately has a direct impact on the number of opportunities students will have to further their language learning process. An analysis of ethnographic data of invitations performed by American English native speakers carried out by Wolfson, D'Amico-Reisner, and Huber revealed that certain elements need to be present for an invitation to be perceived as such. An unambiguous ("real") invitation requires a reference to time and/or a reference to place or activity and a request for a response. For example:

- Do you want (REQUEST FOR RESPONSE) to go to the movies (ACTIVITY)

tomorrow (TIME)?

- I'm going to the beach (PLACE) tomorrow (TIME) and I was wondering if you

  wanted to come (REQUEST FOR RESPONSE)?

The reference to time and/or place or activity can appear later in the conversation, but the request for a response is always present in an invitation. Rarely, all the components of an invitation can be contained in one phrase because of the context. For example, if a good friend opens your office door around noon and says: "Lunch?"

The most common patterns used to request a response, also called "kernels" are:

- Do you   want to/wanna VP   (21.6%)

- Why   Do Neg   you/we VP   (21.6%)

- What/How   about   V-ing   NP   (11%)

- Would you   be interested in/like   VP   (8.1%)

- Let's   VP   (8.1%)

- I'd   like for   you to V   (5.4%)
                                          be delighted if   you Mod V

Another important aspect of an invitation is the "lead", that is, the preparation for the actual invitation. Wolfson et al found that leads were present in 74 percent of the corpus. Table 4 illustrates the classification of leads made in the study.

The study also showed that leads usually contain at least one of the elements of an unambiguous invitation: time or mention of place or activity. In the expressive lead, the speaker expresses a desire for a social commitment. This expression can be direct or indirect and it does not include the specifics. Almost half of the time, these leads are followed by a second lead to establish the availability of the hearer.

Table 4

Types of Leads (based on Wolfson, D'Amico-Reisner, and Huber, 1983)

Types of Leads			Examples
Expressive - *I'd (really) like/love to VP*			I'd really like to have a chance to sit down and talk to you.
Availability	Question or statement to elicit a yes/no answer	More Direct	Are you busy for dinner tonight?
		Ambiguous	Do you have a lot of work to do tonight?
	Information question	More Direct	What are you doing Saturday, May 2nd?
		Ambiguous	What time are you going to be finished?
Pseudo-kernel			Maybe we can get together for lunch one day.

As for availability leads, they can take the form of (1) a question or statement to elicit a positive or negative response or (2) an information question, both of which present varying degrees of ambiguity. The first form of availability leads can be direct enough that it is easily recognizable by the hearer and so, it starts the invitation negotiation immediately or it can be more ambiguous and not lead to an actual invitation. For example, "Do you have a lot of work to do tonight?" can be interpreted as "Will you be free tonight?" or "I'm really wondering, 'Do you have a lot of work to do tonight'?" Likewise, the second form of availability leads can also be direct or ambiguous.

Finally, pseudo-kernel leads are formulaic in nature and have some special features: they do not call for a response directly, time is always left indefinite, and the verb is often marked by the presence of "have to" or a modal auxiliary. Some of the lexical elements that are likely to appear in this kind of lead are: the words "sometime," "anytime," "soon," "definitely," and indefinite adverbial clauses beginning with "when."

For instance:

- We have to get together sometime.

- We should do something fun when finals are over.

- We should definitely get together.

All these elements give speakers cues that the lead is not likely to be followed by an unambiguous invitation. Language learners often perceive Americans as insincere because they mistake pseudo-kernel leads with unambiguous invitations, when, in fact, they are simply an expression of good intentions and a desire to further the relationship. However, pseudo-kernel leads may also function as politeness formulas, and as such, may be superficial and meaningless.

As regard to leads, it should be noted that when Americans start the negotiation process for a social commitment with a non-native speaker, they expect an appropriate response. If this is not the case, they do not pursue the issue any further because they usually assume that the non-native speaker does not want to make a social commitment with them. Unfortunately, this end result would lead to the loss of an opportunity to interact with native speakers, which would enhance the non-native speaker's communicative competence.

Also, it should be mentioned that social context has a great effect on whether or not invitations are negotiated. The negotiation process for social commitments (lead, kernel, responses, etc.) is most likely to take place between non-intimates of equal power status. However, a certain degree of familiarity, at least the same degree required to exchange first names, is a prerequisite to invitation negotiations. On the other hand, when the speakers involved are unequal in power, direct invitations are much more common

than negotiations or pseudo-kernels. Likewise, equal power intimates often use direct invitations and omit the negotiation process. Since the fear of rejection is minimal in this situation, they can request each other's company at any time or even invite themselves. For example: "Are you doing anything tonight? I thought I'd come over and we could watch a movie."

Methods and Strategies for Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is perhaps the most widely accepted approach for language instruction. This approach is deeply rooted in the idea of communicative competence. As mentioned earlier, communicative competence is composed of four categories: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural or sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence (Hymes, 1972). Grammatical competence includes the knowledge of the syntactic, lexical, phonological, and morphological aspects of the language. Discourse competence is concerned with the cohesion and coherence of utterances in discourse. Sociolinguistic competence is concerned with the appropriateness of communication depending on the context. Finally, strategic competence refers to the set of strategies that are put into use when communication fails.

As for the features of CLT, Savignon (2001) notes that the essence of the approach involves engaging the learners in communication as a means to develop their communicative competence. Also, Finocchiaro and Brumfit (as cited in Brown, 2001) published a comprehensive list of the features of CLT as part of a comparison between the audiolingual method and the communicative approach. Some of the features

mentioned in their list that are particularly relevant to the present project include: (a)

meaning is paramount, (b) learning languages is equivalent to learning to communicate,

(c) the goal of instruction is to achieve communicative competence, (d) fluency and

appropriate language use are sought, (e) any device that helps learners is accepted, (f)

contextualization is essential, (g) learners interact with other people, (h) translation may

be used if needed or beneficial, (i) drilling may occur but peripherally, (j) learners create

language by trial and error, (k) intrinsic motivation will result from an interest in the

content being communicated by the language (in the case of this project, that "content"

would be the understanding of the speech act behavior of Americans, as well as the

reasons behind that behavior.)

In addition, Brown (2001) affirms that CLT instruction is learner-centered, and it

involves cooperative and interactive learning, as well as content-based and task-based

learning. Also, Nunan (1991) suggests that there are certain characteristics that define

instruction based on the CLT approach. First, there should be an emphasis on learning by

interactions in the target language. Second, instruction should include authentic materials.

Third, learners should be given the opportunity to focus on the learning process itself.

Fourth, learners' personal experiences should be viewed and utilized as important

elements to the learning process. Fifth, learners should be encouraged and motivated to

use the language outside the classroom.

Computer-Assisted Language Learning

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) refers to the use of the computer

in language teaching and learning. The field is definitely interdisciplinary in nature, with

major contributions from the fields of second language acquisition, instructional

technology, psychology, and computational linguistics. As a result of this, there is a

relative lack of a "coherent set of principles for examining past work and plotting fruitful

directions" (Chapelle 2001). Levy (1997) also pointed out that relying exclusively on

knowledge from other fields may lead to misconceptions in research and erroneous

conclusions.

Notwithstanding the above, a number of authors have attempted to give guidelines

for the development and evaluation of CALL materials. Levy (1997) suggests the

following factors should be taken into account: (a) language learning philosophy and

teaching methodology, (b) role of the computer, (c) point of departure, and (d) role of the

teacher. It seems obvious that the language learning philosophy and the teaching

methodology favored by the instructional designer will greatly affect all aspects of the

instructional product. The computer can be used as a tutor, in which case the teaching

methodology will be built into the instructional design and the teacher is left to play a

marginal role, or as a tool, in which case the teacher plays a major role, and external

factors determine to a great extent the success or failure of the program. As for the point

of departure, it may be as varied as a strategy or a macroskill to be acquired, a particular

classroom problem, an exploration of aspects of technology itself, etc.

Also, Chapelle (1998) suggests several elements to be considered in the

development of multimedia CALL: (a) the linguistic characteristics of the input should be

noted so as to achieve "input enhancement," (b) learners should be provided with help to

understand semantic and syntactic aspects of the linguistic input, (c) learners should be

given opportunities to communicate, (d) learners should be able to recognize their errors

and correct them, (e) learners should engage in tasks designed to maximize opportunities for interaction.

Instructional Theory Review

The design of the present instructional project and the process of creating the instruction were based on Gagne's "nine events of instruction" and Dick and Carey's systems approach model, respectively. Also, Keller's ARCS model for motivational design was used as the motivational strategy.

Principles of Instructional Design

Gagne's theory of instruction (Gagne, 1979, Gagne, Briggs, and Wager, 1992) contains three main elements: a taxonomy of learning outcomes, conditions for achieving such outcomes, and events of instruction that can be used as a guide for developing units of instruction. The taxonomy of learning outcomes identifies five categories of learning: (1) verbal information, such as memorized facts, concepts, etc., (2) intellectual skills, which include discrimination, classification of concrete concepts and abstract concepts, rules, and higher order rules, (3) cognitive strategies, (4) motor skills, and (5) attitudes. As for the conditions of learning, they can be internal or external and they vary by outcome. External conditions are those arranged during instruction by the teacher or instructional designer, while internal conditions refer to the skills learners have already mastered. Finally, there are nine events of instruction: (1) gaining attention, (2) informing learners of the objective, (3) stimulating recall of prior learning, (4) presenting the stimulus, (5) providing learning guidance, (6) eliciting performance, (7) providing feedback, (8) assessing performance, and (9) enhancing retention and transfer.

Design and Development Process

The systems approach model (Dick, Carey, and Carey, 2001) is based on the concept that instruction is a systematic process. The model describes a series of nine steps to guide the design and development of instruction: (1) determining instructional goals, that is, what learners will be able to do when they have completed the instruction, (2) conducting an instructional analysis, (3) analyzing learners and contexts, (4) writing performance objectives, that is, specific behavior skills to be learned, the conditions under which they must be performed and the criteria for successful performance, (5) developing assessment instruments, (6) developing an instructional strategy, (7) developing instructional materials, (8) designing and conducting formative evaluation, and (9) conducting summative evaluation .

As noted in the discussion about Communicative Language Learning, motivation is an essential component of L2 learning. For this reason, it seemed appropriate to take into account the strategies laid out in Keller's ARCS model for motivational design (Keller 1999). ARCS stands for attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. Keller suggests that these motivation components, along with their corresponding strategies, need to be present in the instruction to obtain a motivational learning outcome. In order to stimulate motivation, instruction should strive to: (a) gain and sustain attention by using novel or unexpected approaches and techniques that involve students in problem solving, and by varying the instructional presentation, (b) enhance relevance by showing learners how the instruction relates to their needs and goals and building on learners' previous experiences, (c) build confidence by creating positive expectations for success, empowering students to attain challenging goals to have a certain degree of control over

their own learning, and finally (d) generate satisfaction by providing opportunities for learners to use their new skills and by praising their progress.

Conclusion

To sum up, the design of this project took into account existing research on the specific subject matter, speech acts, as well as current methods and strategies for second language teaching and principles of instructional design theory. The following chapter, Project Description, takes a closer look at the lessons themselves and at the different activities they contain.

CHAPTER 3: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

In this chapter, I describe the instructional materials produced as part of this project. I begin by describing the context and the audience for the lessons. Then, I present the instructional objectives and specific learner outcomes this project aims to achieve. After that, I give a brief explanation about the content and the sources of information, followed by the scope and sequence of the lessons. Finally, I offer a summary of the lessons' structure and screens, including the introduction, presentation, practice, evaluation, and help screens. No attempts are made in this chapter to delineate the changes made to the prototype's design since a description of the evaluation methods and results, as well as references to major subsequent changes are included in Chapter 5.

Context

The present project is a storyboard for lessons that will be part of the TALL program. These lessons will be developed by the TALL team and delivered as a complement to Levels 4 and 5 of the TALL instructional program. As a result of the above, the design of the lessons was largely determined by the nature, characteristics, and capabilities of the TALL program. Evidently, the delivery method of the instruction was determined by the nature of the TALL engine. Also, since the lessons are not likely to be consecutive, each speech act is presented in a self-contained unit.

The activities included in the instruction were selected taking into account the capabilities of the TALL software, as well as preferences of the target audience and

principles of the CLT approach. An effort was made to create the lessons as learner-centered as possible under the circumstances. In order to accommodate for different learning styles and strategies, lessons try to always combine visual and auditory input, as well as a variety of activities. The instructional materials also promote cooperation and interaction between participants, and encourage them to complete tasks and produce authentic language in situations that they are likely to encounter in the real world.

Brief Overview of TALL

TALL stands for Technology Assisted Language Learning and refers to a computer software application that was developed at the Provo Missionary Training Center for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. It has been used for several years to teach Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, English, and Russian to over 10,000 learners, as part of a system that also includes classroom instruction and opportunities to interact with native speakers of the target language (Elzinga, 2000).

The newer version of TALL, which is currently being developed and implemented, is a flexible, adaptive program that gathers performance data and alters student progression through the instructional material in order to maximize learning. The TALL software tools support a wide range of activities: from simple activities, such as fill-in-the blanks, multiple-choice, and matching, to more complex activities like simulations, collaborative activities, instructional videos, and voice recording –the latter being extremely important given that the current version of the program does not have voice recognition capabilities.

Audience

The intended audience for the lessons that are described in this project is adult learners of English as a second or foreign language who are literate in their native language and have at least an intermediate level of proficiency in English as measured on the ACTFL scale (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 1986). Since the lessons are completely based on research on American English speech behavior, users should be aware that some of the patterns of speech act use may be different for members of other speech communities, such as Australians, British, South Africans, etc.

After identifying the target audience, it was necessary to find out their perceptions about the need for the project and their preferred type of instruction. As part of this audience analysis, a profile questionnaire (see Appendix A) was administered to a sample of the target audience. Eighteen people, aged twenty-two to thirty-six, participated in this survey. All of them were either acquaintances of the designer or acquaintances of other participants of the survey. Eight of the participants were Latin, two were from the Middle East, four were Asian, and four were European. As for their experience in the target culture, they had been living in the United States between one and six years, 3 years being the average length of stay in the country.

According to the results most participants (90%) admitted having problems when it comes to using effective strategies to request or invite. Some said they felt ignored by Americans, which could be due to the fact that people tend to avoid socializing with those whom they consider rude or poor communicators in other ways. When asked if they had ever felt Americans were rude or insincere, a significant portion of the participants (66%) answered affirmatively. An interesting note is that most of the examples given seem to

indicate that learners do not understand how Americans actually use the language to communicate, and they fail to recognize their bad experiences as communication problems rather than flaws in Americans' characters. Also, eighty percent of participants expressed interest in learning more about how to interact effectively with Americans. Ten percent responded they might be interested and the other ten percent said they were not interested at all.

As for the target audience's preferred type of instruction, the results show that the most popular features or activities were interactive activities, explanations, and videos, followed closely by simulations and role-plays. Fill-in-the blank and multiple choice exercises were by far the least popular. The questionnaire also revealed that most of the participants preferred to learn by observing demonstrations or examples and by "doing." The latter means that students learn to communicate effectively by attempting to communicate and learning from their successful attempts, as well as from their mistakes.

In addition to the aforementioned questionnaire, the designer reviewed existing TALL data in order to gain a better understanding of its current and past audiences. According to this information, which was gathered from questionnaires and focus groups during previous TALL implementations, users particularly liked collaborative activities with peers and native speakers, dialogs, songs and chants, videos, interactive activities, and clear and detailed instructions. Learners also expressed the need for some explanations and praised the variety of activities found in the TALL program.

Objectives

General Instructional Objectives:

- Help learners gain a deeper understanding of American English pragmatics rules as applied to the speech acts of request, apology, compliment, and invitation.

- Enable learners to use said rules in their interactions with native speakers, so that they may be able to respond to requests, apologies, compliments, and invitations in a way that seems polite to the average native speaker and to produce these speech acts effectively and in appropriate pragmatic contexts.

Specific Learner Outcomes:

- Recognize an apology and respond appropriately

- Recognize situations in which it is necessary to apologize

- Produce apologies appropriately, using different strategies according to the severity of the offense and the relationship between parts involved

- Recognize different types of requests and respond appropriately

- Use the appropriate type of request and modification strategy according to the degree of imposition and the relationship between participants

- Recognize compliments and respond appropriately

- Recognize opportunities to compliment, according to the different functions performed by compliments in American English

- Perform compliments appropriately, taking into account the social context

- Recognize the different types of leads to invitations and respond appropriately

- Recognize actual invitations and respond appropriately

- Produce leads to invitations and invitations appropriately, taking into account the social context

Content

The content of the lessons is mainly based on existing research on speech acts. As mentioned in the review of literature, the work of several authors was taken into account. In most cases, findings by one author supported or expanded on findings of previous studies, thus, corroborating the adequacy and usefulness of the studies involved. The information about compliments and invitations was taken from research work done specifically on speech acts in American English. The data used to create the lessons on apologies and requests was taken predominantly from cross-cultural research. As a result, it was necessary to isolate the information that referred to American English in particular. In the case of apologies, the relative lack of material made it necessary to conduct surveys to collect data to be used in the lessons.

Two surveys were conducted for apologies: a simple questionnaire and a series of discourse completion tasks. The purpose of these surveys was to find out native speakers' perceptions about the degree of severity of certain offenses and how they would apologize after committing those offenses. Survey forms were sent through email to acquaintances of the researcher who, in turn, forwarded those emails to their acquaintances. Participants were native speakers of American English and were located mainly in California, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Utah, and the Washington D.C. area.

In the questionnaire participants were asked to rate situations according to the degree of severity of the offense portrayed in them. There were six degrees of seriousness, one being "not very serious" and six being "very serious." Thirty-eight

people participated in this survey, and as it was expected, each situation was assigned

degrees that varied within a range of two to three numbers (see Appendix B.) For

example, for the first situation most participants chose a degree of severity between three

and five.

The discourse completion tasks included a brief description of the situation

designed to elicit a response on the part of the participants. Twenty-three people

responded to this survey. For each task, most of the responses included similar strategies

or parts of the apology (see Appendix C.)

Scope and Sequence

The project includes the following speech acts: requests, apologies, compliments,

and invitations. These were chosen because they are face-threatening and/or because they

can lead to misunderstandings that may result in unwillingness to engage in future

interactions. In both cases, the lack of appropriate recognition or performance of the

speech act on the part of non-native speakers may hinder communication, limit

opportunities to become integrated to American society, and thus, have a negative impact

on their language development process.

There are four lessons, each of which will focus on a specific speech act.

Lesson One: Apologies

- Situations that require apologies
- Parts of an apology
    - o Possible parts
    - o Uses according to:

- - - Degrees of formality

  - - Severity of the offense

- Responding to apologies

  - Acceptance

  - Non-acceptance

- Other uses of "I'm sorry"

Lesson Two: Requests

- Types of requests

  - Role of familiarity and power in choice of request strategy

- Perceived degree of imposition

- Modification strategies

  - Types of modification

  - Uses according to:

    - Degree of imposition

    - Relationship between participants

- Responses

  - Granting the request

  - Refusing to grant the request

Lesson Three: Compliments

- Functions of compliments in American English

- What to compliment

- Role of relationship between participants

- Role of gender

- Language used for compliments

    o Most common structures

    o Most common adjectives

- Responding to compliments

    o Accepting (thanking)

    o Playing it down

Lesson Four: Invitations

- Leads ("Introductions to invitations")

    o Types of leads

    o Role of relationship between participants (power, familiarity)

    o Common structures/language used

- Pseudo-kernel Leads ("Non-invitations")

    o Characteristics

    o Common structures/language used

- "Real" invitation

    o Elements

    o Language used

- Responding to invitations

    o Accepting

    o Declining

        ▪ Apology

        ▪ Explanation

Lesson Structure

Introduction Screens

On the first screen students will see a video depicting a conversation where either the speech act in question or the response to it is performed inappropriately. This is meant to motivate learners who might think they already know how to perform speech acts in a native-like manner.

On the next screen, learners see the agent, Nathan, who introduces himself and explains the problems with the production of the speech act shown in the previous video. He continues by presenting advance organizers.. As he speaks, bullet points appear on the screen. Also, the agent recommends students to follow the organization of the lesson, but informs them they will be able to access any of the modules by clicking on the corresponding bullet point. He then explains how to get to that screen at any time during the lesson, as well as what students have to do if they need help. As he talks about the different buttons involved, a pointing hand appears next to them. None of the other options in the navigational bar are explained as learners are already familiar with them because by the time they get to the speech act lessons they will have seen many other TALL lessons. It is worth noting that the agent is used as a motivator, so that students can visualize the "voice" they will hear throughout the instruction.

Presentation Screens

The presentation screens are designed to provide learners with an understanding of the functions of the speech act in the L2 community, as well as of the way the L2 community produces and responds to that speech act. In this section, learners exercise mostly receptive skills, but there are some screens where learners perform certain tasks

intended to check comprehension, encourage analysis, or make the presentation of the material more interactive.

The presentation section starts by asking one or two questions that encourage learners to think about the specific speech act in their culture so they can link their L1 pragmatic knowledge to the new information that will be presented in the lesson. After that, there are several screens where the agent gives explanations and examples, and in some instances asks more questions to help the students compare and contrast the American pragmatic rules being taught with those of their own communities (see Fig. 1.) All the explanations and examples are presented both in audio and text format to cater to the needs of different types of learners.

Figure 1. Screen shot of an example of an explanation screen.

In addition to this type of screens, there are screens where learners have to classify situations and they do so by guessing and using trial and error. The explanation in this case is given in the feedback they receive immediately after classifying each situation (see Figure 2.)
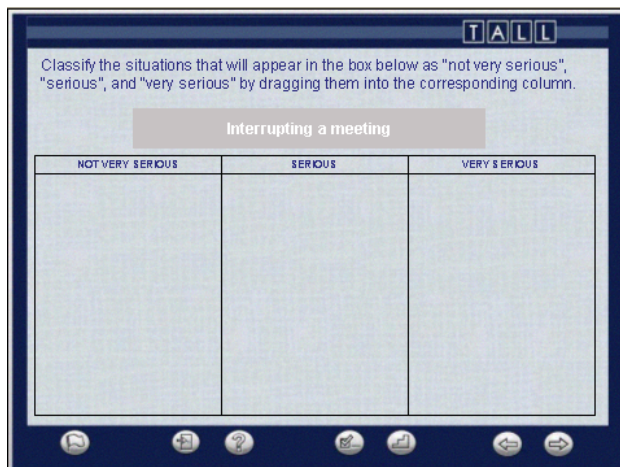
Figure 2. Screen shot of an explanation screen with a classification exercise.

Next, there are six to twelve screens with video segments (see Figure 3,) each followed by two to three screens containing short exercises geared toward helping learners analyze the situations depicted in the videos (see Figure 4.) Feedback with explanation is given as soon as students finish each screen. In the case of exercises where students have to rate a situation or a speech act, the feedback appears as a range of possible options, since there is not just one correct answer (see Figures 4 and 5.)
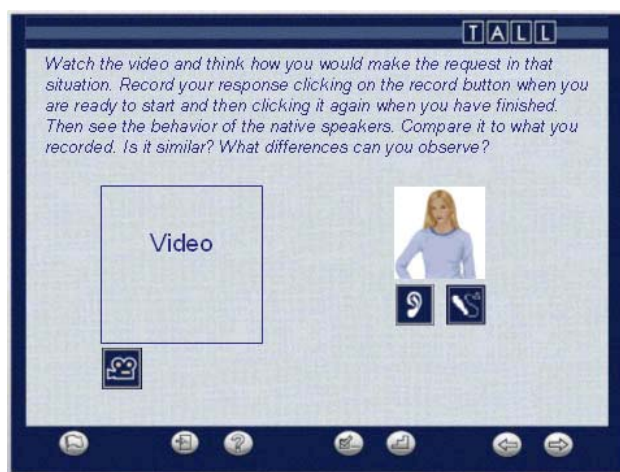
Figure 3. Screen shot of a video screen.
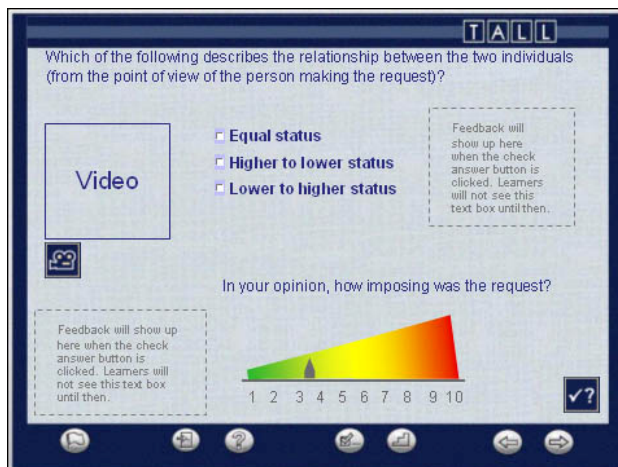
Figure 4. Screen shot of a video exercise screen.

Every three video segments, there is a screen that compares the three previous situations, so that learners can further analyze the elements involved in the situations as well as the speech acts produced under those conditions (see Figure 5.)
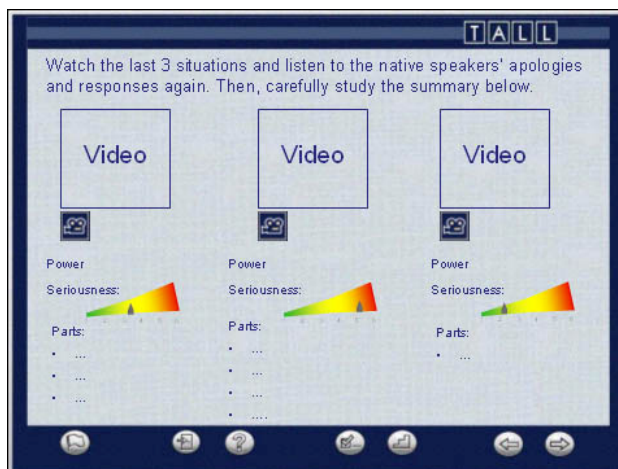
Figure 5. Screen shot of a video summary screen.

Practice Screens

A variety of activities and screens comprise the practice section. There are dialogs, matching exercises, classification/recognition exercises, dialog completion

exercises, written exercises, simulations, and collaborative activities, such as guided

conversations and free conversations. The activities are sequenced so that learners go

from exercises that are more structured and are intended to reinforce what students saw

during the presentation of the material or test students' understanding and ability to

recognize certain elements to exercises that are more communicative and require students

to apply what they learned in order to produce and respond to speech acts.

In the dialog screens (see Figure 6,) learners have the opportunity to observe what

they saw in the presentation applied to a conversation and to practice that conversation.

First learners listen to a dialog and then they can record themselves saying the lines of

either one of the participants. They have the option of recording their voice at different

speeds and listening to the "new" dialogs until they are satisfied with their rate of speech

and their pronunciation. Also, students can click on words or sentences they do not

understand and see their translation on a display next to the dialog.

Figure 6. Screen shot of dialog screen.

The matching exercises (see Figure 7) come directly after the dialogs. In these

exercises, learners have to match phrases or sentences taken from the dialogs with their

corresponding purpose or function. These exercises intend to test learners' ability to

recognize the purpose or functions perform by the different parts of the speech act.
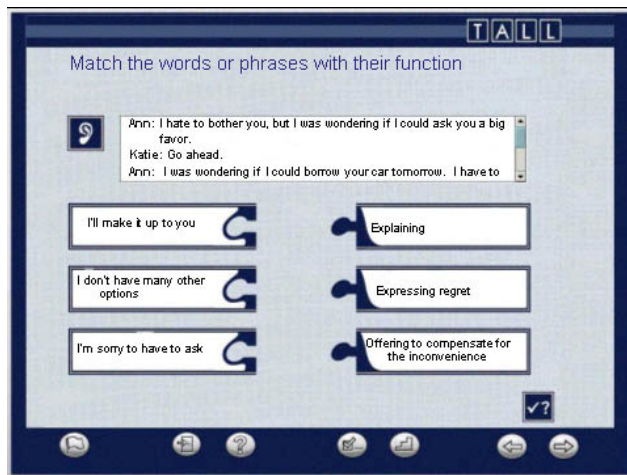
Figure 7. Screen shot of a matching exercise.

In the next type of screen (see Figure 8,) learners have to recognize or classify

elements, expressions, or situations by clicking on one of the categories next to those

expressions or situations. Again, the purpose of these exercises is to test students'

knowledge.
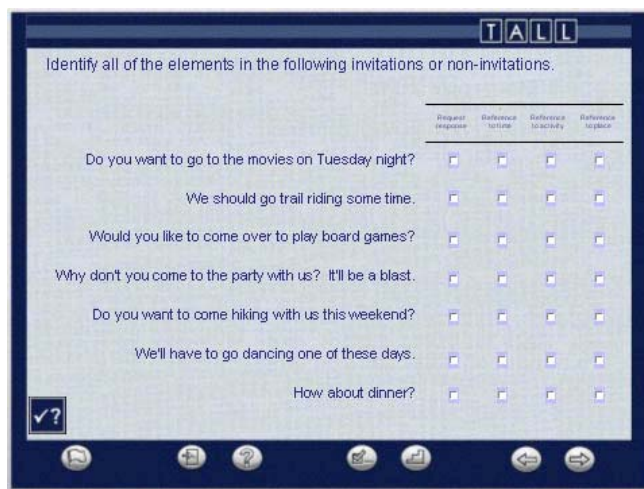
Figure 8. Screen shot of classification exercise.

In the simulations (see Figure 9,) learners are presented with a situation and have to respond to it by selecting one of the choices provided. That choice will lead to a consequence and once again, they will have the chance to choose. That choice, in turn will have a consequence, and so on. The situations and consequences will be presented by short video segments, which, when possible, will be shot from the viewer's perspective so as to make him or her feel part of the scene. In addition, learners will have the chance to go back and see the result of having selected other options. Clearly, simulations aim at testing students' ability to recognize appropriate instances of speech act performance and at giving learners further opportunities to see the practical application of what they studied during the presentation of the material.
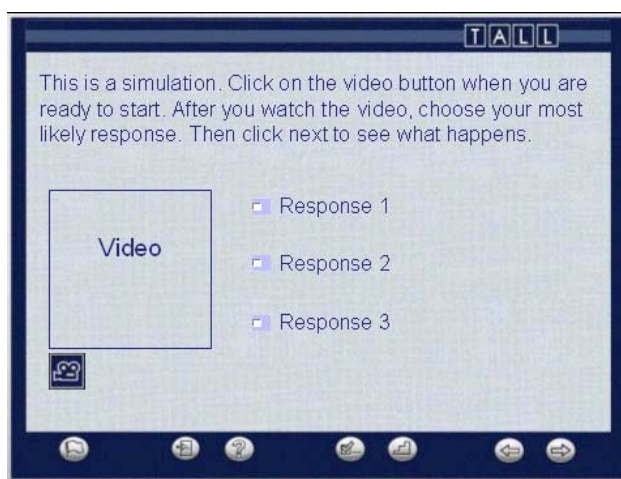
Figure 9. Screen shot of a simulation screen.

In the written exercises (see Figure 10) learners are given a situation and they have to produce the appropriate speech act. They are asked to write what they would say without having any clue as to what they should say. Once they have finished the activity, they can compare their answers against a model. Some guiding questions are provided to make sure students look at the right elements when they compare. These exercises are

designed to help learners start producing the speech act in question. They are written so
that students will have more time to think what they want to say and so that when they
compare their answer against the model, they can visualize their work and see what they
need to improve.
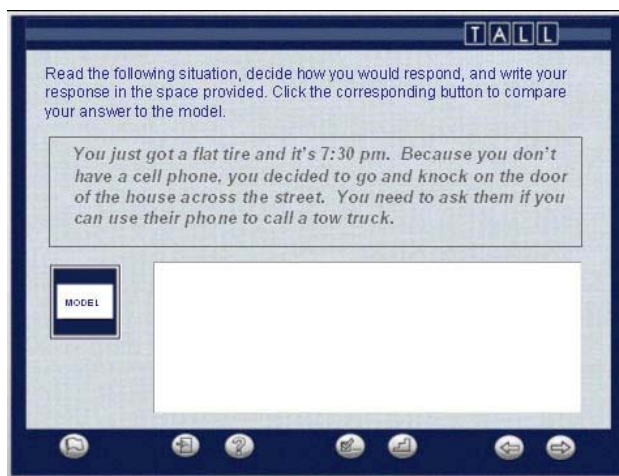
Figure 10. Screen shot of a written exercise.
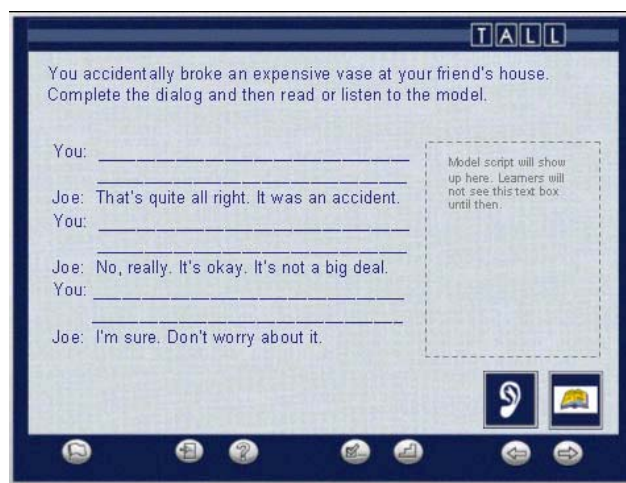
Figure 11. Screen shot of dialog completion exercise.

The dialog completion exercises (see Figure 11,) are similar to the written
exercises in that learners are given a situation and are instructed to respond to it. They are

also designed to help learners in the early stages of appropriate speech act production. In this case, they can see the lines corresponding to their interlocutor, which gives them clues of what to say. They have to write their own lines so as to create a coherent dialog. After they write their part, they can compare their answers against a model, which they can read or hear. Again, some guiding questions are provided to make sure students look at the right elements when they compare.

Finally, there are two kinds of collaborative exercises. Collaborative activities are already a part of the TALL program. In them, the program connects two students who have similar levels of proficiency and who are at about the same point in the lesson through the internet. Students do not decide when they will do a collaborative activity because it depends on who else is online at the same time. However, the program will only connect students who have completed certain parts of the instruction and are ready to participate. The first type of collaborative exercises, guided conversations, requires learners to interact with a peer and carry out a conversation by following the steps outlined in the instructions (see Figures 12 and 13.) Even though these exercises are definitely productive, they include cues that students can follow through the conversation. The purpose of those cues is to build learners' confidence before they are required to engage in free speech act production. In the second type, learners are given situations and roles and are asked to role play with a peer (see Figure 14.) There are several situations from which they can choose. Students are also asked to rate their own performance and their peer's performance according to a rubric. This rubric is a simplified version of the rubric that will be used by the tutor when he or she evaluates learners' progress.
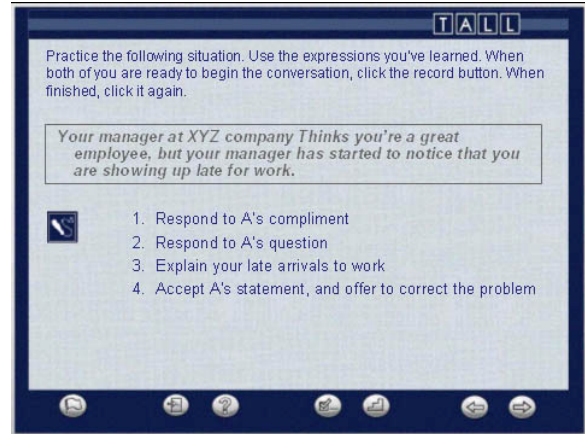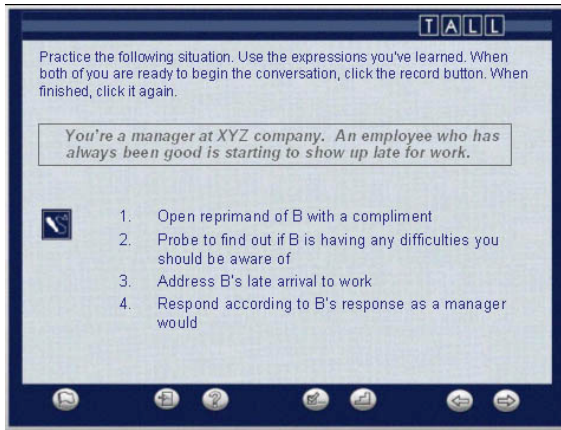
Figures 12 and 13. Screen shots of a guided dialog exercise.
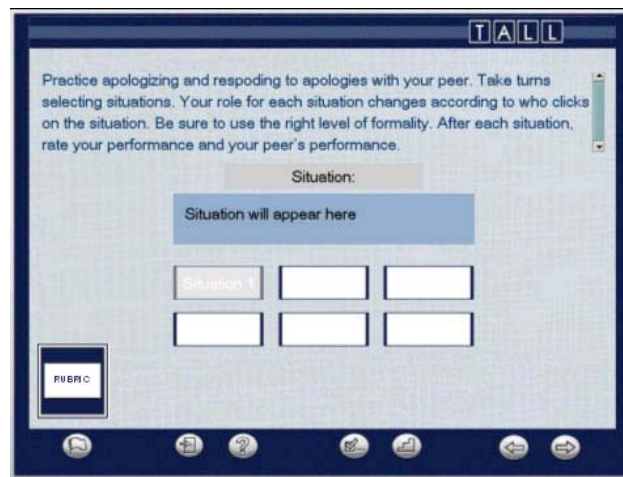
Figure 14. Screen shot of a free collaborative exercise.

Evaluation Screens

In the evaluation section, tutors and learners interact via the internet. Tutors are

able to choose situations to role play with students by dragging them and dropping them

in the situation box (see Figure 15.) Tutor screens also have four buttons to indicate

learners to start role playing, stop, discuss their performance, and prepare for the task.

Tutors are provided with a rubric so that they can assess student performance according

to the criteria shown in it.
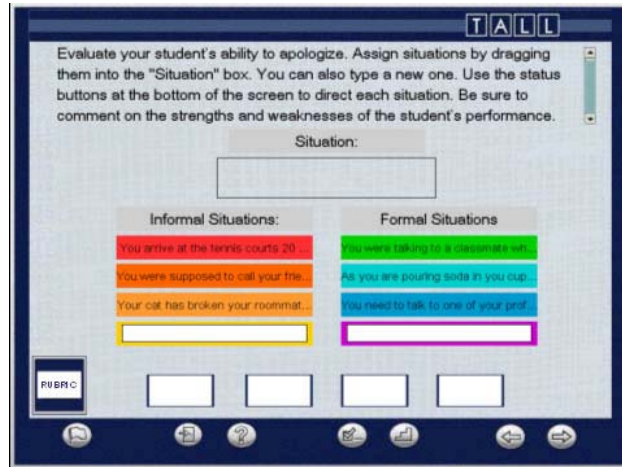
Figure 15. Screen shot of an evaluation screen for tutors.

Learner screens, on the other hand, have only two boxes: a situation box, which shows the situation selected by the tutor, and the status box, which shows what he or she should do next (see Figure 16.)

Figure 16. Screen shot of an evaluation screen for learners.

Help Screens

Help screens are available to learners throughout the instruction. Some of these screens contain common expressions and language studied in the presentation stages (see Figure 17.) Others are chat screens where learners can contact tutors with their questions. Learners also have the option of sending emails to tutors if none of them are online at that time (see Figure 18.)

Figure 17. Screen shot of a help screen.
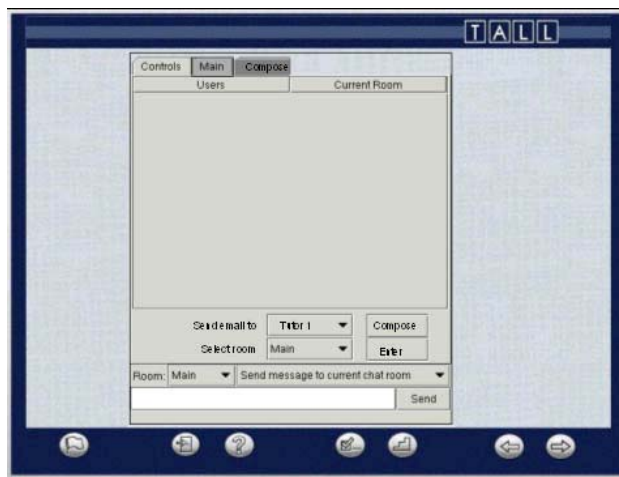
Figure 18. Screen shot of a "chat room" help screen.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the goal of the instructional materials is to help learners gain a deeper understanding of the speech acts of request, apology, compliment, and invitation in American English pragmatics and to enable them to appropriately use and respond to those speech acts in their interactions with native speakers. However, this project is not intended to be all inclusive, but to provide examples of authentic interactions as a trigger for learners to acquire more. Given the facts that the scope of this project is limited to a few speech acts and that students will face an almost infinite number of L2 interactions in their every day activities, it would be naïve to even attempt to recreate all of them in an instructional course. Therefore, the idea behind this course is to make students aware of the existence of pragmatic functions and to train them to become "astute and consistent people-watchers" (Hinkel 2001) so that in the future they will be able to distinguish culturally determined linguistic behaviors in their interactions with native speakers.

This chapter dealt with the project as a whole, including mostly characteristics that applied to all the lessons. The description of the various activities and screens was done in a generic manner. The next chapter contains the prototype for apologies, and thus, it offers a more accurate idea of how a lesson flows.

CHAPTER 4: APOLOGIES PROTOTYPE

This chapter presents the prototype for apologies. As mentioned earlier, it is comprised of five sections: introduction, presentation, practice, evaluation, and help. In the introduction, the agent who will guide learners through the lesson introduces himself and gives a brief description of what to expect. The presentation stage includes explanations, interactive activities, video segments, and video activities that allow learners to become acquainted with the instructional content. In the practice stage, learners work on a variety of activities aimed at helping them review and solidify the concepts they saw during the presentation stage. These activities include dialogs, dialog and discourse completion exercises, classification exercises, one simulation activity, and two types of collaborative activities: guided practices and free communication activities. The evaluation stage is designed to allow tutors to assess learners' performance and understanding of the pragmatic rules behind the use of apologies. Finally, the help screens are available to learners throughout the various stages of the lesson.

When reading the prototype, it should be noted that the agent's narration and the examples that will be presented in audio format appear in italics, while the designer's notes to the developers appear in regular font.

Introduction

APOLOGIES

Figure 19. Screen shot of an introductory video screen - Apologies

Conversation:

Jeff: Alex, do you still have the pen that I lent to you?

Alex: No Jeff. I am sorry. Someone took it from my desk when I was at lunch.

Jeff: That was a gift from my wife when I graduated college. You have no idea where it is?

Alex: No. But don't worry. I'm sure it will show up shortly.

Figure 20. Screen shot of an introduction screen - Apologies

The bullet points will be links to the corresponding sections. After the agent finishes, he will give learners the choice to follow to the next section or to jump to the desired selection of sections.

<u>Agent:</u>

Hello, my name is Nathan and I'm going to walk you through this lesson. As you saw in the previous video, language learners are likely to make mistakes when they apologize. That is because, apologizing includes at lot more than just knowing the right words. In this particular case, they apology is inappropriate. Because of the unique nature of the pen, this was a serious offense. A simple "I'm sorry" it's not enough. To offer an acceptable apology, you need to be much more apologetic, and you need to start doing something immediately to rectify the situation.

As you can imagine, this is not the only problem that can arise when we apologize in a second language because the elements involved in an apology often vary from culture to culture. In this lesson, you will learn about apologies in American culture. That means you will learn to recognize situations that require an apology, to apologize appropriately, and to politely respond when some offers you an apology. How do you do all these things in your culture? What kind of situations require an apology in your country? How do people apologize? Think about that for a second.

Now, we will start this lesson by looking at when Americans apologize. We will also consider the seriousness of the offense and the formality of the situation. Then we will see how apologies vary according to these two factors. Finally, there will be a series of activities that you'll need to complete individually and with a peer. If you need help at any time during the instruction or the exercises, just click on the question mark button and you will have the option to see a list of useful expressions. You will also have the option to ask a tutor for help. If there aren't any tutors online, you can email them your questions. They might not answer immediately, but they **will** *answer.*

I recommend you study the material in the order it is presented. To do this, use the next and back buttons to go to the next screen or to the previous screen if you need to review something. However, if you would like to skip a section of the lesson or if at some point you want to review previous sections, you may click on the ladder button to see these bullet points. Then you can click on any of them to go directly to the corresponding section.

Presentation
APOLOGIES

Figure 21. Screen shot of a presentation screen - When to apologize

Bulleted list will appear as the agent speaks (synchronized.)

Agent:

It is difficult to know exactly when to apologize, but in general Americans apologize when they have done something that hurts or inconveniences another person. They may apologize for:

•Damaging someone's property or taking it by mistake,

•Ruining someone's work accidentally (for example, deleting a file, spilling coffee on a report or drawing, etc.) ,

•Being rude or impolite,

•Hurting someone's feelings,

•Causing a misunderstanding,

•Missing or being late for a class, meeting, appointment, etc.,

•Telling a secret or confidential information accidentally,

•Calling someone early in the morning or late at night,

•Interrupting a conversation or meeting,

•Asking for a favor when it will mean an inconvenience to the other person,

•Invading someone's personal space by bumping into them or hitting them accidentally,

•Dialing the wrong number on the phone.

Remember that Americans also apologize when an offense is caused by some person or animal for whom they are responsible.
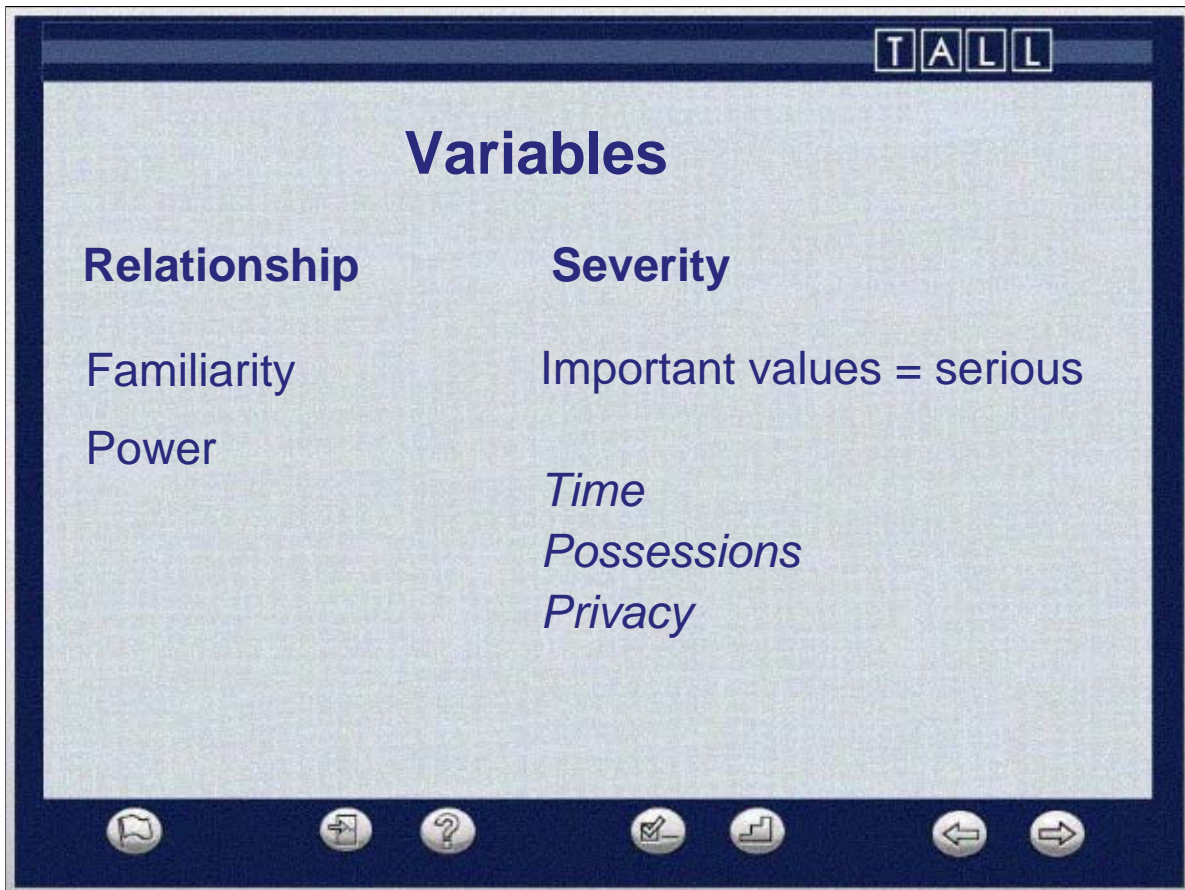
Figure 22. Screen shot of an explanation screen -Variables

Title and list will appear as the agent speaks (synchronized.)

Agent:

Apologies **vary** depending on the **seriousness** of the offense and the **relationship** between the people involved. For instance, the more serious the offense or the more formal the situation or both, the more elaborate the apology will be.

Let's start with the relationship between the people involved. There are two aspects to take into account: the familiarity, that is how much they know each other, and the power that one has over the other one. For example, if the two people involved are classmates, they have the same power because they are equals, but if one is a professor and the other one is his student, the first one is in a position of power compared to the latter.

Next, let's talk about how to evaluate the severity of an offense. In general, offenses that affect values that are important to Americans are considered to be serious. For example, Americans value time, possession, and privacy a great deal, so wasting someone's time, ruining someone's property, or invading someone's privacy are serious offenses. Now let's look at specific offenses and evaluate their severity.
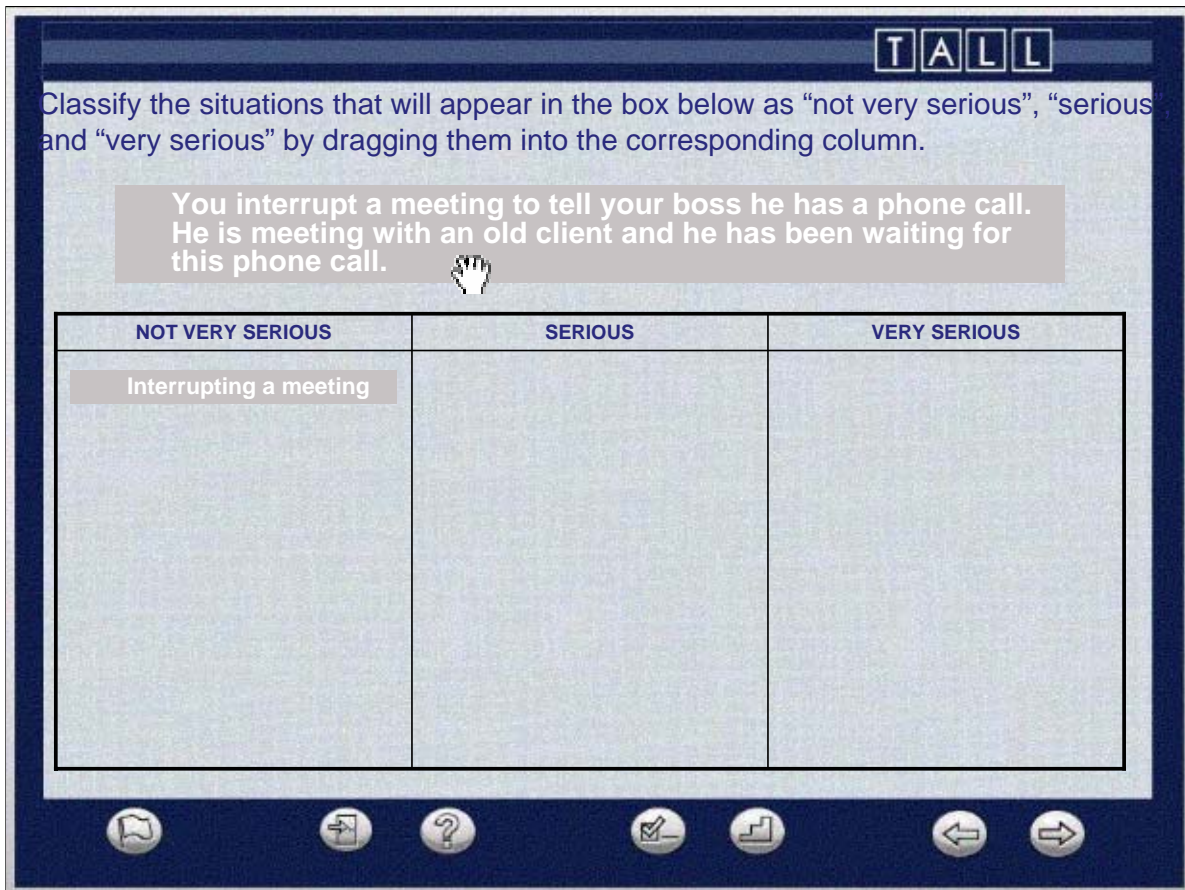
Figure 23. Screen shot of a presentation screen –Situation classification exercise

(A survey was conducted among 7 TALL employees. The same survey was administered later to a group of 19 people. The suggested feedback agrees with the findings of both surveys.)

Learners will have two opportunities to drag the situation to the correct place. If they are not successful after the second time, they will see the correct answer and a pop-up message box with feedback (e.g. "Interrupting a meeting is quite common in the workplace and other settings. Therefore, as long as it is for valid reasons, most Americans consider this to be a NOT VERY SERIOUS offense.")

If they place it correctly, they will see a pop-up message box that says: "Good job" + feedback (e.g. "Good job! Interrupting a meeting is quite common in the workplace and other settings. Therefore, as long as it is for valid reasons, most Americans consider this to be a NOT VERY SERIOUS offense.")

Other situations that will appear on the box:

A friend arranged to meet you in order to get some notes from you to study for an exam. She waited for an hour but you didn't show up because you forgot about it.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider missing an appointment to be a VERY SERIOUS offense. Since time is very valuable to Americans, wasting someone's time is a very serious offense.)

You and your friend are visiting his or her family during spring break. You tell one of your friend's relatives about the person he or she is dating. Your friend gets mad at you.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider telling confidential information to be a SERIOUS offense. Of course, it depends a lot on the nature of the information revealed, but most Americans place great value on their privacy.)

You are running to catch a bus. You unintentionally bump into an older man.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider this to be a NOT VERY SERIOUS offense. Of course, if it results in a serious injury, it would be considered more serious.)

You lost your temper yesterday and said some angry words to a coworker. Among other things, you said she did not do a very good job.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider being rude or hurting someone's feelings to be a VERY SERIOUS offense.)

You accidentally deleted your roommate's research paper from the computer you share. He/she had been working on it for 3 weeks. The paper is due in another week.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider ruining someone's work to be a VERY SERIOUS offense. The time devoted to do something is very valuable, as is the work itself.)

You dial the wrong number on the phone early in the morning.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider this to be a NOT VERY SERIOUS offense, especially because they usually don't know the person on the other end of the line.)

You accidentally backed into your friend's car. From what you can see, it will cost at least $500 to repair the damage.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider damaging someone's property to be a VERY SERIOUS offense. Possessions are very important to Americans and a lot of people are very careful of their possessions.)

You are 10 minutes late for a doctor's appointment.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider being late to be a SERIOUS offense, mainly because time is very valuable to them and being late usually affects someone else's time.)

You unintentionally took your friend's pen because it looks very similar to yours.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider this to be a NOT VERY SERIOUS offense because when this happens the person usually returns the property and apologizes.)

You call your neighbor at 10:30 PM to ask him about the time of the neighborhood meeting the next day.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider this a SERIOUS offense. By doing this, the person disturbs someone else's personal life.)

You ask your friend to give you a ride to a town that is 50 minutes away because you have an interview for a summer internship there.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans consider asking for a favor when it will mean an inconvenience to the other person to be rather SERIOUS. Even though this isn't a real offense, Americans expect an apology from the person requesting the favor.)
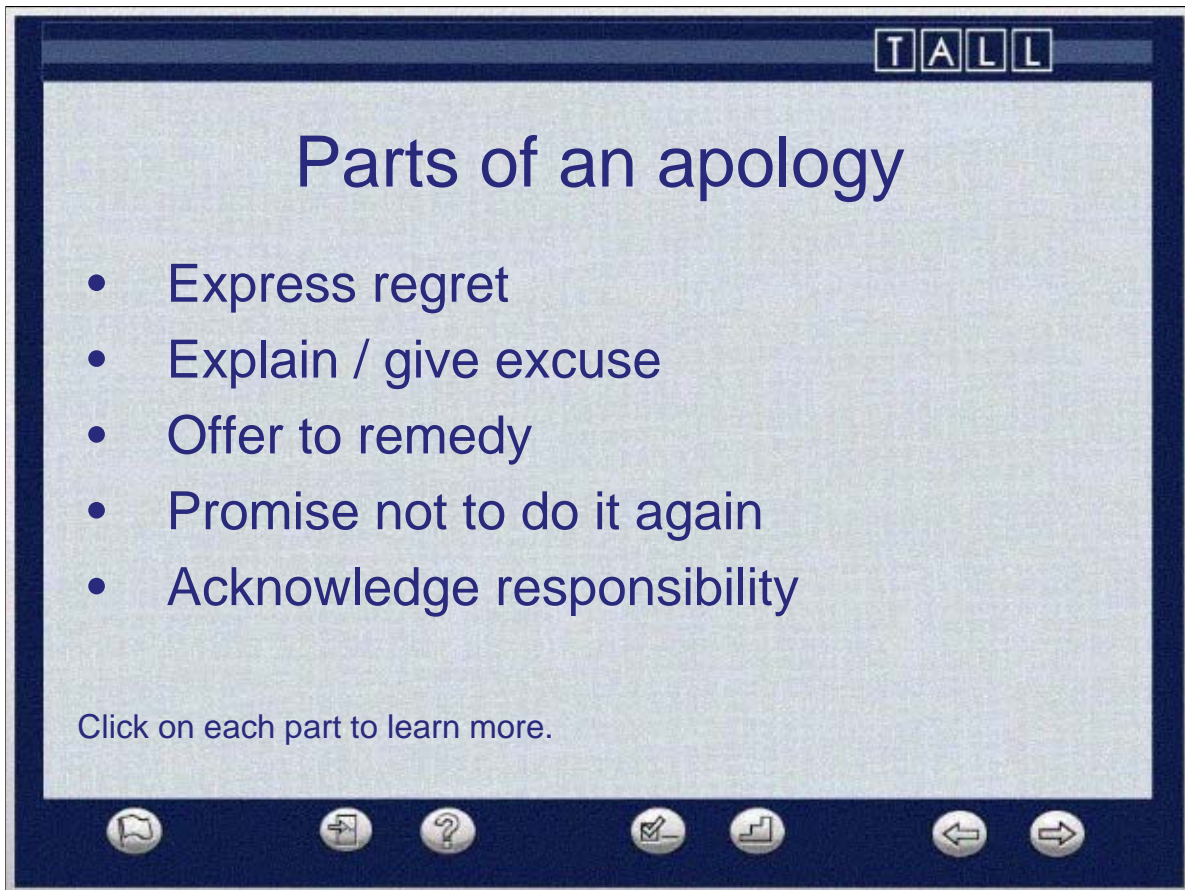
Figure 24. Screen shot of an explanation screen –Parts of an apology

Agent:

> *As we said before, apologies vary depending on the **seriousness** of the offense and the **relationship** between the people involved in the situation. For example, if you have to apologize to someone who is in a position of power compared to you, let's say, a boss or a customer, your apology will be more elaborate than if you have to apologize to a friend for the same offense. Also, the more serious the offense, the more elaborate the apology will be. There are five things you can do when you apologize:*

> *-Express regret, either explicitly or implicitly*

> *-Explain or give an excuse. This shows why the mistake occurred.*

> *-Offer to remedy the situation.*

> *-Promise you will not repeat the mistake*

> *-And acknowledge your responsibility*

> *When the offense is not very serious, Americans generally use only one or two of these parts in their apology. However, when they have to apologize for something more serious or when the offended person has power over the offender, or both, they may use all five parts in their apology.*

Figure 25. Screen shot of an explanation screen –Expressing regret

<u>Agent:</u>

> One part of an apology is to express regret. As previously stated, the more serious the offense, the more elaborate the apology. Also, if the person committing the offense is in a lower position of power relative to the person who was offended, the apology will be more elaborate. So, just this part, the expression of regret, can be enough to apologize to a friend for an offense that was not very serious.

> Let's look at an example of someone expressing regret to his roommate.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the apology. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Figure 26. Screen shot of an explanation screen –Excuse me vs. I'm sorry

Agent:

　　　There are several ways to express regret. Now, we are going to look at the difference between "Excuse me" and "I'm sorry."

Figure 27. Screen shot of an explanation screen –Excuse me

Agent:

　　　　We use "Excuse me" when we have broken or are about to break a social rule, that is, when we have done or are about to do something that is not considered very polite. We use the expression to be polite.

　　　　Let's look at the example of someone who is going to interrupt a conversation:

　　　　The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the apology. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Figure 28. Screen shot of an explanation screen –I'm sorry

Agent:

      We use "I'm sorry" when we have done something that violated someone's rights or hurt their feelings. The main concerned behind this expression is "You might be hurt in some way."

      For example:

Figure 29. Screen shot of an explanation screen –Explaining/Giving excuse

Agent:

        Another part of an apology is to give an explanation or an excuse for the behavior that offended the other person.

        Let's look at the example between roommates.

        The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the apology. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.
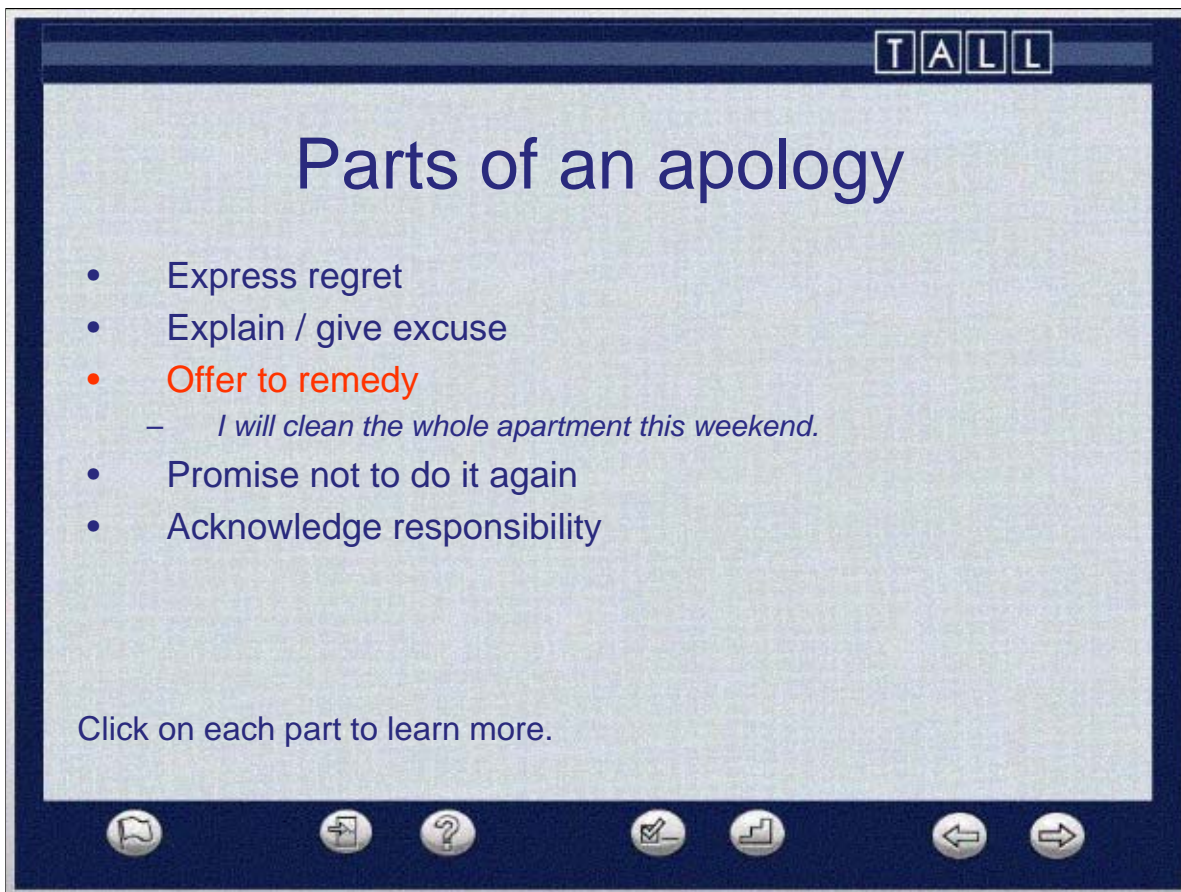
Figure 30. Screen shot of an explanation screen –Offering to remedy

Agent:

> *Yet another part of an apology is to offer to remedy a situation. In this case of **offering a remedy**, the person who has committed the offense may be in a position to correct the situation.*

> *Let's look at an example.*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the apology. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.
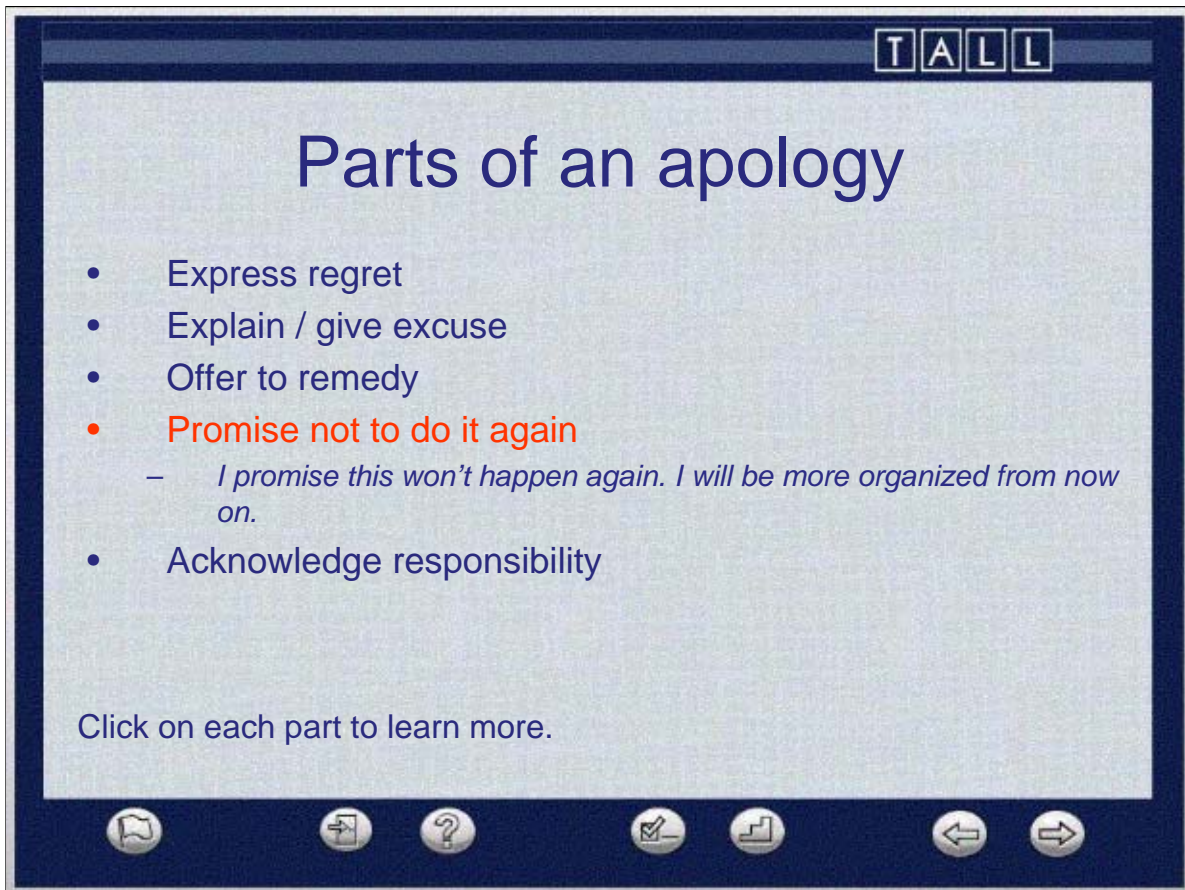
Figure 31. Screen shot of an explanation screen –Promise of forbearance

Agent:

       Also, as part of an apology the offender may promise not to repeat the bad behavior.

       Let's look at an example.

       The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the apology. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.
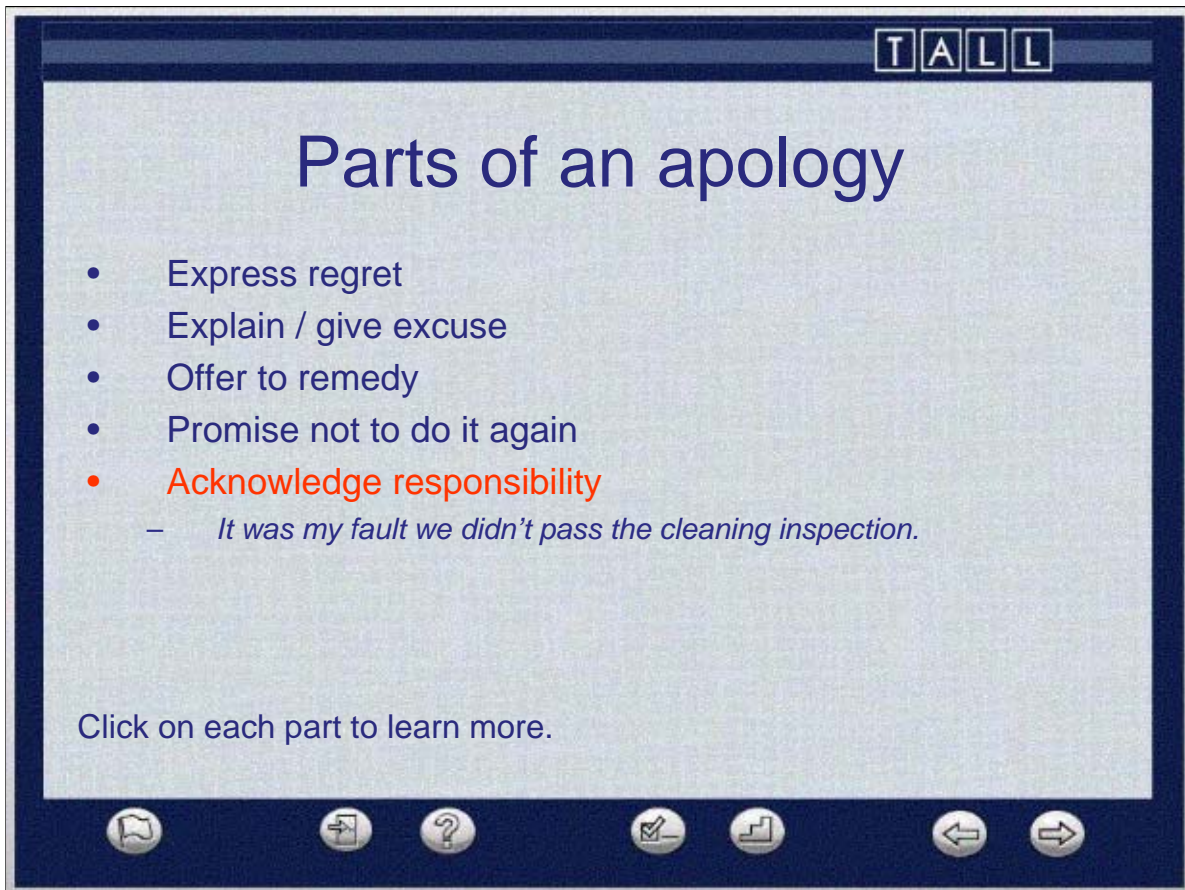
Figure 32. Screen shot of an explanation screen –Acknowledgement of responsibility

Agent:

Another part of an apology may be to acknowledge responsibility. Again, as previously stated, the more serious the offense, the more elaborate the apology. So, a person may use all five parts to apologize for a serious offense, specially if the offended person was a superior.

Let's look at an example of acknowledgement of responsibility.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the apology. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.
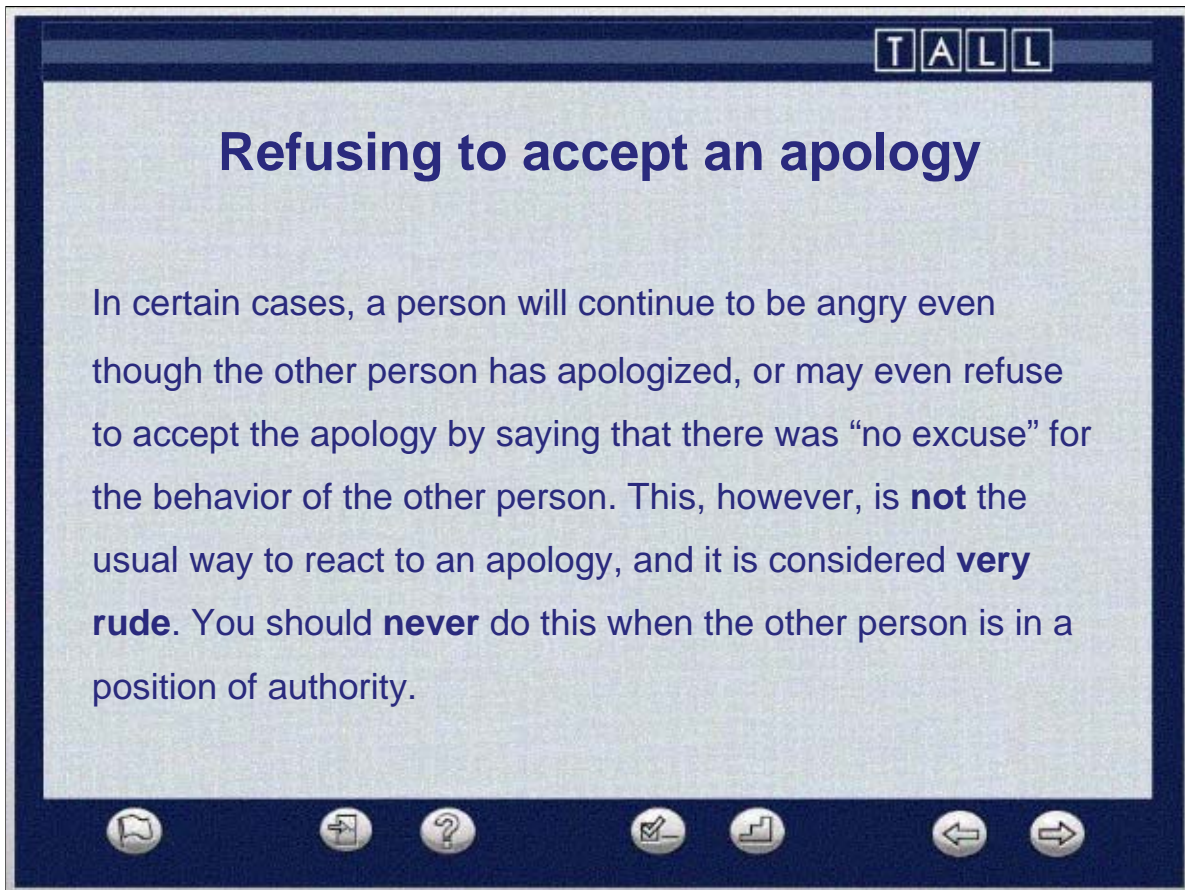
Figure 33. Screen shot of an explanation screen –Refusing to accept an apology

Agent:

   After all of this you might be wondering, ¨What if I don't want to accept the apology? What if it's not okay? Well, in that case, go ahead and read along.

   *In certain cases, a person will continue to be angry even though the other person has apologized, or may even refuse to accept the apology by saying that there was "no excuse" for the behavior of the other person. This, however, is **not** the usual way to react to an apology, and it is considered **very rude**. You should **never** do this when the other person is in a position of authority.*

Figure 34. Screen shot of an explanation screen –Other uses of "I'm sorry"

Voice and examples synchronized

<u>Agent</u>:

      The expression "I'm sorry" is sometimes used to express sympathy rather than to apologize. For example: "I'm sorry you are sick." or "I'm sorry to tell you that you may have to rewrite that paper. Dr. Smith hates to see arguments that lack supporting evidence."

<u>Example</u>:

Kim: Hi! How are you today?

Susan: I've had better days. You won't believe what happened to me this morning. As I was getting in my car, I noticed that the windshield was broken. I called the office to let you know that I would be late, and headed to the garage to get the windshield fixed. As I'm driving down State Street, a police officer pulls me over and gives me a ticket!

Kim: Oh! I'm sorry! That's really awful. Can I help in any way?

Susan: No, it's okay, but thanks anyway.
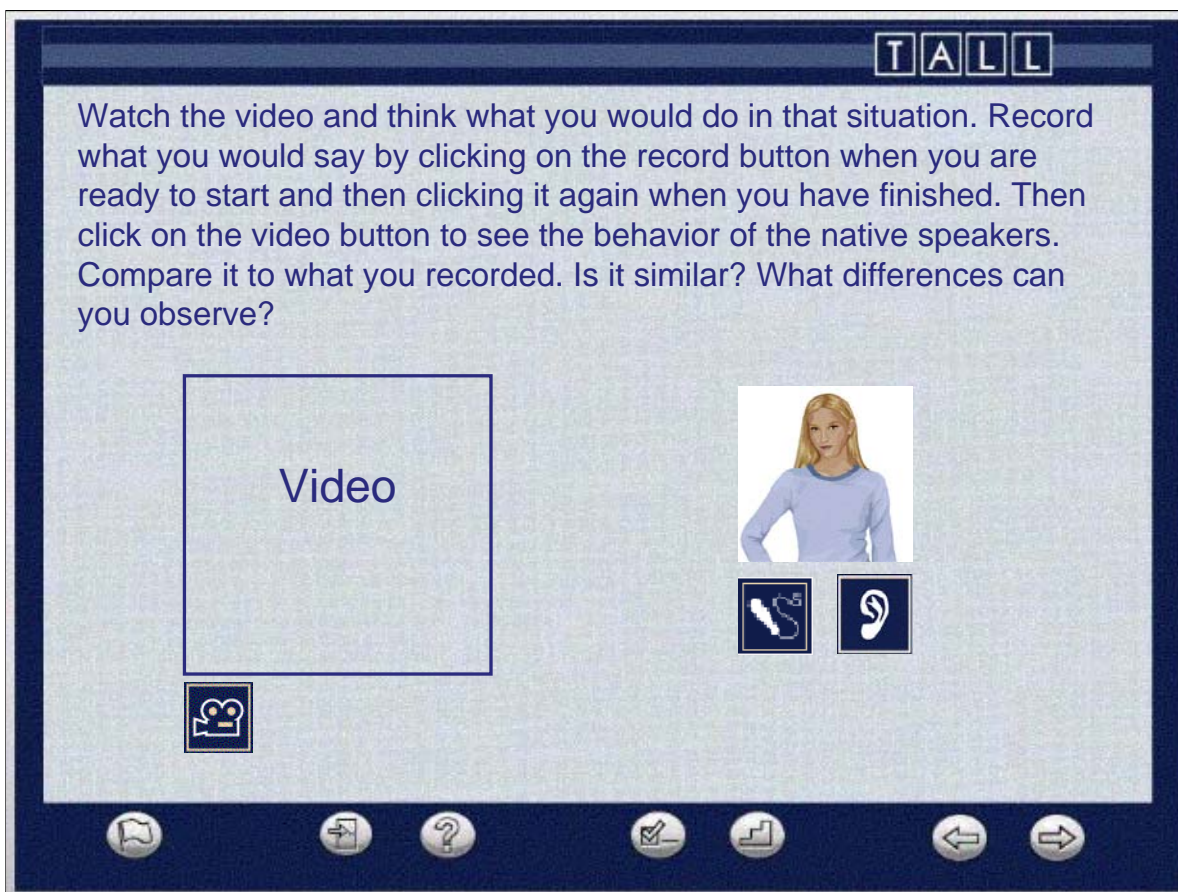
Figure 35. Screen shot of a video screen – Apologies

Agent tells instructions:

> *Watch the video and think what you would do in that situation. Record what you would say by clicking on the record button when you are ready to start and then clicking on it again when you have finished. Then click on the video button to see the behavior of the native speakers. Compare it to what you recorded. Is it similar? What differences can you observe?*

Learners will see a segment of the video containing the introduction of the situation that shows the offense. Then the video will stop and they won't be able to see the rest of the video until they have recorded their response to that situation. After that they will be able to see the offender's apology and the other person's response to that apology.

Situation 1

Yesterday you borrowed and then forgot to return your boss's expensive pen. Now she asks you to return it, but you don't remember where it is.

Suggested Conversation

Jen: John, do you remember my pen from last night?

John: Yes, I borrowed it to sign some documents before leaving.

Jen: Well, it appears to be missing now. Do you remember what you did with it?

John: I thought I had put it back on your desk, but let me look for it. When I find it, I will get it back to you. Okay?

Jen: Thank you, John. I appreciate it.
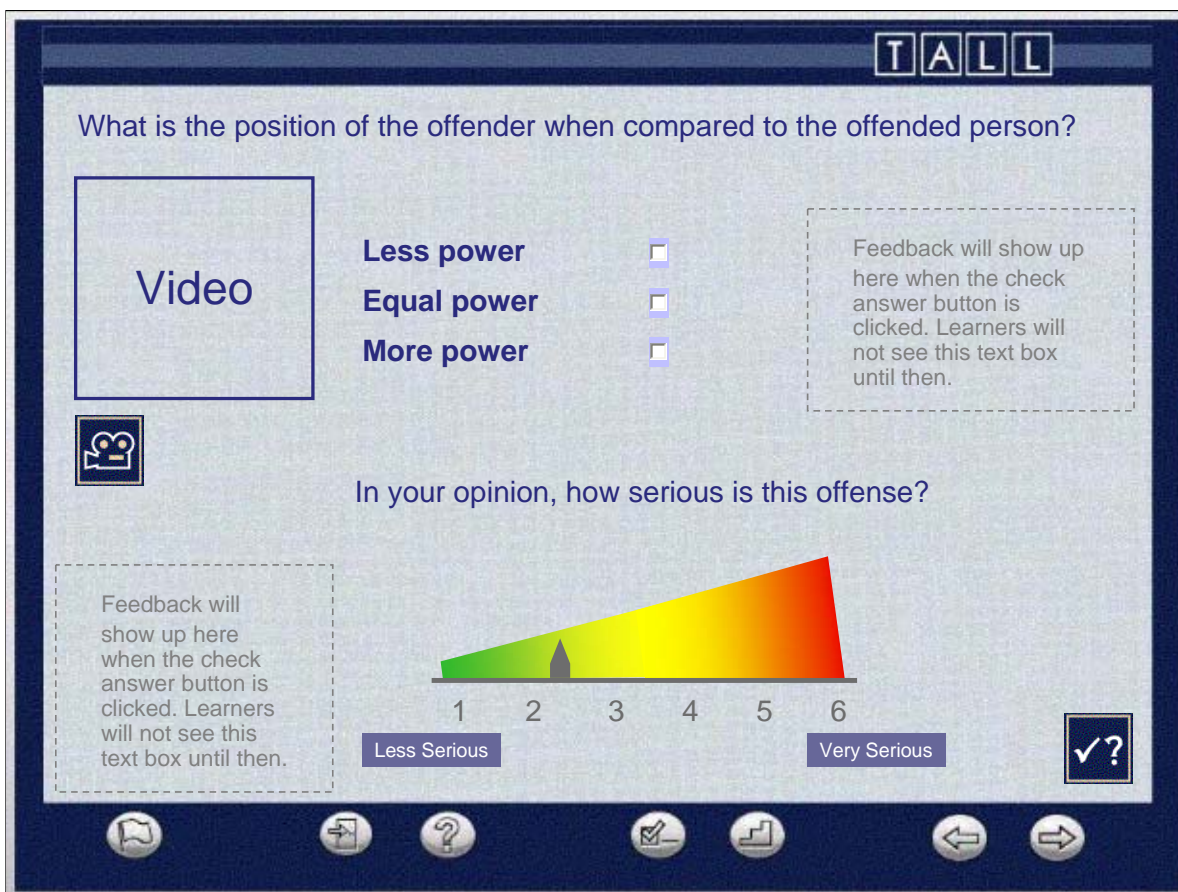
Figure 36. Screen shot of a video exercise screen – Power and Severity

Learners have to select the relative social positions of the people involved in the situation. They will also have to move the arrow to choose the perceived degree of severity of the offense. When they click on the check answer button, they will see the feedback. On the second exercise, they will see where most Americans surveyed place the severity of the offense. Since there is not a definite answer, they will see the range in which their response would be considered correct (e.g. if most Americans placed the seriousness of the offense between 3 and 6, they will see that area selected.)

Power

Less Power

Severity of the offense

Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 3 and 5

(Results: 1 → 0%, 2 → 11%, 3 → 22%, 4 → 28%, 5 → 22%, 6 → 17%)

Figure 37. Screen shot of a video exercise screen – Parts of an apology

Learners will have two opportunities to get the correct answers. If they are not successful after the second time, they will see the correct answer and a pop-up message box with feedback. The feedback will consist of the script of the dialog with the different parts of the apology marked in different colors and annotations specifying the names/functions of the parts.

<u>Parts</u>

Explanation/excuse

Offer to remedy

Instructional Videos

The video segments are used to reinforce and expand on the points presented earlier in the instruction. There are eleven scenarios in this lesson, so that learners will have exposure to different levels of power and severity of offenses.

A survey was conducted among native speakers (see Appendix C.) The dialogs in the video include one of the most common responses to the specific scenario or a scripted combination of them.

The three previous screens will be repeated for each of the remaining video segments. Below, I include the situations and the suggested conversations for those segments, as well as the power relationships between participants, the perceived severity of the offenses –which reflect the results of the survey reported in Appendix B, and the different parts present in the depicted apologies.

Situation 2

You live with three roommates. One of them asks you if you want to go on a trip for the weekend. Your other two roommates have already had to say no because they have work this weekend and couldn't get anyone to cover their shifts. Because you are a morning person you usually set your alarm to get up at 6:30 AM. Every day when you get up you are in the habit of resetting your alarm clock for the next day. On Friday morning when you got up you did as you always do, and reset the alarm clock without realizing you wouldn't be there the next morning. When you get back on Sunday night, one your roommates makes a comment about how annoying it was to be woken up at 6:30 on a Saturday morning when she didn't have to be at work until 10:00AM.

Suggested Conversation

Jen: Alison, I wanted to talk to you about your alarm clock. You know Saturday is the only day that I get to sleep in, and last Saturday you left your alarm clock on and it woke me up at 6:30am. I didn't have to be up until 9:00am! You know I usually work at 10:00am.

Allison: I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to wake you up. It's just that I always get up at 6:30am, an then last weekend I got invited to go on this trip. I totally forgot!

Jen: It's okay. Just try and remember next time. I hardly ever get to sleep in anymore. And with work and school it's all just so tiring.

Allison: Don't worry, I won't let it happen again. Thanks for understanding.

Power
    Equal Power

Severity of the offense
    Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 1 and 3
    (Results: 1 → 16%, 2 → 47%, 3 → 16%, 4 → 11%, 5 → 11%, 6 → 0%)

Parts
    Expression of regret
    Explanation/excuse
    Promise not to do it again

Situation 3

You are in charge of scheduling appointments for your boss. You make a mistake and schedule an appointment with an important client for a time when your boss is not going to be in the office. Unfortunately, you don't realize your mistake until now, when the client gets in and tells you he's there to speak with you boss.

Suggested Conversation

Mr. Smith: I am here for my appointment to see Peter.

Sarah: Mr. Smith, apologize. When I scheduled your appointment, I didn't realize that Mr. Smith would be out of the office. I can reschedule it for another time, or he will be back in the office in an hour and he could see you then. What would be best for you?

Mr. Smith: If it's okay, I will see him when he gets back in an hour. I haven't had lunch yet, so I'll go to the restaurant down the street.

Sarah: Great. I'll let him know, and he'll be expecting you.

Power
Less Power

Severity of the offense
Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 5 and 6
(Results: 1 → 0%, 2 → 5%, 3 → 11%, 4 → 11%, 5 → 37%, 6 → 37%)

Parts
Expression of regret
Explanation/excuse
Offer to remedy

Situation 4

You are a waiter/waitress in a restaurant. It is a Friday night and the restaurant is very busy. The wait for a table is up to 35 minutes. You have been working for 5 and ½ hours of your 6 hour shift. You accidentally bring one of the people in a group of six young college students the wrong drink with his dinner. As you are leaving the drinks one of the young men says, "Excuse me, I didn't order a Coke, I ordered a raspberry lemonade."

Suggested Conversation

Alex: Waiter, I didn't order a coke. It should have been a lemonade.

John: I'm sorry sir. I'll be right back with your lemonade.

Alex: That's alright.

Power
      Less Power

Severity of the offense
      Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 1 and 2
      (Results: 1 → 53%, 2 → 21%, 3 → 21%, 4 → 5%, 5 → 0%, 6 → 0%)

Parts
      Expression of regret
      Offer to remedy

Situation 5

Your coworker Steve tells you about a promotion that he is almost sure he will get, but he doesn't want anyone else to know until it's official. Without realizing, you tell another coworker about it.

Suggested Conversation

John: Steve, do you have a minute in private?

Steve: Sure, what's up?

John: I owe you an apology. I know you want to keep the news about your new promotion quiet, and early today I was speaking with Sean, and accidentally told him about it. I'm sorry.

Steve: That's alright. I don't think it's that big of a deal. But please try to keep from telling anyone else. The news should be official within a few days. Okay?

John: Okay, and thanks for understanding.

Power
        Equal Power

Severity of the offense
        Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 3 and 5
        (Results: 1 → 0%, 2 → 16%, 3 → 21%, 4 → 32%, 5 → 26%, 6 → 5%)

Parts
        Expression of regret
        Explanation/excuse

Situation 6

You really need to talk to one of your professors, but he's talking to a colleague in the hallway at the moment. You know you probably won't catch him again until it's too late, and you can't wait long because you have to be at work in 15 minutes.

Suggested Conversation

John: Excuse me, I am sorry to interrupt. I have a quick question to ask you.

Dr. Smith: Yes, what did you need?

John: We have lab due tomorrow, and there is still one aspect of the design that I cannot figure out. I have talked with the teaching assistants about it already, and neither one of the could figure it out either. Would I be able to meet you some time this afternoon to discuss it with you?

Dr. Smith: That would be fine, but may I ask why you have waited so long to speak with me?

John: To be honest, I have had a busy couple of weeks and I thought that I would be able to figure it out. Typically I am at work during your office hours, and then I got married a little over a week ago, and it's just been really busy.

Dr. Smith: Okay, I will be free at 4:30pm, can you meet me then?

John: Yes, and thank you for meeting with me.

Dr. Smith: You're welcome. Just remember not to keep getting behind. It'll catch up to you one day.

Power
    Less Power

Severity of the offense
    Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 2 and 4
    (Results: 1 → 16%, 2 → 26%, 3 → 21%, 4 → 21%, 5 → 11%, 6 → 5%)

Parts
    Expression of regret
    Explanation/excuse

Situation 7

You need to borrow Lori's American Heritage book to study for the Midterm Exam, which is 6 days away. You can't find your book because it got misplaced, and you are afraid you will not be able to find it in time. You have already been through the entire house 3 times looking for the book, but it does not turn up. You ask Lori for the book and she says that you can borrow the book on Monday, but that she needs it back by Wednesday night at the latest. Wednesday night comes and you forget to bring the book to the class. Because you live on opposite ends of town, and neither one of you has a car, it will be hard for you to meet up again before the exam.

Suggested Conversation

Anne: Lori, I am really sorry. I forgot to bring your book to class with me tonight.

               Is there any time that I can meet you after class tonight to get it back to you?

Lori: I'll be home all night after class. So if you can drop it off at my apartment that would be great.

Anne: Okay, I think there is a bus that comes by at about 8:30pm. I will drop it off sometime around then.

Lori: Thanks Anne.   I'll see you later tonight.

Power
          Equal Power

Severity of the offense
          Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 5 and 6
          (Results: 1 → 0%, 2 → 5%, 3 → 5%, 4 → 11%, 5 → 42%, 6 → 37%)

Parts
          Expression of regret
          Explanation/excuse
          Offer to remedy

Situation 8

You have taken your 4-year-old son to visit a friend, who has just come back from a vacation in Thailand. She shows you a beautiful vase she bought there and tells you that she fell in love with it when she saw it. Since it was really expensive, that was the only thing she brought back from the trip. Later, as you are chatting, you hear a crash and when you look you see the vase on the floor and your son standing next to it.

Suggested Conversation

Susan: Oh my gosh, I can't apologize enough. Is there anything that I can do to make it up to you? Please let me make it up to you some how.

Emily: No, that's fine. He didn't mean to do it. Neither one of was paying much attention, and kids will be kids.

Susan: I know, but you have waited for so long to have a vase like this, now just after you got it, it's destroyed.

Emily: That's alright, we'll figure something out.

Susan: I know we can't get back to Thailand to get you another one, but I know this vase shop in the city. Could we at least go there one weekend and try to find one similar to this one?

Emily: If you want to, but you really don't have to do that.

Susan: No, I want to. Do you have some time in the next few weeks?

Emily: We can go a week from Saturday if you'd like to.

Susan: Perfect.

Power
      Equal Power

Severity of the offense
      Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 4 and 6
      (Results: 1 → 0%, 2 → 0%, 3 → 5%, 4 → 26%, 5 → 32%, 6 → 37%)

Parts
      Expression of regret
      Offer to remedy

Situation 9

You have a job interview for a secretarial position. You have problems with your car and you arrive 10 minutes late to the interview. Your interviewer greets you and point out the fact that you are late.

Suggested Conversation

Jason: I am sorry for arriving late. I had some car troubles on the way over here.

Shannon: That's okay. We'll just have to shorten your interview a few minutes.

Jason: I understand. Thank you for the opportunity to interview with you.

Shannon: Shall we head back to my office?

Jason: Yes, please.

Power
       Less Power

Severity of the offense
       Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 4 and 6
       (Results: 1 → 5%, 2 → 0%, 3 → 16%, 4 → 16%, 5 → 26%, 6 → 37%)

Parts
       Expression of regret
       Explanation/excuse

Situation 10

You are at the mall with a friend. While you are walking around a store you turn around to see something your friend is showing you and you bump into an older woman and step on her foot. As a result, she stumbles and drops some bags she was carrying. (The woman looks fragile.)

Suggested Conversation

Sarah: Oh, I am so sorry. Are you alright?

Elaine: Oh yes, I am fine.

Sarah: Can I help you up?

Elaine: Thank you.

Sarah: And all your bags. Here, let me help you gather everything up too.

Elaine: Thank you. That's very kind of you.

Sarah: You're welcome.

Power
          Equal Power

Severity of the offense
          Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 3 and 4
          (Results: 1 → 0%, 2 → 16%, 3 → 26%, 4 → 37%, 5 → 11%, 6 → 11%)

Parts
          Expression of regret
          Offer to remedy

Situation 11

Your friend Tyler and you decide to take time out of your busy schedules to play racquetball, so your friend reserves a court at a local club for an hour. The day you were supposed to meet him, you oversleep and arrive 20 minutes late. By the time you get ready to play, you only have a little over half an hour to play.

Suggested Conversation

Tyler: Scott, I had almost given up on you. You're 20 minutes late.

Scott: Yeah, I know. Sorry Tyler. I slept through my alarm clock. How long have you been here?

Tyler: Since about ten after 8:00am. I guess we're not morning people. Hey, do you want to serve first?

Scott: Sounds great to me.

Tyler: Alright, then let's get started.

Power
Equal Power

Severity of the offense
Most native speakers surveyed placed this offense between 2 and 4
(Results: 1 → 0%, 2 → 26%, 3 → 26%, 4 → 26%, 5 → 21%, 6 → 0%)

Parts
Expression of regret
Explanation/excuse

Figure 38. Screen shot of a video summary screen – Apologies

Agent:

Before we continue with more situations, let's recap what we have seen so far. Watch the three situations, listen to the native speakers' apologies and responses and then, observe how the apologies vary according to the relationship between the people involved and the seriousness of the offense.

The screen above compares three situations shown in the video segments. That is, there is a video summary screen after three videos and their corresponding exercise screens. There are a total of four video summary screens, as follows:

Video Summary 1: Compares situations 1, 2, and 3

Content shown in Figure 38.

Video Summary 2: Compares situations 4, 5, and 6

Less Power	Equal Power	Less Power
Seriousness (Range shown in graph: 1 to 2)	Seriousness (Range shown in graph: 3 to 5)	Seriousness (Range shown in graph: 2 to 4)
Parts: • Expression of regret • Offer to remedy	Parts: • Expression of regret • Explanation/excuse	Parts: • Expression of regret • Explanation/excuse

Video Summary 3: Compares situations 7, 8, and 9

Equal Power	Equal Power	Less Power
Seriousness (Range shown in graph: 5 to 6)	Seriousness (Range shown in graph: 4 to 6)	Seriousness (Range shown in graph: 4 to 6)
Parts: • Expression of regret • Explanation/excuse • Offer to remedy	Parts: • Expression of regret • Offer to remedy	Parts: • Expression of regret • Explanation/excuse

Video Summary 4: Compares situations 11 and 12

Equal Power	Equal Power
Seriousness (Range shown in graph: 3 to 4)	Seriousness (Range shown in graph: 2 to 4)
Parts: • Expression of regret • Offer to remedy	Parts: • Expression of regret • Explanation/excuse
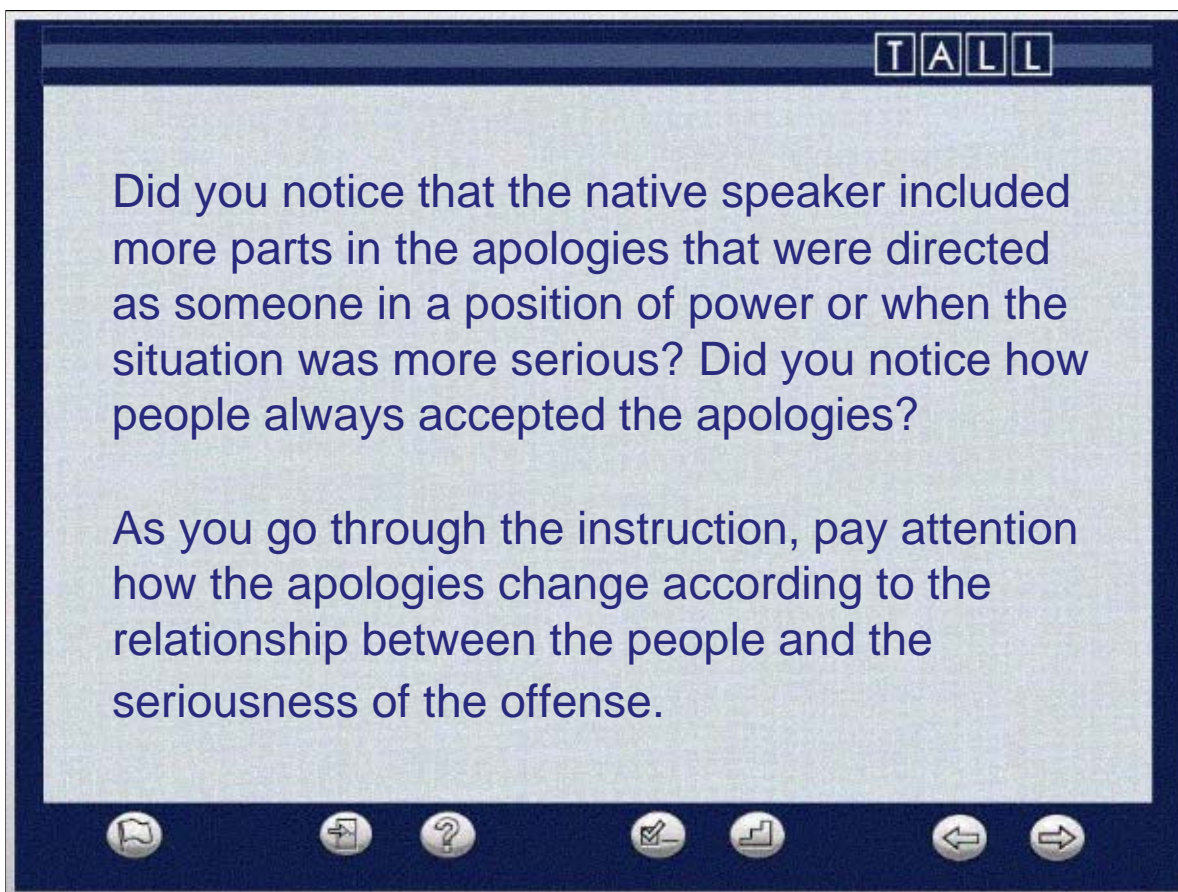
Figure 39. Screen shot of a practice screen – Apologies

Agent:

        Did you notice that the native speaker included more parts in the apologies that were directed as someone in a position of power or when the situation was more serious? Did you notice how people always accepted the apologies?

        As you go through the instruction, pay attention how the apologies change according to the relationship between the people and the seriousness of the offense.

Practice

APOLOGIES

Figure 40. Screen shot of a dialog screen – Apologies

On this screen, learners will be able to listen to a dialog, read the script, and view translations for words and sentences they do not understand. By clicking on the green arrows, they will hear the sentence that follows. They will also be able to choose a speaker, select their preferred recording speed, record their voice in the chosen role, and listen to the new dialog.

Dialog:

Ann: I hate to bother you, but I was wondering if I could ask you a big favor.

Katie: Go ahead.

Ann: I was wondering if I could borrow your car tomorrow. I have to pick my sister up from the airport, but my car is at the mechanic.

Katie: Well, I don't know. What time would you need it?

Ann: Her plane comes in at 4:30 in the afternoon, so I would need to leave here about 3:30. By the time she gets here luggage, and with the rush hour traffic, I imagine I could have the car back by 6:00 or 6:30.

Katie: I get off work at 5:00, so I would have to take the bus home.

Ann: Oh, that's right. I wasn't thinking.

Katie: Hmmm.

Ann: I'm sorry to have to ask, but I don't have many other options.

Katie: I understand.

Ann: I'll fill your tank with gasoline before I bring it back.

Katie: Well, I think that could work.

Ann: I'd really appreciate it.

Katie: Okay. Can you come to my office and pick it up there?

Ann: Of course! Thank you so much!

Katie: You're welcome.

Ann: I'll make it up to you.

Katie: Don't worry about it.

Ann: Thanks again. I'll see you tomorrow.

There are two more dialog screens like the previous one.

Dialog 2

Tom: Excuse me. I'm sorry to interrupt.

Ellen: That's okay.

Tom: Ellen, you have a phone call on line 3. It's Mr. Anderson.

Ellen: Oh, thanks. (to John) Sorry. I'll just be a minute.

John: No problem.

Dialog 3

Joe: Good morning! How are you this morning?

Bob: Actually, I am a little bit tired. I didn't get much sleep last night.

Joe: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. We had a little party last night at my house. Were we too loud?

Bob: Yeah, it was a little loud last night. I couldn't fall asleep until 1:45AM.

Joe: I am so sorry! We had all the windows closed and I didn't think that we were making that much noise. We'll keep it down if we do another party here. And please, if we are ever making too much noise again, feel free to call us up and let us know. We don't want to be the jerks next door.

Bob: I appreciate that. Don't worry about it too much. We've been a little loud a couple of times too.

Joe: Thanks for letting me know about last night. I am so sorry, and we'll try not to let it happen again. Hey, do you want to go play 18 holes on Saturday? My treat, as a way of apologizing for last night.

Bob: Sure, sounds like fun. What time should we meet up?

Figure 41. Screen shot of a matching exercise – Apologies

        In this type of activity, there will be phrases and sentences taken from the dialogs. Students will have to match the phrase with its purpose/function. At the discretion of the developer, one or two more matching screens could be added to each dialog.

I'll make it up to you → Offering to compensate for the inconvenience

I don't have many other options → Explaining

I'm sorry to have to ask → Expressing regret

I understand → Accepting the apology

There are two more matching exercises like the previous one. Each one of them follows a dialog screen.

Matching Exercise 2

I'm sorry to interrupt → Expressing regret

That's okay → Accepting the apology

No problem → Accepting the apology

Matching Exercise 3

I'm sorry to hear that   → Expressing sympathy

I didn't think we were making that much noise → Giving an excuse

I am so sorry! → Expressing regret

We'll keep it down → Promising not to do it again

I appreciate that. Don't worry about… → Accepting the apology
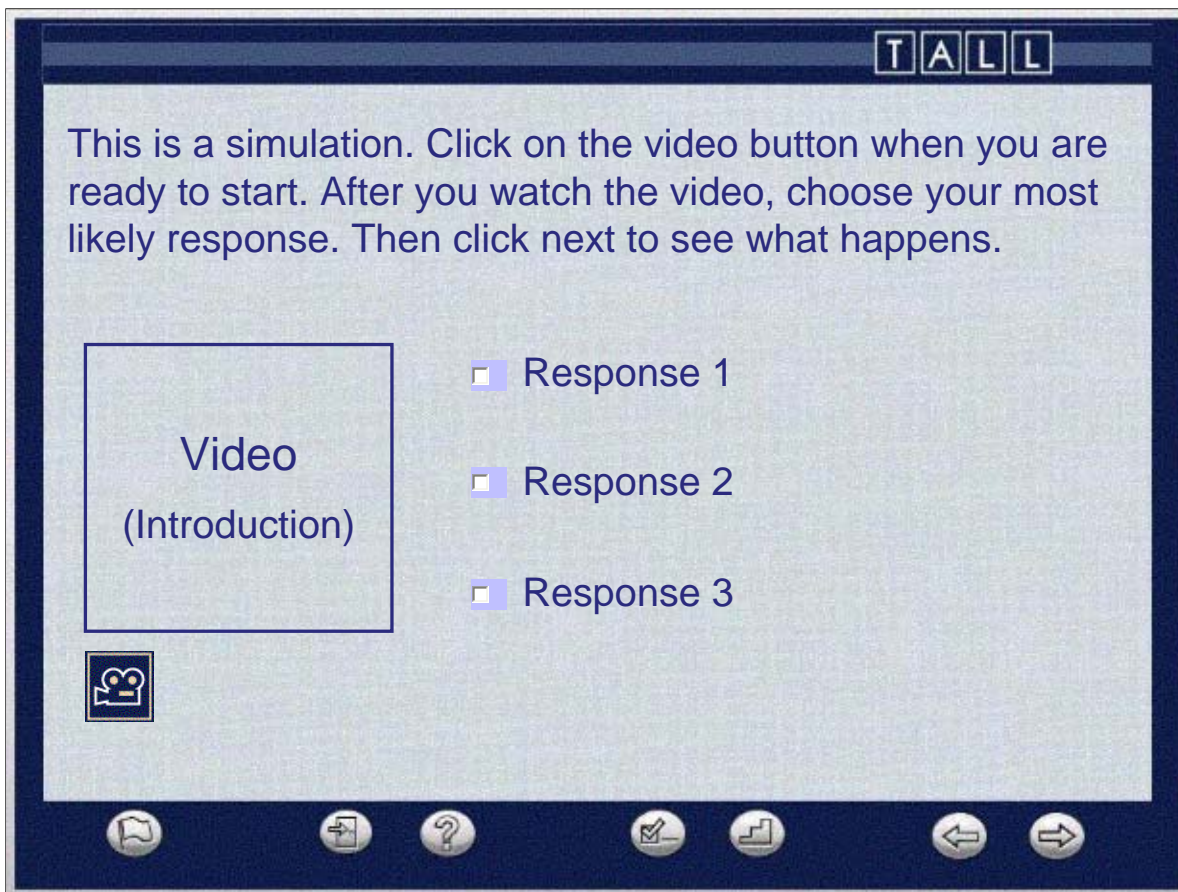
Figure 42. Screen shot of the first simulation screen – Apologies

Agent:

> *This is a simulation. Click on the video button when you are ready to start. After you watch the video, choose your most likely response. Then click next to see what happens.*

At this point, there will be a simulation exercise. The situations and consequences will be presented by short video segments, which, when possible, will be shot from the viewer's perspective so as to make him or her feel part of the scene and the camera becomes his/her eyes.

The activity will be divided into ten video sections. The first section will set the situation. (Then, learners will see three possible responses, written, not on video.) The next three will show the likely outcomes, which will vary according to the choice learners made previously. (Again, learners will see three possible responses, written, not on video.) The last six will show the final outcomes, that will vary according to their previous choices. In addition, learners will have the chance to go back and see the result of having selected other options.

This activity needs to be scripted, but in the next two pages I included a suggested organization chart and rough script.

Simulation – Organization

Video shot from viewer perspective so that he/she feels part of the action.

1. CORRIDOR

Someone hurries down the corridor. A woman says: Another late night? Good luck with the boss!

The person gets to a door and knocks. Someone answers: Come in.

Responses – not on video
      1. Hello. How are you this morning?
      2. Sorry I'm late.
      3. I'm so sorry I'm late. I've had transportation problems lately.

2. OFFICE

A man sitting at his desk says:

Outcome 1: I'm fine, but you are late again. You've been late every day this week.
Outcome 2: You've been late every day this week. Is everything okay?
Outcome 3: I imagine there was something wrong. You've been late every day this week.

Responses – not on video
      1.1. Yeah. I've had some problems.
      1.2. I've been having problems with my car. I'm very sorry. I promise it won't happen again.
      2.1. I've been having problems with my car, but I'll try to be on time tomorrow.
      2.2. I've had problems with my car. It had been having problems, but a couple of days ago it died on me on my way to work.. Since then, I've been trying to get the hang of public transportation. I'm really sorry I've been late. I promise it won't happen again.
      3.1. Idem 2.1.
      3.2. I know. I'm sorry. I've had problems with my car. It had been having problems, but a couple of days ago it died on me on my way to work. Since then, I've been trying to get the hang of public transportation. I promise it won't happen again.

3. CLOSE ON

The man sitting at his desk says:

Outcome 1.1: Well, you know the rules. If you it happens again, you might have to look for another job.
Outcome 1.2: That's fine, but please try to be on time from now on.
Outcome 2.1: I'm sorry to hear about your car, but please don't let this happen again.
Outcome 2.2: Idem 1.2.
Outcome 3.1: Idem 2.1.
Outcome 3.2: I'm sorry to hear about your car. Is there anything we can do to help you be on time.

Click on the video button to see what happened as a result of your choice. Again, after you watch the video, choose your most likely response. Then click next to see what happens.

Video

(Outcome

1, 2, or 3)

☐ Response 1.1, 2.1, or 3.1

☐ Response 1.2, 2.2, or 3.2
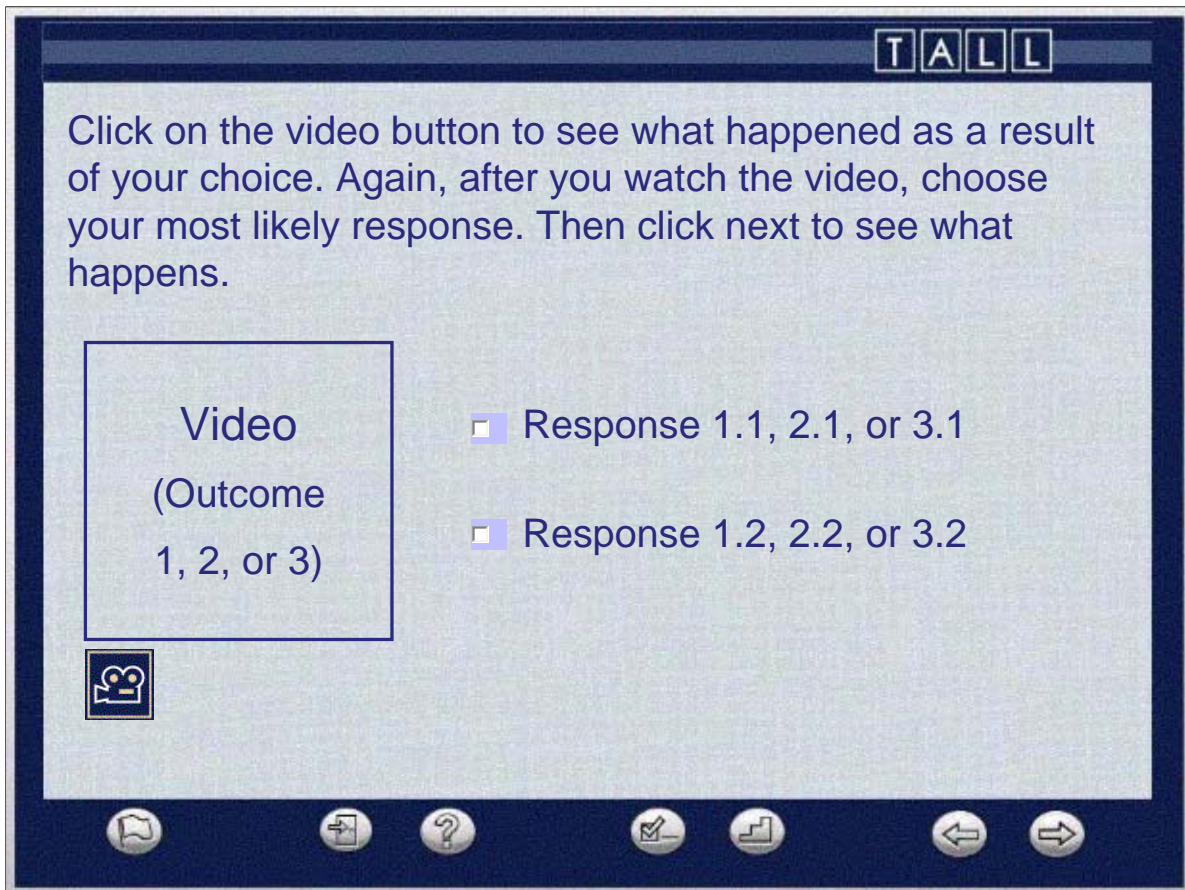
Figure 43. Screen shot of the second simulation screen – Apologies
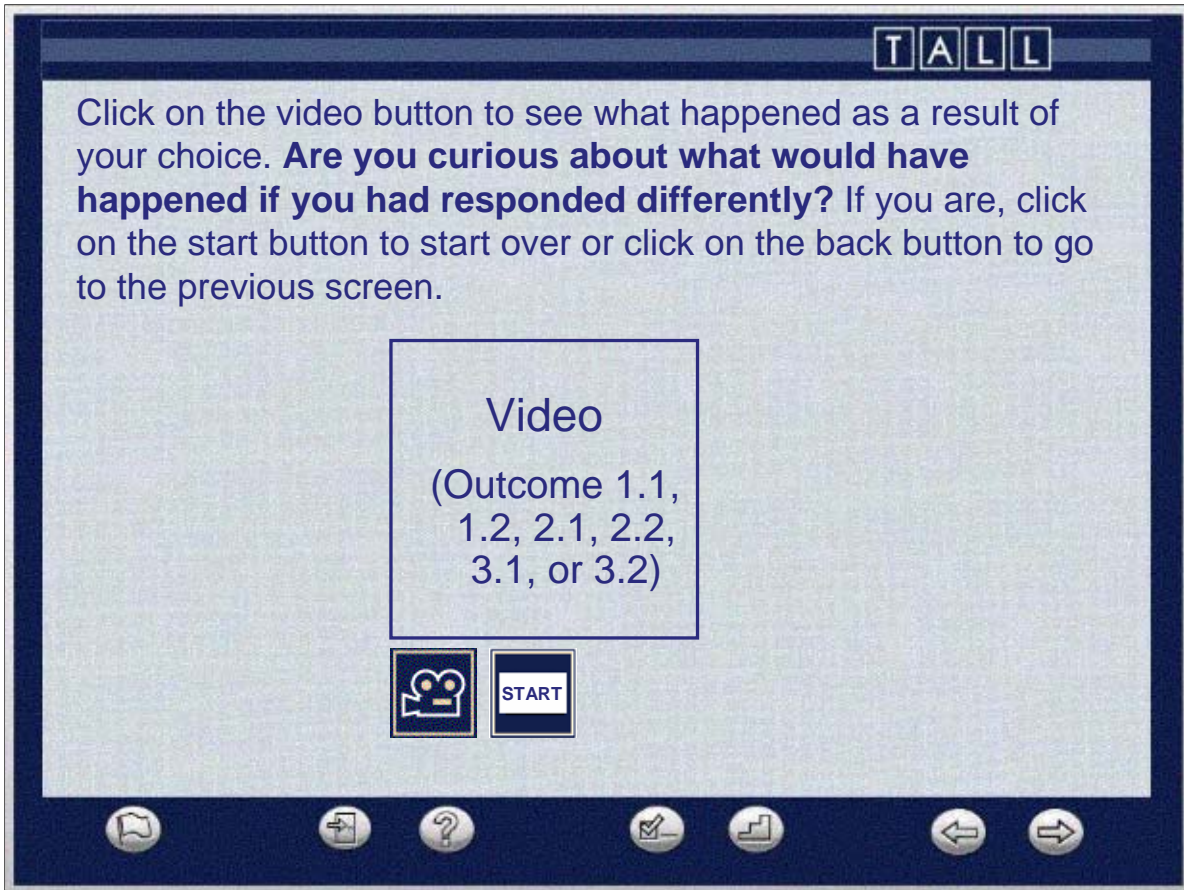
Figure 44. Screen shot of the third simulation screen – Apologies

Figure 45. Screen shot of a classification exercise – When to use apologies

There are two more classification exercises like the previous one.

Classification Exercise 2

	Apology	No Apology
You forgot your friend's birthday, so you didn't go to her party.		
Your cat ruined your roommate's old pillow.		
You step on someone's foot as you get off the bus.		
You knock on your roommate's door at 10 PM to ask for a ride.		
Your elderly neighbor can't understand your accent.		
You couldn't finish an assignment your boss had given you.		
One of your classmates got offended when you asked her why she is not married yet.		

Classification Exercise 3

	Not Very Serious	Serious	Very Serious
You promised to meet your friend for lunch, but you forgot.			
You borrowed your roommate's cup while he or she was out, and you accidentally broke it.			
You accidentally bump into someone at the store			
You call a classmate at 10 PM.			
You arrived at the tennis courts 15 min. late for your game with your friend, Matt.			
You accidentally spilled juice over your roommate's research paper.			
You lost your temper and said some angry words to a friend.			

Figure 46. Screen shot of a written exercise – Apologies

Model:

I'm really sorry I snapped at you yesterday. I was having a bad day and I took out my frustrations on you. I realize that's completely unacceptable. I promise it will never happen again.

Questions:

•Did you include an expression of regret?

•Did you include an explanation, an excuse, or a promise not to do it again?

There are two more written exercises like the previous one.

Written Exercise 2

Situation:

Your friend is waiting for you to go to the opera because you have both tickets. You are running late because you received a work related phone call as you were leaving the apartment. You call your friend to apologize. What do you say?

Model:

Hi! This is Bonnie. I'm on my way. I'm so sorry. As I was walking out the door (my boss called about an important report we are giving tomorrow). Shall I still come and pick you up, or would it be faster if we just met at the theater?

Questions:

- Did you include an expression of regret?
- Did you include an excuse, an explanation, or an offer to remedy?

Written Exercise 3

Situation:

Yesterday you borrowed and then forgot to return your boss's expensive pen. Now he/she asks you to return it, but you don't remember where it is.

Model:

Oh! I didn't return it yet?! I'm so sorry. It's not right here, but I'll find it and bring it to you right away.

Questions:

- Did you include an expression of regret?
- Did you include an excuse, an explanation, or an offer to remedy?

Figure 47. Screen shot of a dialog completion exercise – Apologies

Model:

A: I'm sorry that I hurt your feelings. Please forgive me. I didn't mean to hurt you.

B: It's not your fault. You didn't know.

A: I feel terrible about it. How can I make it up to you?

B: Don't worry about it. It's okay. Let's just forget about it.

Questions:

•Did you include an expression of regret?

•Did you include an explanation, an excuse, an offer to remedy, or a promise not to do it again?

There are two more dialog completion exercises like the previous one.

Dialog Completion Exercise 2

Situation:

You accidentally broke an expensive vase at your friend's house. Complete the dialog and then read or listen to the model.

Model:

A: I broke your vase. I'm very sorry. I didn't see it.
B: That's quite all right. It was an accident.
A: No, I mean it. I'm really sorry. Can I buy another one? Where did you get it?
B: No, really. It's okay. It's not a big deal.
A: Are you sure? I feel terrible about it.
B: I'm sure. Don't worry about it.

Questions:

- Did you include an expression of regret?
- Did you include an excuse or an explanation?
- Did you include an offer to remedy?

Dialog Completion Exercise 3

Situation:

You knocked a package out of a stranger's hands on a crowded street. Complete the dialog and then read or listen to the model.

Model:

A: Oh, I'm sorry.
B: That's all right.
A: Here, let me help you.
B: Thanks.
A: Sorry about that.
B: That's OK.
.
Questions:

- Did you include an expression of regret?
- Did you include an excuse, an explanation, or an offer to remedy?
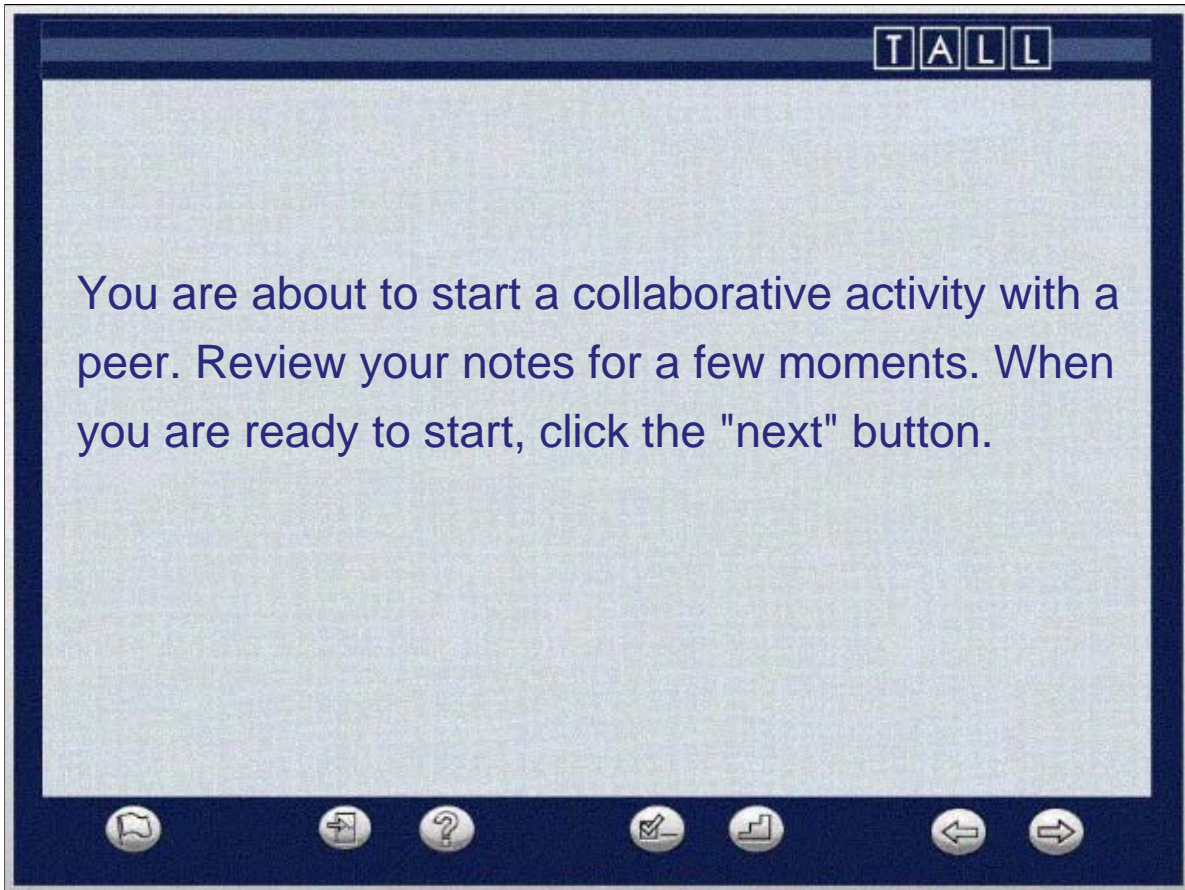
Figure 48. Screen shot of the introduction to a collaborative activity

This screen appears before every collaborative activity to alert students what they are going to be connected with another student in order to practice what they have learned.

Figure 49. Screen shot of a guided dialog exercise – Student A

Agent:

   Practice the following situation with your peer. Use the expressions that you have learned or any others that are appropriate to express the functions given.

   Follow the order so that you can produce a complete conversation. You are student A. Remember that you are supposed to start the conversation.

   When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

There is another guided dialog exercise like the previous one. The content for the screen corresponding to student A is as follows:

Situation

Your friend B comes over to visit your family and while you are absorbed in the conversation, your child takes her sunglasses and accidentally breaks them.

Cues

1. Express shock, scold child, apologize.
2. Offer to pay for sunglasses.
3. Repeat apology.
4. Repeat offer to pay

Figure 50. Screen shot of a guided dialog exercise – Student A

Agent:

Practice the following situation with your peer. Use the expressions that you have learned or any others that are appropriate to express the functions given.

Follow the order so that you can produce a complete conversation. You are student B.

When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

There is another guided dialog exercise like the previous one. The content for the screen corresponding to student B is as follows:

Situation

You go to visit your friend A and his family. While you are   in conversation, his child takes your sunglasses and accidentally breaks them.

Cues

1. Blame yourself for leaving the sunglasses unattended.
2. Refuse, say they were old.
3. Accept apology.
4. Refuse again, assure that it is okay.
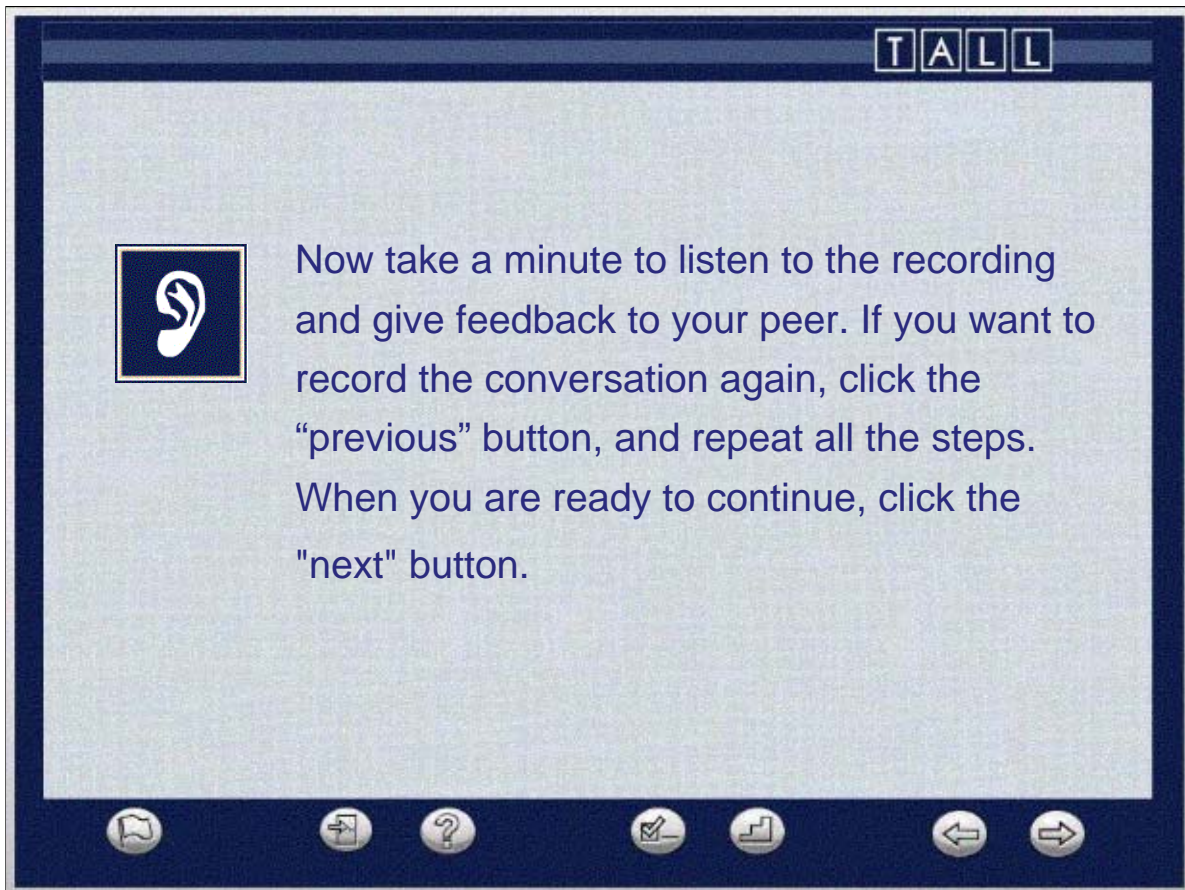
Figure 51. Screen shot of the follow up to a collaborative activity
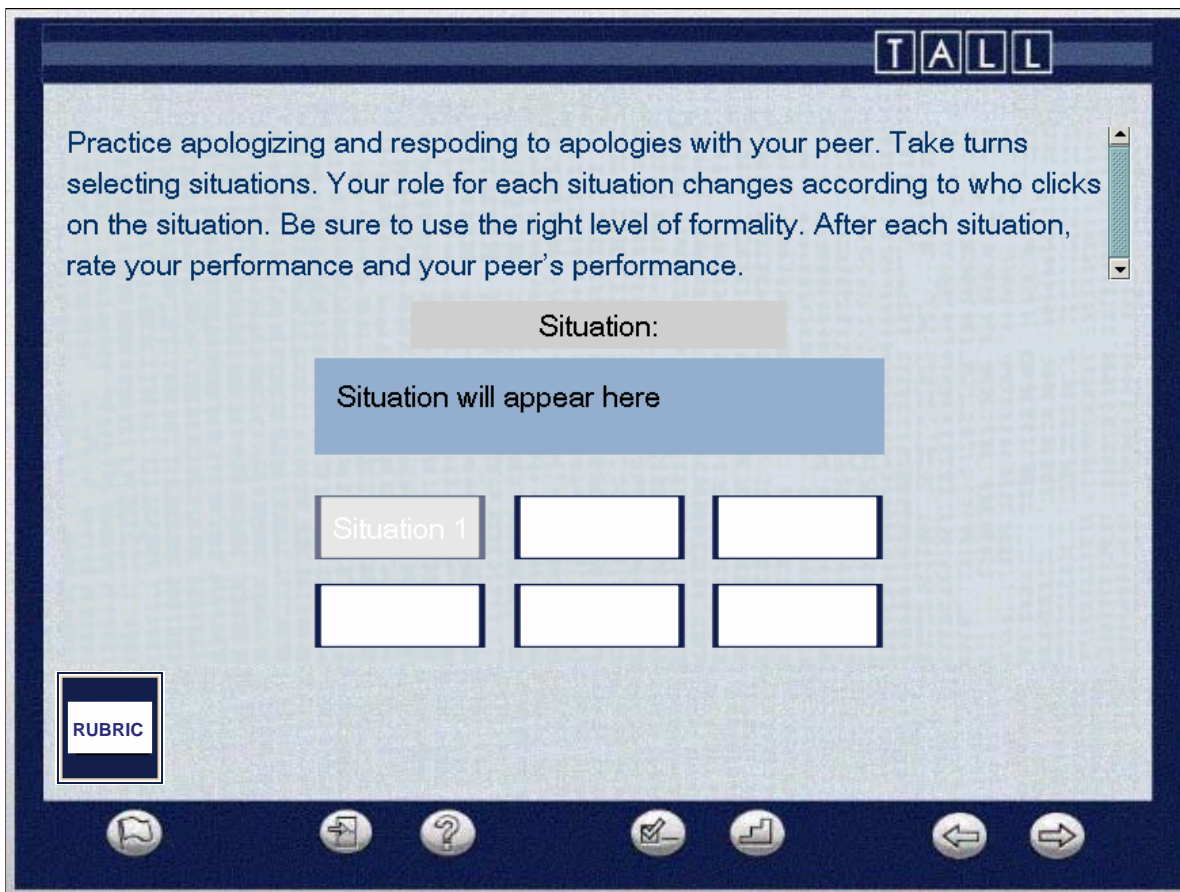
Figure 52. Screen shot of a free collaborative exercise

When learners place the mouse over the other buttons, they will see the texts: "Situation 2", "Situation 3", etc. Students have worked with this type of activity before.

Situations:

•You are trying to get to your assigned seat in the back of the bus, and you are carrying several packages. As you walk down the aisle, you hit several passengers with the packages.

•You borrowed your roommate's cup while he or she was out, and you accidentally broke it.

•As you are pouring soda in you cup at an office party, someone bumps into you and you spill soda on your boss's shirt.

•You lost your temper yesterday and said some angry words to a coworker.

•As you are pouring soda in your cup at an office party, someone bumps into you and you spill soda on your boss's shirt.

•You promised you'd buy your neighbor medicine for her sick child while in town, but you forgot.

Rubric:

Please, evaluate your performance and your peer's performance taking into account the following questions:

• Did we apologize in this particular situation?

• How many parts did we include in our apology? Was that enough to be polite?

• If the offense was serious or if the offended person was in a position of power, did we include at least 2 or 3 parts?

• Did we accept the apologies that were offered to us? Did we use expressions such as, "That's okay," "Don't worry about it," or "No problem"?

Evaluation

APOLOGIES
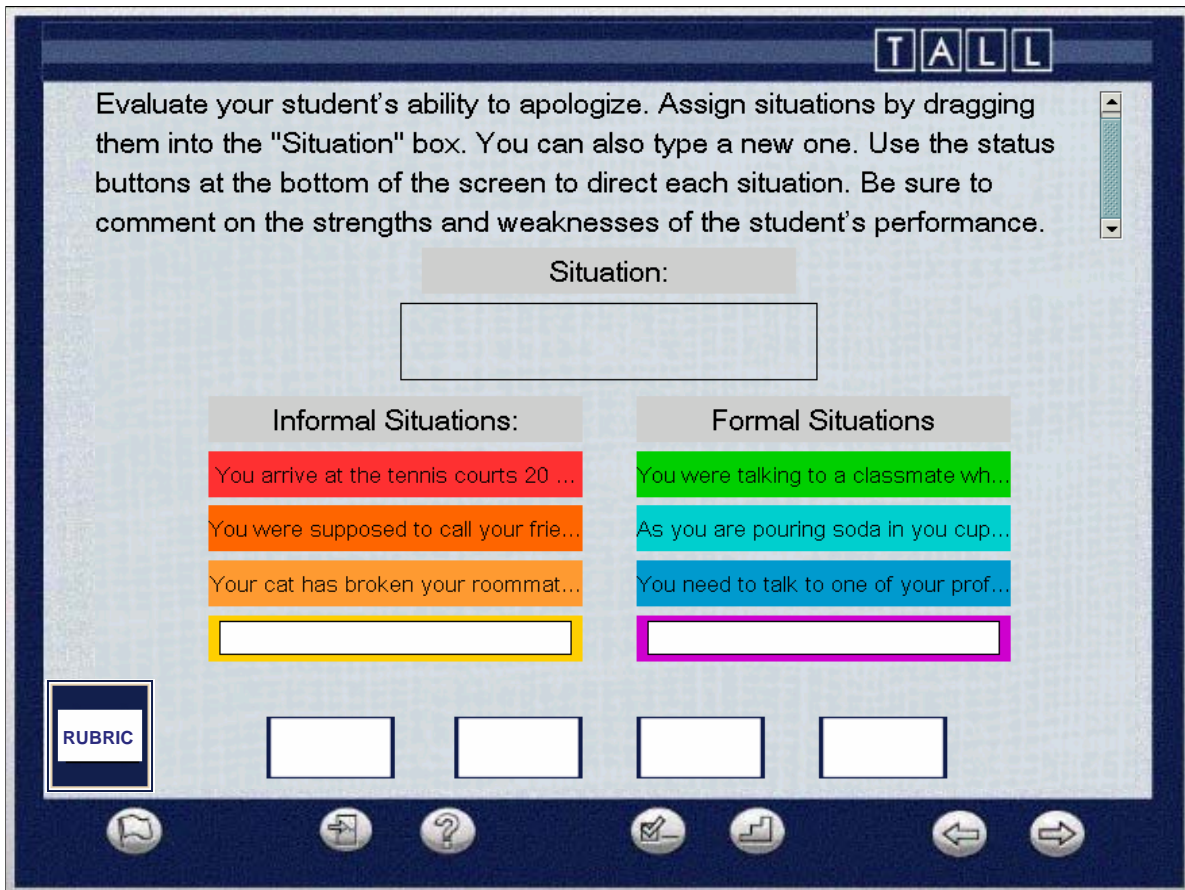
Figure 53. Screen shot of an evaluation screen for tutors - Apologies

When the tutor place mouse over the buttons, the following texts appear: START, STOP, DISCUSS, PREPARE.

Situations:

•You arrive at the tennis courts 20 minutes late for your game with your friend, Matt. This is not the first time you've been late.

•You were supposed to call your friend about going to the movies, but you never did. Now you see him and he seems a little angry.

•Your cat has broken your roommate's lamp. This is not the first time your cat has caused problems.

•You were talking to a classmate while the teacher was trying to explain something. You realize your teacher is a little upset about it.

•As you are pouring soda in your cup at an office party, someone bumps into you and you spill soda on your boss's shirt.

•You need to talk to one of your professors, but he's talking to a colleague in the hallway at the moment. You know you probably won't catch him again until it's too late.

Apologies: Evaluation Rubric

Category	4	3	2	1
Recognizing Situations	Learner can recognize all the situations that required apologies.	Learner can recognize most of the situations that required apologies.	Learner can recognize some of the situations that required apologies.	Learner cannot recognize any of the situations that required apologies.
Apologizing: Formality of the Situation	Learner always apologizes appropriately according to the degree of formality of the situation.	Learner apologizes appropriately most of the time according to the degree of formality of the situation.	Learner sometimes apologizes appropriately according to the degree of formality of the situation.	Learner almost never apologizes appropriately according to the degree of formality of the situation.
Apologizing: Severity of the Offense	Learner always apologizes appropriately according to the severity of the offense.	Learner apologizes appropriately most of the time according to the severity of the offense.	Learner sometimes apologizes appropriately according to the severity of the offense.	Learner never apologizes appropriately according to the severity of the offense.
Apologizing: Language Used	Learner uses structures seen on the instruction often. Learner's speech is clear and free of grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.	Learner uses structures seen on the instruction sometimes. Learner's speech is clear and has a few grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.	Learner uses structures seen on the instruction infrequently. Learner's speech is not very clear at times and has some grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.	Learner almost never uses structures seen on the instruction. Learner's speech difficult to understand and has many grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.
Responding to Apologies	Learner always responds appropriately to apologies.	Learner responds appropriately to apologies most of the time.	Learner sometimes responds appropriately to apologies.	Learner never responds appropriately to apologies.

An **appropriate apology** includes **as many parts as necessary** according to the degree of formality of the situation and the severity of the offense. It is **not too abrupt or too verbose**.

An **appropriate response** is one that would be accepted as polite by the average American English speaker.
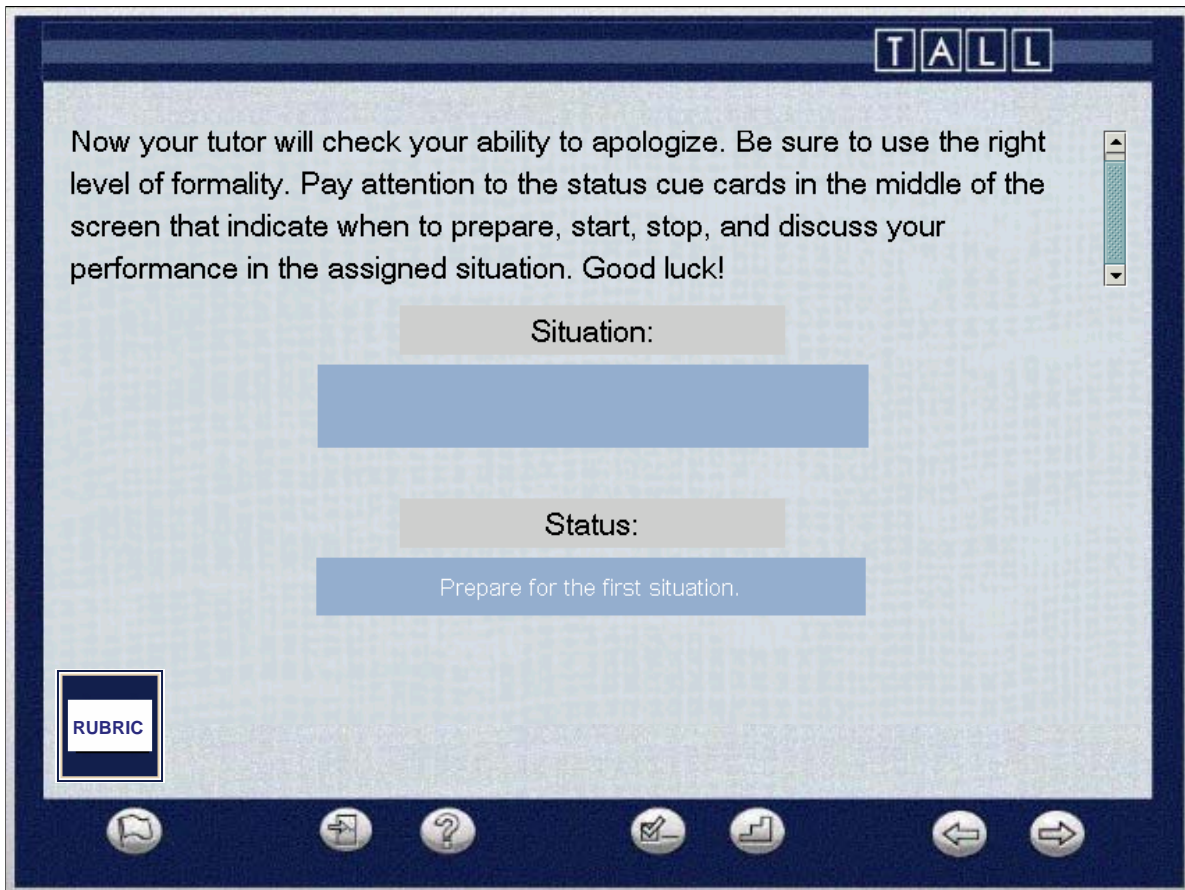
Figure 54. Screen shot of an evaluation screen for learners - Apologies

Text to appear in status box:

•Please START now.

•STOP now. Thank you.

•Now DISCUSS your performance with your tutor.

•Prepare for the next situation.

Help

APOLOGIES

Figure 55. Screen shot of a help screen – Express regret and respond
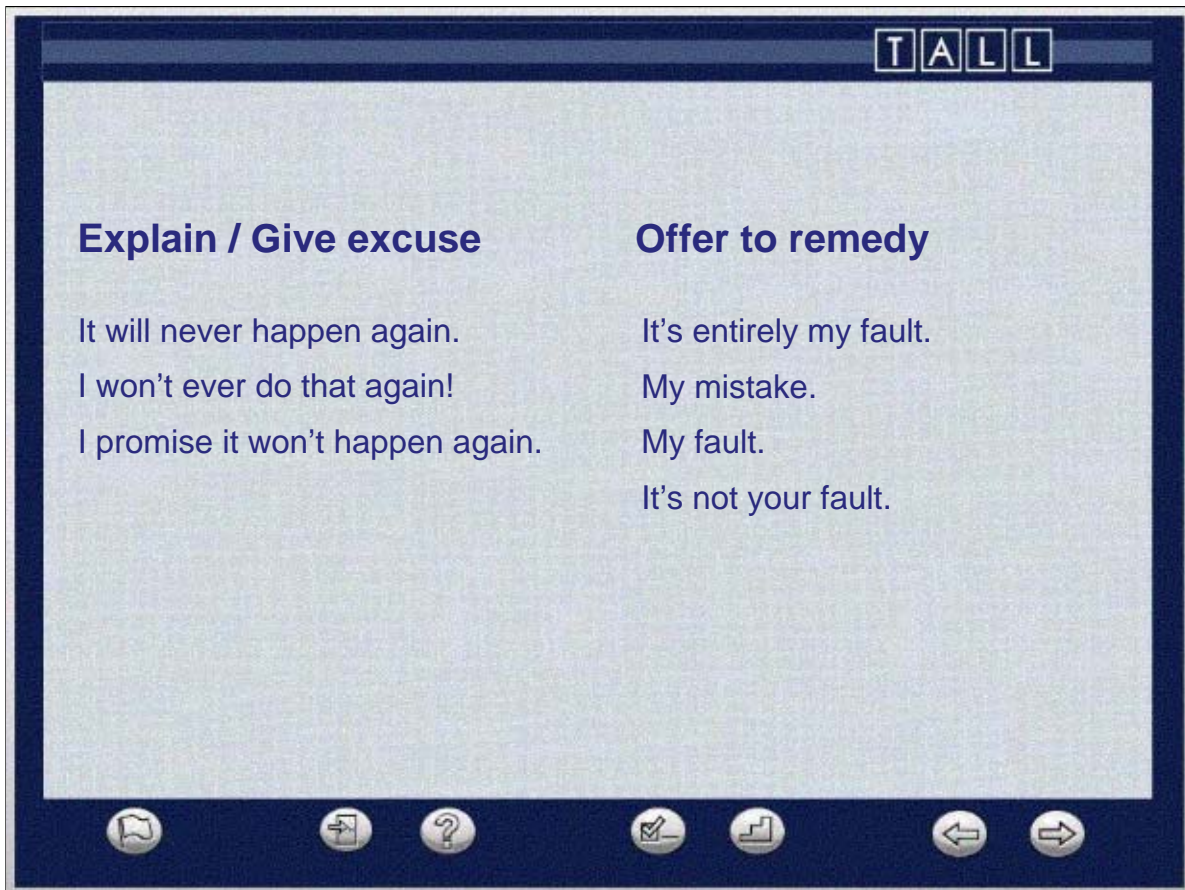
Figure 56. Screen shot of a help screen – Give excuse and offer to remedy
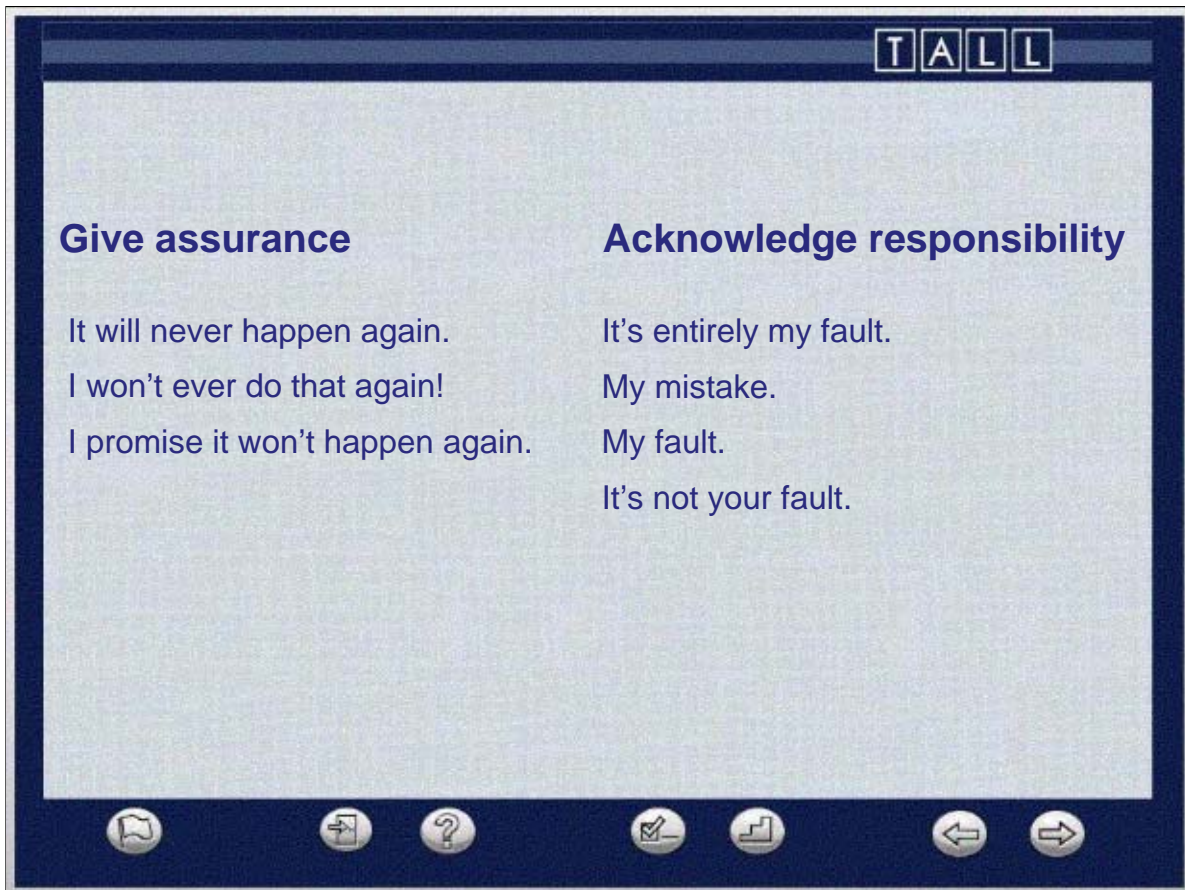
Figure 57. Screen shot of a help screen – Give assurance and acknowledge responsibility

Figure 58. Screen shot of a help screen – Accept the apology
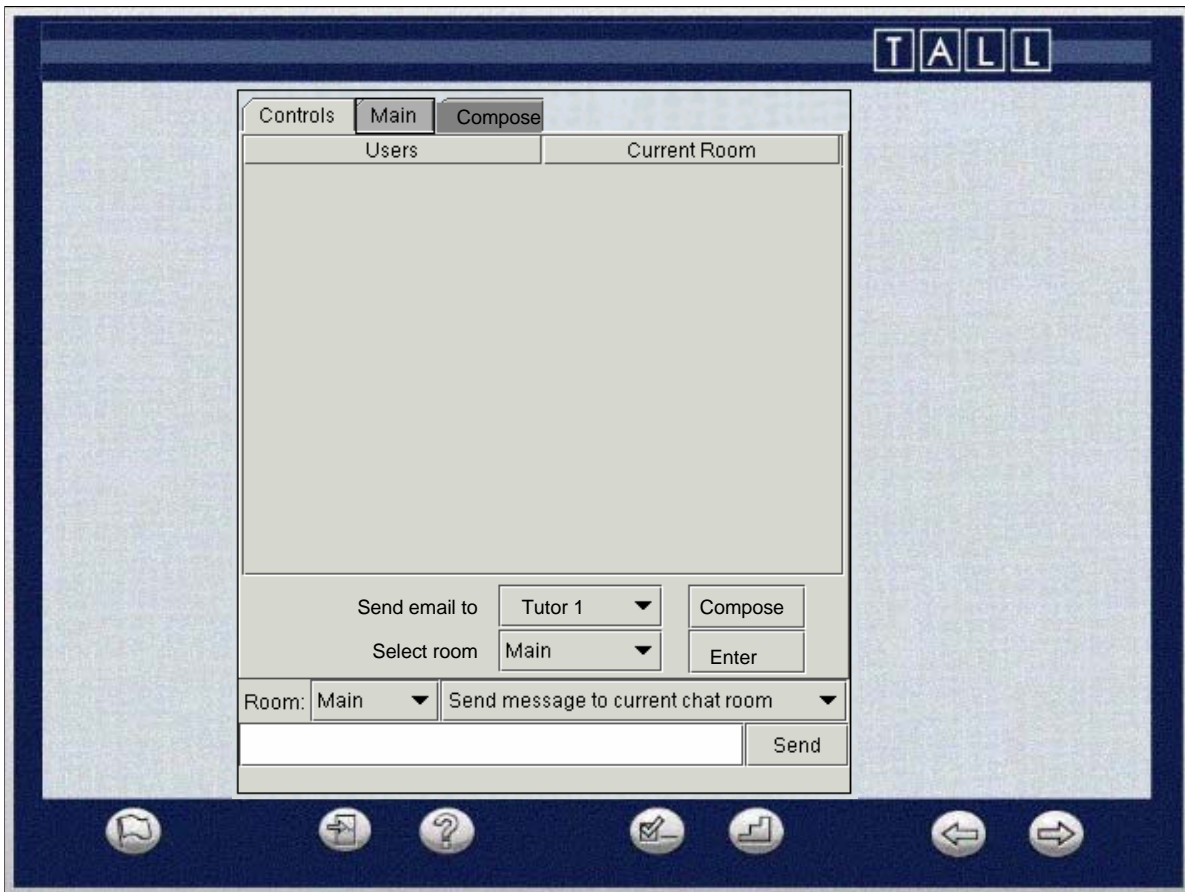
Figure 59. Screen shot of a "chat room" help screen

Conclusion

The prototypes for the remaining speech acts can be found in Appendix F. Along with the thesis and the above prototype, they comprise the totality of this project. The following chapter will explore the details of the prototype's formative evaluation.

CHAPTER 5: PROJECT EVALUATION

In this chapter, I will describe the details of the project's formative evaluation. According to Gagne et al. (1992), evaluation is an essential element of instructional design. Fitzpatrick, Sanders, and Worthen (2004) define it as "the identification, clarification, and application of defensible criteria to determine an evaluation object's value in relation to those criteria" (p. 5). More specifically, formative evaluation aims at providing information that can be used to improve the product. Since the present project entails only the design of storyboards for speech act lessons as opposed to the entire design and development process of those lessons, the evaluation conducted was formative in nature and relied exclusively on qualitative data. As proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1998), qualitative research refers to any type of research that "produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (p. 10). Interviews, observations, and questionnaires were the three main types of qualitative data used in this project.

Fitzpatrick, Sanders, and Worthen (2004) suggest that in order for the evaluation to be effective, it should include evaluative criteria and standards developed from the analysis of the stakeholders' concerns and questions. Four primary stakeholders were identified at the beginning of the project: intermediate to advanced students using the TALL system, TALL's content team, represented by Dr. Graham and Sherrie Spencer, and the group of developers who will work on the project. Representatives from each group of stakeholders were informally interviewed and their comments and responses were analyzed and compiled into a list of questions that reflect the criteria and standards

that will be used to judge this project.

The following is a list of the evaluation questions:

- Are learners able to meet the specific objectives of the lesson? Given the general instructional objectives for the lessons, this question could be answered by answering the following two questions:

  - Do the lessons help learners understand the pragmatic rules of American English as applied to speech acts?

  - Do the lessons help learners in their ability to apply those rules in conversations?

- Do learners enjoy the lessons and feel they are a worthwhile experience?

- Do learners think the various elements (explanations, videos, simulations, collaborative activities, interactivity) help them learn?

As for this last question, the original question was "Do the various elements (explanations, videos, simulations, collaborative activities, interactivity) help students learn?" Since it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to identify the effect of those particular elements on the learners' performance through a criterion-based test, the focus was placed on learners' perceptions of how useful those elements were in their learning process.

Methods

Two methods were selected to evaluate the design of the lessons according to the above list of questions: expert evaluation and one-to-one evaluation (Dick, Carey, and Carey, 2001.) While the first method focused on the reviews of content and instructional

design experts, the latter focused on the feedback provided by learners. Both methods proved very valuable and were used at various stages throughout the design of the prototype.

Content Reviews

The purpose of this type of formative evaluation is to benefit from the experience of content experts in order to improve the design, and thus, it aims at examining and appraising the product itself rather than its effects (Flagg, 1990.) Expert reviews of the language learning content and strategies used in the lessons came from two sources: native speakers of American English and linguists who have extensive experience teaching the target language.

As "expert" users of the target language, five native speakers participated in the evaluative activities at various stages of the design. The purpose of these reviews was to aid the designer in the development of scripts that sounded natural to an average native speaker. Typically, the designer presented one of the lessons and asked a number of questions, after which, the native speakers provided their feedback. The questions were designed to elicit formative feedback on the language used in dialogs, videos, and examples. Some of the questions used in these informal interviews with native speakers included: (1)Overall, does the language used in the instruction seem natural to you? (2)Are you likely to use the expressions/language used in the dialogs and models? (3)Are people you know likely to use them? (4)Do the dialogs and models seem appropriate considering the situations in which they take place? Or are they too soft, hard, formal, informal, verbose, abrupt, etc.? (5)In your opinion, how can the lesson be improved?

The most consistent comments received from native speakers concerned the language used in the dialogs. They felt that it was too verbose and apologetic, and that it only reflected female communication strategies. To correct this, the designer enrolled the help of male and female native speakers to help with the dialogs and the models. As for the language used in the video conversations, they were scripted according to either existing research or research done by the designer previous to the scripting.

As regards the second source of content reviews, subject matter experts provided feedback on a continual basis. The designer periodically submitted several versions of the lessons for review and occasionally conducted informal face-to-face interviews. The experts offered comments and suggestions which focused mainly on the depth and breadth of the material covered, the language used, and the activities selected. Sometimes the designer also asked questions about how to best present certain elements of the instruction. This process of submitting materials and receiving feedback was repeated until the lessons were in satisfactory condition.

An example of the comments received from content experts was regarding feedback in the presentation stage. They suggested that feedback containing a brief explanation be offered immediately after learners dropped a situation in a certain category in the "drag and drop" exercise. This would prevent students from moving on without knowing the content if they were just guessing. Also, the lessons initially showed three native speakers giving slightly different responses to the situations portrayed in the video. Experts proposed that each situation include only one native speaker in order to avoid confusion. Instead, learners could select the age and gender group that most closely represented them at the beginning of the lesson. Later, they would only see one native

speaker from the selected groups in each video situation. The purpose of that was to make sure students learned rules that applied specifically to their age and gender group. In the end, the designer decided to use only one native speaker per video without making any distinction based on age and gender. The reason for this decision was that the designer was unable to find existing research on the above mentioned topics as related to speech acts, and the research she conducted did not revealed consistent differences between those groups.

Design Reviews

The design of the speech act lessons underwent a number of design reviews by specialists in instructional design and experienced developers of language teaching materials. These reviews aimed at identifying weaknesses in the design in order to refine it, so as to achieve the objectives of the instruction.

As in the case of subject matter experts, materials were submitted to the experts who reviewed them and provided feedback. Also, a few interviews were conducted. As a general rule, the review process was informal and the specialists were asked to offer their comments freely. These comments and suggestions were later studied taking into account their feasibility and practicality. Some changes were implemented in lessons' design based on the time and resources available to the designer.

Since the early stages in the design process, the design reviewers made a number of comments that were helpful in refining the effectiveness of the lesson. For example, they encouraged the use of both text and audio narration in the explanations. They also suggested a visual representation of "degrees of severity" and "degrees of imposition" be

included. Up to that point, those concepts were represented on a scale showing the numbers one to six. As a result of the feedback, a triangle-shaped graphic showing colors ranging from green to yellow to red, as well as the number scale (see video exercises in Chapter 4.)

One-to-one Evaluations

According to Dick, Carey, and Carey (2001), one-to-one evaluations are useful in identifying and removing errors in the instruction. Also, they allow the designer to observe how learners react to the instruction. Gagne (1992) defines them as the observations of the learner's performance when he or she faces a specific learning task.

The one-to-one evaluations were conducted at two different stages of the design of the speech act lessons, using a low fidelity prototype and a refined prototype.

Low Fidelity Prototype Phase

The low fidelity phase utilized a paper-based prototype that included printouts that approximated the final product and represented the interface, instructions, content, and sequence of the lessons. There was one example of each learning activity in the lesson, and learners were informed of how many more screens there would be per type of activity. The prototype lacked audio, video, and animation, but the evaluator read the agent's narration and the examples. Learners read the dialogs on their own. The video activities had not been yet scripted, so learners were told how that part of the instruction would work.

Three members of the target audience participated in the review of the low fidelity prototype. The interviews were conducted in a face to face setting and the participants were encouraged to voice their thoughts at any point during the presentation. Also, the evaluator paused every so often and tried to elicit comments. The evaluator took notes on the learners' feedback, as well as on what she observed during the interview. These notes were later analyzed and the prototype was adjusted accordingly.

Given the nature and limitations of the prototype used, this low fidelity phase focused on only two of the evaluation questions: (1) Do the lessons help learners understand the pragmatic rules of American English as applied to speech acts? and (2) Do learners enjoy the lessons and feel they are a worthwhile experience?

There were a number of useful comments and suggestions collected at this stage of the evaluation. Learners expressed interest in the content of the instruction. They also said they liked the use of advanced organizers to help them know what to expect from the lessons. In addition they offered feedback on visual design elements they deemed necessary. They suggested the "drag and drop" exercises have a clearer visual message and that there be labels in the "seriousness scale" and "imposition scale" graphics. Changes were made to accommodate for these learners' preferences. Finally, they said they would like to see videos showing complete interactions, as opposed to just showing native speakers producing the speech acts in questions. In response to this concern, the video segments were re-written to include complete conversations.

During this evaluation phase, it was also observed that sometimes learners did not take the time to read the instructions carefully. To solve this problem, the designer decided to include the instructions in the agent's narration.

Refined Prototype Phase

The second phase of the one-to-one learner evaluation used a refined prototype of the lessons, which approximated the final product more accurately than the previous one. This prototype was a more precise representation of the lessons' content and interface, since it included all the activities and feedback. Even though there was no audio, video, and interactivity, the designer enlisted the help of two native speakers who read the agent's narration, the examples, and the dialogs. They also acted out the situations, with the help of the designer in the rare cases where there were more than two people involved in them.

Two members of the target audience participated in this phase of the evaluation, which was conducted in a face to face setting but in a slightly different manner than the low fidelity phase. The learners sat in front of a computer screen where they saw the prototype in a power point presentation format. Since there was no interactivity, they used their index finger to point at the buttons and "drag" elements during the presentation. The evaluator sat next to them with a laptop computer where she had the presentation and all the notes for the power point document. This was done so that she could easily know when to instruct the native speakers to read their parts, should that be necessary. The two native speakers, who had printed copies of the presentation and notes, sat behind the evaluator where they could see the laptop's screen.

As the learners went through the lesson, they paused to make comments. The evaluator also asked questions to elicit feedback from time to time. The evaluator took notes on the learners' comments and suggestions. After the presentation, learners were asked to fill out a questionnaire about their experience using the prototype (see Appendix

E.)

This evaluation phase focused on the following questions: (1) Do the lessons help learners understand the pragmatic rules of American English as applied to speech acts? (2) Do learners think the lessons will help them in their ability to apply those rules in conversations? This is a modified version of the question generated by the stakeholders' analysis. It was not possible to really answer the original question because the lessons are not yet developed and there was no quantitative evaluation of students' performance and progress in this stage. (3) Do learners enjoy the lessons and feel they are a worthwhile experience? (4) Do learners think that the various elements (explanations, videos, simulations, collaborative activities, interactivity) will help them learn?

Overall, the feedback received during this one-to-one evaluation was encouraging. Learners expressed satisfaction with the content and the varied activities. Even the advanced learner found the lesson very useful and felt she learned a lot about the choices Americans make in certain situations regarding language use.

During this phase, learners pointed out the need for an explanation about the difference between the uses of "I'm sorry" and "Excuse me." They also raised the concern that matching activities may be too easy for advanced learners, and that unlike other activities, they do not have anything that would challenge those learners.

Instruments

Two evaluative instruments were used for the purpose of evaluating the lessons: an observation log and a questionnaire. The observation log was designed to assist the evaluator in gathering data during the one-to-one learner evaluations. It allowed the

designer to record the learner's proficiency level, the number of years the learner has been living in the United States, the activity type, and comments about the observed learner's behavior, performance, and attitudes toward the instruction (see Appendix D.) The questionnaire consisted of 24 questions developed to evaluate the learners' opinions about how effective, engaging, and worthwhile the different activities and the overall lessons are. It also collected information about the learners, more precisely, their level of proficiency and the number of years they have been immersed in the target culture (see Appendix E.)

The above mentioned qualitative instruments were designed to provide answers to the following stakeholder questions:

- Do the lessons help learners understand the pragmatic rules of American English as applied to speech acts?

- Do learners think the lessons help them in their ability to apply those rules in conversations? (Modified from stakeholders' question.)

- Do learners enjoy the lessons and feel they are a worthwhile experience?

- Do learners think the various elements (explanations, videos, simulations, collaborative activities, interactivity) help them learn?

As for the expert reviews, no formal evaluation instruments were used in those instances. The purpose of those informal questions and interviews was to collect experts' comments, suggestions, feedback. The designer gathered notes from their written feedback and from the discussions during the interviews.

Results

Qualitative data was collected from the questionnaire completed by students after experiencing the lesson and from observational notes taken during the one-to-one evaluation of the refined prototype. The following paragraphs describe how these two sources addressed several of the stakeholders' questions, as previously mentioned.

Do the lessons help learners understand the pragmatic rules of American English as applied to speech acts? As noted earlier, one of the main instruction objectives of the lessons is to make learners aware of the pragmatic rules of the target culture that apply producing and responding to speech act, which would inevitably lead to cultural understanding. It was therefore important for all stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of the lessons in accomplishing this objective. During the one-to-one evaluations, learners indicated the lesson was in fact helped them understand the rules associated with the speech act presented in the lesson and it helped them gain a better understanding of why Americans sometimes communicate in certain ways. One of them posed the question of the difference between "I'm sorry" and "Excuse me" and indicated that she would like to learn more about that. She said she was never sure when to use one and when to use the other. It is interesting to note that this learner had an advanced level of proficiency in the target language. A section addressing this topic was added to the lesson.

Do learners enjoy the lessons and feel they are a worthwhile experience? All stakeholders agreed that an important aspect to take into account when evaluating the

lessons was the learners' attitude toward their experience. Learners are more motivated to learn when they enjoy the material and they consider it relevant. Students were asked to rate the lesson as "very useful," "somewhat useful," "not very useful," and "useless." The overall response to the questionnaire items indicated that learners found the lesson enjoyable and useful.

Also, when asked to indicate the parts of the lesson they enjoyed most, learners responded in favor of the simulations and video exercises. They reported that the simulations engaged them in the lesson content and motivated them to go back and review the different options, thus giving them more exposure to the consequences of following or breaking the pragmatic rules of the target culture. The participants also indicated that they would like to use more lessons of a similar nature.

Do learners think the various elements (animated explanations, videos, simulations, collaborative activities, interactivity) help them learn? Since the beginning of the design process, it was established that videos –in video activities and simulations– would be used to give learners the opportunity to observe native speakers' behaviors in various situations. Also, it was decided that collaborative and interactive activities, along with animated explanations, would be used to take advantage of the capabilities available through the TALL system. The question of the effectiveness of these elements was obviously raised when considering the aspects of the lesson to be evaluated. As said before, this evaluation question was changed from its original form to its present form in order to reflect the learners' opinions.

Learners described the collaborative activities as very useful. In particular, they agreed that the guided practices would be "great" to build their confidence using the information presented in the lessons. Also, for the most part learners had positive reactions towards the interactive activities. For example, they said they liked the "drag and drop" activity where they had to classify situations because it was more hands on and that helped them stay focused on the material. Learners made positive comments about the dialogs because they challenged them to speak like native speakers, while at the same time offered more examples of the speech act in question. The advanced learner, however, thought the matching activities after the dialogs were too easy for her proficiency level.

As for the video activities, they were also well-received. Learners said they liked them a lot because they would give them an opportunity to really listen and pay attention to the conversation, as opposed to just have "an idea" of what was happening. Learners also expressed enthusiasm about the simulation exercise. They said it would be an engaging way to learn because it would allow them to see the results of different choices. They even said they hoped "life could be like that, that one could go back in time and say things over again until it was right."

Do the lessons help learners in their ability to apply those rules in conversations? The above question could not be answered through the instruments used to conduct the formative evaluation. It will only be effectively answered after the lessons' development process is complete and quantitative methods are used to evaluate students' performance and progress. However, a modified version of the question that focused on students'

perceptions was posed during the evaluation process:

Do learners think the lessons help them in their ability to apply those rules in conversations?

When asked this question during the one-to-one evaluations, learners responded that they thought they would be able to apply what they learned in their interactions with native speakers of the target language. As previously noted, at this point there was no way to evaluate the actual effectiveness of the lessons in helping students apply the pragmatic rules they saw in the instruction. It would be necessary to test learners' performance before and after the lessons to come to any conclusion in that respect.

In closing, this chapter has reviewed the formative evaluation of the prototype. This evaluative stage has been very useful in the design of the lessons. However, more extensive research, including quantitative research and small group implementations of the final product would be needed to positively assess the effectiveness of the instructional materials. In the next chapter, I will discuss some of the limitations of the project and I will give suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This thesis has explored the design and evaluation of the lessons that comprise the project *A Computer-based Course to Teach Speech Acts: A Prototype for the Technology Assisted Language Learning Program.* These lessons were created to help learners in their integration to the L2 culture by making them aware of the existence of certain pragmatic functions and training them to be able to distinguish culturally determined linguistic behaviors in their interactions with native speakers. In other words, the main objective of the project was to help learners gain a deeper understanding of American English pragmatics rules as applied to the speech acts of request, apology, compliment, and invitation, and to enable them to use those rules to appropriately perform and respond to the above speech acts.

In order to achieve the instructional goals, the design of the lessons took into account the capabilities of the TALL engine, as well as principles of instructional theory and current methods and strategies for language teaching. As mentioned before, the materials included a variety of activities such as videos, explanations, dialog and discourse completion, simulations, collaborative practices, and so on. They combined audio, graphics, video, animation, and text.

The effectiveness of the lessons was evaluated through qualitative methods and instruments. As part of the formative evaluation, content and design experts reviewed the prototype on an ongoing basis. Also, two instances of one-to-one evaluations were conducted. Several members of the target went through the lesson and voiced their opinions, while the evaluator took notes on their comments and concerns. After using the

prototype, learners completed a questionnaire about their experience. Overall the feedback received was positive and encouraging. In spite of this, there were some limitations to the process and the final product. The remainder of this chapter will examine those limitations and suggest ideas for future research.

Limitations

The most obvious limitation of the project stems from the fact that the lessons have not been developed. Due to circumstances beyond my control, TALL has decided to postpone the development process until later modules of the program. As a result, it was not possible to conduct small group implementations or quantitative research to evaluate learner progress. Also, neither the rubric designed to be used by the students nor the tutor's rubric was tested during the qualitative evaluation process.

Another limitation of this project is that the sample of the L2 community used to conduct the surveys to gather some of the data used in the prototype on apologies was not large enough to safely make generalizations based on their results. As a consequence, the information on the perceived severity of the offenses and on the speech act behavior of native speakers in certain situations may differ from data collected in later studies. For example, the discourse completion questionnaire indicated no consistent differences based on the age and gender of the participants, but there were a few isolated examples where the responses of the participants in the younger age group seemed to vary from the norm.

Yet another limitation is that potential differences in the perception of power status between the American English speech community and other cultures were not

addressed in the lessons.

Finally, all the research used to design the lessons does not take into account sociolinguistic variations within the United States. It is well known that some linguistic aspects, such as phonetics or lexicon, present regional variations. Arguably, sociolinguistic behavior may be subject to variations given different geographical and socio-economical settings.

Suggestions for Future Research

Due to the relative lack of studies that focus specifically on speech acts in American English, it would be useful to further explore certain topics related to speech acts. It would be very beneficial to the field of language teaching to have more information on all of the speech acts included in this project, but more particularly on American requests and apologies. For instance, the perceived degree of imposition in requests has been the subject of a small number of cross-cultural studies, but apparently there is no data on this topic that applies directly to American English. Likewise, it would be helpful to examine in more detail the perceived severity of offenses in apologies.

Another suggestion for future research associated with this project would be the study of the effect of gender and age on speech act performance. Some studies seem to indicate there are differences in Americans' compliment behavior based on gender. Similarly, cross-cultural studies have found that request strategies in Spanish vary according to the age of the people involved. In order to design and develop optimal instructional materials, it would be necessary to further investigate the way gender and age affect speech acts in American English. This would allow instructional designers to

tailor instruction to learners' profiles, should significant differences be found.

  Finally, there is currently a need for more instructional materials that address the topic of speech acts. The present project could be expanded to include several other speech acts. Given the fact that sociolinguistic competence is a vital factor of communicative competence, it could be argued that the inclusion of such materials in the language classroom is as important as the inclusion of materials that support grammar instruction.

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Appendix A

Audience Analysis Questionnaire Results

Question	Responses	
Have you ever had communication problems when you tried to request something, invite someone to do something, complain about something or apologize for something you had done? (For example, someone got mad at you, reacted defensively, or ignored you.) If so, please give a specific example.	- No - Sometimes I have to explain things twice of three times before the other person really understands what I mean. - Yes, I asked for an appointment with a professor. I could not go, so I thought it would be polite to call him and apologize because I was not going to make it. So, I called his office a left a message. After that, he would not speak to me. I probably will never know why. - Sometimes I feel my jokes are not funny. - Oh yeah… Many people ignore you all the time.	
Have you ever felt Americans are rude or insincere? (For example, when they request something, complain about something, apologize or fail to apologize for something, or when they give compliments.) If so, please give a specific example.	- Yes! They overreact when I talk about the bad things that happened to me when they actually don't care. - I don't think they are rude, although sometimes they can be a bit shallow or insincere. Specific example, I had a workmate offer me help to do my work. Whey I really needed her help, she did not show interest in helping me. - Yes, when they compliment so much about how you speak, I really start to believe they are mocking me. I can believe one or two times, but they do it so many times that I start to believe after a while they are not sincere. - No, they express their feelings more than I do. But I don't think they are not feeling what they say. - They don't return phone calls. They think that problems will be resolved by not talking about them.	
Would you be interested in learning more about how to interact effectively with Americans?	Yes Maybe No	2 2 14
What type of features/activities would you like the instruction to include (rank them from 1-most preferred to 8-least preferred)?	Videos Pictures Explanations Fill-in-the blank exercises Multiple choice exercises Role-plays Simulations Interactive activities Others (please specify):	2.89 5.88 2.88 7.13 7.0 3.75 3.36 2.56 0

Question	Responses	
	• Attending a lecture or listening to a tape.	4
	• Watching someone else demonstrate it or seeing an example and then doing it.	14
How do you prefer to learn (choose up to two)?	• Watching a video or looking at graphics or pictures that illustrate the point.	4
	• Reading a good textbook.	2
	• Doing hands-on experiments (e.g. taking something apart to see how it worked.)	5
	• Other (please specify):	0

Appendix B

Survey Results: Video Situations

Situations	Not very serious				Very serious	
	←---→					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Yesterday you borrowed and then forgot to return your boss's expensive pen. Now she asks you to return it, but you don't remember where it is.	0%	11%	22%	**28%**	22%	17%
You live with three roommates. One of them asks you if you want to go on a trip for the weekend. Your other two roommates have already had to say no because they have work this weekend and couldn't get anyone to cover their shifts. Because you are a morning person you usually set your alarm to get up at 6:30 AM. Every day when you gets up you are in the habit of resetting your alarm clock for the next day. On Friday morning when you got up you did as you always do and reset the alarm clock without realizing you wouldn't be there the next morning. When you get back on Sunday night, one your roommates makes a comment about how annoying it was to be woken up at 6:30 on a Saturday morning when she didn't have to be at work until 10:00AM.	16%	**47%**	16%	11%	11%	0%
You are in charge of scheduling appointments for your boss. You make a mistake and schedule an appointment with an important client for a time when your boss is not going to be in the office. Unfortunately, you don't realize your mistake until now, when the client gets in and tells you he's there to speak with you boss.	0%	5%	11%	11%	**37%**	**37%**
You are a waiter/waitress in a restaurant. It is a Friday night and the restaurant is very busy. The wait for a table is up to 35 minutes. You have been working for 5 and ½ hours of your 6 hour shift. You accidentally bring one of the people in a group of six young college students the wrong drink with his dinner. As you are leaving the drinks one of the young men says, "Excuse me, I didn't order a Coke, I ordered a raspberry lemonade."	**53%**	21%	21%	5%	0%	0%
Your coworker Steve tells you it's almost sure he's getting a promotion, but he doesn't want people to know about it until it's official. Without realizing, you tell another coworker about it.	0%	16%	21%	**32**%	26%	5%
You really need to talk to one of your professors, but he's talking to a colleague in the hallway at the moment. You know you probably won't catch him again until it's too late and you can't wait too long because you have to be at work in 15 minutes.	16%	**26%**	21%	21%	11%	5%

Situations	Not very serious				Very serious	
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
You need to borrow Lori's American Heritage book to study for the Midterm Exam, which is 6 days away. You can't find your book because it got misplaced, and you are afraid you will not be able to find it in time. You have already been through the entire house 3 times looking for the book, but it does not turn up. You ask Lori for the book and she says that you can borrow the book on Monday, but that she needs it back by Wednesday night at the latest. Wednesday night comes and you forget to bring the book to the class. Because you live on opposite ends of town, and neither one of you has a car, it will be hard for you to meet up again before the exam.	0%	5%	5%	11%	**42%**	37%
You have a job interview for a secretarial position. You have problems with your car and you arrive 10 minutes late to the interview. Your interviewer greets you and point out the fact that you are late.	5%	0%	16%	16%	26%	**37%**
You have taken your 4-year-old son to visit a friend, who has just come back from a vacation in Thailand. She shows you a beautiful vase she bought there and tells you that she fell in love with it when she saw it. Since it was really expensive, that was the only thing she brought back from the trip. Later, as you are chatting, you hear a crash and when you look you see the vase on the floor and your son standing next to it.	0%	0%	5%	26%	32%	**37%**
You have a job interview for a secretarial position. You have problems with your car and you arrive 10 minutes late to the interview. Your interviewer greets you and point out the fact that you are late.	5%	0%	16%	16%	26%	**37%**
You are at the mall with a friend. While you are walking around a store you turn around to see something your friend is showing you and you bump into an older lady and step on her foot. As a result, she stumbles and drops some bags she was carrying. (The lady looks fragile and she's very well dressed.)	0%	16%	26%	**37%**	11%	11%
Your friend Tyler and you decide to take time out of your busy schedules to play racquetball, so your friend reserves a court at a local club for an hour. The day you were supposed to meet him, you oversleep and arrive 20 minutes late. By the time you get ready to play, you only have a little over half an hour to play.	0%	**26%**	**26%**	**26%**	21%	0%

Survey Results: Classification Exercise

Situations	Not very serious				Very serious	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
You interrupt a meeting to tell your boss he has a phone call. He is meeting with an old client and he has been waiting for this phone call.	16%	**32%**	**32%**	11%	5%	5%
A friend arranged to meet you in order to get some notes from you to study for an exam. She waited for an hour but you didn't show up because you forgot about it.	0%	0%	6%	22%	**50%**	22%
You and your friend are visiting his or her family during spring break. You tell one of your friend's relatives about the person he or she is dating. Your friend gets mad at you.	0%	21%	**42%**	21%	11%	5%
You are running to catch a bus. You unintentionally bump into young man who is walking down the street.	**32%**	**32%**	16%	16%	5%	0%
You lost your temper yesterday and said some angry words to a coworker. Among other things, you said she did not do a very good job.	0%	0%	0%	37%	**42%**	21%
You accidentally deleted your roommate's research paper from the computer you share. He/she had been working on it for 3 weeks. The paper is due in another week.	0%	0%	0%	5%	16%	**79%**
You dialed the wrong number on the phone early in the morning.	17%	**39%**	28%	11%	6%	0%
You accidentally backed into your friend's car. From what you can see, it will cost at least $500 to repair the damage.	0%	5%	**26%**	**26%**	**26%**	16%
You are 10 minutes late for a doctor's appointment.	11%	**58%**	21%	0%	5%	5%
You unintentionally took your friend's sweater because it looks very similar to yours. You call her to tell her of your mistake.	**89%**	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%
You call your neighbor at 10:30 PM to ask him about the time of the neighborhood meeting the next day.	21%	**32%**	**32%**	11%	5%	0%
You ask your friend to give you a ride to a town that is 50 minutes away because you have an interview for a summer internship there.	16%	16%	**37%**	16%	11%	5%

Appendix C

The following are the results of the discourse completion questionnaire. Participants were asked what they would say in these situations, but they were not told specifically to apologize.

Situation 1

> *Yesterday you borrowed and then forgot to return your boss's expensive pen. Now she asks you to return it, but you don't remember where it is.*

- Regret: Only 30% of participants offered an explicit expression of regret like "I'm sorry."

- Explanation/excuse: 60% gave an excuse or explanation, such as "I left it in my shirt pocket when I went home" or "I cannot remember where I put it right at this moment."

- Remedy: 100% offered a remedy. For example, "I'll get it to you by tomorrow" or "Would it be okay if I brought it to you tomorrow?"

As for the number of strategies used, 20% of participants used three –regret, explanation/excuse, and remedy; 90% used two –explanation/excuse and remedy; and 10% used only one –remedy.

Situation 2

> *You live with three roommates. One of them asks you if you want to go on a trip for the weekend. Your other two roommates have already had to say no because they have work this weekend and couldn't get anyone to cover their shifts. Because you are a*

morning person you usually set your alarm to get up at 6:30 AM. Every day when you get up you are in the habit of resetting your alarm clock for the next day. On Friday morning when you got up you did as you always do, and reset the alarm clock without realizing you wouldn't be there the next morning. When you get back on Sunday night, one your roommates makes a comment about how annoying it was to be woken up at 6:30 on a Saturday morning when she didn't have to be at work until 10:00AM.

- Regret: 100% expressed regret, like "I'm sorry."

- Explanation/excuse: 62% gave an excuse or an explanation. For instance, "I thought I had turned it off" or "It is habit to reset my alarm and I forgot I wouldn't be here."

- Remedy: 20% made some kind of offer to compensate the roommate for the inconvenience. For example, "Let me make you breakfast tomorrow" or "Can I make it up to you?"

- Forbearance: 20% promised not to do it again. For example, "It won't happen again" or "I'll try not to do that again."

It is interesting to note that 15% would not respond to the roommate's comment with an apology, but would say something to express they were offended by it. One participant, for example, responded with "Sorry boss! Next time I won't complain when you do (list his annoying habits.)" This type of response corresponded to the younger age group (18 to 24.)

Most participants (70%) used two strategies to apologize in this situation: an expression of regret and either an explanation/excuse or a promise of forbearance. Twenty percent of participants used three (regret, explanation/excuse, and remedy) and 10% used only one (regret.)

Situation 3

You are in charge of scheduling appointments for your boss. You make a mistake and schedule an appointment with an important client for a time when your boss is not going to be in the office. Unfortunately, you don't realize your mistake until now, when the client gets in and tells you he's there to speak with you boss.

- Regret: 100% of participants expressed regret, as in "I'm sorry" or "I apologize."

- Responsibility: 70% acknowledge their responsibility in the offense. Responses included "I made a mistake in scheduling the appointment" and "This is my mistake."

- Explanation/excuse: 60% gave an excuse or an explanation. For instance, "I scheduled this appointment without realizing the Mr. Boss wasn't going to be in today." It is interesting to note that 10% of participants gave an excuse that made it sound as if it had not been their mistake, such as "Unfortunately he has a conflict in his schedule."

- Remedy: 100% offered a remedy, that is, they offered to reschedule the meeting.

Situation 4

You are a waiter/waitress in a restaurant. It is a Friday night and the restaurant is very busy. The wait for a table is up to 35 minutes. You have been working for 5 and ½ hours of your 6 hour shift. You accidentally bring one of the people in a group of six young college students the wrong drink with his dinner. As you are leaving the drinks one of the young men says, "Excuse me, I didn't order a Coke, I ordered a raspberry lemonade."

- Regret: 100% of participants expressed regret, as in "I'm sorry" or "Sorry about that."

- Remedy: 100% also offered a remedy, like "I'll be right back with your lemonade"

  and "I'll bring you your drink right away."

Situation 5

  Your coworker Steve tells you about a promotion that he is almost sure he will

get, but he doesn't want anyone else to know until it's official. Without realizing, you tell

another coworker about it.

- Regret: 100% of responses included an expression of regret, like "I'm sorry."

- Explanation/excuse: 80% also provided an explanation or excuse. For example, "I

  know you told me not to say anything, but it slipped out" or "I forgot your news was

  hush, hush."

Situation 6

  You really need to talk to one of your professors, but he's talking to a colleague in

the hallway at the moment. You know you probably won't catch him again until it's too

late, and you can't wait long because you have to be at work in 15 minutes.

- Regret: 70% of participants express regret, as in "Excuse me" or "Excuse me. I'm

  sorry to interrupt."

- Explanation/excuse: 70% provided an explanation or excuse for the interruption. For

  instance, "I have to be at work in 15 minutes and I was wondering if I could bother

  you for just a moment?"

- Thirty percent of participants said they would not interrupt at all. They said they

  would be late for work or send an email or call the professor's office, even if that

meant they were not going to be able to get in touch with him/her.

Situation 7

You need to borrow Lori's American Heritage book to study for the Midterm Exam, which is 6 days away. You can't find your book because it got misplaced, and you are afraid you will not be able to find it in time. You have already been through the entire house 3 times looking for the book, but it does not turn up. You ask Lori for the book and she says that you can borrow the book on Monday, but that she needs it back by Wednesday night at the latest. Wednesday night comes and you forget to bring the book to the class. Because you live on opposite ends of town, and neither one of you has a car, it will be hard for you to meet up again before the exam.

- Regret: 100% of participants expressed regret, as in "I'm sorry" or "I'm really sorry."

- Responsibility: 10% acknowledge their responsibility in the offense. For example, "This is my mistake…"

- Explanation/excuse: 20% gave an explanation or excuse. For example: "I completely forgot about the book."

- Remedy: 100% offered a remedy. For instance, "Look, it will be a little late, but can I bring it by tonight?" or "Is it okay if I scan the chapters and email them to you?"

  As for the number of strategies used to apologize, all participants used two or less.

Situation 8

You have taken your 4-year-old son to visit a friend, who has just come back from a vacation in Thailand. She shows you a beautiful vase she bought there and tells you

that she fell in love with it when she saw it. Since it was really expensive, that was the

only thing she brought back from the trip. Later, as you are chatting, you hear a crash

and when you look you see the vase on the floor and your son standing next to it.

- Regret: 100% of responses included an expression of regret, as in "I'm so sorry."

- Remedy: 100% of participants also offered a remedy, like "What can I do to replace it or fix it?" or "Please let me pay for the vase."

Situation 9

You have a job interview for a secretarial position. You have problems with your

car and you arrive 10 minutes late to the interview. Your interviewer greets you and point

out the fact that you are late.

- Regret: 100% of participants expressed regret, like "I apologize" or "I'm sorry."

- Responsibility: 30% acknowledge their responsibility in the offense. For instance, I should have planned better… I didn't plan on that."

- Explanation/excuse: 90% gave an explanation or excuse. For example: "I had some car trouble on my way here."

Situation 10

You are at the mall with a friend. While you are walking around a store you turn

around to see something your friend is showing you and you bump into an older woman

and step on her foot. As a result, she stumbles and drops some bags she was carrying.

(The woman looks fragile.)

- Regret: 100% of responses included an expression of regret, such as "I'm so sorry" or "I'm really sorry."

- Explanation/excuse: 8% gave an explanation or excuse. For example: "I didn't see you there."

- Remedy: 90% of participants offered a remedy. Fifty percent made an explicit offer, such as, "May I help you?" or "Please let me help you." Thirty percent said they would pick up the bags, but without saying anything first. Sixteen percent would saying something like "Are you all right?", which could also be interpreted as willingness to help and repair the damage.

Situation 11

    Your friend Tyler and you decide to take time out of your busy schedules to play racquetball, so your friend reserves a court at a local club for an hour. The day you were supposed to meet him, you oversleep and arrive 20 minutes late. By the time you get ready to play, you only have a little over half an hour to play.

- Regret: 80% of participants expressed regret, as in "I'm sorry" or "Sorry."

- Responsibility: 20% acknowledged their responsibility by saying something like "…my bad" or "Dude, I'm such an idiot…" It is interesting to note that this type of response was only found in males in the 18 to 24 age group.

- Explanation/excuse: 50% of participants gave an explanation or excuse. For example, "I really didn't hear my alarm" or "I overslept."

- Remedy: 35% offered a remedy. For instance, "I'll have to buy you a hamburger or something to make it up to you" or "I'll pay for the court next time."

- Forbearance: 10% promised not to be late again. For example, "I won't be late again."

Also, most participants used two strategies to apologize. Twenty percent used just one, and eight percent used three.

Appendix D

Observation Log

Date: _____

Proficiency Level: _____

Years in the U.S. : _____

Activity	Observations/Learner's Behaviors	Comments

Appendix E

Post Questionnaire: Apologies

1. Proficiency Level:

2. How many years have you lived in the United States?

Circle "yes" or "no" to answer the questions in the boxes next to the images. Write your comments in the space provided.

3. Explanations

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the explanations clear?

Comments:

4. Classification
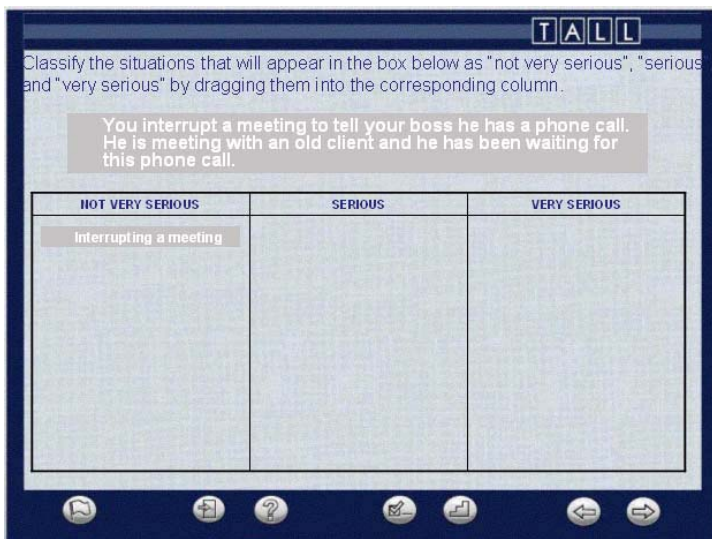
Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

5. Video Screens

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

6. Video Exercises 1

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

7. Video Exercises 2

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

8. Video Comparisons

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

9. Dialogs

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

10. Matching Exercises

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

11. Classification Exercises

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

12. Dialog Completion

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

13. Written Response

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

14. Collaborative Activity - Guided

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

15. Simulation

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

16. Collaborative Activity - Free

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

17. Help

Y	N	Did you like the activity?
Y	N	Did you find the activity useful?
Y	N	Were the instructions clear?

Comments:

Answer the following questions. Write the number of the corresponding activity and explain why you chose those activities.

18. What were you three favorite activities? Why?

19. What were the three activities you liked the least? Why?

20. In what activities did you learn the most? Why?

21. In what activities did you learn the least? Why?

22. Overall, how much do you feel you learned in the lesson?

A lot	Some	Not much	Nothing at all

23. Overall, how useful was the lesson to you?

Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not very useful	Useless

24. In your opinion, how can the lesson be improved?

Appendix F

This appendix contains the prototypes for requests, compliments, and invitations in the following order:

- Requests Prototype
    - Introduction
    - Presentation
    - Practice
    - Evaluation
    - Help
- Compliments Prototype
    - Introduction
    - Presentation
    - Practice
    - Evaluation
    - Help
- Invitations Prototype
    - Introduction
    - Presentation
    - Practice
    - Evaluation
    - Help

Introduction

REQUESTS

Watch the video and think what you would do in that situation.

Video

Conversation:

Jim: Hi. I'm your new neighbor, Jim. Can I use your phone?

Sue: Okay, may I ask what you need? Maybe I can help you.

Jim: No, thank you. I just need to use the phone.
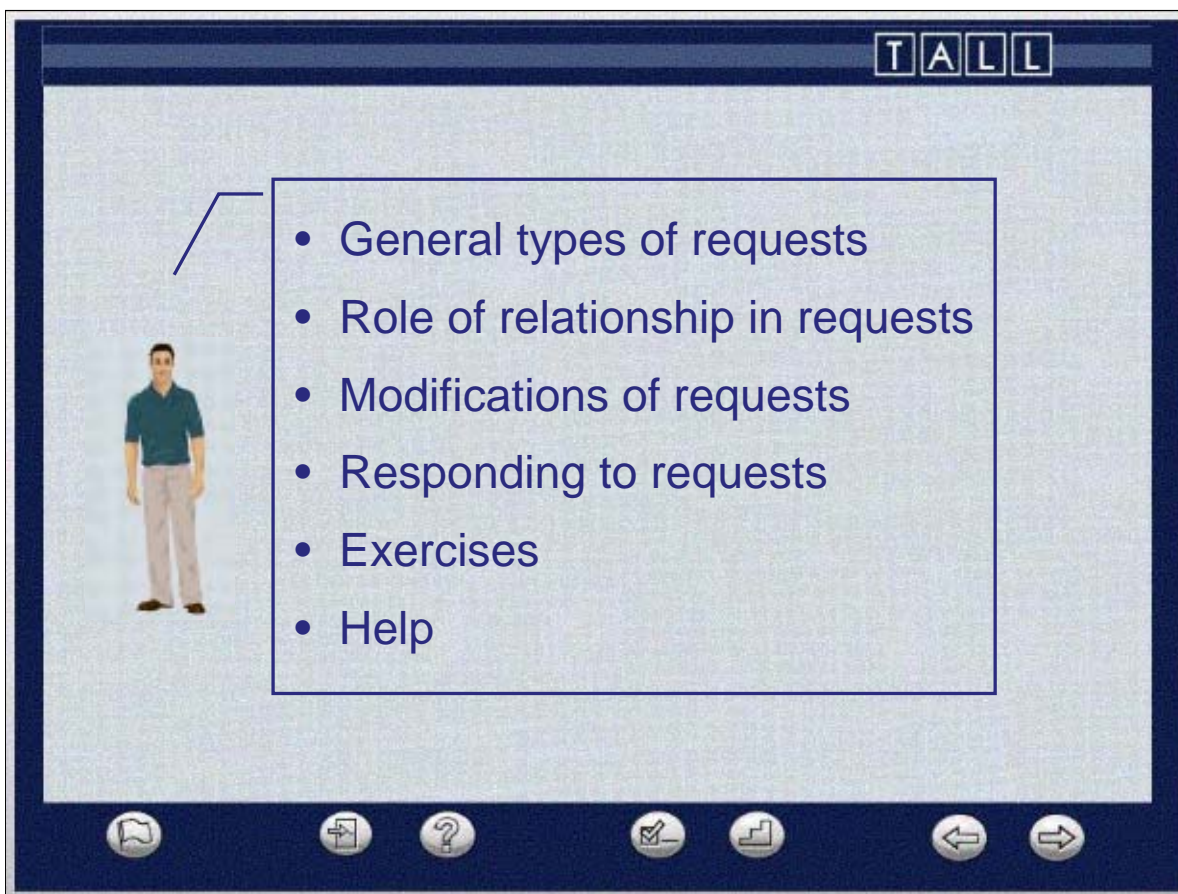
Each of the bullet points will be links to the corresponding section of the presentation. After the agent finishes each section, he will give the learner the opportunity to either follow to the next section or jump to the learner's desired selection of sections.

Agent:

      Hello, my name is Nathan and I'm going to walk you through this lesson. As you saw in the previous video, language learners sometimes make mistakes when they make requests. That is because, requesting includes at lot more than just knowing the right words. In this particular case, they request is inappropriate. Because the two people are not close friends, Jim should have explained why he needed to use the phone and apologized for the inconvenience he was causing. Even though the neighbor is likely to let him used the phone, she will probably think he is rude.

      As you can imagine, this is not the only problem that can arise when we make requests in a second language because the elements involved in a request often vary from culture to culture. In this lesson, you will learn how to use requests and respond to them appropriately. How do you do make requests politely in your culture? Think about that for a second.
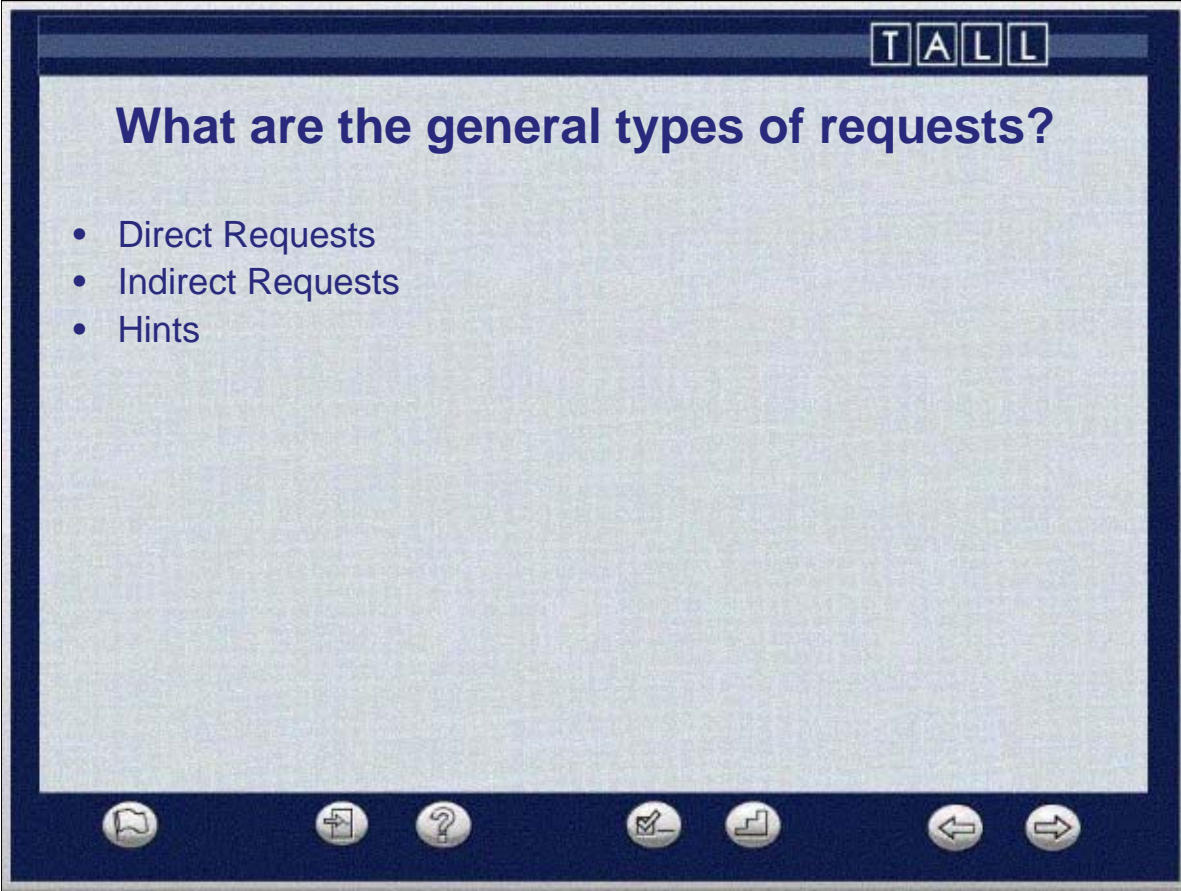
      We will start this lesson by looking at the general types of requests that Americans make. Then we will see how requests vary according to relationship between the individuals involved. Then, we will learn how to modify requests in different situations and how to appropriately respond to requests. Finally, there will be a series of activities that you'll need to complete individually and with a peer.

*If you need help at any time during the instruction or the exercises, just click on the question mark button and you will have the option to see a list of useful expressions. You will also have the option to ask a tutor for help. If there aren't any tutors online, you can email them your questions. They might not answer immediately, but they **will** answer.*

I recommend you study the material in the order it is presented. To do this, use the next and back buttons to go to the next screen or to the previous screen if you need to review something. However, if you would like to skip a section of the lesson or if at some point you want to review previous sections, you may click on the ladder button to see these bullet points. Then you can click on any of them to go directly to the corresponding section.

Presentation

REQUESTS

What are the general types of requests?

- Direct Requests
- Indirect Requests
- Hints

Agent

We will begin our discussion on requests now.

There are three primary types of requests used in American English. As we progress through the content of this course, you will learn how and when to use each type of request.

Agent:

Direct requests are not commonly used by Americans. Using direct requests can be viewed as rude and impersonal. However, there are some situations between individuals who know each other well and have an established relationship where using direct requests can be acceptable. In these cases, the individuals will frequently be of equal power.

Also, there may be situations when a person of higher power may make such direct requests of people in lower power positions. This is normally expected from a boss or manager to someone who works under him or her. Also, this could be done in a situation when someone is paying for the services of someone else, for example a person in a restaurant talking to the server.

Take a moment to study the examples.

Agent:

       In direct requests, the meaning can be determined based on its content. There is no question about the fact that something is being requested. They can also be referred to as commands. Let's see an example:

       The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the request. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

       Direct requests are most commonly used between individuals who are in equal power relationships. However, there are some situations when a person of higher power may make a direct request of someone in a position of lower relative power.

Continue to the next slides to see more examples of this.

Agent:

 In indirect hints, the meaning must be interpreted from the content and the context together. For example, the question "Can you open the window?" can be interpreted as an inquiry about the person's ability to open the window or as a request to open the window. The meaning can be ambiguous if we just look at the content. Therefore, we have to pay attention to the context in which the question was asked to determine its meaning.

 Indirect requests are the type of requests most commonly used by Americans. They can be appropriately made from higher power to lower power, from the standpoint of equal power, and from lower power to higher power. This is typically the polite way to make a request.

 The example appears on the screen after the agent say: "For example, the question." Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the request. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

As you can see in the examples, friends could use indirect requests to ask a friend for something. Also, a student could go to a professor and ask for help understanding something covered in the content of the class. Additionally, a person of higher power, could use this request to be more polite and less commanding to someone of lesser power.

Agent:

   In hints, the meaning can only be inferred from the context in which the request was made. For example, someone says: "It's cold in here." That would normally be interpreted as a simple comment. However, if it's winter time and the people involved in the situation are in a room with an open window and if the speaker is talking to someone who's sitting by that window, "It's cold in here." can definitely be interpreted as a request to close the window.

   As you can see, hints may very well be misunderstood.

   The example appears on the screen after the agent say: "For example, some says." Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the request. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

>Hints are commonly used among people who have a very high level of familiarity. This form of communication can be used in a group setting where one person's desire is considered in the decision to be made, but where each individuals desire in the group could be considered of equal importance. Hints may also be used when the task requested between the two or more people would be considered "special." For example, in a group of friends, someone says:

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

>Another example, could be a wife telling her husband:

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

>Observe how the "HINTS" are used in both group and personal relationships. Frequently, as previously discussed the task requested will be considered "special."
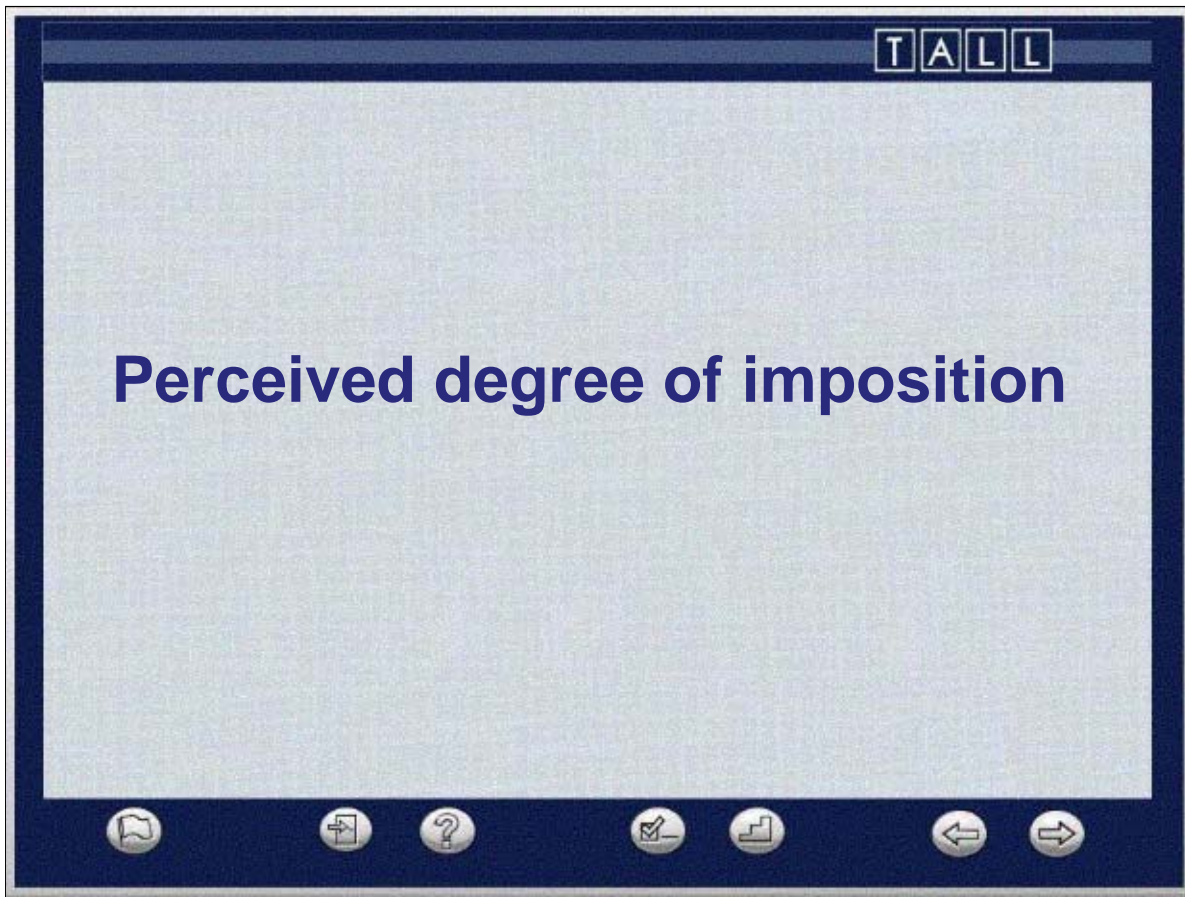
Agent:

Now we will explore how the perceived degree of imposition plays a role in the use of requests. In general, requests that place an burden on something Americans consider important, such as time or possessions, are perceived as very imposing.

The perceived degree of imposition, along with the relationship between the people involved, affect the way requests are used. The more imposing the request and the more formal the situation, the more polite the request should be.

(Survey conducted among 8 native speakers of American English.)

Learners will have two opportunities to drag the situation to the correct place. If they are not successful after the second time, they will see the correct answer and a pop-up message box with feedback (e.g. "Asking a co-worker to cover for you for a half an hour because you have to go to a doctors appointment is not very imposing. This is a very common practice in the United States.")

If they place it correctly, they will see a pop-up message box that says: "Good job" + feedback (e.g. "Good job! Asking a co-worker to cover for you for a short period of time is quite common in the United States. Therefore, as long as it is for valid reasons, most Americans consider this to be NOT VERY IMPOSING.")

Other situations that will appear on the box:

You ask your teacher if you can take the test a few days later because you will be out of town during the testing dates, and you don't want to fail the exam.

> (*Feedback:* Most teachers in America will expect you to be available to take a test on the scheduled testing date unless you have a very good reason to miss it, e.g. a death in the family, you were seriously ill and could not make it to the test, etc. Very serious imposition.)

You have lost your book and you ask a classmate if you can borrow his / hers for the night to study for the exam coming up in a few days.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans are protective of their property, and do not like to lend it out to people who they do not know well. This would be very imposing.)

You need a ride to the airport on Saturday morning to fly home for Christmas, so you ask your best friend if he / she can take you.

> (*Feedback:* For very close friends, personal favors like this are not very imposing. Friends will commonly look to each other for help in situations like this.)

You are at work, and your boss asks if they can borrow your computer for the next 15 minutes. His / hers is having problems and he / she has to finish a report in the next 15 minutes.

> (*Feedback:* This would be a common thing for you boss to do. Although it may be imposing for some people to ask you for a favor like this, most Americans would normally rate this situation as not very imposing.)

Your friend has just written a research paper and he / she asked you to read over it and look for grammatical errors before he / she turns it in tomorrow.

> (*Feedback:* This would be imposing. Most Americans are protective of their time. Although you are friends, your friend probably doesn't want to spend all the time necessary to review the paper carefully.)

You and a friend are going on a hike, and you ask your friend if he / she will make you a sandwich while he / she is making his / hers.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans would consider this to be not very imposing. They would probably be asking for some type of similar favor from the friend in the near future, or had just recently asked for such a favor.)

You have a date Friday night and your car is in the shop. You ask your friend if you can borrow his / her car for the night.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans protect their valuable property, and they do not like to lend it to others. This would be considered a very imposing request.)

You just met someone, and found out that he / she has a car. You need a ride to the grocery store 2 blocks away, so you ask him / her for a ride.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans will consider this imposing. For a friend, they would be happy to make the trip, but for someone they just met, they would probably feel like they were being used.)

You need to borrow a computer, and you ask the student across the hall in your dorm, who you don't know well, if you can use his / hers.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans are protective of their property and would therefore consider this imposing.)

You show up to the store late to an outlet store late to buy some clothes, and ask the clerk in the store to let you in so you can buy a shirt.

> (*Feedback:* Most Americans would consider this very imposing. They are protective of their time, and if they don't know you, they will simply think you should have come earlier.)

You go to an expensive designer clothing store to buy three new outfits. You have to match all the part of the outfit precisely to your liking. You notice that the store is past its closing time, and ask if you may have a few more moments to try on the outfits.
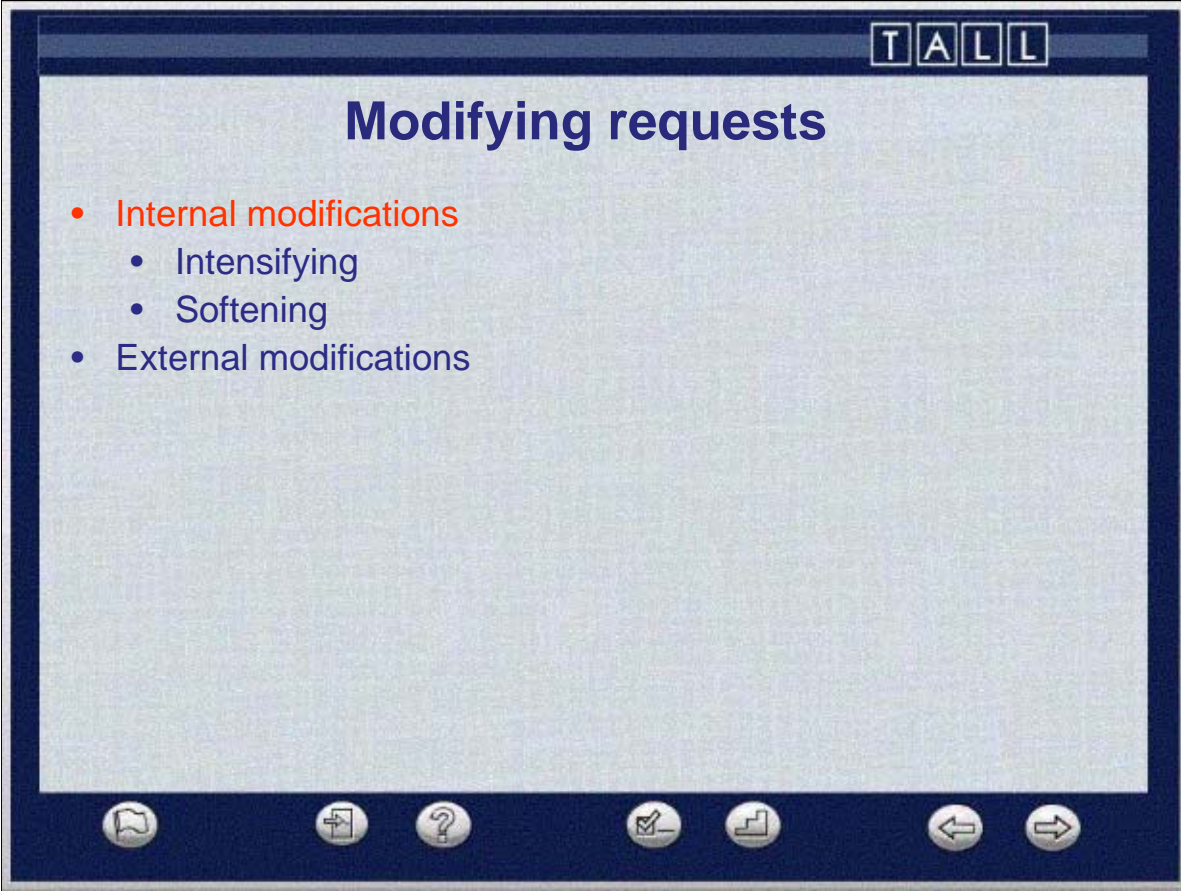
> (*Feedback:* Most Americans would consider this to be imposing. The degree of imposition is lower because of the nature of the store. There are a limited number of stores like this, and these types of stores are generally much more willing to cater to their customers' needs and wants.)
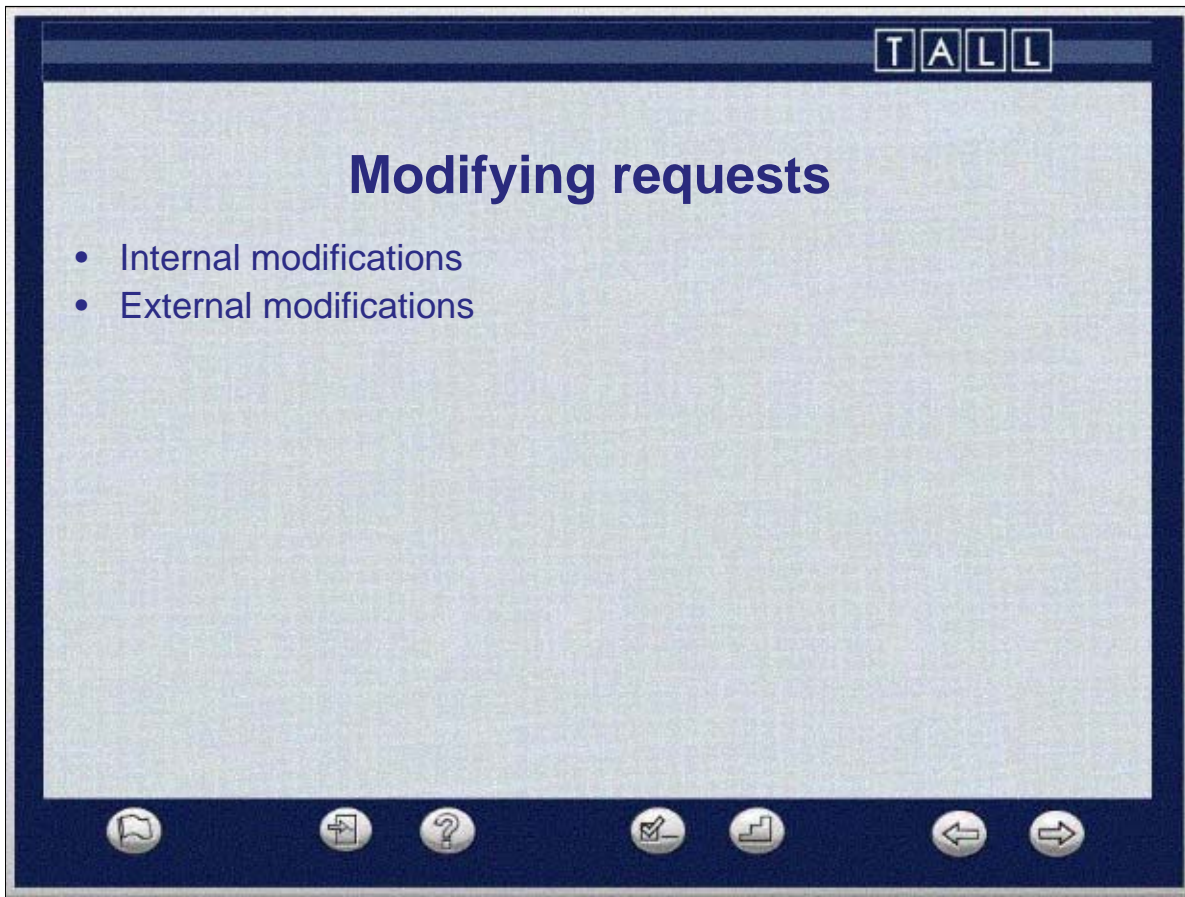
Agent:

   We will now see how requests can be modified, that is, how we can change or add words to the basic request types we saw before. Generally, this is done as a way to make the request more polite and less imposing.

   There are two main ways in which requests can be modified: internal modifications and external modifications. We will discuss in the following screens how to use each class of modification.

Agent:

Internal modifications are words added to request phrases. They are not needed to understand the nature of the request, however, they will serve to either soften the request or to intensify the force of the request.

Agent:

   Adding certain words, for instance "now," will intensify the force of the request. Typically this will only be used in situations where the person making the request is in a position of power above the person of whom the request is being made, for example a parent to a child or a teacher to a student. Also, you may see instances of upgrading between equals, like between siblings. This would not be indicative of good feelings between the individuals involved.

   Now, let's study these examples.

   The examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices making the requests. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.
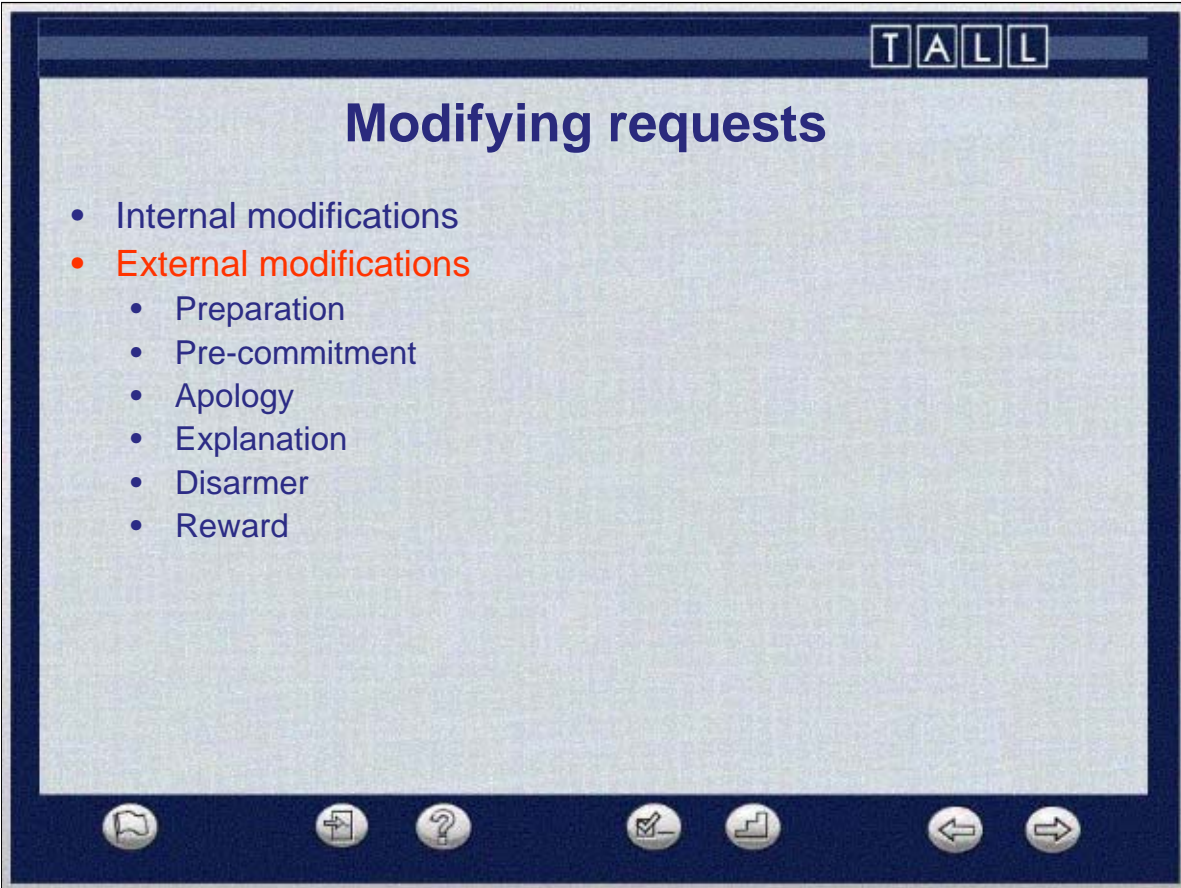
Agent:

In order to soften the request, certain words can be used. Undoubtedly the most common is "please." For example, a boss asks her assistant to bring her some papers, but she doesn't want to sound too imposing. This is a much more polite way to make a request of a person of equal or lesser power.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the request. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Agent:

     External modifications can be accomplished through phrases or sentences that are said WITH the request. These are elements that do not affect the utterance used for making the request, but they do affect the context in which the request is made.

Agent:

        The first external modification we are going to see is the Preparation. This means that you prepare the person to whom you are making the request. This is usually done by simply stating that you have a request to make of them.

For example:

        The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man making the request. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

      The second type of external modification is the pre-commitment. In a pre-commitment, you first ask the person to whom you will make the request if he or she will be willing to help you. Then, once he or she has agreed to help you, you will make the request.

      Let's see an example.

      The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear two voice in the dialog. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

>Requests can also be modified by apologies. That is, the speaker first apologizes for asking the favor. This shows that she acknowledges the request is imposing and she expresses regret for it.

>For instance:

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the request. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

> *Explanations are also used to give justify the need for the favor. This helps the person of whom you will ask the favor to see why it is so important that they help you.*

> *For example*:

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man making the request. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

> *Another type of external modification is the "Disarmer." Disarmers are a way to remove potential objections; they are used when you know that the person of whom you will be asking the request has a pre-disposition against whatever it is that you will ask of him or her. You start your request with a disarmer to show that you are aware of their point of view, but you still consider it is important to make the request.*
>
> *Let's see an example.*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man making the request. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

   The last external modification we are going to see is the "Reward." You typically use rewards when you know the reward will encourage the person of whom you make the request to do what you ask of him or her.

     For example:

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man making the request. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Modifying requests

TALL

- **Internal modifications**
  1. Intensifying
  2. Softening

- **External modifications**
  3. Preparation
  4. Pre-commitment
  5. Apology
  6. Explanation
  7. Disarmer
  8. Reward

I'm sorry to bother you this late. I saw you had your lights on, and
             5   **6**

I have a terrible headache. Can I please borrow some ibuprofen
         6   **2**

or some other headache medicine?

Agent:

      Now let's recap. As we talked before, Americans use modifications to make their request sound more polite. So remember, the more imposing the request and the more formal the situation, the more likely the use of modifications. In fact, two or more modifications may be used in these circumstances.

      Let's look at this example of a person requesting something of her neighbor late at night. First, she apologizes, then she explains the situation that prompted the request, and finally she makes the request using the word "please" to soften the force of the request.

The example appears on the screen as the agent speaks (synchronized.) Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the request. The corresponding bullet points also appear on screen as the agent speaks.

Agent:

Now we will study the proper and polite way to respond to a request.

Typically, it is considered rude to simply deny a request. Therefore, the most common response would be to perform the task or accept the request. However, if the request is too imposing, if you are unable to do what was asked of you, or if you simply don't want to do it, then you may have to resort to the second polite way to respond to a request.

Responding to requests

- Perform the requested task or agree to the request
- Give supporting explanation for why the request will not be granted
  - *I wish I could let you leave work early, but we have an important meeting later this week, and there is so much to do before then. We have to be ready for it.*

Agent:

      When denying a request, it is customary to give an excuse or explain why we are denying the request. This will soften the denial.
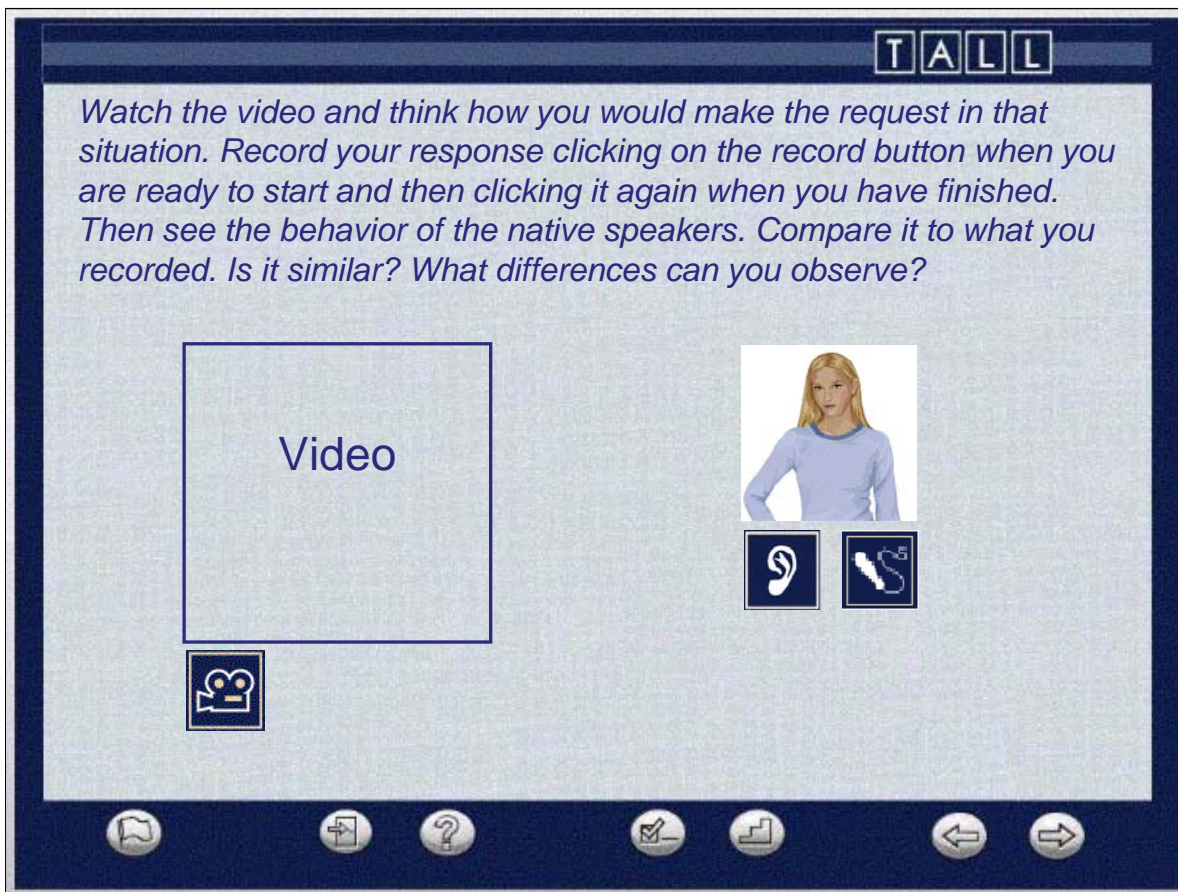
Agent tells instructions:

> *Watch the video and think how you would make the request in that situation. Record your response clicking on the record button when you are ready to start and then clicking it again when you have finished. Then see the response of the native speaker. Compare it to what you recorded. Is it similar? What differences can you observe?*

> Learners will see the introduction of the situation that shows the need and asked how they would make that request. Then the video will stop and they won't be able to see the rest of the video until they have recorded their response. After that, they will be able to see the people involved complimenting and responding to the compliment.

There will be ten scenarios, so that learners will have exposure to different levels of power and perceived degrees of imposition. This screen, as well as the next two screens will be repeated for each scenario. The picture of the girl will be replaced by a still shot taken from the video.

Conversations should be scripted taking into account the information presented in this lesson and the research data reviewed in Chapter 2 (Literature Review) of my thesis. However, I provide sample conversations below.

Situation 1

You need a ride home for Christmas. One of your friends lives in the same area and will be driving home for the Holiday. Ask if you can ride with him /her.

John:	Alex, are you going home for the holidays?
Alex:	Yeah, I am going to drive down after finals. I'll probably leave first thing Saturday morning. What about you? Are you heading back or are you going to stay around here?
John:	I'm not sure yet. I would love to go home, but my car is not doing so well, and I can't afford a plane ticket. Do you think I might be able to ride with you? We could split the gas on the way home.
Alex:	Sure. I was going to drive down alone, but it would be much more fun to ride together. Does Saturday work for you?
John:	That would be perfect. What time do you want to get going?
Alex:	I was thinking about 8:00am.
John:	Perfect. I will see you then.

Situation 2

You are going camping with a friend. When you are preparing to go you realize you can't find your sleeping bag. Ask your friend if you can borrow his / hers.

Sean:	So Adam, are you ready for the campout this weekend?
Adam:	Yes sir. I have everything ready to go. I have been looking forward to this trip for a while now. What about you?
Sean:	I am almost ready. I just can't seem to find my sleeping bag, and I know it is going to be cold up in the mountains. I am not sure what I will do if I cannot find it before we leave.
Adam:	I have an extra one you know. Would you like to borrow it this weekend?
Sean:	Would that be alright?
Adam:	Sure it would. I do not need it, and it will just be sitting here in my house.

Sean: Great, then I guess that means that I am ready to go to. Thanks Adam!

Adam: You are welcome. It will be a great trip.

Situation 3

You need to borrow a book from one of you classmates. You don't know him / her very well.

Sally: So Jen, what do you think of the class so far?

Jen: I like it. I think the material is fascinating.

Sally: It is pretty interesting. The only problem I am having is that my book is on backorder, so it is a little hard for me to prepare for the quizzes. The professor covers most of the material in class, but I know some of what he is quizzing us on must be in the book, because I do not have it anywhere in my notes.

Jen: Yeah, there are some things in the book that have been on the quizzes. I don't know how you are doing it without the book.

Sally: Well, I am just doing the best that I can. I know this is a huge favor to ask, but do you think I could borrow your book some time before the next quiz. I will be happy to use it once you have studied the chapter so that it will not make it harder for you in the class, and then I could give the book back to you at the next class. And hopefully it will only be a few more days until my book arrives at the bookstore.

Jen: Yeah, we can do that. Here, take my phone number down and call me tomorrow morning. We will work out a time to meet and I will get you the book.

Sally: Jen, thank you so much. That will be so helpful to me. I owe you one.

Jen: Don't worry about it, and I will see you tomorrow.

Situation 4

You had computer problems and lost half of the work you did for you semester paper. You ask the professor if you can get an extension on the due date.

John:	Dr. Smith, I know it is a student's responsibility to have all coursework prepared and ready to turn in on time, but I wanted to ask you for something. Do you have a minute?
Dr. Smith:	Yes, what is you wanted to ask me?
John:	Well, my computer started to have some problems last night. I was preparing the final touches on my term paper, and my computer suddenly shut off. I can't get it to start again, and although I had been saving my work as I went, I saved it all on my computer. I have it at a computer repair store right now. I brought it down first thing this morning, and I have asked them if the can restore the file from my computer, but I am not sure if I will have it back in time to turn it in today. Is there any way that I can get a small extension of time?
Dr. Smith:	John, you know that I do have a strict deadline police for all assignments, however, because you have been a great student and you have never turned in anything late, I will give you some time to work this out. I can give you until the end of the day tomorrow, and please keep me up to date on your progress.
John:	Thank you Dr. Smith. I appreciate your help, and I will get my paper in just as soon as I can.
Dr. Smith:	You're welcome, and I will see you tomorrow.

Situation 5

You need to fill out your check deposit slip at the bank, but you forgot your pen. Ask the banker at the teller window for a pen.

Jeff:	Please excuse me for not filling out my deposit slip before getting here, but I didn't have a pen. Would you have a pen I could borrow to fill it out quickly?
Fred:	Yes sir. Here you go.

Jeff: Thank you. I'll be just a second.

Fred: You are welcome.

Situation 6

You need to get Friday night off from work because your friend is playing in his / her band's first live, public performance, and you promised you would be there.

James: Tim, I have a huge favor to ask of you. Can you help me out Friday
               night?

Tim: Okay, so what do you need this time?

James: Can we trade shifts? I will work any other night that you want. It's just
               that Friday night my friend Megan and her band are doing their first live
               performance, and I promised that I would be there to see it.

Tim: Friday night! You will owe me big for this one, but yes I can do it.

James: Thanks Tim, you're a life saver!

Tim: No problem, but remember you owe me.

James: I know, I know.

Situation 7

You need gas at the gas station and realize that you left your wallet at home. Because your car is on empty you can't drive any further without gas. Ask someone at the station if you can borrow one dollar to get enough gas to get home and get you wallet.

Sarah: Excuse me miss, I have a little problem, and I was wondering if you could
               help me.

Emily: I may be able to help you. What do you need?

Sarah: Well, this is actually quite embarrassing. I have run out of gas, and I seem
               to have forgotten my wallet today, so I have no money. I only live a few

miles from here, but my car is completely out of gas, and I don't think it will make it home. Could you lend me one dollar just to be sure I have enough gas to get home?

Emily: Well, normally I don't like to give money out to strangers, but if it's only one dollar, then I can help you out. Here you go.

Sarah: Thank you so much! I really appreciate this.

Situation 8

You need a ride to the store to buy food. It's ten blocks away and you don't have a car. Ask a friend for a ride.

Ann: Mary, could you give me a ride to the grocery store some time in the next few days?

Mary: Sure. I am going the day after tomorrow. What time do you want to go?

Ann: Any time after 4:00pm, if that's okay with you.

Mary: Let's go at 4:30pm, okay?

Ann: Great, and thanks for helping me.

Mary: Don't mention it. I'll see later.

Ann: See you later.

Situation 9

You need someone to pick you up from the airport upon your return. The airport is about 1 hour away from home.

John: Adam, are you going to be around on January third?

Adam: Yes, I get back into town right after New Year's Day. Why, what's up?

John: Well, I was wondering if I might be able to get a ride back from the airport. If I paid for the gas, do you think you could do that?

Adam: Sure, what time does your flight get in?

John: It gets in about 4:00pm, but I can wait a while at the airport if that's not convenient for you.

Adam: No, 4:00pm will be fine. Call me on my cell when you land, because I'll be getting to the airport just about when you should be getting off the plane to avoid parking costs.

John: Okay, I'll give you call as soon as we're off the plane.

Adam: Great. So what are we doing tonight?
John: Do you want to catch a movie?

Adam: Sounds good to me. Let's go.

Situation 10

You need to borrow toothpaste one night when you are sleeping over your friend's house. You forgot yours.

Allison: Beth, can I borrow some toothpaste?

Beth: Sure. It's in the right draw in the bathroom.

Allison: Thanks Beth.

Beth: Don't worry about it.

(Same scenario than previous screen.)

        The learners will select the type of request that was given. Next, they will select how imposing the request was. When they click on the check answer button, first they will see what type of request it was, and then they will see the graphic that most of the Americans surveyed chose and where most Americans surveys placed the level of imposition for the request. Since there is not a definite answer, they will see the range in which their response would be considered correct (e.g. if most Americans placed the level of imposition between 3 and 6, they will see that area selected).

(Same responses than 2 previous screens.)

Learners will have two opportunities to get the correct answers. If they are not successful after the second time, they will see the correct answer and a pop-up message box with feedback. The feedback for the second exercise will consist of scripts of the dialog with the modifications marked and labeled. The learners will see feedback for one set of answers at a time.
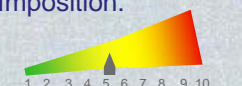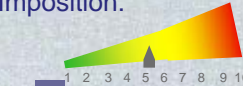
Agent:

     Before we continue with more situations, let's recap what we have seen so far. Watch the three situations, listen to the native speaker's requests and then, observe how the requests vary according to the relationship between the people involved and the perceived level of imposition.
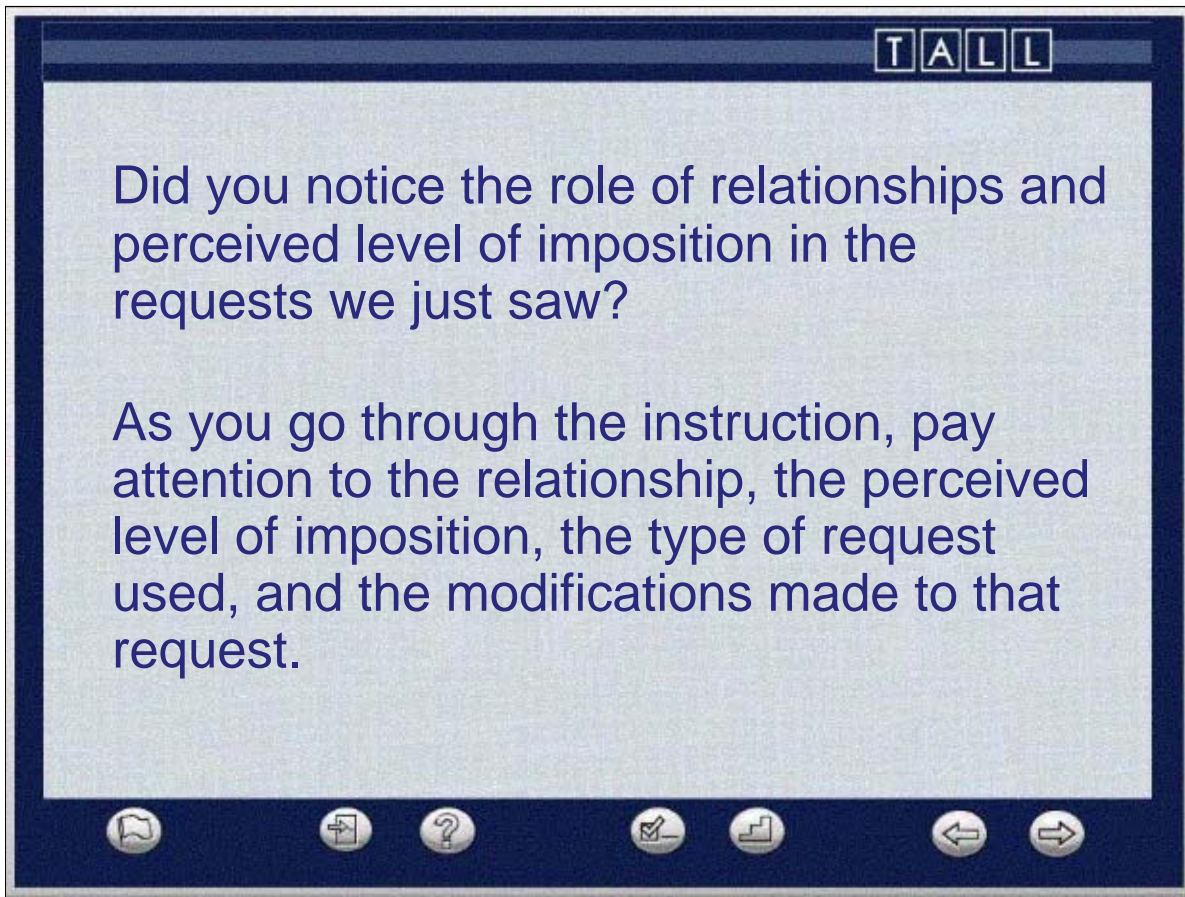
Agent:

     Did you notice the role of the relationship between the individuals making the requests? The correct usage of the requests and the response will largely be determined by the relationship between the two individuals.

     As you go through the instruction, pay attention how the requests change according to the relationship between the people and the perceived level of imposition.

(it would be great if they could hear this when the press the Next button in the previous screen. That is, when they press that button, they will hear the agent speaking –without the text– before going to the next screen, which in this case would be the one that has the first dialog.)

Practice

REQUESTS

Dialog:

Alex: Are you gong to be busy next weekend?

Jeff: No, is something going on?

Alex: Well, there may be something going on. I've got a friend who's having a party up at his cabin in the mountains. We were thinking about skiing, dancing, and partying this weekend up there.

Jeff: Sounds good, so when do we find out.

Alex: He should know if it's going to happen tomorrow. There's only one thing. We'd need a four wheel drive to get up there, and we don't have one. His is in the shop. Would you be willing to drive up there if we can have the party?

Jeff: Yeah, I guess so.

In this type of activity, there will be phrases and sentences taken from the dialogs. Students will have to match the phrase with its purpose/function. The same kind of activity will appear after the next dialog screens.

Classify the following requests as "not very imposing", "imposing", and "very imposing" by checking the appropriate box. Assume familiarity between the individuals.

	Not very imposing	Imposing	Very imposing
You asked to borrow a friend's notes the night before the exam.	☐	☐	☐
You asked if you could borrow you roommate's motor cycle.	☐	☐	☐
You asked if your neighbor would lend you a cup of sugar.	☐	☐	☐
You call a friend at midnight on a Friday.	☐	☐	☐
You ask if you can borrow Jennifer's new skirt. She just got it.	☐	☐	☐
You ask John to help you get your apartment ready for cleaning inspections later this week.	☐	☐	☐
You ask a friend to make a reservation for you at the hotel for your trip next week.	☐	☐	☐
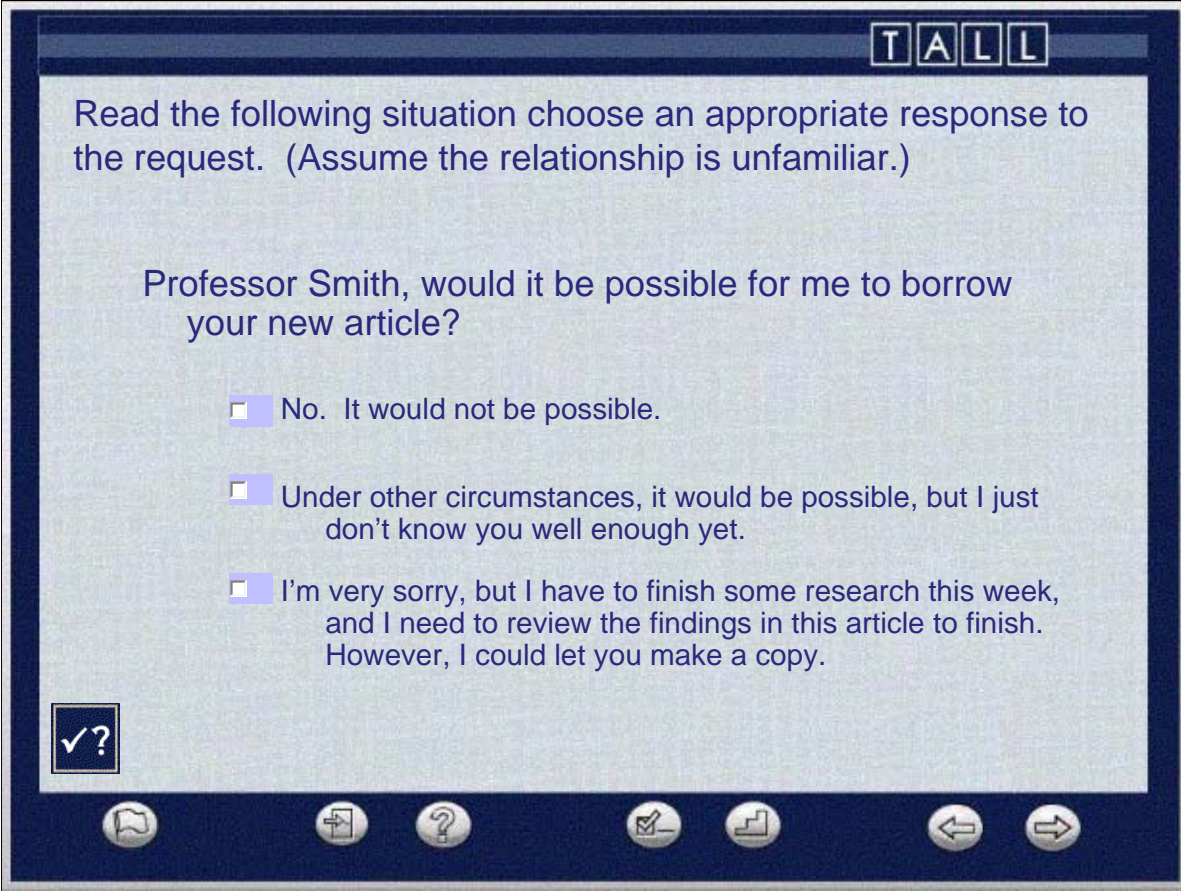
Learners will see the correct choices when they click on the check answer button.

There is another classification exercise like the previous one.

Classification Exercise 2

	Direct	Indirect	Hint
Give me a double bacon cheeseburger.			
Can I use you cell phone, please?			
It's a beautiful night for a walk.			
Would it be possible to turn the music down a little bit?			
Bring me the phone book, now.			
Could we review the material one more time?			
Leave me alone.			

TALL

Read the following situation choose an appropriate response to the request. (Assume the relationship is unfamiliar.)

Professor Smith, would it be possible for me to borrow your new article?

☐ No. It would not be possible.

☐ Under other circumstances, it would be possible, but I just don't know you well enough yet.

☐ I'm very sorry, but I have to finish some research this week, and I need to review the findings in this article to finish. However, I could let you make a copy.

✓?

Learners will see the correct choices when they click on the check answer button.

There is another multiple-choice exercise like the previous one.

Multiple-choice Exercise 2

<u>Request</u>:

Hey, Joe. Can I borrow some money until next week?

<u>Possible Answers</u>:

- I'd like to help you out, but I'm short of money myself. I get my paycheck next week too. Sorry.

- Are you kidding me? No way!

- Hmm. Why don't you ask your parents? I don't have any money.

Agent:

> *This is a simulation. Click on the video button when you are ready to start. After you watch the video, choose your most likely response. Then click next to see what happens.*

At this point, there will be a simulation exercise. The situations and consequences will be presented by short video segments, which, when possible, will be shot from the viewer's perspective so as to make him or her feel part of the scene and the camera becomes his/her eyes.

The activity will be divided into ten video sections. The first section will set the situation. (Then, learners will see three possible responses, written, not on video.) The next three will show the likely outcomes, which will vary according to the choice learners made previously. (Again, learners will see three possible responses, written, not on video.) The last six will show the final outcomes, that will vary according to their previous choices. In addition, learners will have the chance to go back and see the result of having selected other options.

This activity needs to be scripted, but in the next two pages I included a suggested organization chart and rough script.

Simulation – Organization

Introduction — Sets situation: Apartment & Hall

Response 1 (not on video) → Outome 1

Outome 1 → Response 1.1 (not on video) → Outome 1.1

Outome 1 → Response 1.2 (not on video) → Outome 1.2

Response 2 (not on video) → Outome 2

Outome 2 → Response 2.1 (not on video) → Outome 2.1

Outome 2 → Response 2.2 (not on video) → Outome 2.2

Response 3 (not on video) → Outome 3

Outome 3 → Response 3.1 (not on video) → Outome 3.1

Outome 3 → Response 3.2 (not on video) → Outome 3.2

Video shot from viewer perspective so that he/she feels part of the action.

1. APARTMENT

A young woman is cooking. She looks for some ingredient and cannot find it. Then, she looks at the clock (10:30 PM) and goes out the door.

2. HALL (looks like student apartments)

Next, she knocks on the door of the apartment across the hall. Another woman opens the door wide, and there are two other people in the room (a man and a woman.) Everybody inside the apartment says: Hi!

Responses – not on video
    1. Hello. I have a favor to ask you guys. Can you give me a ride to the store?
    2. Hi. Can any of you give me a ride to the store?
    3. Hi. I'm sorry to bother you. You see, I was cooking and realized I don't have anymore seaweed. I'm kind of homesick and I was preparing a recipe my mom used to cook all the time. I know it's late, but I was wondering if one of you guys could give me a ride to the store? I'll get ice cream for everybody!

3. DOOR/INSIDE APARTMENT

The woman who opened the door says:

Outcome 1: I don't have a car, but maybe I can help you anyway. What do you need?
Outcome 2: What do you need? Maybe we can help you and you won't need to go to the store.
Outcome 3: I'm sorry. I don't have a… *(the woman inside the apartment interrupts and says:)* I'll give you a ride. Let me go get my purse.

Responses – not on video
    1.1. Oh! I just need some seaweed to make one of my mom's favorite recipes. I'm a little bit homesick, and I thought that would help. But then in the middle of cooking, I realized I had run out of seaweed. It's silly, don't worry about it. Thanks anyway!
    1.2. Oh! Nothing, I just needed to go to the store.
    2.1. Oh! Nothing, I just need to go to the store.
    2.2. Oh! I need to buy some seaweed to make dinner.
    3.1. Thank you. I really appreciate it.
    3.2. Thanks!

4. CLOSE ON

Outcome 1.1: *(The woman inside the apartment stands up and says:)* I can take you! Let me go get my purse.
Outcome 1.2: I'm sorry but I don't have a car. *(The girl inside the apartment says:)* I'm getting ready to go to bed. I have to get up early tomorrow. Sorry!
Outcome 2.1: Idem 1.2
Outcome 2.2: Oh! I'm sorry. We don't have any seaweed and I don't have a car. You, but I'm getting ready to go to bed. I have to get up really early tomorrow. Sorry!
Outcome 3.1: *(After the "visitor" leaves, the woman closes the door, and says:)* She's a nice girl. I hope she feels better. I remember how hard it was when I first left home.
Outcome 3.2: Idem 3.1
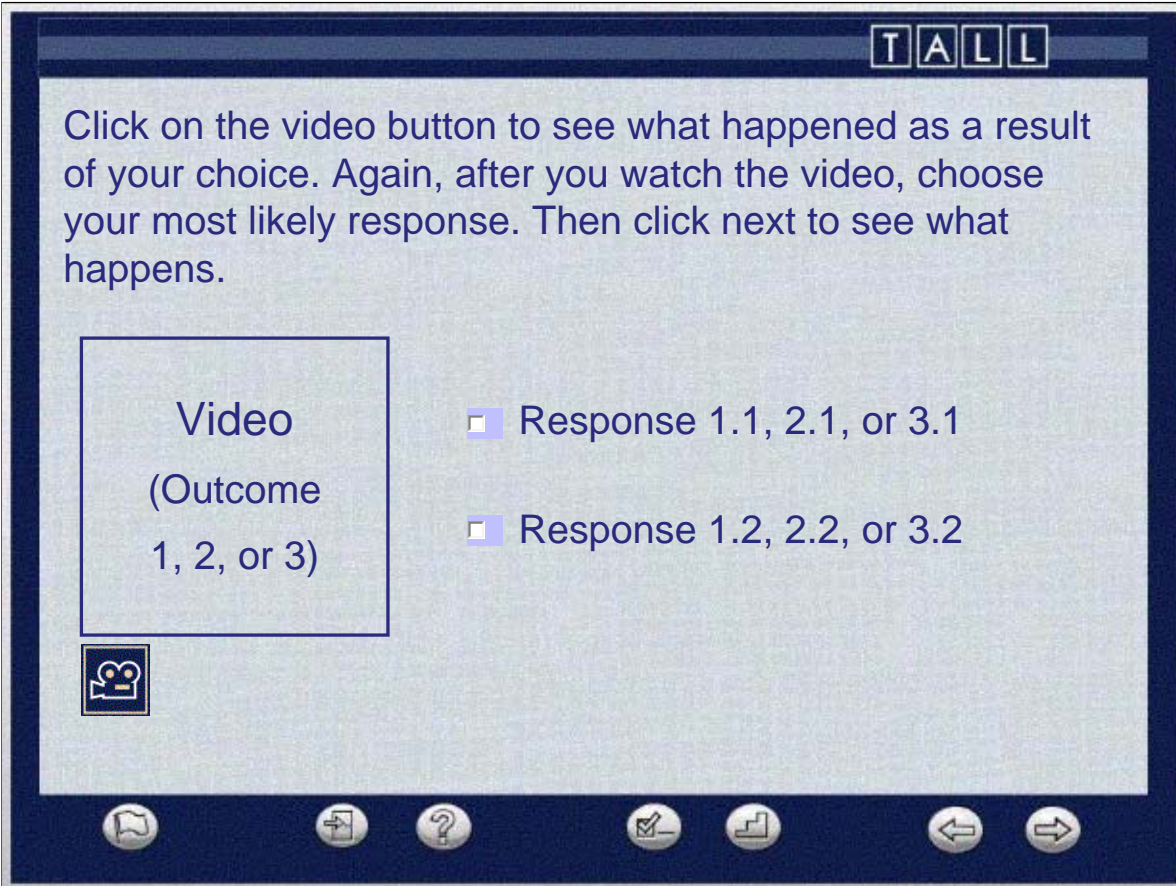
Click on the video button to see what happened as a result of your choice. Again, after you watch the video, choose your most likely response. Then click next to see what happens.

Video

(Outcome

1, 2, or 3)

☐ Response 1.1, 2.1, or 3.1

☐ Response 1.2, 2.2, or 3.2

Simulation Screen

Click on the video button to see what happened as a result of your choice. **Are you curious about what would have happened if you had responded differently?** If you are, click on the start button to start over or click on the back button to go to the previous screen.

Video

(Outcome 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, or 3.2)

START

Simulation Screen

Read the following situation, decide how you would respond, and write your response in the space provided. Click the corresponding button to compare your answer to the model.

> *You just realized that you don't have a pencil to take the test with. You raise your hand and ask the professor for a pencil.*

MODEL

Model:

Dr. Murphy, I'm sorry to bother you, but I seem to have forgotten a pencil. May I borrow one for the exam?

Questions:

Did you modify the request to make it more polite?

If so, did you include the word "please" or a preparation, an apology, an explanation, or a promise of reward?

There is another written exercise like the previous one.

Written Exercise 2

Situation:

You just got a flat tire and it's 7:30 pm. Because you don't have a cell phone, you decided to go and knock on the door of the house across the street. You need to ask them if you can use their phone to call a tow truck**.**

Model:

Hi. I'm sorry to bother you during dinner time. It's just that my car got a flat tire, and my jack isn't working, so I need to call a tow truck. Would you mind if I called the towing company, or would you call them for me if you prefer?

Questions:

- Did you modify the request to make it more polite?
- If so, did you include the word "please" or a preparation, an apology, an explanation, or a promise of reward?

Your friend just bought a new boat, and you want to take it out for a test drive. Complete the dialog and then read or listen to the model.

You: _____
_____

Mike: Well, I guess if I come out with you, then it would be alright.

You: _____
_____

Mike: Don't mention it. Are you ready?

Model script will show up here. Learners will not see this text box until then.

Model:

A: I know you're particular about who you let drive your boat, but do you think I could take it out for a test drive. Normally, I wouldn't ask, but we're thinking about buying one too, and I just want to see how this one handles.

B: Well, I guess if I come out with you, then it would be alright.

A: Thanks Mike, I really appreciate it.

B: Don't mention it. Are you ready?

Questions:

Did you modify the request to make it more polite?

If so, did you include the word "please" or a preparation, an apology, an explanation, or a promise of reward?

There is another dialog completion exercise like the previous one.

Dialog Completion Exercise 2

Situation:

You have to make a trip to Chicago for the week of Christmas, and you have no one to spend the Holiday with. You don't want to impose on your friend or his family.

Model:

A: Sean, what do you have going on during the week of Christmas?
B: Well, you know how it goes. First we're having my family over, then my wife's family. It's going to be hectic, but we love it.
A: That sounds great. I've always loved having so many people around during the Holiday. Too bad I'll be out in Chicago on a trade show this year. I mean, it's good for work. We usually have a great show out there, but this Christmas, looks like I'll be working, and alone.
B: Well if you're just going to be in the Hotel room, why don't you join us at our home. I'm sure they'd all love to see you again.
A: Do you think that would be okay?

Questions:

- Did you modify the request to make it more polite?
- If so, did you include the word "please" or a preparation, an apology, an explanation, or a promise of reward?
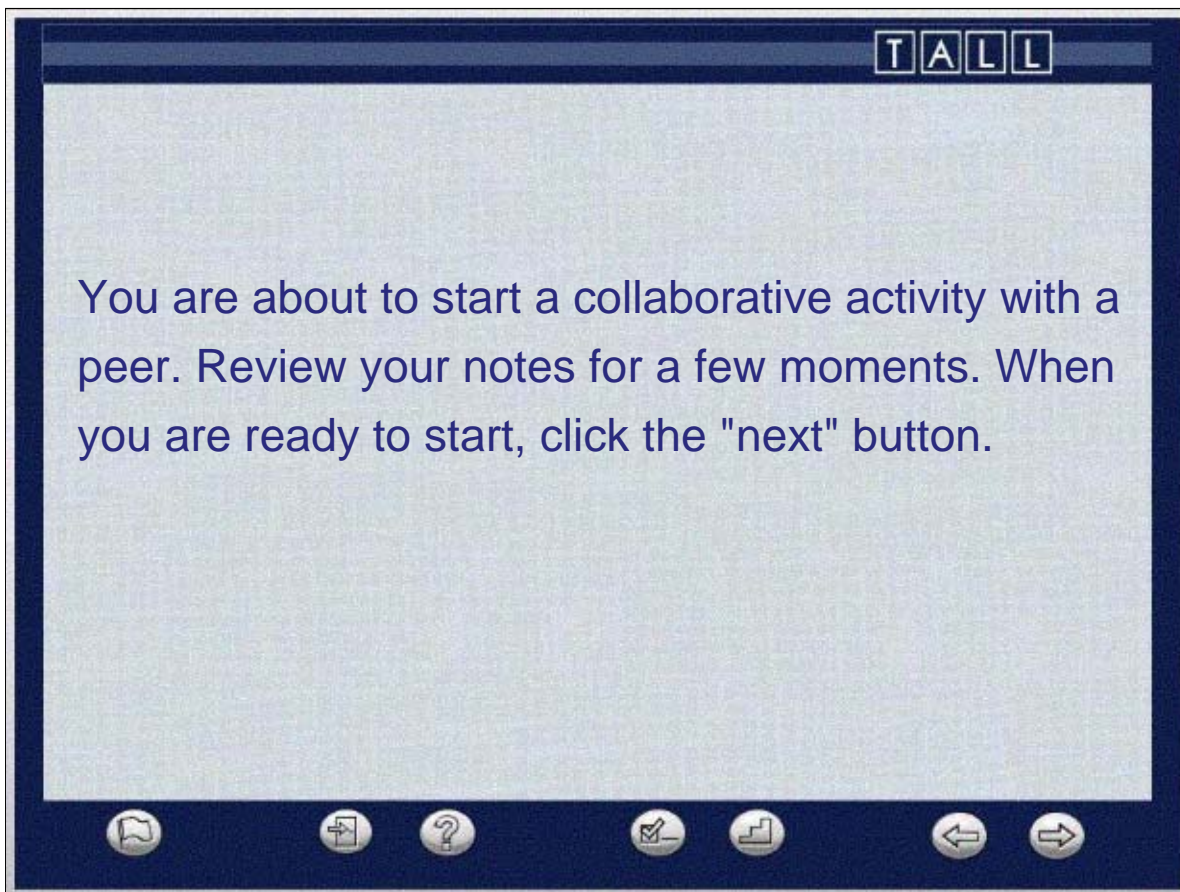
This screen appears before every collaborative activity to alert students what they are going to be connected with another student in order to practice what they have learned.

Practice the following situation. Use the expressions you've learned. When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

> *Your friend is good with cars and you want to ask him for help in repairing your car because you can't afford to pay someone to fix it.*

1. Begin request to B with "preparation."
2. Respond to B and use an indirect request to ask for help.

Agent:

Practice the following situation with your peer. Use the expressions that you have learned or any others that are appropriate to express the functions given. Follow the order so that you can produce a complete conversation.

You are student A. Remember that you are supposed to start the conversation. When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

There is another guided dialog exercise like the previous one. The content for the screen corresponding to student A is as follows:

Situation

You need to ask a friend to watch your dog for the weekend because you have to fly down to Houston, TX for a job interview.

Cues

1. Prepare B for your request by modifying it with an apology.
2. Respond to B and use an indirect request, modified with a reward, to ask B to watch your dog.
3. Thank B for the help and re-confirm the reward.

Practice the following situation. Use the expressions you've learned. When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

> *You are a mechanic, and you are very good at fixing cars. One of your friends needs your help and will ask you for help.*

1. Respond to the "preparation" you received from A.
2. Respond to A's request and agree to help A with his / her car.

Agent:

Practice the following situation with your peer. Use the expressions that you have learned or any others that are appropriate to express the functions given. Follow the order so that you can produce a complete conversation.

You are student B. When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

There is another guided dialog exercise like the previous one. The content for the screen corresponding to student B is as follows:

Situation

Your friend will have to travel out of town to do a job interview. Your friend will ask you to watch his / her dog while he / she is away.

Cues

1. Respond to A's apology.
2. Accept A's request.

TALL

Now take a minute to listen to the recording and give feedback to your peer. If you want to record the conversation again, click the "previous" button, and repeat all the steps. When you are ready to continue, click the "next" button.
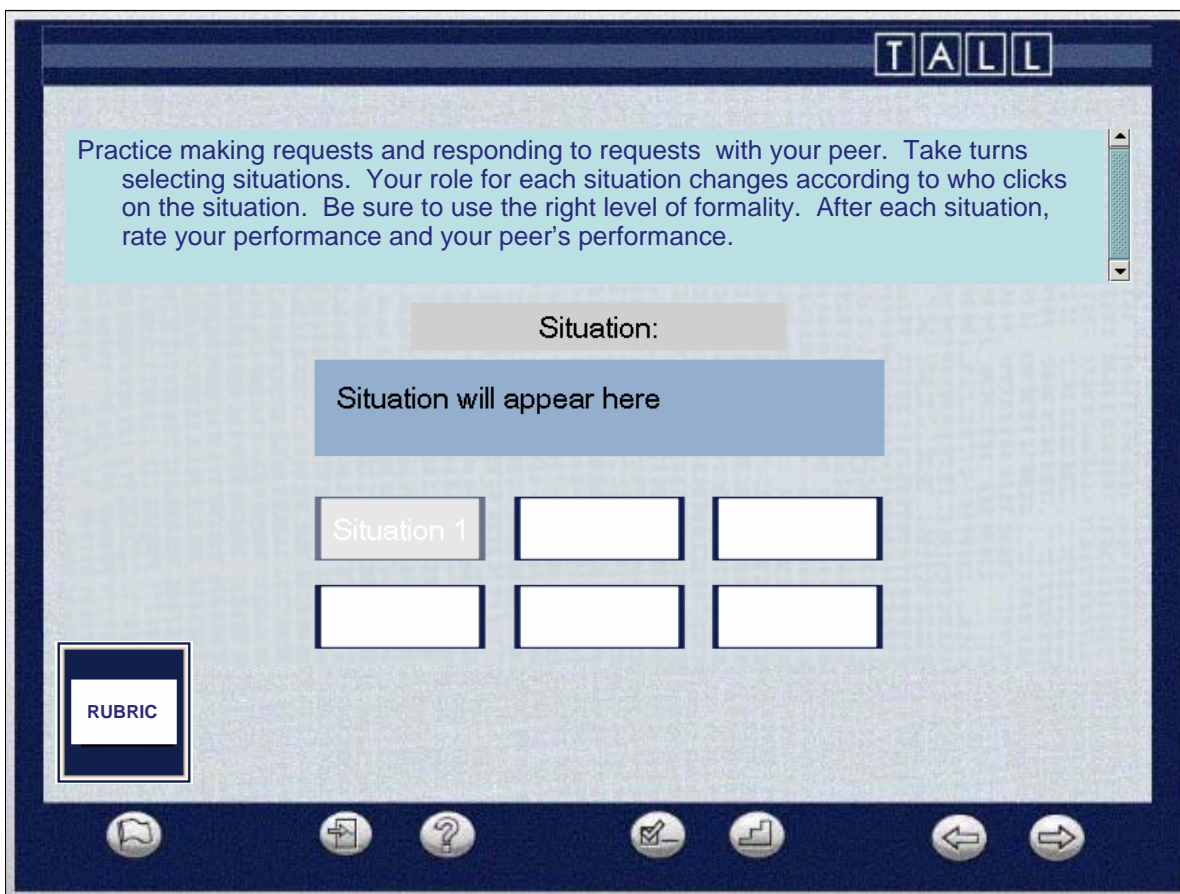
When learners place the mouse over the other buttons, they will see the texts: "Situation 2", "Situation 3", etc. Students have worked with this type of activity before.

Situations:

•You need a pair of shoes that goes with your outfit, and you know that your friend Lisa has the perfect shoes for you. Ask Lisa if you can borrow her shoes.

•You will be on vacation for the summer, but you don't want to leave your house abandoned all summer. You know the Smith's son is looking for some extra money this summer, and he is a very responsible person. Ask him to watch your house for the summer. Offer to compensate him for his work and time.

•You have a piano recital in your music class next week, and all of the lab pianos are scheduled already. Your friend has a piano though. Ask your friend if you can practice for the next week on his / her piano.

•You are out of milk, and you only have cereal for breakfast. Ask your roommate if you can use a little of his / her milk.

•You have an important meeting, and you just realized that your shoes need to be polished, but that you don't have any polish. Ask your neighbor if you can borrow some black shoe polish.

•One of our coworkers is going out to buy lunch. Ask him/her to get you lunch when he/she goes out.

Rubric:

Please, evaluate your performance and your peer's performance taking into account the following questions:

- Did we use modifications to make the requests more polite and less imposing?

- Did we use the word "please" or did we use strategies, such as preparation, pre-commitment, apology, explanation, disarmer, or promise of reward?

- If the request was imposing or if the person to whom we made the request was in a position of power, did we use at least 2 or 3 modification strategies?

- Did we agree to grant the request? If not, did we give an explanation or excuse for refusing it?

Evaluation
REQUESTS
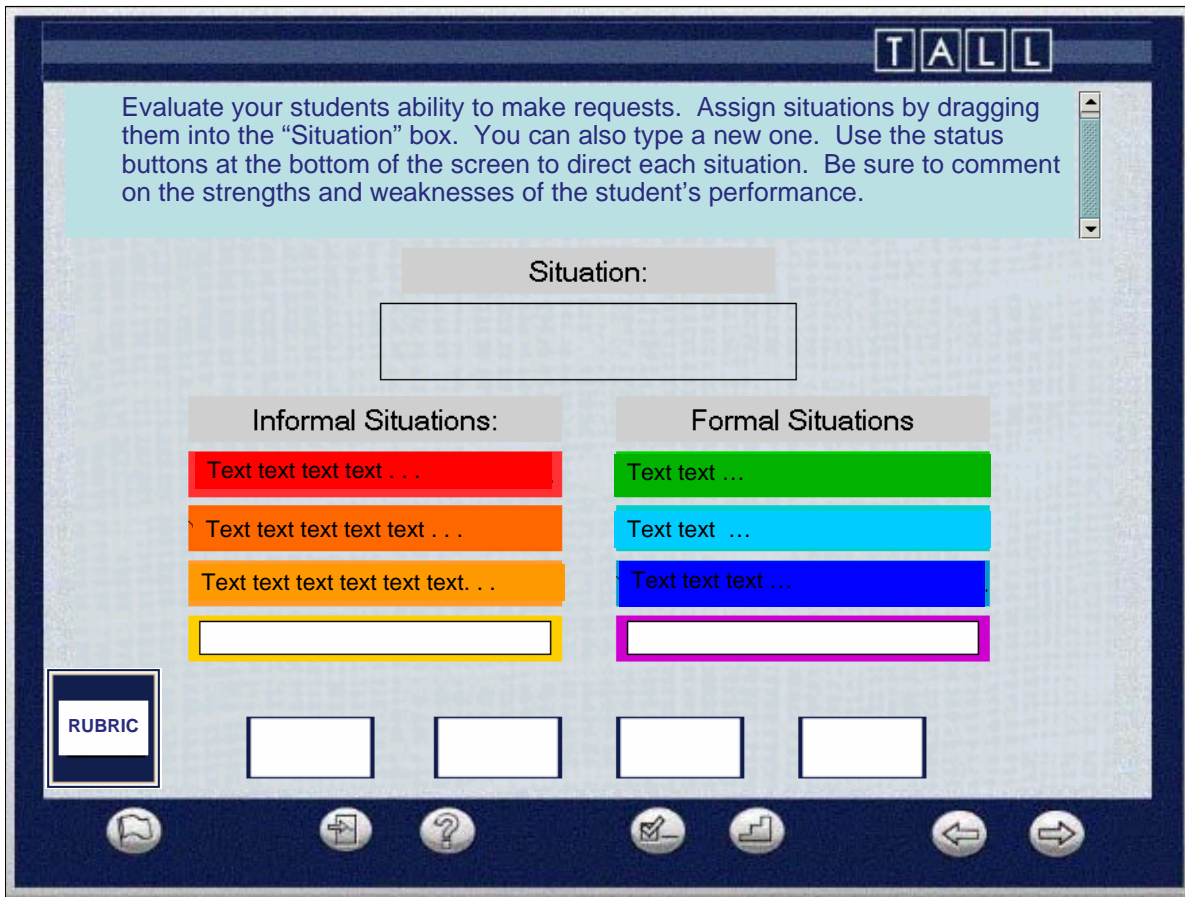
The instructor will see this page

When the tutor places the mouse over the buttons, the following texts appear: START, STOP, DISCUSS, PREPARE.

Situations:

•Your best friend is getting married out of state, and you would like to go there for the weekend and attend the wedding. Unfortunately, you have a test scheduled for Saturday morning. Make an appropriate request to your professor for an extension, or to take the test early.

•You need to borrow a tool to fix your dishwasher. Ask you neighbor if you can borrow the tool.

•You need help understanding your Biology homework. Ask your friend for help on the material.

•Ask a friend to watch your kids for the weekend. You and your spouse want to go away for the weekend to celebrate your anniversary.

•Your sister is coming to town to visit this weekend. However, you are already scheduled to work. Ask one of your coworkers to cover for you this weekend.

•Ask your server for another soft drink.

Requests: Evaluation Rubric

Category	4	3	2	1
Relationship between Participants	Learner always makes requests appropriately according to the relationship between the people involved.	Learner makes requests appropriately most of the time according to the relationship between the people involved.	Learner sometimes makes requests appropriately according to the relationship between the people involved.	Learner hardly ever makes requests appropriately according to the relationship between the people involved.
Requesting: Degree of Imposition	Learner always makes requests appropriately according to the degree of imposition.	Learner makes requests appropriately most of the time according to the degree of imposition.	Learner sometimes makes requests appropriately according to the degree of imposition.	Learner never makes requests appropriately according to the degree of imposition.
Requesting: Request Types and Modification Strategies	Learner always uses common and appropriate types of requests and modification strategies.	Learner uses common and appropriate types of requests and modification strategies most of the time.	Learner sometimes uses common and appropriate types of requests and modification strategies.	Learner never uses common and appropriate types of requests and modification strategies.
Requesting: Language Used	Learner uses structures seen on the instruction often. Learner's speech is clear and free of grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.	Learner uses structures seen on the instruction sometimes. Learner's speech is clear and has a few grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.	Learner uses structures seen on the instruction infrequently. Learner's speech is not very clear at times and has some grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.	Learner almost never uses structures seen on the instruction. Learner's speech difficult to understand and has many grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.
Responding to Requests	Learner always responds appropriately to requests.	Learner responds appropriately to requests most of the time.	Learner sometimes responds appropriately to requests.	Learner never responds appropriately to requests.

*An **appropriate request** includes a suitable type of request and **as many modification strategies as necessary** according to the relationship of the people involved and the degree of imposition of the request. It is **not too abrupt**.*

*An **appropriate response** is one that would be accepted as polite by the average American English speaker.*
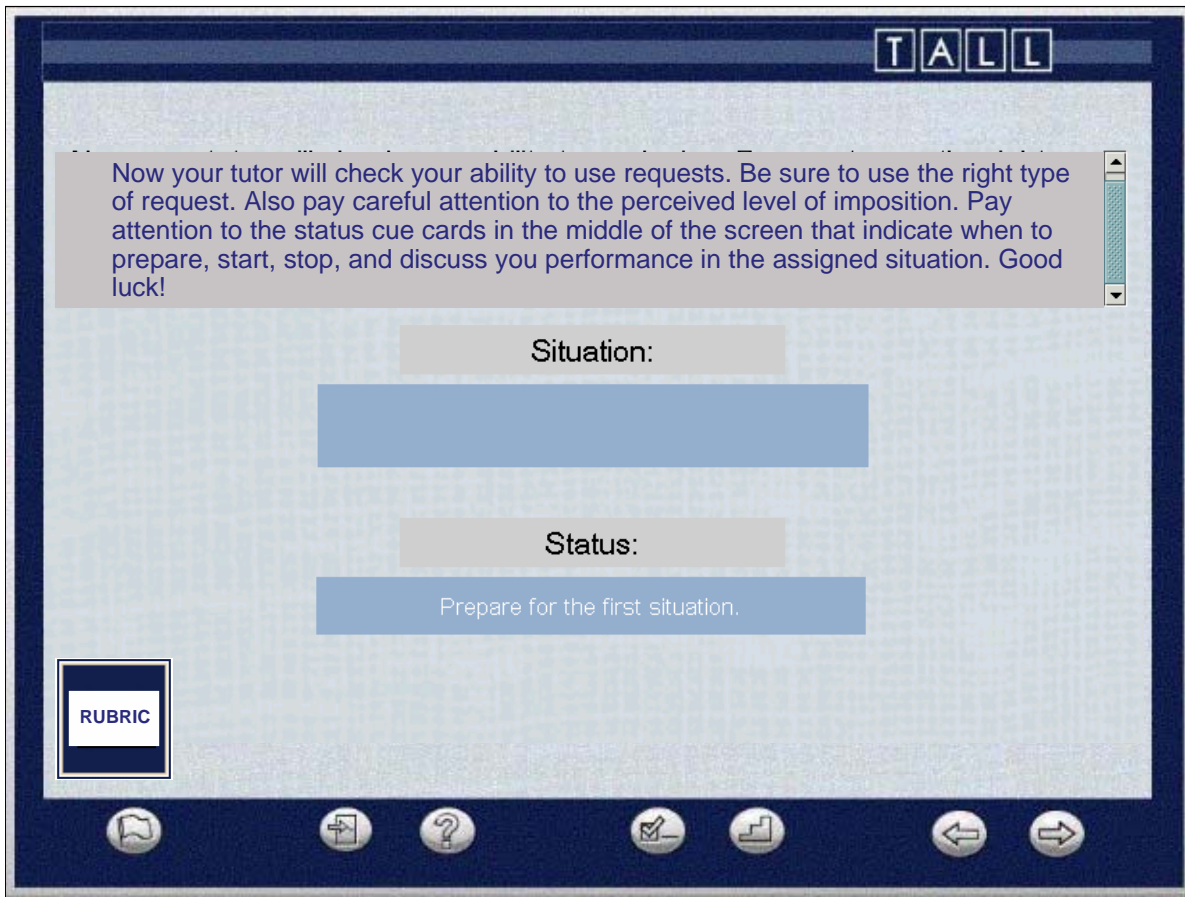
The Student will see this page

Text to appear in status box:

•Please START now.

•STOP now. Thank you.

•Now DISCUSS your performance with your tutor.

•Prepare for the next situation.

Help
REQUESTS

Help screen

Most common modifications

Internal

- **Intensifying** → *Give me the book now!*

- **Softening** → *Can you give me the book, please?*

External

- **Preparation** → *I have to ask you something. Can you give me a ride to the store?*

- **Pre-commitment** → *Can you do me a favor? Can you give me a ride to the store?*

- **Apology** → *I'm sorry to bother you, but can you give me a ride to the airport?*

- **Explanation** → *My car is in the shop and I'm flying to New York tomorrow night. Can you give me a ride to the airport?*

- **Disarmer** → *I know you are very busy these days, but could you give me a ride to the airport?*

- **Reward** → *Can you give a ride to the airport? I'll bring you a present from New York.*
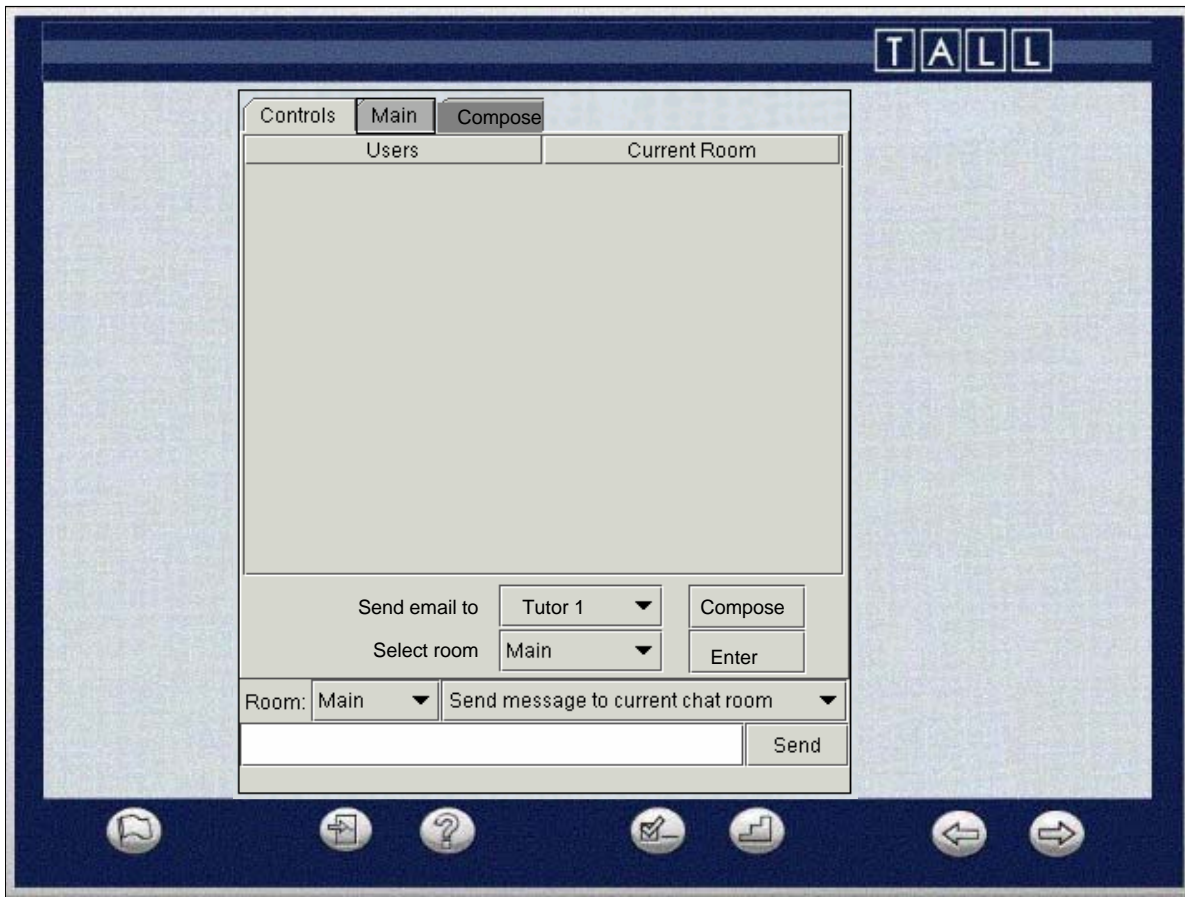
Help screen

Help screen

Introduction

COMPLIMENTS

Watch the video and think what you would do in that situation.

Video
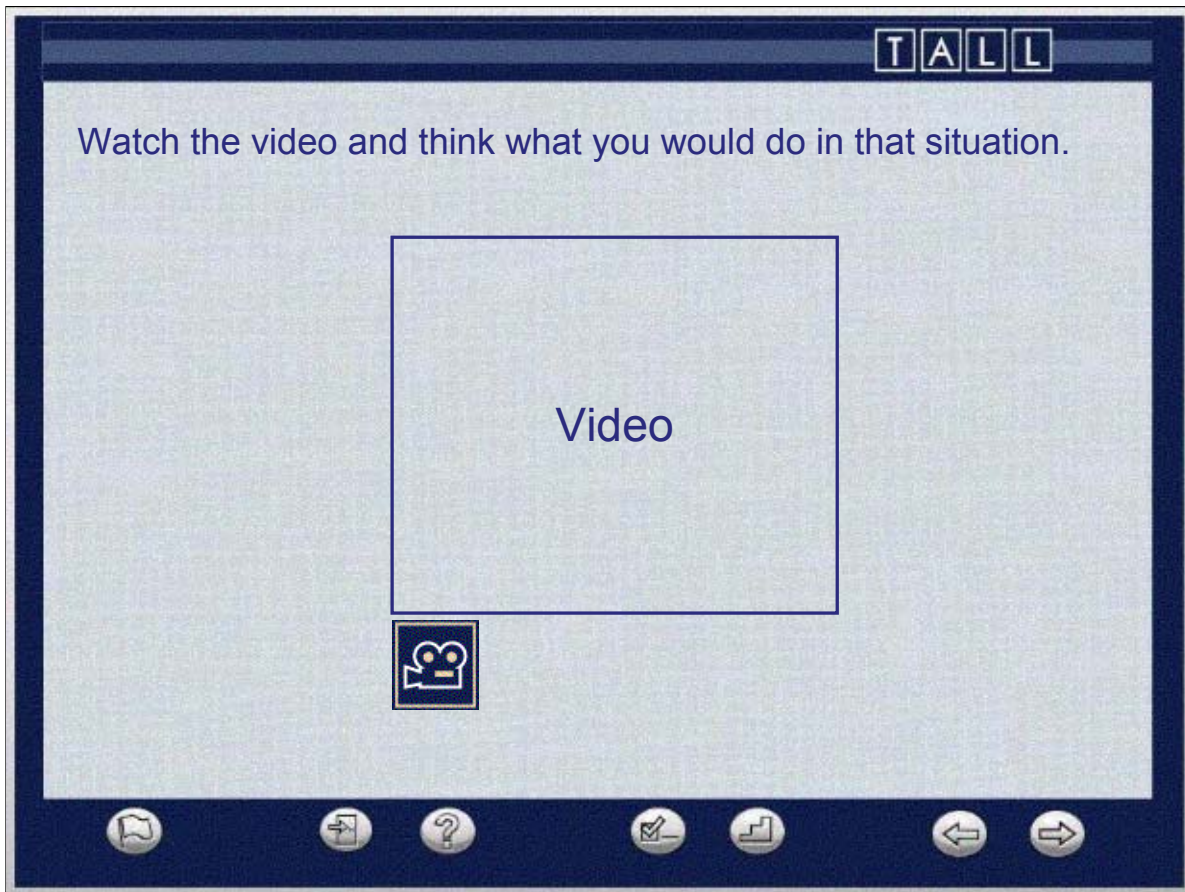
Conversation:

John: That's a great jacket.

Sean: This old thing? I hate it, but I lost my other one so I'm stuck with this one until I go shopping.

Each of the bullet points will be links to the corresponding section of the presentation. After the agent finishes each section, he will give the learners the opportunity to either follow to the next section or jump to the learner's desired selection of sections.

Agent:

Hello, my name is Nathan and I'm going to walk you through this lesson. As you saw in the previous video, language learners are often make mistakes when they compliment or respond to compliments in English. That is because, compliments include at lot more than just knowing the right words. In this particular case, they response to the compliment is inappropriate. Even though Americans often respond to request by playing down the compliment, it is considered impolite to disagree with the person giving the compliment. By saying, "I hate it," Sean may give the impression that he thinks the other person has no sense of style.

As you can imagine, this is not the only problem that can arise when we give and respond to compliments in a second language because the elements involved in compliments often vary from culture to culture. In this lesson, you will learn about compliments in American culture. That means you will learn to recognize opportunities to use compliments, to compliment appropriately, and to politely respond when someone gives you a compliment. How do you do all these things in your culture? When do you compliment someone? What things do you usually compliment? Think about that for a second.

*Now, we will start this lesson by looking at the reasons why Americans give compliments. Then we will see how to use compliments, that is, we will learned about appropriate object of compliments and about how compliments vary according to relationship between the individuals involved. After that we will take a look at phrases, structures, and words commonly used by Americans in compliments. Finally, there will be a series of activities that you'll need to complete individually and with a peer. If you need help at any time during the instruction or the exercises, just click on the question mark button and you will have the option to see a list of useful expressions. You will also have the option to ask a tutor for help. If there aren't any tutors online, you can email them your questions. They might not answer immediately, but they **will** answer.*

I recommend you study the material in the order it is presented. To do this, use the next and back buttons to go to the next screen or to the previous screen if you need to review something. However, if you would like to skip a section of the lesson or if at some point you want to review previous sections, you may click on the ladder button to see these bullet points. Then you can click on any of them to go directly to the corresponding section.

Presentation
COMPLIMENTS

Why do Americans compliment each other?

- Establish and reinforce solidarity
- Express admiration or approval
- Start conversations (ice breakers)
- Soften criticism
- Reinforce behavior
- Other (e.g. with apologies or expressions of gratitude.

Agent:

Now we will begin our section on the reasons to use compliments.

At times, people of other nationalities wonder why Americans compliment each other so often. It could even appear that they are not being sincere. However, the real reason behind that behavior is that Americans use compliments for a lot more than just expressing admiration or approval. They also use them a ice breakers to start conversations, to establish or reinforce relationships of solidarity between the speaker and the addressee, to greet: as part or instead of greeting formulas, to soften criticism and for many other reasons.

As you can see, using compliments the way Americans do can be a big help as you try to integrate to their culture.

Agent:

   The first reason Americans use compliments is to establish and reinforce solidarity, that is good relations with others. This type of situation is most often seen between acquaintances, not between friends. Compliments in this situation are most commonly used to solidify the relationship and help the individuals involved feel more comfortable with each other. This tendency is more noted among women than men.

   Let's see an example.

   The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

  Another reason is to express admiration or approval. Most cultures use compliments to express admiration or approval, so you might be familiar with this use. It shows a general sense of acceptance and respect between individuals.

  Here's an example of this use.

  The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

      Americans will also use compliments as ice breakers. They will tend to use a compliment as a way to start a conversation with someone. For example, a person meets another person at a party and wants to start speaking to them, they will find something small to compliment which will invoke a response from the receiver of the compliment. This use of compliments is found both between people who do not know each other well and between individuals who are close friends.

      It is important to note, however, that compliments on possessions are the most appropriate between strangers, while compliments on appearance may have different implications in this case. So, remember, if you want to start a conversation with a stranger, the best thing you can do is find something you can compliment his/her on.

      For example:

      The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Why do Americans compliment each other?

- Establish and reinforce solidarity
- Express admiration or approval
- Start conversations (ice breakers)
- Soften criticism
  – John, you gave good presentation, but I think there are a few things that we should talk about.
- Reinforce behavior
- Other (e.g. with apologies or expressions of gratitude.

Agent:

    Americans will frequently give a compliment just before offering a criticism to someone in order to make it sound more polite. This example could be a teacher offering feedback to a student; the teacher's ultimate goal is to offer the feedback to help the student perform better in the future.

    For instance:

    The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

   Frequently, Americans use compliments to encourage a specific behavior. An example of this could be a mother or a father complimenting his or her daughter for completing all of her chores for the week. This would encourage the daughter to continue to do all of her chores into the future.

   Let's see the example.

   The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:
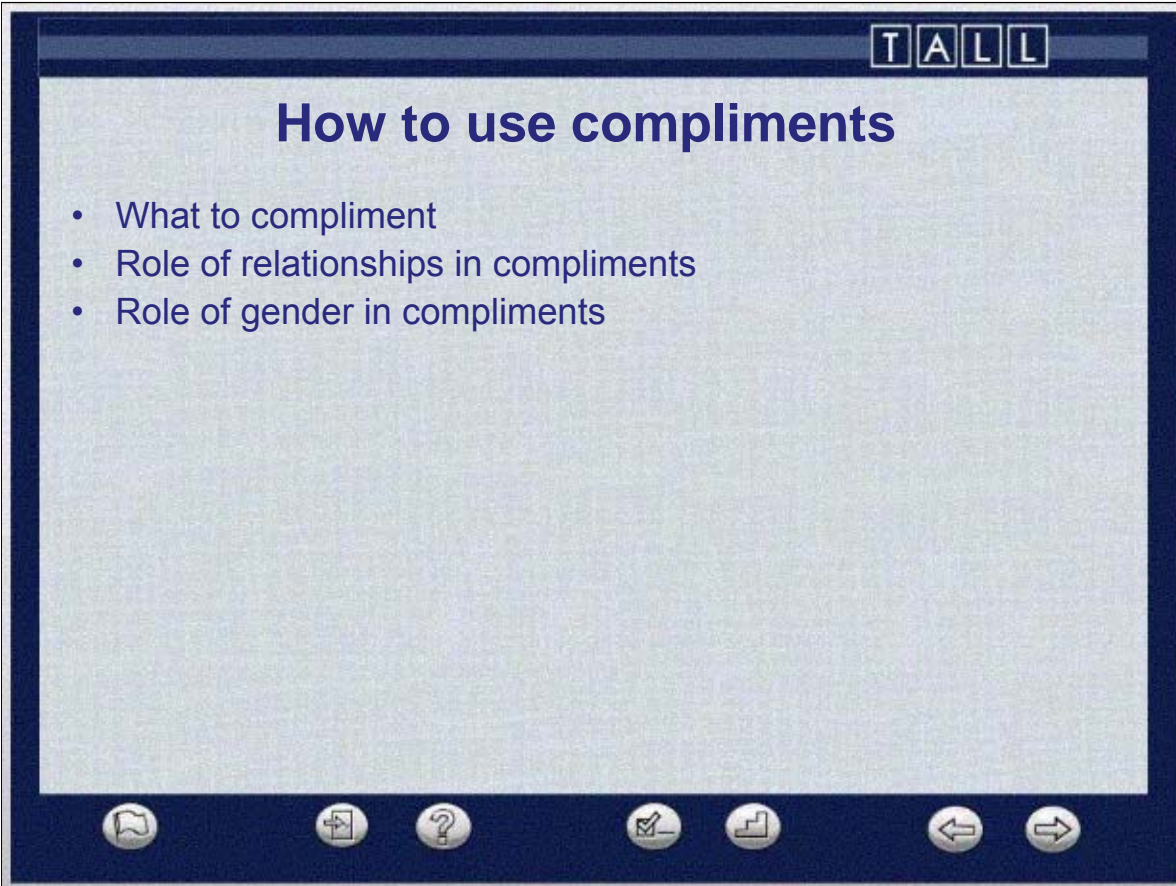
       There are several other reasons Americans give compliments. For example, Americans will use compliments as parts of greetings or expressions of gratitude or as preparation to give an apology. Imagine two members of a team who are working together on a project, and one of the team members takes longer to finish something in their part of the project. The other team member must then work harder to accomplish their portion on time. This would typically cause the first team member to give a compliment followed by an apology for their tardiness.

       For instance:

       The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

Now we will begin our discussion of how to use compliments.

There are three basic elements behind the use of compliments: what to compliments or in other words, the objects of compliments, the role of relationships between the people involved, and the role of the gender of the participants. As we learn about the first element, what to compliment, we will also talk about the role of relationships and gender.

How to use compliments

- What to compliment
  - Appearance
  - Ability
  - Possessions
  - "Newness"
- Role of relationships in compliments
- Role of gender in compliments

Agent:

Compliments in American English are generally used to compliment appearance, ability, possessions, and new items. In a way, compliments reflect common cultural values.

Agent:

> Women in American culture are more likely to use compliments on appearance, both on apparel and on personal appearance. They will frequently compliment each other on clothing, jewelry, and fragrances. Men may also do this, but it is less common. This style of compliment may be used both between close friends and new acquaintances. It serves to establish and strengthen a relationship between two or more individuals.

Let's see an example

> The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Agent:

  Women are usually involved in compliments on personal appearance, either because they are the ones offering the compliment or receiving it. This style of compliment also happens among men, but it is less common among them. Compliments on appearance in American culture tend to be focused on aspects that are a result of some kind of effort and not on just natural attractiveness.

  Let's see an example:

  Also, it is not uncommon to hear compliments on the way someone looks on a particular occasion. This does not mean the speaker thinks the other person normally looks ugly.

  For example:

  The examples appear on the screen after the agent says "Let's see an example" and "For example." Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliments. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Agent:

      Compliments on ability can be directed at an ability or talent in general terms or at a specific act or accomplishment. The first type are used to indicate that in general, the recipient of the compliment, has an ability to perform whatever is being complimented,

      Look at the example. In this case, is intellectual ability for Math.

      The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Agent:

It is also common for Americans to compliment people on a specific act or accomplishment that demonstrate ability.

Agent:

> *Compliments on possessions are common both between men and women. They help to show approval of an individuals possessions, and to establish stronger relationships between individuals. This type of compliments is often used to start conversations.*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.
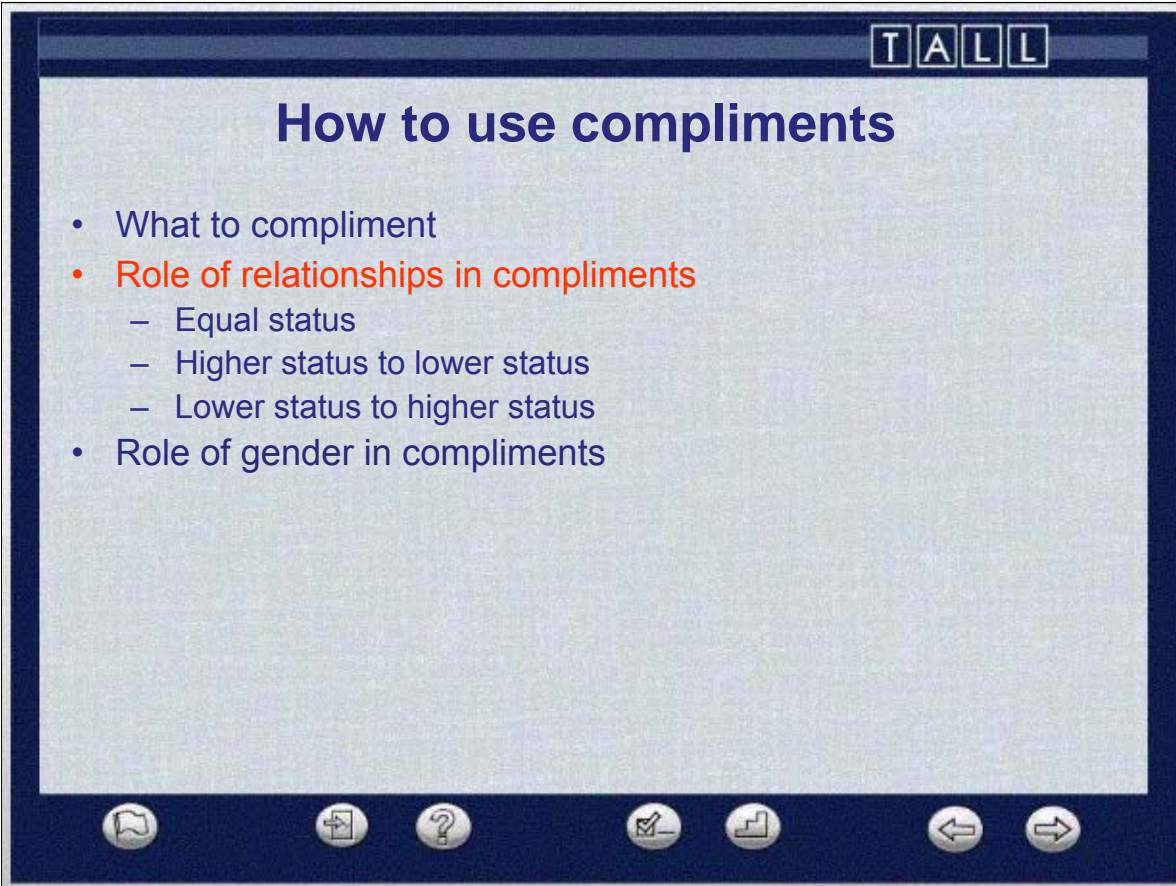
Agent:

   As for newness, Americans typically like to receive compliments on new items they have acquired or on changes they have made to their appearance. If a compliment is not given, it may indicate a lack of approval of the new item. This could be seen as offensive.

   Let's see an example of this type of compliments.

   The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Agent:

As we will see in just a moment, the nature of the relationship between individuals will have a significant impact on the use of compliments.

Agent:

  Most compliments in American culture are exchanged between people of the same status, that is, people who have the same relative power. For instance, classmates, friends, neighbors, coworkers. Compliments will typically be used in this context to reinforce a relationship and establish solidarity between individuals.

  Take a look at this example:

  The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Agent:

   The second largest number of compliments are given by people of higher status to a lower status individuals. For instance, a teacher complimenting a student or a boss complimenting a secretary. When this is the case, compliments are likely to be on ability rather than on appearance or possessions.

   In American society, we can observe that higher status individuals will commonly use compliments to encourage a particular behavior in those over whom they have responsibility.

   For example, a manager may tell one of his employees that he did a great job to motivate him or her to keep working hard on his or her assignments. Like this:

   The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

How to use compliments

- What to compliment
- Role of relationships in compliments
    - Equal status
    - Higher status to lower status
    - Lower status to higher status
        - Mr. Black, I like your new tie. Where did you get it?
- Role of gender in compliments

Agent:

     Compliments from people of lower status to people of higher status are not the most frequent despite popular belief that compliments are commonly used as a type of flattery to gain better standing with individuals who are in a position of power. When compliments are offered in this situation, they will most likely be on appearance or possessions of the higher status person, and may be used as an attempt to build rapport with that person.

     Let's see an example of this type of compliments:

     The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Agent:

      Men and women communicate in different forms. We will now review some of the key differences between how men and women use compliments.

How to use compliments

- What to compliment
- Role of relationships in compliments
- Role of gender in compliments
  - Male behavior
  - Female behavior

Agent:

      Men will generally use compliments less frequently than women will. Men are more likely to compliment larger purchases or significant changes, while women are more likely compliment these changes as well as smaller every day compliments.

How to use compliments

- What to compliment
- Role of relationships in compliments
- Role of gender in compliments
  - Male behavior
  - Female behavior

Agent:

     Women typically will compliment more frequently than men will. Also, they will receive more compliments on appearance than men do.

Most common compliment structures

- Structures: half all American compliments
  1) NP + is/are + (really) + ADJ
  2) NP + look(s) + (really) + ADJ

- Other common compliment structures
  1) I + (really) + love + NP
  2) I + (really) + like + NP
  3) PRO + is/are + (really) + (a) + ADJ + NP

- Most common adjectives

Agent:

We will now begin our discussion of the language used in compliments.

Approximately 50% of the compliments used in the United States will be in the following forms:

1) NP + is/are + (really) + ADJ

2) NP + look(s) + (really) + ADJ

Also, it has been found that approximately 30% of the compliments in the United States will be in the following forms:

1) I + (really) + love + NP

2) I + (really) + like + NP

3) PRO + is/are + (really) + (a) + ADJ + NP

Also, we will see the five most common adjectives used in compliments.

We are reviewing only these five structures and adjectives because if you learn these basic structures you will be skilled in using and understanding compliments in the United States. Examples will be shown in the following slides for each of these structures.

Most common compliment structures

- Structure 50 % of all American compliments
  1. NP + is/are + (really) + ADJ
     – *Your baby is beautiful.*

  2. NP + look(s) + (really) + ADJ
     – *Your hair looks really great.*

- Other common compliment structures
- Most common adjectives

Click on the structures to see more examples.

The different parts of speech and the examples appear on the screen in red as the agent speaks (text synchronized with voice.)

Agent:

*The two structures we'll see next represent about 50% of the compliments used in the U.S. The first structure that we'll discuss is comprised of a **noun phrase** followed by **is** or **are** and an **adjective**. The word "**really**" is optional and may be used to add emphasis. For example:*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Now, click on the corresponding structure to hear more examples.

The examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices giving the compliments. The corresponding bullet points appear in red again.

Examples: Your parents are really nice.

Your portfolio is really good.

Most common compliment structures

- Structure 50 % of all American compliments
    1. NP + is/are + (really) + ADJ
        – *Your baby is beautiful.*

    2. NP + look(s) + (really) + ADJ
        – *Your hair looks really great.*

- Other common compliment structures
- Most common adjectives

Click on the structures to see more examples.

The different parts of speech and the examples appear on the screen in red as the agent speaks (text synchronized with voice.)

Agent:

 *The second structure we'll discuss is comprised of a **noun phrase** followed by **looks** and an **adjective**. Again, the word "**really**" is optional and may be used to add emphasis. An example of this is the following:*

 The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

 Now, click on the corresponding structure to hear more examples.

 The examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices giving the compliments. The corresponding bullet points appear in red again.

Examples: Your outfit looks pretty.
            Your new house looks beautiful.

Agent:

> The following three structures represent approximately 30% of the compliment structures used in the U.S.

> The first structure is comprised by **I** followed by the verb **love** followed by a **noun phrase**. The word "**really**" is optional and may be used after **I** to add emphasis. For instance:

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

> Now, you can click on the corresponding structure to hear more examples.

The examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices giving the compliments. The corresponding bullet points appear in red again.

Examples: I love your skirt.

I really love that lip stick shade.

Agent:

> *The second structure is comprised by **I** followed by the verb **like** followed by a **noun phrase**. The word "**really**" is optional and may be used after **I** to add emphasis. Let's see an example:*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

> *Now, you can click on the corresponding structure to hear more examples.*

The examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices giving the compliments. The corresponding bullet points appear in red again.

Examples: I really like your apartment.

I liked your presentation.

Agent:

   *The third structure is comprised by **a pronoun** followed by a conjugated form of the verb **to be** followed by an **adjective** and a **noun phrase**. The word "**really**" is optional and may be used after the verb **to be** to add emphasis. For example:*

   The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

   Now, you can click on the corresponding structure to hear more examples.

   The examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices giving the compliments. The corresponding bullet points appear in red again.

Examples: These are really good tamales.

      That is a great idea.

Agent:

> *Nice, good, beautiful, pretty,* and **great** *comprise 90% of the adjectives used in compliments in the U.S. If you use these adjectives correctly, you will most likely give appropriate compliments.*

Agent:

Now we will learn how to properly respond to compliments.

There is always a dilemma when someone receives a compliment. If the person who disagrees with the compliment and says negative things about the object of the compliment, it can be seen as rude. However, if a person is too quick to agree with the compliment, that also can be seen as conceited and proud.

*To solve this problem, Americans generally use a simple **thank you** or "**play down**" the compliment. Next we'll talk a little bit more about these two strategies.*

Agent:

*When responding with a simple **thank you**, the receiver of the compliment neither agrees nor disagrees with the compliment. He or she simply says thanks, or thank you. Also, there may be times when the receiver of the compliment turns the spotlight back to the giver of the compliment, by responding with another compliment.*

*Let's look at two examples of using **thanks** or **thank you.***

The examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man giving the compliment and of one responding to the compliment. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Agent:

     To avoid being rude, Americans often respond to compliments by playing them down. That means that even though they don't disagree with the object of the compliment, they refer to a characteristic that makes it less impressive.

     Let's look at some examples.

     The first example we'll see is of someone disagreeing with the compliment. It could be interpreted as if the speaker is disagreeing with the other person's taste and sense of style.

     The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment another one responding to it. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

     In the next two examples the person who received the compliment plays it down, by making a note of some characteristic of the object that is less desirable.

     The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman giving the compliment another one responding to it. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.
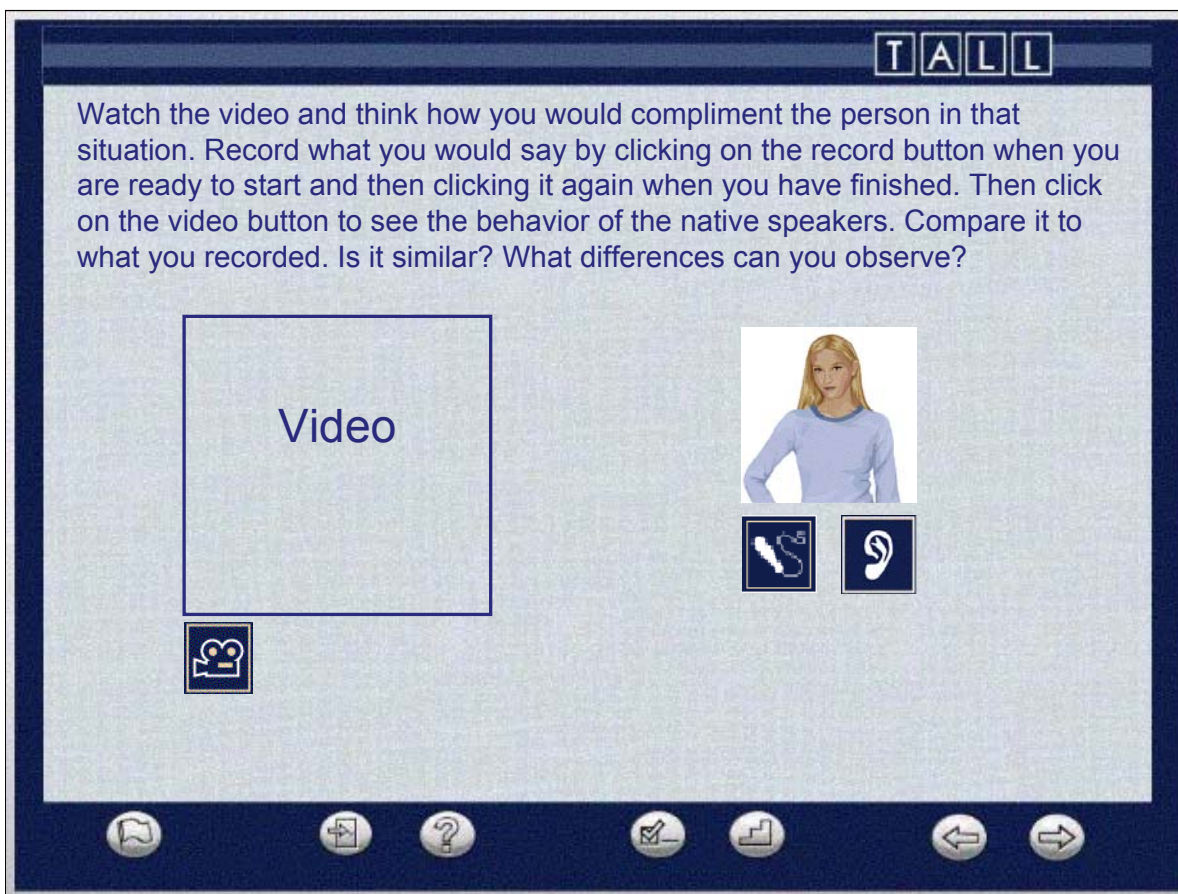
Agent tells instructions:

Watch the video and think how you would compliment the person in that situation. Record what you would say by clicking on the record button when you are ready to start and then clicking it again when you have finished. Then click on the video button to see the behavior of the native speakers. Compare it to what you recorded. Is it similar? What differences can you observe?

Learners will see the introduction of the situation that may prompt a compliment. Then the video will stop and they won't be able to see the rest of the video until they have recorded their response. After that, they will be able to see the people involved complimenting and responding to the compliment.

There will be eight scenarios, so that learners will have exposure to different levels of power and uses of compliments. This screen, as well as the next two screens will be repeated for each scenario. The picture of the girl will be replaced by a still shot taken from the video.

Conversations should be scripted taking into account the information presented in this lesson and the research data reviewed in Chapter 2 (Literature Review) of my thesis. However, I provide sample conversations below.

Situation 1

Your friend sets you up on a blind date. You just arrived at your date's house and you have to great him/her. Use a compliment to start the conversation with your date.

Sean: It's nice to meet you Jen. Sarah has said so many wonderful things about you.

Jen: Well, I hope they were all true. It's nice to meet you too Sean. Do you want to step inside for a minute before we get going?

Sean: Thanks, that would be great.

Jen: I'll be finished getting ready in just a second.

Sean: Okay, you know you have a really nice apartment here.

Jen: Thanks.

Situation 2

You are walking through the library late one night and you walk past one of your friends, who is studying psychology. You want to let them know they you really respect them for their work ethic. (*Note: This type of compliment is usually used from the standpoint of equal power relationships, or from a more powerful person to the less powerful person.*)

Nancy: Lauren, how are you doing?

Lauren: I'm doing well. I am just here studying for finals so I will be prepared for them next week.

Nancy: I know. It's hard to believe that the semester is almost over. It seems like we've been living in this library for months.

Lauren: I know. Every night I am here trying to keep up on all of my coursework.

Nancy: Yeah, every time I come here I see you studying. You've been a really great example to me, and that has made it easier for me to stay focused on my coursework.

Lauren: Nonsense. You are here all the time too. You've been a great example for me.

Nancy: Well, I guess we've helped each other then.

Lauren: I guess so. Well, I don't want to interrupt. After all, we only have a few days left to finish everything up.

Nancy: That's the truth. Good talking to you, and I will see you in class tomorrow.

Lauren: See you tomorrow.

Situation 3

You are a professor, and you notice that one of your students is exceptionally gifted with math. You want to offer this student a position as a Teacher's Assistant. Use a compliment to reinforce your students' good behavior and performance, and then invite the student to be your TA.

Dr. Smith: John, I've noticed you do terrific work in this class. Tell, me, how do you enjoy the material?

John: I love this class Dr. Smith. I have always been fascinated with Calculus.
Dr. Smith: You know, it really shows in your work. It seems like you have a real gift for it too. Did you know that we are looking for a new TA for the class?

John: No, I haven't heard anything about that.

Dr. Smith: Well, we are currently looking for one. Do you think you might be interested in the position?

John: I'd love to do it. What would it require?

Dr. Smith: Well, it will probably take about 10 hours of work per week, and most of them you can do whenever you would like. However, there are a few hours a week when we would need you to be in the lab.

John: That sounds great. When would I have to be in the lab?

Dr. Smith: Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00pm to 1:30pm. Can you do that with your schedule?

John: Yes, that would actually be perfect for me. So what do I need to do next to get the position.

Dr. Smith: Well, I will get an interview set up with the head of the department, and if everything goes well, and I am sure that it will, he will offer you the position right there.

John: Great. When can I set up an interview.

Situation 4

You're a TA and you think your professor gave a fantastic class; you want to give your professor a compliment about his/her teaching for the day. (*Be careful of how you approach the situation and be sure not to place yourself in a position of higher power than your professor; this will undermine the purpose of your compliment.*)

Al: Dr. Francis, thank you for today's class. I had been having a little bit of a hard time understanding the topic when I read the book and did the homework. Your explanation of the material in class today really helped me understand it better.

Dr. Francis: Thank you Al, and I am glad that it was a good class for you.

Situation 5

When you were sick, a friend brought you chicken noodle soup. You want to show appreciation and strengthen your relationship with your friend.

Sharon: Sally, thank you for bringing me dinner last night. I really appreciate it.

Sally: You're welcome. I am just glad that I could help.

Sharon: You've always been a good friend. It seems like whenever one of our friends needs something, you are always ready lend a helping hand.

Sally: Well, that's what friends are for. And I know you would do the same for me.

Situation 6

One of the coworkers on your crew consistently doesn't pay attention to the instructions given by the shift supervisor. You want to ask them to be more attentive to detail, but you don't want to offend or upset them.

Alex: Chris, I was wondering if you had a minute to speak in private.

Chris: Sure, do you want to go now or at some other time?

Alex: Now would be great if you have time.

Chris: So what is it Alex?

Alex: Well, I wanted to let you know that I really appreciate all the help you give on our crew, and I wanted to thank you for being here on time every day. You've been doing a great job on almost everything you've been asked to do. There is one thing though, that I wanted to ask you about. I've noticed you don't seem to like taking instruction from the shift supervisor. Is there any reason for this?

Chris: Well, basically I think that he makes things harder than they need to be sometimes. I am just trying to save us all a little work.

Alex: I understand where you're coming from. And like I said, you've been a great member of the team. Did anyone ever walk you through the process of why we do some of the things that we do?

Chris: No, not really.

Alex: Well, if you have another minute, maybe we could go over some of it, because there are some valid reasons why the supervisor wants us to do things his way, but until understood the process, it seemed like extra work to me to.

Chris: Okay, let's go over it then. I just want to do my job the best that I can.

Alex: I know you do, and that's why you're such a valuable team member here.

Situation 7

Your friend, who you have known since first grade, helps you finish up everything you have to do before the long weekend so you can join the rest of your friends on a long weekend trip. You want to strengthen the relationship and show how thankful you are for the help.

Susan: Mary, thank you so much for helping me. You've always been a great friend, and you've always been so willing to help me out when I needed it. I really appreciate you and your friendship.

Mary: You're welcome. And so you don't forget, you have helped me many times when I needed help too. I think that's why we get along so well.

Susan: Well, I guess we have helped each other quite a few times. Anyway, thank you for this time.

Situation 8

You're interviewing a candidate for a new job, and they have a great resume and have done fantastically in the interview. You want to show the candidate your admiration and respect.

Ms. Smith: Brian, thank you for coming in to be interviewed. I want to let you know that I am very impressed with both your resume and with you here in the interview. How would you like to come back in next week for a few more interviews.

Brian: Thank you Ms. Smith. As I told you, I am very impressed with your firm, and I would very much like to have an opportunity to work here.

Ms. Smith: Okay, well, we'll have to see what the other interviewers think. I don't make the decision alone. But you've impressed me, and I think you will impress the other interviewers as much as you did me.

Brian: Thank you, when should I come back in for the other interviews?

Ms. Smith: Why don't you speak with my assistant and he will get everything scheduled for you. Okay?

Ms. Smith: Okay, and thank you again.

(Same scenario than previous screen.)

      Learners will select the purpose for which the compliment was given. Next, they will select how effectively the compliment was used. When they click on the check answer button, first they will see an explanation of why the compliment was used, and then how effective it was based on the reaction of the recipient.

What is the object of this compliment?

☐ **Appearance**

☐ **Ability**

☐ **Possessions**

☐ **Newness**

Feedback will show up here when the check answer button is clicked. Learners will not see this text box until then.

Video

Which of the following describes the relationship between the two individuals (from the point of view of the person giving the compliment)?

☐ **Equal status**

☐ **Higher to lower status**

☐ **Lower to higher status**

Feedback will show up here when the check answer button is clicked. Learners will not see this text box until then.

(Same responses than 2 previous screens.)

Learners will have two opportunities to get the correct answers. If they are not successful after the second time, they will see the correct answer and a pop-up message box with feedback. The feedback will consist of the script of the dialog with an explanation of what was being complimented and the power relationship between these two individuals. The learners will see feedback for one set of answers at a time.

Read or listen to the compliment again and identify the language structure used in this compliment

Feedback will show up here when the check answer button is clicked. Learners will not see this text box until then.

☐ **NP + is/are + (really) + ADJ**

☐ **NP + look(s) + (really) + ADJ**

☐ **I + (really) + love + NP**

☐ **I + (really) + like + NP**

☐ **PRO + is/are + (really) + (a) + ADJ + NP**

The learners will receive feedback teaching them that these are 3 of the most common forms of complimenting used in the United States. The importance of this lesson is that if the learners master these three basic structures for complimenting, they will rarely make errors relating to the structure of compliments.

Watch the following 3 situations and listen to the native speaker's compliments. Then, carefully study the summary below.

Video

Video

Video

Function

Object

Power

Appropriateness

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- +

Function

Object

Power

Appropriateness

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- +

Function

Object

Power

Appropriateness

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- +

Agent:

Before we continue with more situations, let's recap what we have seen so far. Watch the three situations, listen to the native speaker's conversations, observe how the object of the compliments vary according to the relationship between.

Did you notice the role of relationships and the reasons to give the compliments in the choice of the objects of those compliments?

As you go through the instruction, pay attention to how compliments are used and to how people respond to them.
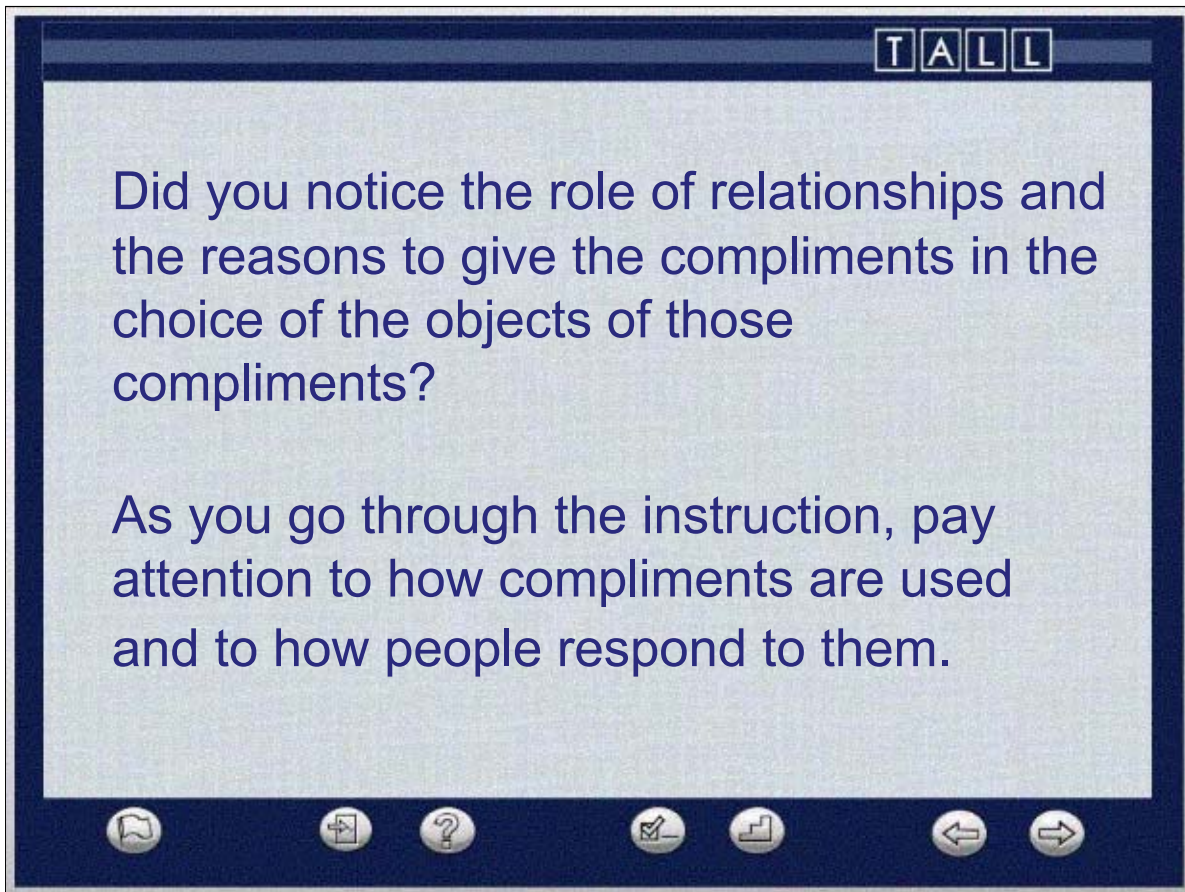
Agent:

   Did you notice the role of the relationship between the individuals using the compliments? The correct usage of the compliment and the response will largely be determined by the relationship between the two individuals.
   As you go through the instruction, pay attention how the compliments change according to the relationship between the people and the seriousness of the offense.

(It would be great if they could hear this when the press the Next button in the previous screen. That is, when they press that button, they will hear the agent speaking –without the text– before going to the next screen, which in this case would be the one that has the first dialog.)

Practice

COMPLIMENTS

Title: Starting Conversation

John: Nice car Sarah. Is that the new model?

Sarah: Yeah, it is. I went to the dealer on Main St. you recommended. You were right, they gave me a great price, and they were so nice to work with.

John: Great. I'm glad it worked out. When I bought mine 6 months ago, I had a great experience with them.

Sarah: John, I'm so glad I talked to you before I bought my new car. The dealer on Main St. was so pleasant to work with, it was almost like I wasn't going through the frustration of buying a new car.

John: Well, any time I can be of service, let me know.

Sarah: John, you're such a good friend! Thanks!

There is another dialog screen like the previous one.

Dialog 2

Sally: I love what you've done with your hair! It's a totally new look for you!

Beth: Thanks. I thought it was time for a change. You don't think it's too much though, do you?

Sally: No way. It's fabulous. You look great!

Beth: I did like it when my stylist finished, but it's so different that I just wasn't sure it was for me.

Sally: I think you picked the perfect style. Do you think you I could get an appointment with your stylist too? I've been feeling like it's time for something new too, and I love what she did with your hair.

Beth: Definitely, I'll get you her number later today. Just tell her I gave you her number and she'll take great care of you.

Sally: Thank you!

Joe: Thanks for letting me know about last night. I am so sorry, and we'll try not to let it happen again. Hey, do you want to go play 18 holes on Saturday? My treat, as a way of apologizing for last night.

Bob: Sure, sounds like fun. What time should we meet up?

Match the words or phrases with their function

Name: text text text text text
Name: text text text text text text
Name: text text text

Nice car Sarah . . .	Expressing approval
Thanks.	Accepting the compliment
I went to the dealer on Main St. you recommended.	Changing the spotlight to the other person

In this activity, there will be phrases from the dialogue. Students will have to match the phrase with its purpose/function. Their task will be to choose the best possible fit for each phrase.

There is another matching exercise like the previous one following a dialog screen.

Matching Exercise 2

Thanks. I thought it was time for a change → Accepting the compliment

No way. It's fabulous. You look great! → Giving reassurance

Sarah, I love what you did with your hair! → Expressing approval

When the learner clicks the box to check their answers, they will see not only if they got the answer right or wrong, but they will also see an explanation of why.

1) *A compliment would be appropriate. Frequently, compliments are used to break the ice and start a conversation.*

2) *No, a compliment would not be appropriate. You are in a lower level of power, and it could be seen as though you actually think that you are better than your boss is at making presentations. Typically, the individual in the position of higher power is implicitly supposed to be the more skilled individual. However, depending on personality type and relationship, there may be instances where this could be appropriate.*

3) *Yes, again, compliments are frequently used to start conversation. Also, remember that Americans use compliments to establish or reinforce solidarity.*

4) *Yes, this would be correct. Many times, a compliment is used to soften the blow of a criticism. Remember, you need to be careful not to always make a habit of complimenting and then making your criticism known. This could lead to a loss of effectiveness in this structure of complimenting.*

5) *Yes, this can be done to start a conversation with your friend and to establish solidarity.*

6) *Yes, this would be an appropriate use of compliments. Note, this is not one of the most common uses of a compliment, but it would still be correct. The implication of it's infrequent usage is that non-native speakers will want to be careful not to overuse.*

7) *Yes, this may be appropriate to show your admiration of the speaker.*

Read the following situation choose an appropriate response to the compliment

John, that's a beautiful car. Did you restore it yourself?

- ☐ Oh this? Yeah, I guess it's been my little project for quite some time.
- ☐ Thanks. I spent the last 3 years rebuilding this car from the ground up
- ☐ No. I don't like doing manual labor much.

✓?

Learners will see the correct answers when they click on the check answer button.

There is another multiple-choice exercise like the previous one.

Multiple-choice Exercise 2

<u>Compliment</u>:

Susan, I love your coat! Is it new?

<u>Possible Answers</u>:

- Thank you! It's not new. In fact, I almost never wear it because it's old. I love it, though. It's really warm.

- Thank you! I like yours too.

- This old thing? No. My grandma gave it to me for my birthday years ago. I only wear it when I go see her.

Agent:

> *This is a simulation. Click on the video button when you are ready to start. After you watch the video, choose your most likely response. Then click next to see what happens.*

At this point, there will be a simulation exercise. The situations and consequences will be presented by short video segments, which, when possible, will be shot from the viewer's perspective so as to make him or her feel part of the scene and the camera becomes his/her eyes.

The activity will be divided into seven video sections. The first section will set the situation. (Then, learners will see two possible responses, written, not on video.) The next two will show the likely outcomes, which will vary according to the choice learners made previously. (Again, learners will see three possible responses, written, not on video.) The last four will show the final outcomes, that will vary according to their previous choices. In addition, learners will have the chance to go back and see the result of having selected other options.

This activity needs to be scripted, but in the next two pages I included a suggested organization chart and rough script.

Simulation – Organization

```
                                                      ┌──────────────┐
                                            ┌────────▶│ Outome 1.1   │
                                  ┌──────────────┐    └──────────────┘
                                  │ Response 1.1 │
                                  │ (not on video)│
                                  └──────────────┘
                ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
                │ Response 1    │  │   Outome 1   │
                │ (not on video)│─▶│              │
                └──────────────┘  └──────────────┘
                                  ┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
                                  │ Response 1.2 │───▶│ Outome 1.2   │
                                  │ (not on video)│    └──────────────┘
                                  └──────────────┘

┌──────────────┐
│ Introduction │
│ Sets situation:│
│ Beach scene  │
└──────────────┘

                ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
                │ Response 2    │  │   Outome 2   │    │ Response 2.1 │───▶│ Outome 2.1 │
                │ (not on video)│─▶│              │    │ (not on video)│
                └──────────────┘  └──────────────┘    └──────────────┘

                                  ┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
                                  │ Response 2.2 │───▶│ Outome 2.2   │
                                  │ (not on video)│    └──────────────┘
                                  └──────────────┘
```

Video shot from viewer perspective so that he/she feels part of the action.

1. BEACH

A woman walks towards the part of the beach where she will set up her sun shade, her towels, and her cooler. Along the way there, someone sees her and yells out to her.

Acquaintance greeting – not on video
>   1. Hey, Jennifer! I hardly recognized you.
>   2. Jennifer! You look so cute! I didn't know you were coming to the beach today.

2. CLOSE ON JENNIFER

Jennifer responds:

Outcome 1: Oh hi! I hope it wasn't because I look horrible in my new bathing suit.
Outcome 2: Thanks. It's been such a crazy month. Last night I decided I needed to relax a little so I went out and bought this bathing suit, and now here I am at the beach. By the way, I love your tan.

Acquaintance responses – not on video
>   1.1. Don't be silly! You look terrific!
>   1.2. Oh not at all. The bathing suit is just fine.
>   2.1. Thanks. I've been coming to the beach every weekend since the beginning of the summer. I guess we're only young once, right?
>   2.2 Thanks. I used to get red whenever I went in the sun, but I found this wonderful tanning lotion, and it's done miracles for my skin.

3. CLOSE ON BOTH
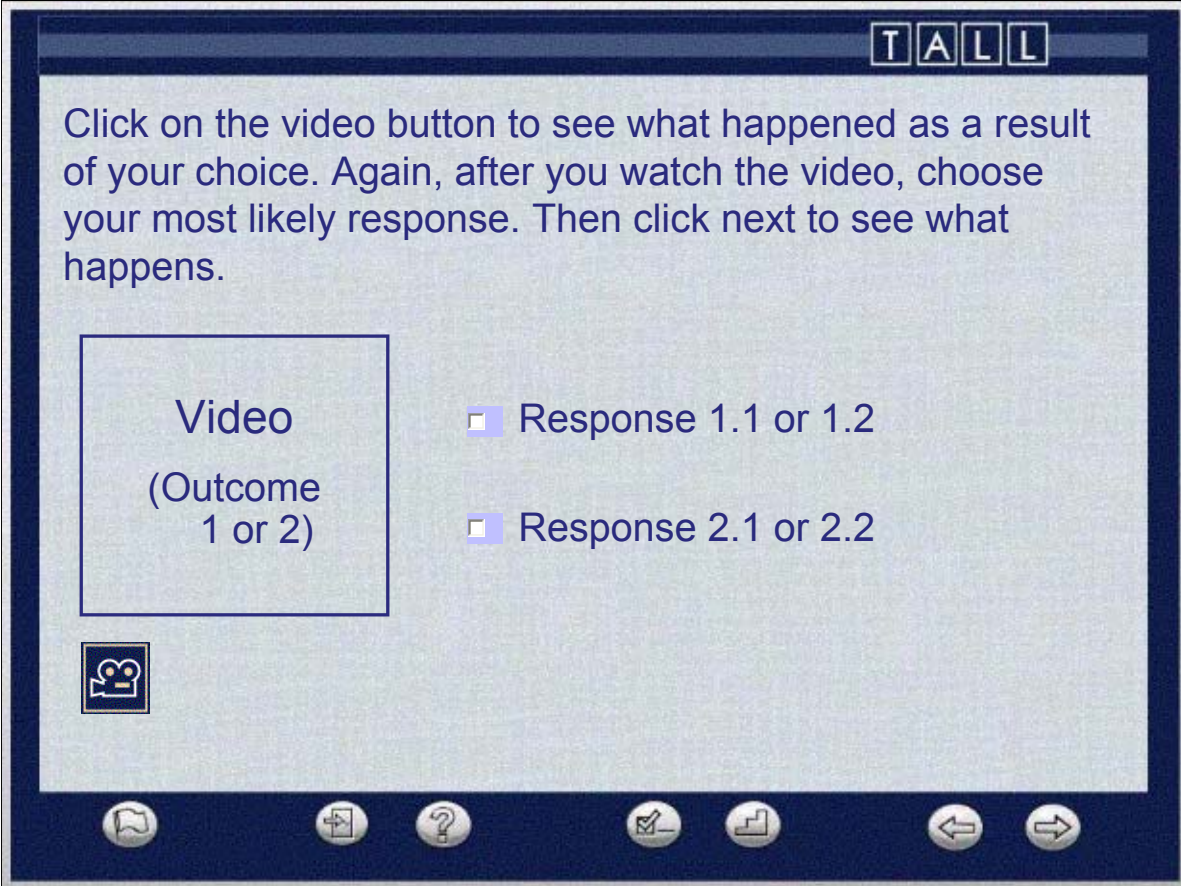
Jennifer replies:

Outcome 1.1: Thanks! You do too. I love your tan.
Outcome 1.2:   Thanks! Well, have fun. I'm going to keep moving down the beach.
Outcome 2.1: That's right. We've got to enjoy it while we can.
Outcome 2.2: Really? I could totally use something like that. What's the name of it?

Click on the video button to see what happened as a result of your choice. Again, after you watch the video, choose your most likely response. Then click next to see what happens.

| Video (Outcome 1 or 2) | ☐ Response 1.1 or 1.2 |
| | ☐ Response 2.1 or 2.2 |

Simulation Screen

Click on the video button to see what happened as a result of your choice. **Are you curious about what would have happened if you had responded differently?** If you are, click on the start button to start over or click on the back button to go to the previous screen.

Video

(Outcome 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 or 2.2)

START

Simulation Screen

Read the following situation, decide how you would respond, and write your response in the space provided. Click the corresponding button to compare your answer to the model.

> *You see a friend you haven't seen in 3 years. What would you say first when you greeted him/her at the airport?*

MODEL

Model:

Jennifer, you look great. I swear you haven't aged a day since the last time I saw you.

Question:

•Did you compliment your friend as part of the greeting?

•Did you compliment something in his/her appearance or something new?

There is one more written exercise like the previous one.

Written Exercise 2

<u>Situation</u>:

You just hired a new salesperson and they just sold the biggest shipment of your product that's been sold all year.

<u>Model</u>:

Shelley, that was really great. It looks like you've got a very bright future with XYZ company. Keep up the good work.

<u>Questions</u>:

- Did you compliment your employee on their performance?
- Did you compliment hard work or effort rather than natural ability?

You really like your friend's new house, and you want to let her know. Complete the dialog and then read or listen to the model.

You: _____
_____

Sue: Thanks. We really spent a lot of time trying to make it just right.

You: _____
_____

Sue: Well, we've been waiting a life time to build our dream home, and new we finally have it.

Model script will show up here. Learners will not see this text box until then.

Model:

A: I love your new house. Everything is so beautiful and well designed.

B: Thanks. We really spent a lot of time trying to make it just right.

A: Well you did a terrific job. I can tell you put a lot of time into choosing every detail of your home.

B: Well, we've been waiting a life time to build our dream home, and new we finally have it.

Question:

•Did you compliment your friend on her new house?

There is one more dialog completion exercise like the previous one.

Dialog Completion Exercise 2

Situation:

You have been assigned to work on a project with a colleague whom you respect. You want to start the relationship off right.

Model:

A: Alex, it's good to finally work with you. I've seen a lot of the work you've done of the last several years. It's brilliant what you've done.

B: Thank you. I've been a fan of yours too. To be honest, I've been hoping we would be able to work on a project together. I think we'll make a great team.

A: Great! Now we finally will get our chance to work together. I think we will really provide an amazing product with this project.

B: Well, when do you think would be a good time to sit down and start to coordinate our activities?

A: How about Thursday morning at 11:00 am?

B: Perfect, I'll see you then.

Questions:

- Did you give a compliment to strengthen your relationship?
- Did you compliment him/her on his/her work or effort rather than natural ability?
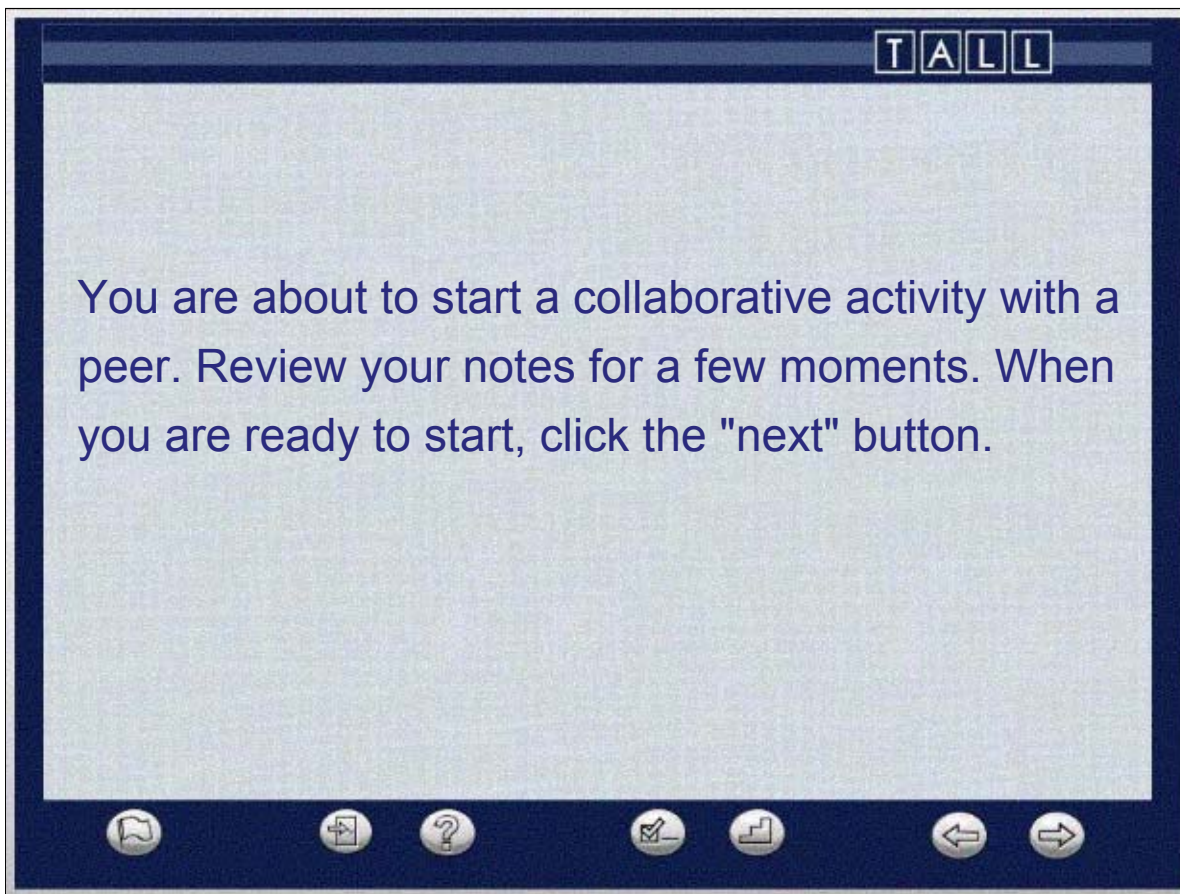
This screen appears before every collaborative activity to alert students what they are going to be connected with another student in order to practice what they have learned.

Practice the following situation. Use the expressions you've learned. When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

> **You see a friend at a part on Friday night. You go up to him to start a conversation.**

1. Greet B with a compliment.
2. Accept B's compliment and start conversation about party

Agent:

Practice the following situation with your peer. Use the expressions that you have learned or any others that are appropriate to express the functions given. Follow the order so that you can produce a complete conversation. You are student A. Remember that you are supposed to start the conversation.

When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

There is another guided dialog exercise like the previous one. The content for the screen corresponding to student A is as follows:

Situation

You're a manager at XYZ company. An employee who has always been good is starting to show up late for work.

Cues

1. Open reprimand of B with a compliment
2. Probe to find out if B is having any difficulties you should be aware of
3. Address B's late arrival to work
4. Respond according to B's response as a manager would

Practice the following situation. Use the expressions you've learned. When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

A friend comes up to you and greets you at a party on a Friday night.

1. Respond to A's compliment with a compliment.
2. Continue conversation started by A about party.

Agent:

Practice the following situation with your peer. Use the expressions that you have learned or any others that are appropriate to express the functions given. Follow the order so that you can produce a complete conversation. You are student B.

When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.
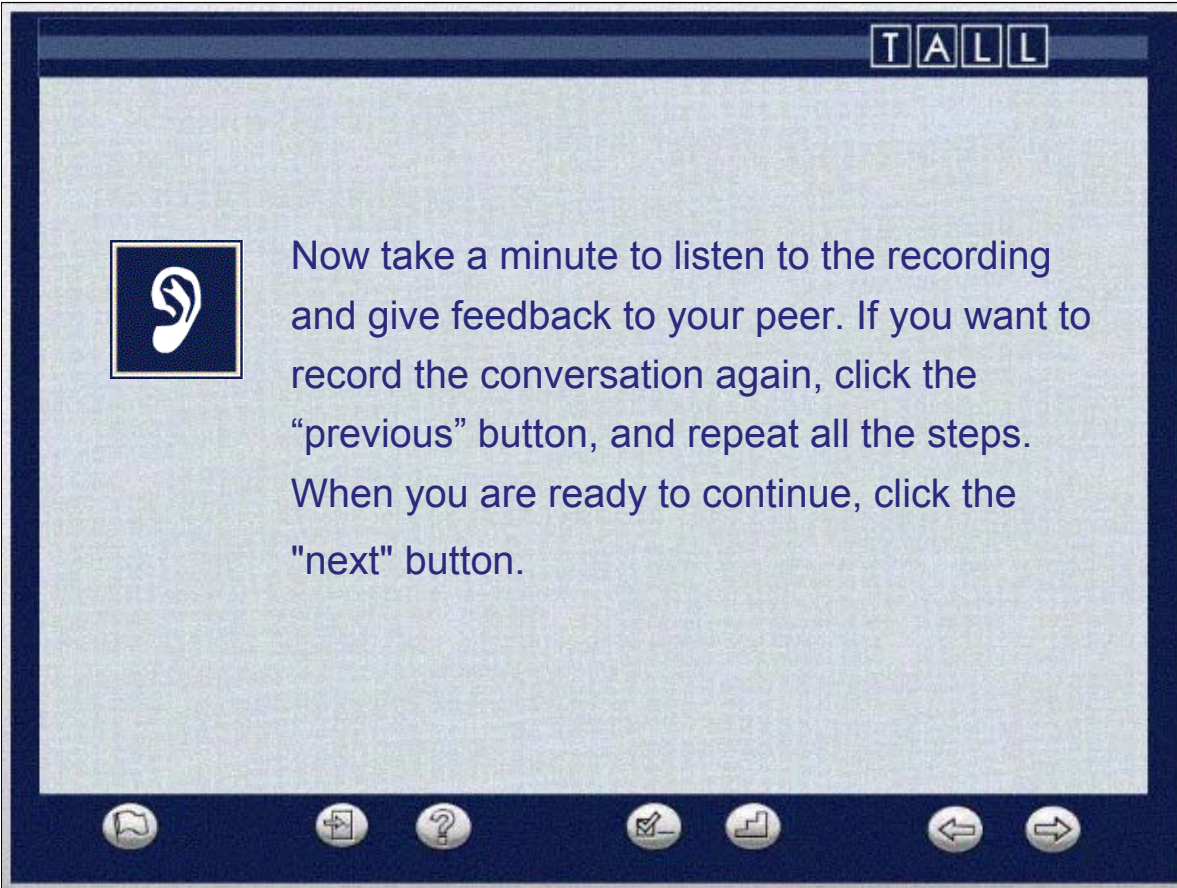
There is another guided dialog exercise like the previous one. The content for the screen corresponding to student B is as follows:

Situation

Your manager at XYZ company thinks you're a great employee, but he/she has started to notice that you are showing up late for work**.**

Cues

1. Respond to A's compliment
2. Respond to A's question
3. Explain your late arrivals to work
4. Accept A's statement, and offer to correct the problem

Now take a minute to listen to the recording and give feedback to your peer. If you want to record the conversation again, click the "previous" button, and repeat all the steps. When you are ready to continue, click the "next" button.

Collaborative Activity Follow Up
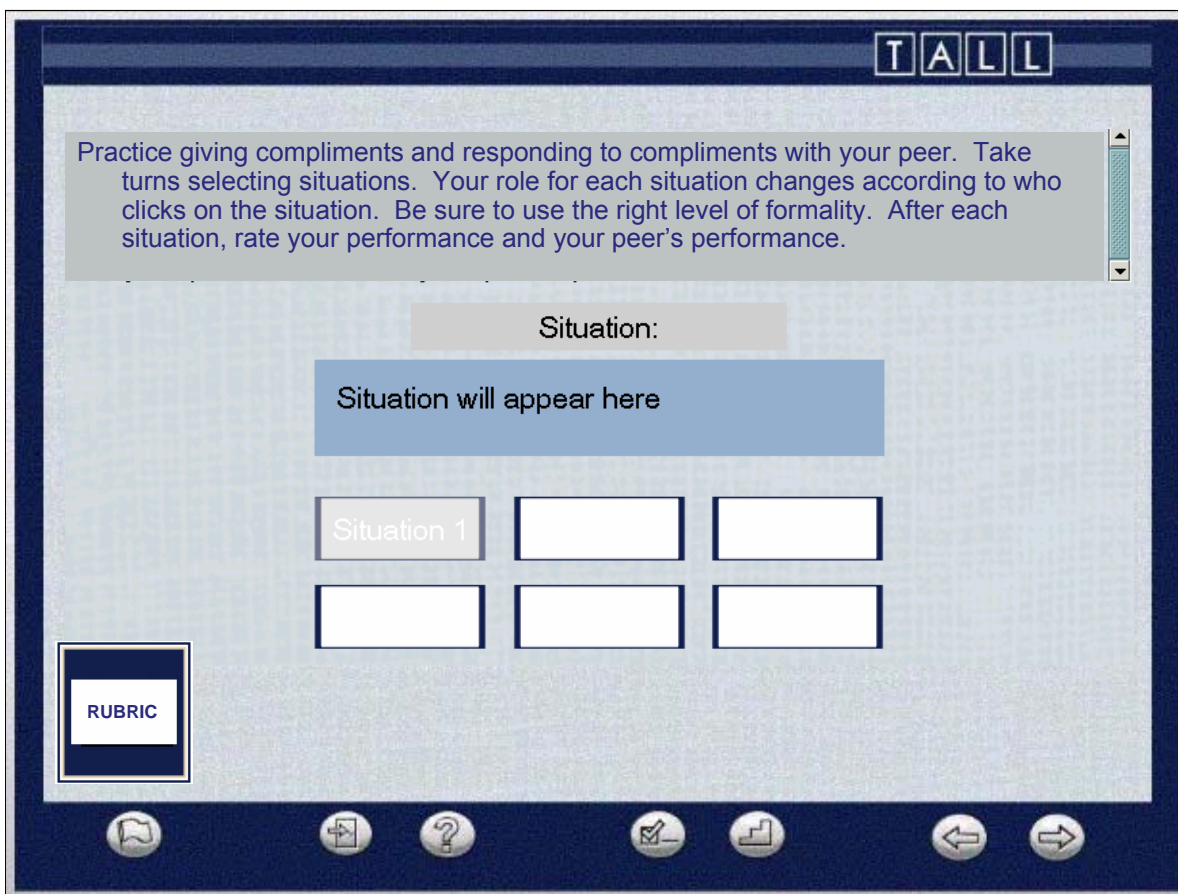
When learners place the mouse over the other buttons, they will see the texts: "Situation 2", "Situation 3", etc. Students have worked with this type of activity before.

Situations:

•You see a friend in the store and you want to greet them. Start the greeting with a compliment.

•You are a team leader on a project. One of the members of your group has been working very hard and doing a great job.

•You see an acquaintance, and you want to reinforce the solidarity of your relationship with that acquaintance.

•You are a teacher and you have a student who is doing sloppy work, but you don't want to be to harsh in your criticism.

•You are a parent and you want to encourage your child to keep doing his or her chores.

•Your friend helped you buy a new house and they were very helpful. Use a compliment to express your gratitude to your friend.

Rubric:

Please, evaluate your performance and your peer's performance taking into account the following questions:

- Did we recognize situations where a compliment was appropriate? Did we use compliments to establish and reinforce solidarity, to express admiration or approval, to start conversations, to soften criticism, to reinforce behavior, or as part of a greeting?

- Did we compliment on appearance, ability, possessions, or new things?

- Did we produce the compliment using the structures and the adjectives we learned in the lesson?

- Did we respond the compliment with a quick "Thank you" or by playing it down?

Evaluation

COMPLIMENTS
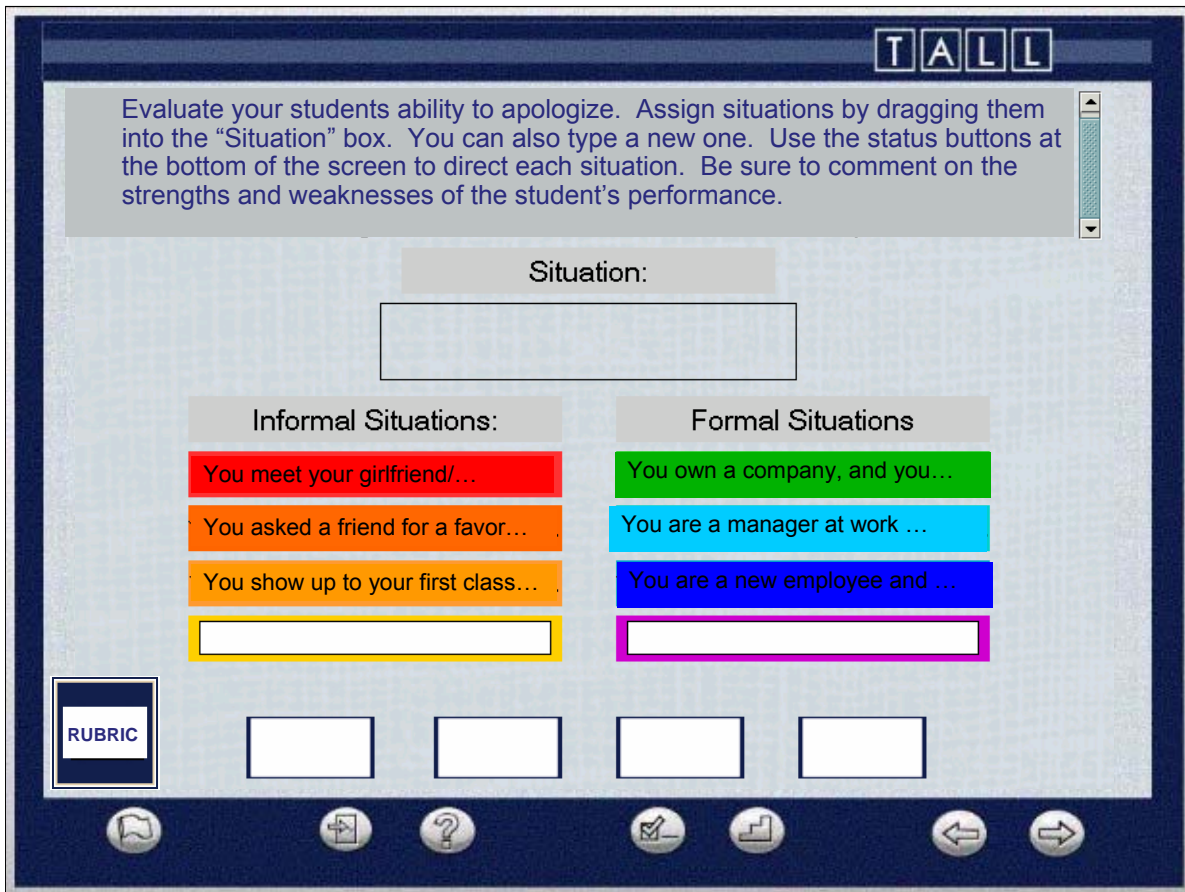
The instructor will see this page

When the tutor place mouse over the buttons, the following texts appear: START, STOP, DISCUSS, PREPARE.

Situations:

•You meet your girlfriend/boyfriend before going out on a date. You compliment him/her on his/her appearance to reinforce solidarity.

•You own a small business, and you want to thank your office manager for all of the hard work he/she has put in to make sure your business runs smoothly.

•You show up to your first class on your first day of college and you see someone you would like to start speaking with. You give him/her a compliment on his/her appearance to break the ice.

•You asked a friend for a favor, and they forgot to perform the favor. You are now in a difficult position because you will get in trouble at work. Your don't want to be too strong, but you want to express your frustration with them.

•You are a manager at work and you like that one of your employees always comes in early and works hard. You want to reinforce this behavior.

•You are a new employee and you want to thank your mentor for the time he/she has spent teaching you the ropes in your new position.

Apologies: Evaluation Rubric

Category	4	3	2	1
Recognizing Situations/ Functions	Learner can recognize most situations in which a compliment can be given, and uses compliments to fulfill different functions.	Learner can recognize many situations in which a compliment can be given, and uses compliments to fulfill only a few functions.	Learner can recognize few situations in which a compliment can be given, and uses compliments to fulfill very few functions.	Learner cannot recognize situations in which a compliment can be given, and fails to use compliments to fulfill different functions.
Complimenting: Objects of compliments	Learner always gives compliments on objects that are readily recognized as positive by Americans.	Learner sometimes gives compliments on objects that are readily recognized as positive by Americans.	Learner infrequently gives compliments on objects that are readily recognized as positive by Americans.	Learner generally gives compliments on objects that are not necessarily recognized as positive by Americans.
Complimenting: Role of Relationships and Gender	Learner always gives compliments appropriately according to the relationship between participants and the gender of the recipient.	Learner gives compliments appropriately most of the time according to relationship between participants and the gender of the recipient.	Learner sometimes gives compliments appropriately according to the relationship between participants and the gender of the recipient.	Learner hardly ever gives compliments appropriately according to the relationship between participants and the gender of the recipient.
Complimenting: Language Used	Learner uses the structures and adjectives seen on the instruction often. Learner's speech is clear and free of grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.	Learner sometimes uses the structures and adjectives seen on the instruction. Learner's speech is clear and has a few grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.	Learner uses the structures and adjectives seen on the instruction infrequently. Learner's speech is not very clear at times and has some grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.	Learner almost never uses the structures and adjectives seen on the instruction. Learner's speech difficult to understand and has many grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.
Responding to Compliments	Learner always responds appropriately to compliments.	Learner responds appropriately to compliments most of the time.	Learner sometimes responds appropriately compliments.	Learner never responds appropriately to compliments.

An ***appropriate response*** is one that would be accepted as polite by the average American English speaker.

The Student will see this page

Text to appear in status box:

•Please START now.

•STOP now. Thank you.

•Now DISCUSS your performance with your tutor.

•Prepare for the next situation.

Help

COMPLIMENTS
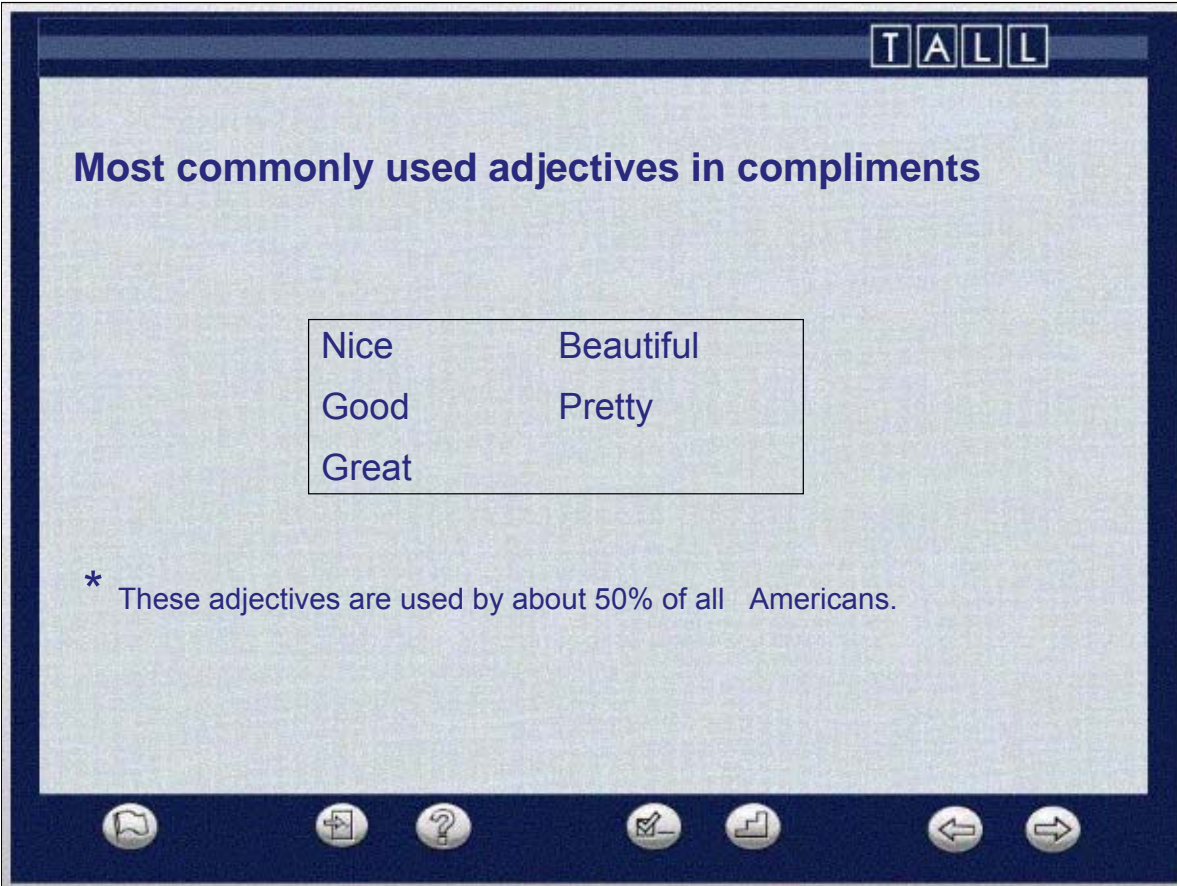
Useful compliment structures

1. **NP + is/are + (really) + ADJ** - *Your baby is beautiful.*

2. **NP + look(s) + (really) + ADJ** - *Your hair looks great.*

3. **I + (really) + love + NP** - *I really love your outfit.*

4. **I + (really) + like + NP** - *I really like your new car*

5. **PRO + is/are + (a/an) + (really) + ADJ + NP**
   - *That was a really good report*

Help screen

Most commonly used adjectives in compliments

Nice	Beautiful
Good	Pretty
Great	

* These adjectives are used by about 50% of all Americans.

TALL
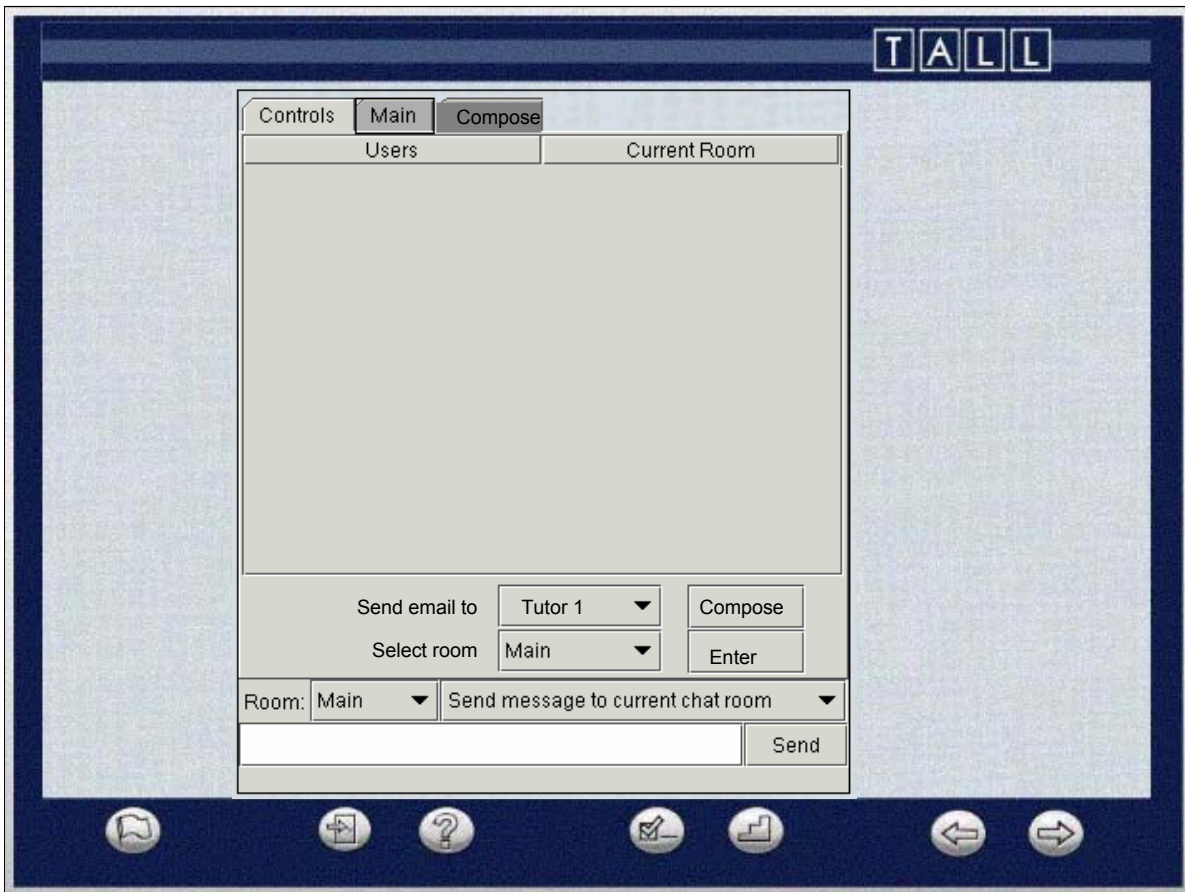
Help screen

Help screen

Introduction

INVITATIONS

Watch the video and think what you would do in that situation.

Video

Conversation:

John: Bill, we definitely should get together one of these days.

Bill: Sounds great. Do you have some time in mind?

John: Not really, let's just think about doing it in the future.

Bill: Okay, should we set something up for next week?

John: Oh, I don't know. I am really busy. Let's do this. I will give you call when things slow down some for me and then we will talk about it some more.

Each of the bullet points will be links to the corresponding section of the presentation. After the agent finishes each section, he will give the learner the opportunity to either follow to the next section or jump to the learner's desired selection of sections.

Agent:

Hello, my name is Nathan and I'm going to walk you through this lesson. As you saw in the previous video, language learners are likely to make mistakes when they extend and respond to invitations. That is because, inviting includes at lot more than just knowing the right words. In this particular case, Bill's response is inappropriate because John's words are not meant to be taken literally. He was simple expressing the desire to keep in touch and not making and invitation. This is a very common source of misunderstanding between Americans and people from other cultures.

As you can imagine, this is not the only problem that can arise when we extend or respond to invitations and social formulas in a second language because the elements involved in an invitations often vary from culture to culture. In this lesson, you will learn how to use invitations appropriately in American culture. How do you invite people to do something in your culture? Think about that for a second.

*To start this lesson, we will look at common "introductions" to invitations. Then, we will study the different elements of invitations. Next, we will learn how to respond appropriately to invitations. Finally, there will be a series of activities that you'll need to complete individually and with a peer. If you need help at any time during the instruction or the exercises, just click on the question mark button and you will have the option to see a list of useful expressions. You will also have the option to ask a tutor for help. If there aren't any tutors online, you can email them your questions. They might not answer immediately, but they **will** answer.*

I recommend you study the material in the order it is presented. To do this, use the next and back buttons to go to the next screen or to the previous screen if you need to review something. However, if you would like to skip a section of the lesson or if at some point you want to review previous sections, you may click on the ladder button to see these bullet points. Then you can click on any of them to go directly to the corresponding section.

Presentation

INVITATIONS
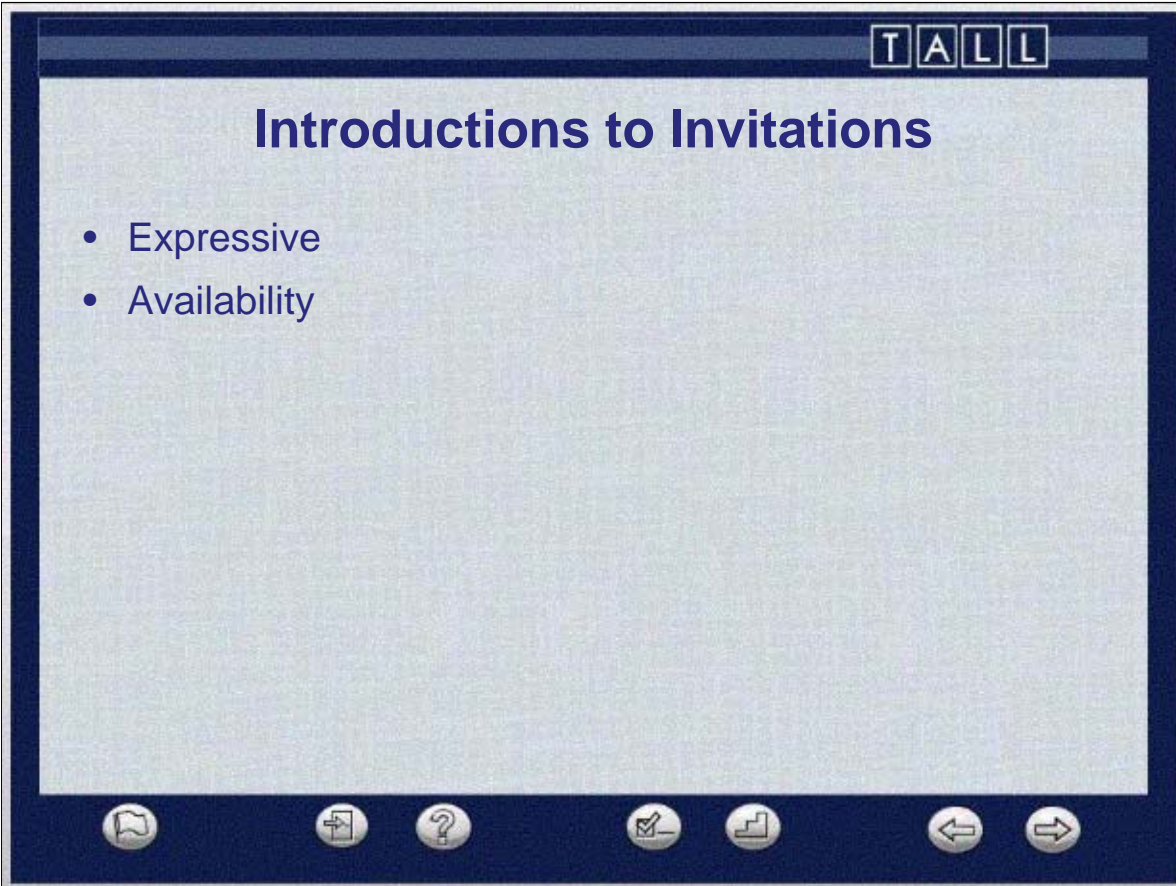
Introductions to Invitations

- Used when the speakers:

  - Are **NOT intimates** (i.e. close friends or relatives)

  - Are of **equal status** (e.g. classmates, coworkers, neighbors, etc.)

- Almost never used when:
  - There is a POWER difference (e.g. professor and student, secretary and boss, etc.)

Agent:

Now we are going to learn about introductions to invitations.

Generally when Americans want to extend an invitation to someone of equal status who's not a close friend or relative, they start with an introduction. That is, there is a "negotiation" process. If the people involved are intimates, that is close friends or relatives, the negotiation process is just limited to arranging the details for the social commitment. Introductions are usually not used when there is a difference in power between the people involved, for example if one of them is a professor and the other one is his or her student.

Introductions to Invitations

- Expressive
- Availability

Agent:

There are two types of introductions used for invitations in American English: expressive introductions and availability introductions. As we progress through the content of this course, you will learn how and when to use each type of introduction.

Agent:

   In expressive introductions, the person who has the intention of making the invitation directly or indirectly expresses a desire for a social commitment, but without giving any specifics. This type of introduction is often followed by an availability introduction. As we said before, expressive introductions are generally used between people of equal power who are not intimates.

   For example:

   The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man saying the introduction. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Introductions to Invitations

- Expressive
- Availability
  - A question or a statement to find out the availability of the other person.
    - *Are you busy tomorrow night?*
    - *What are you doing for Thanksgiving?*

Agent:

An availability introduction is a question or a statement to find out the availability of the other person. This type of introduction is very common, even between people who are intimates, that is, close friends or relatives.

Let's see a couple of examples.

The examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices saying the introductions. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.
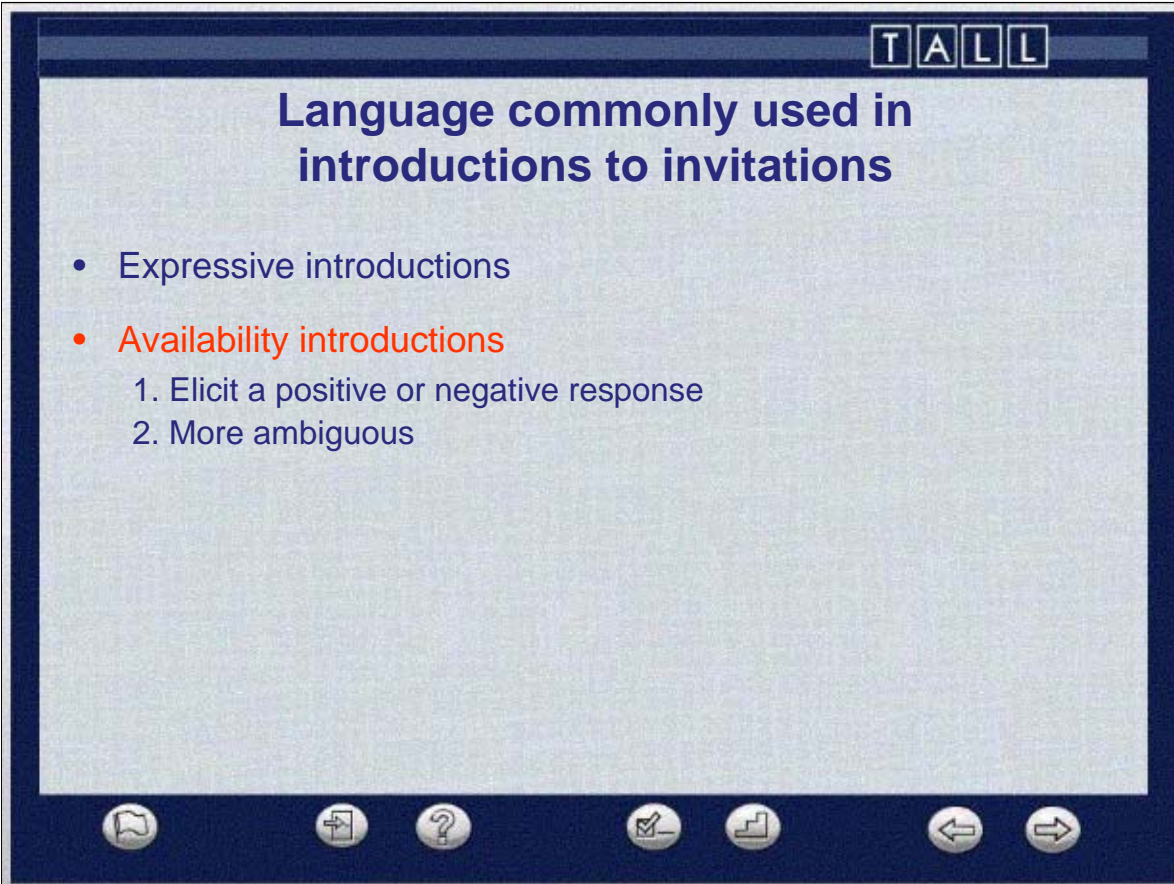
Agent:

*Most expressive introductions are comprised by a **pronoun**, like "**I**," followed by the verb **like** or the verb **love** followed by **to** and a **verb phrase**. The word is the most common pattern in American English for expressive introductions. The word "**really**" is optional and may be used to add emphasis. For instance:*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man saying the introduction. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

> *As mentioned before, expressive introductions are often followed by availability introductions. For example:*

Learners hear the voice of a man saying the same expressive introduction. After that, they hear him saying the availability introduction as the text for this second introduction appears on the screen. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

Availability introductions can be questions or statements to elicit a yes or no response or more ambiguous questions or statements that can be interpreted in more than one way.

Agent:

*Most availability introductions are questions or statements to elicit a yes or no response. Generally, these introductions are comprised of the words **Are you** followed by the word **busy** followed by a **specific date**.*

For example.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman saying the introduction. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Agent:

Other availability introductions are questions or statements that call for information. This type of introduction can be ambiguous and can be interpreted in more than one way. For example, the question: "Do you work the closing shift again tonight?" can be interpreted as an introduction to an invitation or as a simple inquiry about the person's work schedule as a result of curiosity.

The first example appears on the screen after the agent say: "For example, the question:" Learners also hear the voice of a woman saying the introduction. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

The level of ambiguity can range from very high to very low. Let's see more examples.

The rest of the examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices saying the introductions. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Agent:

> *Now we are going to talk about non-invitations.*

> *Non-invitations may sound like invitations or like introductions to invitations, but they are simply expressions of good intentions and the desire to strengthen the relationship. They are used primarily to establish or reinforce relationships. Even though they are similar to invitations, the purpose of non-invitations is NOT to invite the hearer to do anything, but rather it is to develop or strengthen the relationship.*

> The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man saying the introduction. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Non-Invitations

- A non-invitation is an expression of good intentions and a desire to strengthen the relationship

- Features
  1) *Response not directly called for*
  2) *Time always left indefinite*
  3) *Verb often accompanied by "have to"*

Agent:

      As we said before, non-invitations are different from actual invitations. They have three unique features.

First, they don't call for a response directly; second, the reference to time is always indefinite; and finally, the words "have to" are often part of non-invitations.

      The text under "Features" appears in red as the agent speaks (synchronized.) When the agent goes to the next point, the previous one turns blue.

Agent:

As we learned before, non-invitations contain a number of unique characteristics. First, they don't directly call for a response. References to place and activity are frequently left unclear. This does not mean that they never make reference to place or activity, but it may be left ambiguous.

For instance:

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman saying the introductions. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

TALL

Language commonly used in non-invitations

- Response not directly called for

- Verb often accompanied by "*have to*"

- Time always left indefinite {
  Sometime
  Soon
  One of these days

  – *Let's go out and do something fun one of these days.*

Agent:

    *Second, they often contain the phrase **have to** Third, they don't make reference to a specific time, and they generally contain words or phrases like **sometime**, **anytime**, **soon**, and **one of these days**.*

    *Something interesting is that when the word **definitely** is used in this type of introductions, it is very unlikely that an actual invitation will follow. So, the word **definitely** is used to emphasize good intentions and feelings rather than to start an invitation.*

    For example:

    The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man saying the introductions. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Language commonly used in non-invitations

- Response not directly called for
- Verb often accompanied by "*have to*"
- Time always left indefinite { *Sometime* / *Soon* / *One of these days* }
- Word "***definitely***" indication of non-invitation

 - *We definitely have to get together sometime.*

Agent:

*Something interesting is that when the word **definitely** is used in this type of introductions, it is very unlikely that an actual invitation will follow. So, the word **definitely** is used to emphasize good intentions and feelings rather than to start an invitation.*

Let's see an example.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man saying the introductions. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

Now we will learn about the elements of the actual invitation.

An actual invitation is unambiguous. Unlike non-invitations, actual invitations are characterized by a request for a response. Also, in invitations, there are specific references to time, activity, place, or to all of them. For example:

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the invitation. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Because of the context, finding all three elements of an invitation in the same phrase is very rare. We will discuss these elements in the next slides.

Agent:

The request for a response is ALWAYS present directly in the invitation. Let's see an example.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the invitation. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Elements of the invitation

Unambiguous ("real") invitation

1. Request for response

2. Reference to time

   ▪ The reference to time may appear later in the conversation. It is not required directly in the invitation

     – *John, do you want to go to a baseball game with us?*
     – *Sure, when is it?*
     – *Friday night. I'll pick you up at 5:30.*
     – *Great. See you then.*

3. Reference to activity

4. Reference to place

Agent:

> *The reference to time may appear in the invitation or later in the conversation. It is not required directly in the invitation.*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voices of two men having the conversation. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

<u>Agent:</u>

The reference to activity may also appear in the invitation or later in the conversation. If there is a reference to place or time, the reference to place may not appear at all.

Let's see an example.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the invitation. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Agent:

The reference to place may also appear in the invitation or later in the conversation. If there is a reference to activity or time, the reference to place may not appear at all.

For instance.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the invitation. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Language commonly used in invitations

- Structures: half all American invitations

  1) Do you { want to / wanna } - VP?

  2) Why - DON'T { you / we } - VP?

- Other common invitation structures

  1) { What / How } about - (V-ing) - NP?

  2) Would you - { be interested in / like to } - VP?

  3) Let's - VP

Agent:

> Now we are going to talk about the language that is commonly used to extend invitations.
>
> Approximately half of the invitations used in the United States will be in the following forms:
>
> > 1) Do you − {WANT TO / WANNA} − VP
> >
> > 2) Why − DON'T − {YOU / WE} − VP

Also, other common types of structures for invitation in the United States are:

> 1) {WHAT/HOW} – about – (V-ing) – NP?
>
> 2) Would you – {BE INTERESTED IN / LIKE TO} – VP?
>
> 3) Let's – VP

We are reviewing only these five structures because if you learn these basic structures you will be skilled in using and understanding invitations in American English. Examples will be shown in the following slides for each of these structures.

The different parts of speech and the examples appear on the screen in red as the agent speaks (text synchronized with voice.)

Agent:

*The two structures we'll see next represent about half of the invitations used in the U.S. The first structure that we'll discuss is comprised of the words **Do you** followed by the words **want to** or **wanna** and a **verb phrase.** For example:*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man making the invitation. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Now, click on the corresponding structure to hear more examples.

Examples: Do you want to go out to dinner tomorrow?

Do you want to see a show tonight?

The different parts of speech and the examples appear on the screen in red as the agent speaks (text synchronized with voice.)

Agent:

*The second structure we'll discuss is comprised of the word **why** followed by the word **don't** and either the pronoun **you** or **we** followed by a **verb phrase**. An example of this is the following:*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the invitation. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Now, click on the corresponding structure to hear more examples.

Examples: Why don't we go horseback riding this weekend?

Why don't you join us for Sunday brunch?

Agent:

The following three structures are commonly used to invite in American English.

*The first structure is comprised by either the word **What** or **How** followed by the word **about** followed by a **verb+ing** followed by a **noun phrase**. For instance:*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man making the invitation. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Now, you can click on the corresponding structure to hear another example.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices making the invitations. The corresponding bullet points appear in red again.

Example: What about going swimming?

Language commonly used in invitations

- Structures: half all American invitations
- Other common invitation structures

1) { What / How } about - (V-ing) - NP?
   – *How about going to the movies tomorrow?*

2) Would you - { be interested in / like to } - VP?
   – *We are going to the zoo next Saturday. Would you like to come?*

3) Let's - VP
   – *Let's go get dinner.*

Click on the structures to see more examples

Agent:

*The second structure is comprised by the words **Would you** followed by the phrase **be interested in** or the phrase **like to** followed by a **verb phrase**. Let's see an example:*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a man making the invitation. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Now, you can click on the corresponding structure to hear another example.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices making the invitations. The corresponding bullet points appear in red again.

Example: Would you be interested in seeing the new exhibition at the Natural History Museum?

Agent:

*The third structure is comprised by **Let's** followed by a **verb phrase**. For example:*

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear the voice of a woman making the invitation. The corresponding bullet points are still in red.

Now, you can click on the corresponding structure to hear another example.

The example appears on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices making the invitations. The corresponding bullet points appear in red again.

Example: Let's go for a walk.

Agent:

We will now talk about polite ways to respond to invitations.

When you receive an invitation you can either accept it or decline it. Accepting the invitation is rather simple. Let's take a look at a couple of examples.

The examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices in the different conversations. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Example 2: - How about going to the beach tomorrow morning?
                  - Sounds great.

Example 3: - Would you like going out to dinner Saturday night?
                  - Sure, I'd love to.

Agent:

   Declining an invitation is a little bit more tricky. In American English, directly saying NO to an invitation could be considered rude. In order to avoid being perceived as rude, Americans will apologize or give an explanation or both.

   Let's see some examples.

   The examples appear on the screen at this point. Learners also hear different voices in the different conversations. The corresponding bullet point is still in red.

Example 2:   - Would you like to go out to dinner Friday night?

            - I'm sorry, but I already have plans for Friday. What about going another

               night?

              - Sure, just let me know when it's good for you.

Example 3:   - Do you want to go to see the Nutcracker Saturday?

            - I'd love to, but I'm going to visit my parents this weekend. It's my mom's

               birthday.
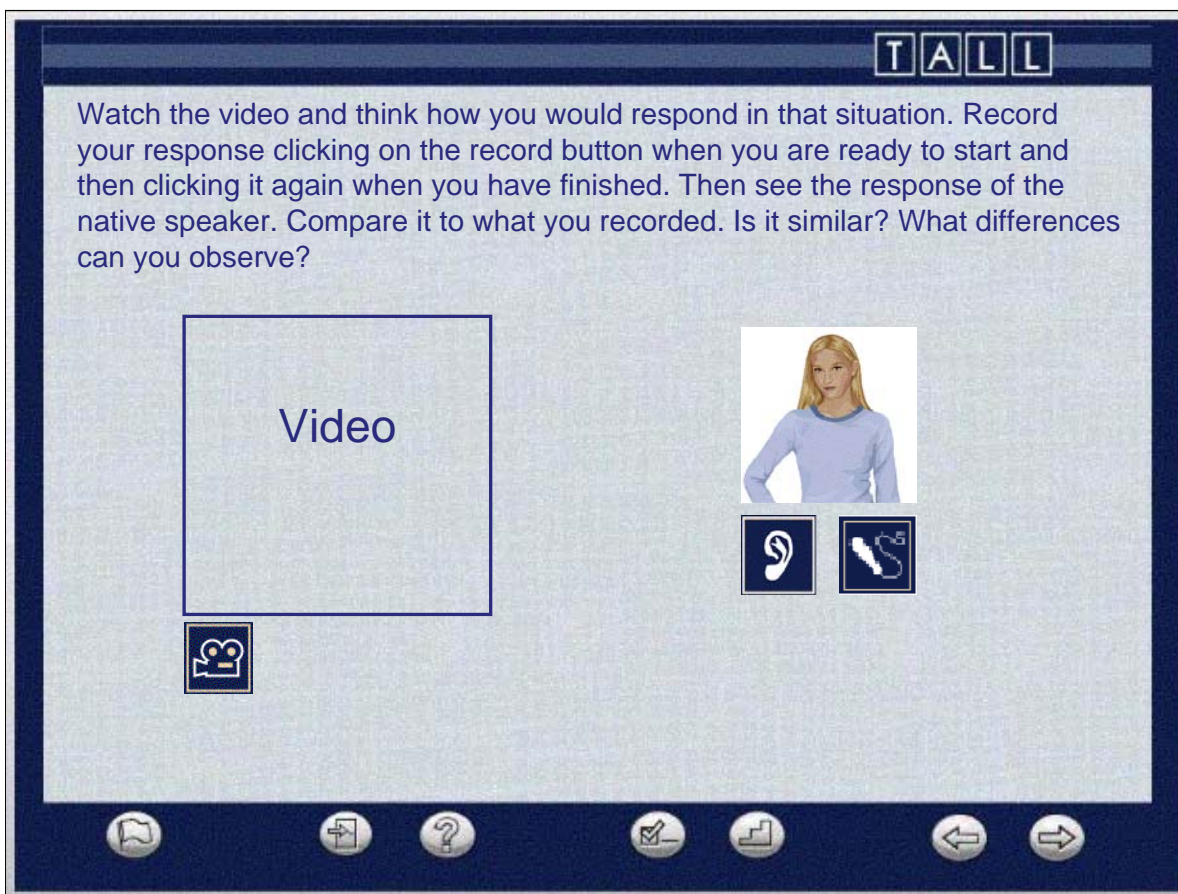
Agent tells instructions:

Watch the video and think how you would respond in that situation. Record your response clicking on the record button when you are ready to start and then clicking it again when you have finished. Then see the response of the native speaker. Compare it to what you recorded. Is it similar? What differences can you observe?

Learners will see the introduction of the situation and will be asked how they would make the invitation. Then the video will stop and they won't be able to see the rest of the video until they have recorded their response. After that, they will be able to see the people involved inviting and responding to the invitation.

There will be eight scenarios, so that learners will have exposure to different situations and relationships between speakers. This screen, as well as the next two screens will be repeated for each scenario. The picture of the girl will be replaced by a still shot taken from the video.

Conversations should be scripted taking into account the information presented in this lesson and the research data reviewed in Chapter 2 (Literature Review) of my thesis. However, I provide sample conversations below.

Situation 1

You are the manager of an office. You want to express your appreciation for one of your employee's hard work.

   Mr. Smith: Mike, you've been doing a great job. My wife and I will have to take you and your wife out some time.

   Mike: Thank you Mr. Smith, that would be great.

   Mr. Smith: Okay, and keep up the good work.

Situation 2

You and some friends are going out to dinner and a movie Friday night. You're new roommate seems like a nice guy, and you want to invite him to come along with you and your friends.

   Alex: John, are you busy Friday night?

   John: No, I don't have anything going on. Why?

   Alex: Some friends of mine are going to dinner at about 6:30pm, and then we were going to catch a movie at the plaza. Do you want to come along?

   John: That would be great. Where should I meet you?

   Alex: We can all get together here before we head out. That will probably be the easiest way to do it.

   John: Great. I will be ready to go then.

   Alex: Okay, I've got to run to work now, but I will see you tomorrow night.

Situation 3

You ask a boy/girl you have known for a few months to go on a date. You want to take him/her to the Eagles concert.

Sean:	Sarah, do you like the Eagles?
Sarah:	I love the Eagles. They have some awesome songs.
Sean:	Well, I may have some exciting news then. What are you doing a week from Friday?
Sarah:	I don't think I have anything planned yet.
Sean:	Well, how would you like to come to the ABC concert with me then?
Sarah:	I would love to! Did you seriously get tickets?
Sean:	I sure did. They aren't the best seats, but I have been told that for an ABC concert, there are no bad seats in the house.

Situation 4

You want to get something for dinner, but you don't want to go alone, so you invite a friend of yours to go get something to eat.

Jen:	Hey, Shelly, what are you doing tonight?
Shelly:	Not much. I was just going to sit at home and relax. Do you have something fun going on?
Jen:	No, but I have this craving for Chinese food, and I was wondering if you'd want to come with me to the Chinese restaurant.
Shelly:	Sure, I could eat Chinese tonight. What time do you want to go?
Jen:	I'm ready as soon as you are.
Shelly:	Okay. Let's go then.

Situation 5

A friend of yours helped you move. You want to invite her somewhere nice to say thanks for helping you move.

Shannon: July, I'd like to take you to the new Italian place downtown. Do you have any time in the next couple of weeks?

July: I could make time for that, but you don't have to do that.

Shannon: No really, it's my way of showing my appreciation for helping me move last week.

July: You don't have to do that. Really.

Shannon: I know, but I would really like to if that's okay with you. I know you love Italian and I know you've been wanting to go there since they opened.

July: Okay, if you insist. What night works best for you?

Shannon: I was thinking Friday, if that's okay with you.

July: Great, let's do it Friday.

Shannon: Okay, sounds like a plan.

Situation 6

You and your spouse have been very busy with finals and final projects. The semester is almost over. You want to take your spouse out to do something fun for a couple of hours to break the stress.

Jeff: Sharon, how would you feel about taking a little break?

Sharon: I don't know. The semester is almost over, and we have finals right around the corner.

Jeff: I know. I was just thinking it might help us work more efficiently in the time we have left if we took a little break. Maybe we could do something quick and simple.

Sharon: What do you have in mind?

Jeff: Well, I thought we could go down to the laser tag place for an hour or so. You know, we could blow off some stress while playing the game.

Sharon: Okay Jeff. I think it could be fun, and we've been studying for a couple of weeks straight.

Jeff: Great, let's go then.

Situation 7

You want to show one of your employees how pleased you are with his/her work habits. He/she does great quality work, and is always early to work.

Mr. Smith: Andy, how long have you been with the company now?

Andy: It's been about 6 months.

Mr. Smith: You know, I've been meaning to tell you how pleased I've been with you work. I can't believe it's already been six months.

Andy: Well, thank you Mr. Smith. I try to do my best, and I really enjoy what I am doing here.

Mr. Smith: It shows in your work, and everyone here is so pleased with your work and your positive attitude. Some time my wife and I will take you and your wife out to show our thanks.

Andy: Thank you Mr. Smith. We'll look forward to it.

Mr. Smith: You're welcome, and keep up the good work.

Situation 8

You call your boyfriend/girlfriend and invite him/her on a date to the movies.

Adam: Sally, do you want to go out this weekend.

Sally: I'd love to. What should we go and do?

Adam: That new comedy movie is out. I thought it might be fun to go and see
          that. What do you think?

Sally: It sounds good to me. I've wanted to see that movie since it came out.

Adam: Great. So I will pick you up at seven o'clock?

Sally: I can't wait. It will be so fun.

Adam: It will. See you Friday.

TALL

What type of introduction is this?

Video

Expressive Introduction ☐
Availability Introduction ☐
No Introduction at all ☐

Feedback will show up here when the check answer button is clicked. Learners will not see this text box until then.

What is the relationship between the people (from the point of view of the person making the invitation)?

Feedback will show up here when the check answer button is clicked. Learners will not see this text box until then.

☐ **Familiar**   ☐ **Equal status**
☐ **Unfamiliar**   ☐ **Higher to lower status**
                        ☐ **Lower to higher status**

✓?

(Same scenario than previous screen.)

The learners will select the type of introduction that was used. Next, they will select elements of the relationship between the people involved. When they click on the check answer button, they will see the feedback boxes.

(Same responses than 2 previous screens.)

Learners will have two opportunities to get the correct answers. If they are not successful after the second time, they will see the correct answer and a pop-up message box with feedback showing them the different elements present in each of the invitations.
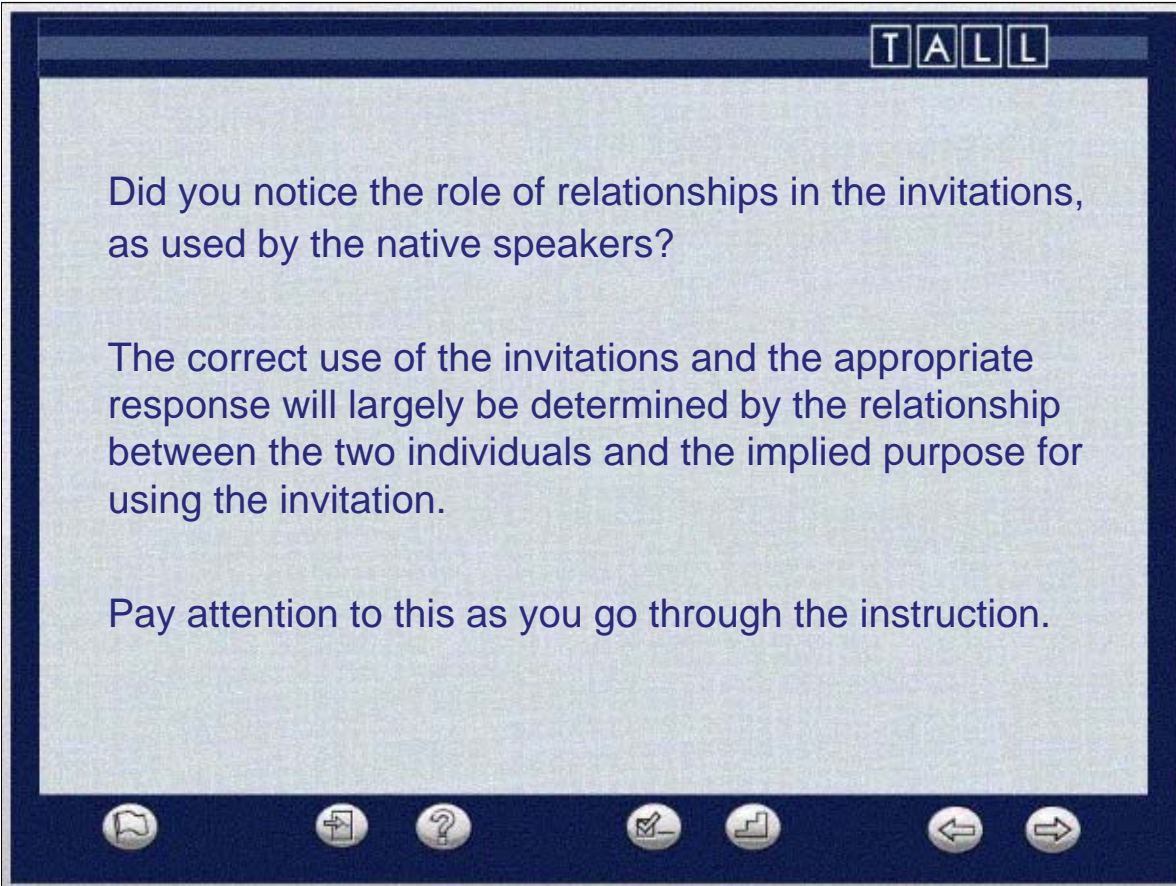
Watch the following 3 situations and listen to the native speaker's invitations. Then, carefully study the summary below.

Video	Video	Video

Power

Familiarity

Type of introduction

Elements:
- ...
- ...
- ...

Power

Familiarity

Type of introduction

Elements:
- ...
- ...
- ...

Power

Familiarity

Type of introduction

Elements:
- ...
- ...
- ...

Agent:

Before we continue with more situations, let's recap what we have seen so far. Watch the three situations, listen to the native speakers' invitations, and study the summaries.

Did you notice the role of relationships in the invitations, as used by the native speakers?

The correct use of the invitations and the appropriate response will largely be determined by the relationship between the two individuals and the implied purpose for using the invitation.

Pay attention to this as you go through the instruction.

Agent:

Did you notice the role of the relationship between the individuals giving the invitations? The correct usage of the invitations and the proper response will largely be determined by the relationship between the two individuals and the implied purpose for using the invitation. Pay attention to this as you go through the instruction.

Practice

INVITATIONS

Select a role from the drop-down list.

Choose a speaker ▼

Click on the audio button to listen to the dialog. To record your voice, click on the record button. When the sentence turns red, start talking. When the entire dialog is done, you can hear the recording by clicking on the play button.

▶ Name: ▶ Text text text text.
▶ Name: ▶ Text text text text.
▶ **Name:** ▶ Text text text text.

Continued

....
....
....
....
....

word translation | Sentence

1. **usted(es), tú, ti, –tigo**
2. tú, usted (es)
3. lo(s), la(s), te
4. usted, ustedes, tú

Recording Speed

Y

Native Speed   More Time

Dialog

Alex: I'd like to take you out for dinner to celebrate. Are there any nights this week that work for you?

Sally: You don't have to do that.

Alex: No, really, I would like to. So what nights work for you?

Sally: Wednesday would probably be the best night for me. Does that fit into your schedule?

Alex: Absolutely. I will pick you up at 7:00pm.

Sally: Thanks! I will see you then.

There is another dialog screen like the previous one.

Dialog 2

Emily: So, do you have a lot going on this long weekend?

Ryan: Not really. How about you?

Emily: A bunch of us are going camping. Why don't you come with us?

Ryan: That sounds like fun. I love camping!

Emily: I know. And you make the best s'mores ever!

Ryan: So I've been told. Where are you guys meeting?

Emily: At Jason's apartment around 9 am.

In this type of activity, there will be phrases and sentences taken from the dialogs. Students will have to match the phrase with its purpose/function.

There is another matching exercise like the previous one following a dialog screen.

Matching Exercise 2

So, do you have a lot going on this long weekend? → Reference to time

A bunch of us are going camping → Reference to activity

Why don't you come with us? → Request for a response

Identify all of the elements in the following invitations or non-invitations.

	Request response	Reference to time	Reference to activity	Reference to place
Do you want to go to the movies on Tuesday night?	☐	☐	☐	☐
We should go trail riding some time.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Would you like to come over to play board games?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Why don't you come to the party with us? It'll be a blast.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Do you want to come hiking with us this weekend?	☐	☐	☐	☐
We'll have to go dancing one of these days.	☐	☐	☐	☐
How about dinner?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Learners will see the right answers when they click on the check answer button.

There is another classification exercise like the previous one.

Classification Exercise 2

	Expressive	Availability	Non-Invitation
I'd love to take you fishing.			
We should get together some time.			
What are you doing for the holidays?			
Do you have any plans after graduation?			
I would really like to treat you to dinner.			
John, you've been doing a great job. My wife and I will have to take you out to dinner to show our appreciation.			
Are you going to the pre-game party tonight?			

Read the following situation choose an appropriate response to the invitation.

Well, it was really fun. We should do it again sometime.

☐ We definitely should.

☐ I'm going to be really busy from now on.

☐ Sure, what day would be good for you?

✓?

Learners will see the right answers when they click on the check answer button.

There are two more multiple-choice exercises like the previous one.

Multiple-choice Exercise 2

Invitation:

Do you want to go to the natural history museum this weekend? There's a brand new taxidermy exhibit of African animals.

Possible Answers:

- Hmm. I don't think so, I hate museums.

- No. I have other plans for this weekend.

- I'd love to, but I'm going out of town this weekend. Maybe another time.

Multiple-choice Exercise 3

Invitation:

John, since you've been with the firm, you've done a great job. Would you like to join me next Thursday for a special training meeting for our new recruits?

Possible Answers:

- No. It would not be possible.

- I would love to. Do you know what time the meeting is? I need to check my calendar and make sure I don't have any other meetings scheduled.

- Thank you for the opportunity, but I am afraid I couldn't make it. I am just too busy right now.

Agent:

> *This is a simulation. Click on the video button when you are ready to start. After you watch the video, choose your most likely response. Then click next to see what happens.*

At this point, there will be a simulation exercise. The situations and consequences will be presented by short video segments, which, when possible, will be shot from the viewer's perspective so as to make him or her feel part of the scene and the camera becomes his/her eyes.

The activity will be divided into seven video sections. The first section will set the situation. (Then, learners will see two possible responses, written, not on video.) The next two will show the likely outcomes, which will vary according to the choice learners made previously. (Again, learners will see three possible responses, written, not on video.) The last four will show the final outcomes, that will vary according to their previous choices. In addition, learners will have the chance to go back and see the result of having selected other options.

This activity needs to be scripted, but in the next two pages I included a suggested organization chart and rough script.

Simulation – Organization

Introduction
Sets situation:
Living room
scene

Response 1
(not on video)

Outome 1

Response 1.1
(not on video)

Outome 1.1

Response 1.2
(not on video)

Outome 1.2

Response 2
(not on video)

Outome 2

Response 2.1
(not on video)

Outome 2.1

Response 2.2
(not on video)

Outome 2.2

Video shot from viewer perspective so that he/she feels part of the action.

1. LIVING ROOM

A man is sitting on a couch looking at movie listings for local theaters for that night (Saturday night.) Then he picks up the phone.

Jim   Hello! Can I talk to Ann, please?

2. DIVIDED FRAME

Both people are on the phone.

Ann   This is she.
Jim   Hi, this is Jim.
Ann   Oh, hi Jim. How are you doing?
Jim   I'm doing great. How about you? What are you up to?

Responses – not on video
      1. Oh! I'm studying hard. I have a big test on Monday.
      2. Oh! I'm just studying. I have a big test on Monday, but I'm getting tired. My
         brain has almost reached full capacity. *(Laughs)*

Outcome 1: I probably should let you go then.
Outcome 2: Well, it sounds like you need a break.

Responses – not on video
      1.1. Oh no, that's okay.
      1.2. Oh, not at all. I'm just thrilled to take a break. I've been studying for hours.
      2.1. Yeah. I've been studying for hours.
      2.2. I sure do. What are you up to tonight?

3. CLOSE ON JIM

Jim says:
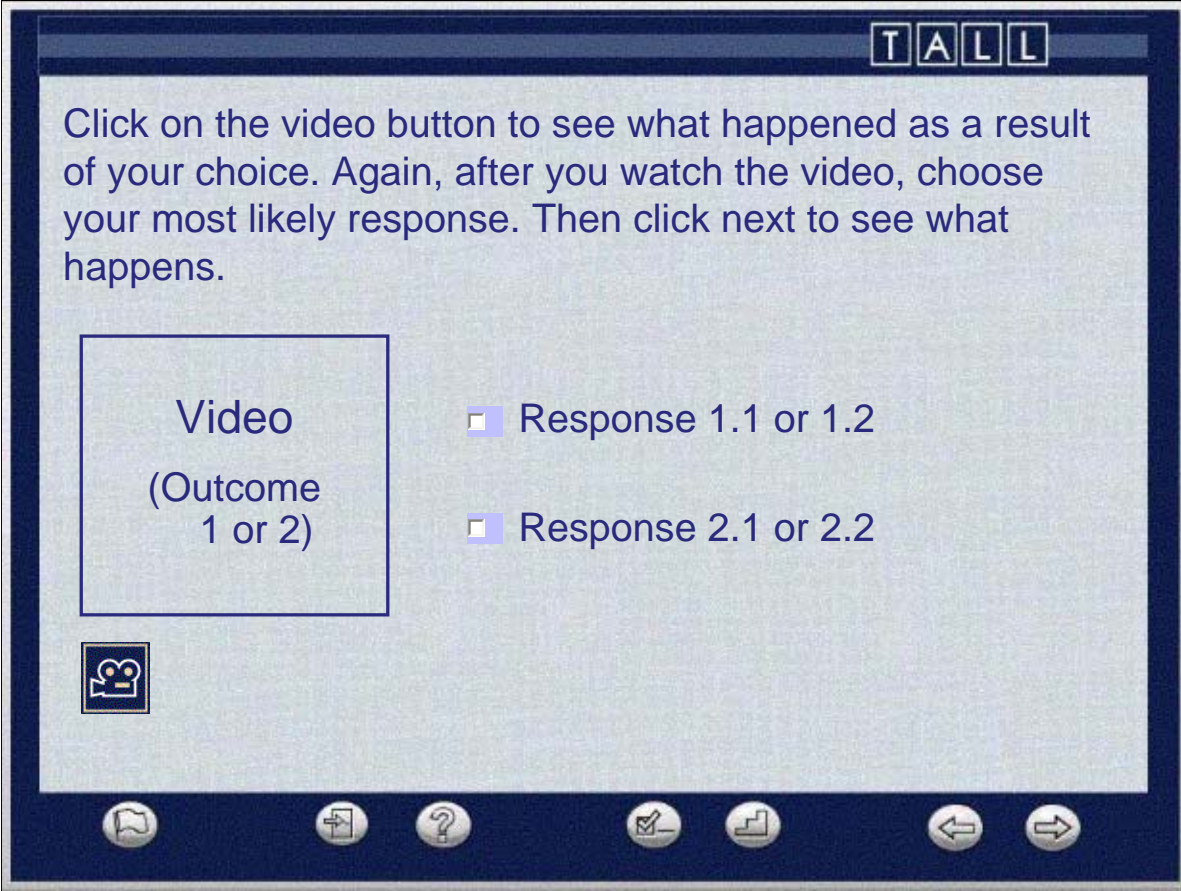
Outcome 1.1: I was just calling to see how you were doing, but we can talk after your
              test. I hope you ace it.
Outcome 1.2: How about a longer break? Do you want to go see a movie?
Outcome 2.1: How about going to a movie then? There are a couple of good ones on
              this weekend.
Outcome 2.2: Actually, I was calling to see if you wanted to go see a movie.

Ann starts to answer and the voice fades out.

Click on the video button to see what happened as a result of your choice. Again, after you watch the video, choose your most likely response. Then click next to see what happens.

Video

(Outcome 1 or 2)

☐ Response 1.1 or 1.2

☐ Response 2.1 or 2.2

Simulation Screen

Click on the video button to see what happened as a result of your choice. **Are you curious about what would have happened if you had responded differently?** If you are, click on the start button to start over or click on the back button to go to the previous screen.

Video

(Outcome 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 or 2.2)

START

Simulation Screen

Read the following situation, decide how you would respond, and write your response in the space provided. Click the corresponding button to compare your answer to the model.

> *You are having a birthday party next weekend and you would like to invite two of your coworkers to come.*

MODEL

Model:

I'm having a birthday party next Friday evening. Would you like to come?

Questions:

•Did you mention an activity or a specific time?

•Did you request a response?

There are two more written exercises like the previous one.

Written Exercise 2

Situation:

Your friend invites you to go to the movies on Friday night. You can't go because you have a test Saturday morning and you will have to study**.**

Model:

I that would be awesome, but I have this huge exam Saturday morning, so I have to study Friday night. Could we go Saturday evening instead?

Question:

- Did you give an explanation to refuse the invitation?

Written Exercise 3

Situation:

Your boss just invited you and your wife out to dinner. However, it is your wife's birthday.

Model:

Brian, thank you so much for the invitation. My wife and I would love to come. There's only one thing. It's my wife's birthday, and we've had this day planned for a month. Could we take a rain check though?

Questions:

- Did you express gratitude for the invitation?
- Did you give an explanation or an excuse to refuse the invitation?

You saw an new acquaintance at a get together Saturday evening. You wish to reinforce the solidarity of the relationship.

You: _____
_____

Mike: We definitely should.

You: _____
_____

Mike: Great.

Model script will show up here. Learners will not see this text box until then.

Model:

A: Mike, we should go skiing some time.

B: We definitely should.

A: Great, call me.

B: Great.

Questions:

•Did you reinforce solidarity through the use of a non-invitation?

•Did you leave the reference to time vague?

There is one more dialog completion exercise like the previous one.

Dialog Completion Exercise 2

Situation:

You saw an ad for a monster truck show, and you want to invite your friend to go with you

Model:

A: I just saw an ad for a monster truck show. Would you like to come?
B: That should be fun. When is it?
A: Next Saturday.
B: Great, what time should we get together?
A: I'll pick you up at 5.
.

Questions:

- Did you mention an activity or a specific time?
- Did you request a response?

You are about to start a collaborative activity with a peer. Review your notes for a few moments. When you are ready to start, click the "next" button.

This screen appears before every collaborative activity to alert students what they are going to be connected with another student in order to practice what they have learned.

Agent:

  Practice the following situation with your peer. Use the expressions that you have learned or any others that are appropriate to express the functions given. Follow the order so that you can produce a complete conversation.

  You are student A. Remember that you are supposed to start the conversation.

  When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

There is another guided dialog exercise like the previous one. The content for the screen corresponding to student A is as follows:

Situation

You want to go shopping this Saturday, but you don't like going shopping by yourself. Make a phone call to invite your friend to go with you.

Cues

1. Greet B.
2. Use an availability introduction to determine if B is free on Saturday.
3. If B is available, invite B to go with you. If not, say why you were calling about.
4. Suggest time and place to meet B.
5. Agree and end the conversation.

Practice the following situation. Use the expressions you've learned. When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

> *A co-worker of yours uses an invitation to establish solidarity. You also would like to reinforce the relationship. Respond to him/her.*

1. Respond to the "non-invitation" you received from A.
2. Respond in such a way as to show that A's intention has been carried through to you. End the conversation.

Agent:

Practice the following situation with your peer. Use the expressions that you have learned or any others that are appropriate to express the functions given. Follow the order so that you can produce a complete conversation. You are student B.

When both of you are ready to begin the conversation, click the record button. When finished, click it again.

There is another guided dialog exercise like the previous one. The content for the screen corresponding to student B is as follows:

Situation

One of your friends calls you up during the week to invite you to do something.

Cues

1. Greet A.
2. Answer A's question.
3. Accept A's invitation. If you previously said you were busy, suggest another day.
4. Disagree with A's time, suggest alternate time.
5. Say goodbye

Now take a minute to listen to the recording and give feedback to your peer. If you want to record the conversation again, click the "previous" button, and repeat all the steps. When you are ready to continue, click the "next" button.
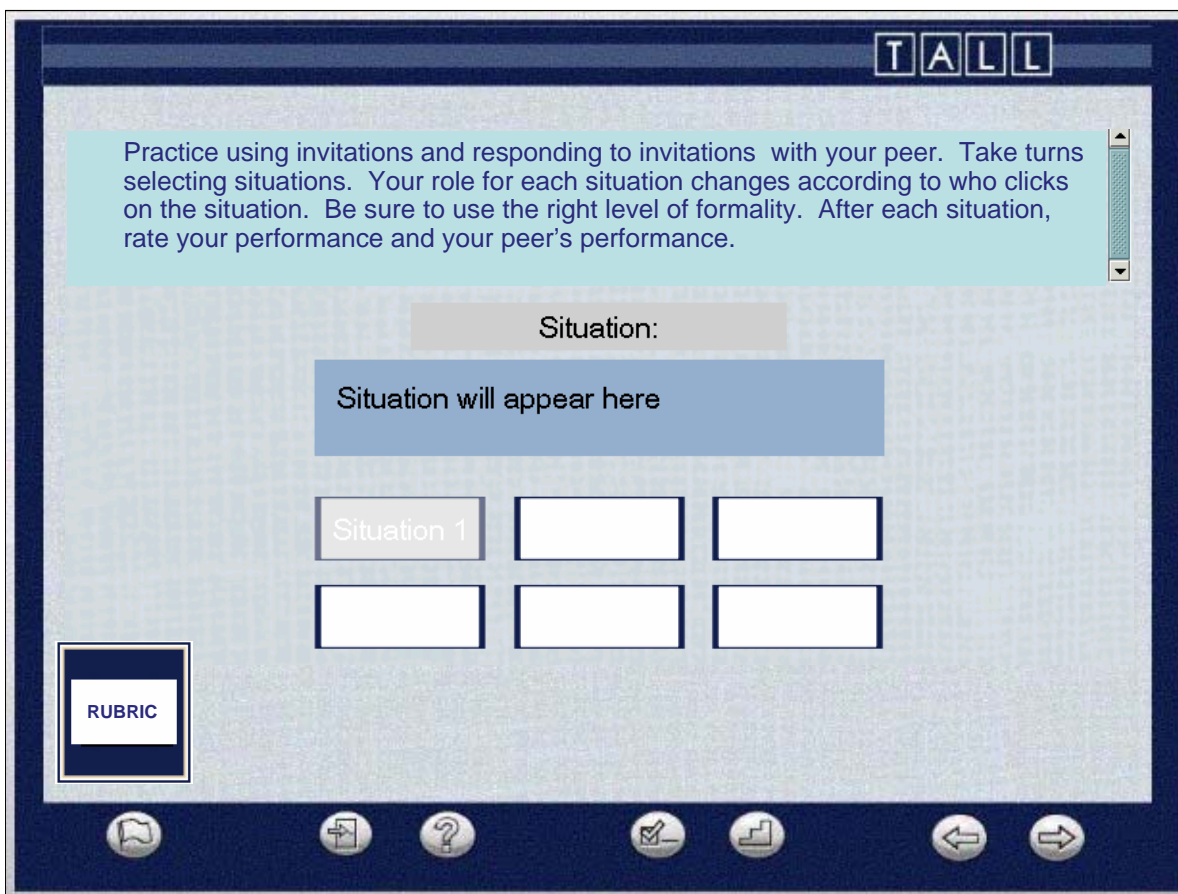
When learners place the mouse over the other buttons, they will see the texts: "Situation 2", "Situation 3", etc. Students have worked with this type of activity before.

Situations:

•Invite a classmate/coworker to get something to eat after class/work.

•You love going to the theater. Invite a friend to go with you.

•You think your friend does a great job as a DJ even though he/she only does it for fun. Invite your friend to DJ your dance party.

•You want to start going to the gym to get back in shape, but you hate exercising alone. Invite your friend to join the gym with you.

•You recently bought a house. You want to thank your real estate agent for all the effort he put into helping you. Invite him and his wife to go to dinner with you and your spouse.

•Today is your first day at a new job. You just met a coworker who seems really nice and you find out he/she loves hiking. You love hiking too, and you want to begin establishing a friendly relationship with him/her.

•You want to take a friend of yours out on a date. Invite him/her to go out with you next weekend.
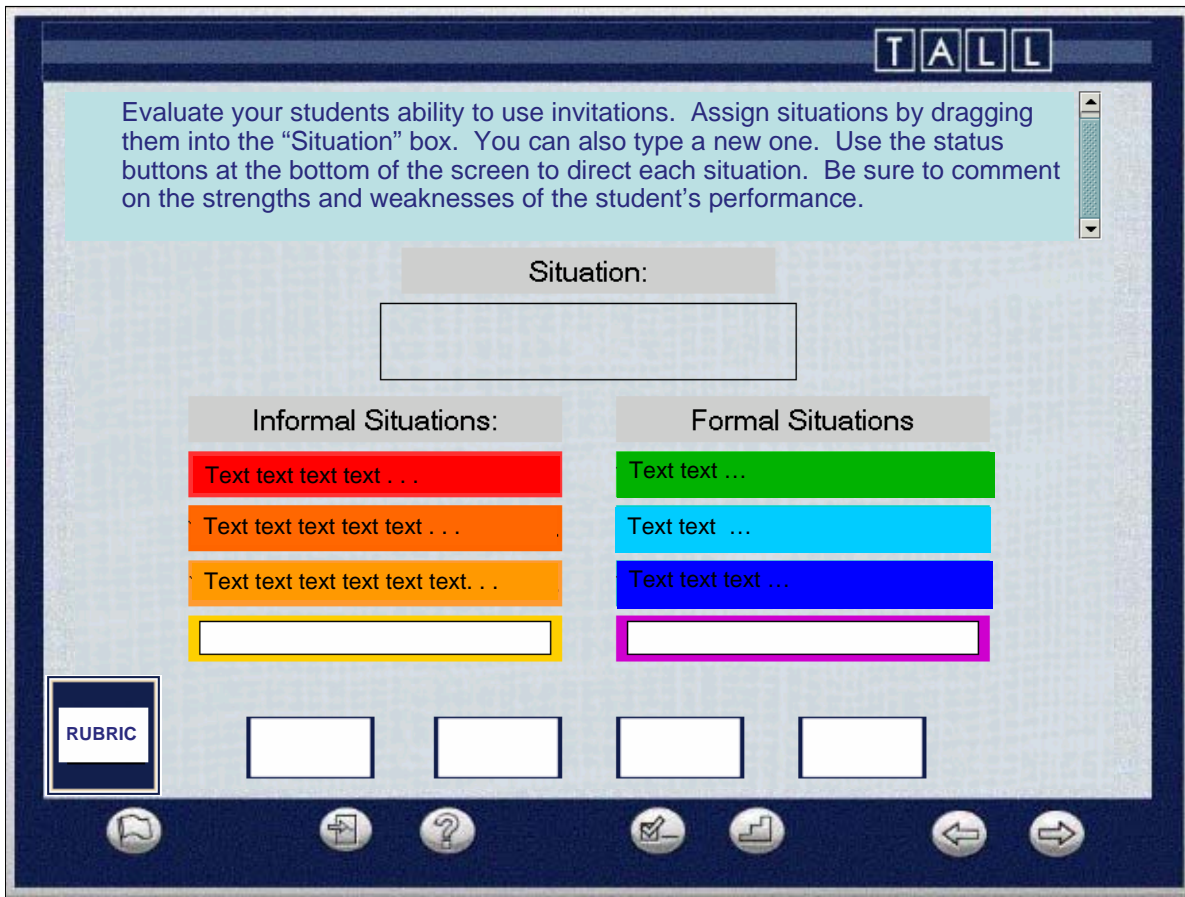
Rubric:

Please, evaluate your performance and your peer's performance taking into account the following questions:

- Did we recognize availability introductions? Did we indicate we were available if we wanted to accept or did we mention how busy we were if we did wanted to decline the invitation?

- Did we include introductions before making the actual invitations?

- Did we include a reference to activity or time in our invitations?

- Did we give an explanation or excuse to decline invitations?

- Did we use non-invitations to express the desire to further a relationship? If so, did we remember NOT to include a reference to time?

- Did we recognize non-invitations and responded by agreeing with the other person, but without ever mentioning a specific time?

Evaluation

INVITATIONS

Evaluate your students ability to use invitations. Assign situations by dragging them into the "Situation" box. You can also type a new one. Use the status buttons at the bottom of the screen to direct each situation. Be sure to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the student's performance.

Situation:

Informal Situations:

Text text text text . . .

Text text text text text . . .

Text text text text text text. . .

Formal Situations

Text text …

Text text …

Text text text …

RUBRIC

The instructor will see this page

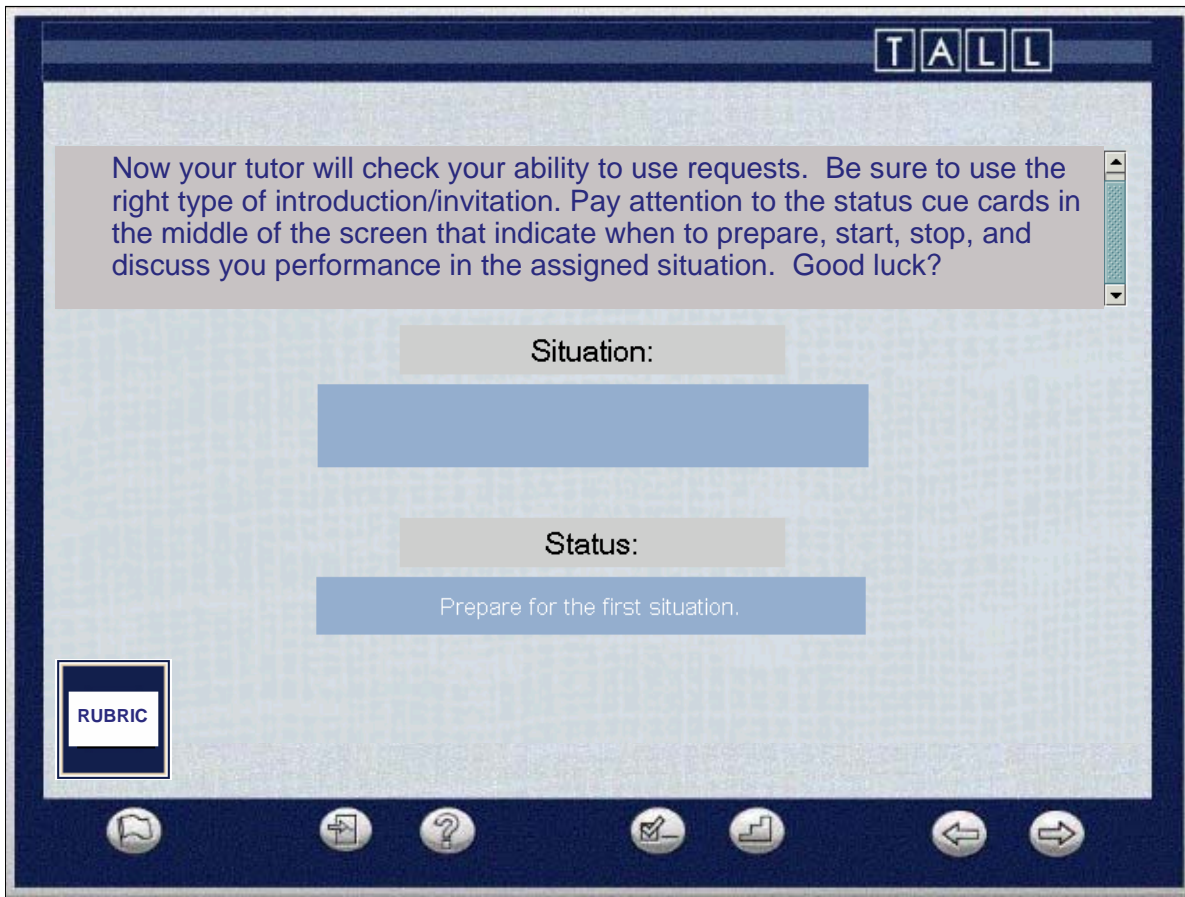*When the tutor place mouse over the buttons, the following texts appear:* START, STOP, DISCUSS, PREPARE.

Situations:

•You would like to invite one of your professors who really helped you a lot to the graduation party your family is preparing for you.

•You are an employer, and a new hire is performing especially well. As it is an entry level job, you know they would appreciate an invitation to a nice dinner. Invite the employee and his/her spouse to join you and your spouse for dinner.

•You run into an good friend that you haven't seen in some time. You want to reinforce your relationship, but you know both of your schedules are extremely busy.

•Your neighbors are really nice, and you talk often. However, you'd like to get to know them better. Invite them for dinner.

•You are still new in town, so you don't have made many friends yet. One of your coworkers seems very nice, so you would like to invite him/her to do something.

•One of your clients gave you two tickets to a big basketball game in two weeks. Invite one of your friends to go with you.

•Your favorite band is performing in your town next week. One of your friends at work also likes that band. Invite him/her to go with you.

Invitations: Evaluation Rubric

Category	4	3	2	1
Relationship between Participants	Learner always uses introductions, invitations, and non-invitations appropriately according to the relationship between the people involved.	Learner uses introductions, invitations, and non-invitations appropriately most of the time according to the relationship between the people involved.	Learner sometimes uses introductions, invitations, and non-invitations appropriately according to the relationship between the people involved.	Learner hardly ever uses introductions, invitations, and non-invitations appropriately according to the relationship between the people involved.
Introductions to Invitations	Learner always uses introduction when appropriate. Learner uses structures seen on the instruction very often.	Learner uses introduction when appropriate most of the time. Learner sometimes uses structures seen on the instruction.	Learner sometimes uses introduction when appropriate. Learner uses structures seen on the instruction infrequently.	Learner hardly ever uses introduction when appropriate. Learner almost never uses structures seen on the instruction.
Non-invitations	Learner always recognizes non-invitations and uses them very often to strengthen relationships. Learner uses language items seen on the instruction very often.	Learner recognizes non-invitations most of the time and sometimes uses them to strengthen relationships. Learner sometimes uses language items seen on the instruction.	Learner sometimes recognizes non-invitations and uses them infrequently to strengthen relationships. Learner uses language items seen on the instruction infrequently.	Learner hardly ever recognizes non-invitations and never uses them to strengthen relationships. Learner almost never uses language items seen on the instruction.
Invitations	Learner's invitations always include all necessary elements. Learner uses structures seen on the instruction often.	Learner's invitations sometimes include all necessary elements. Learner sometimes uses structures seen on the instruction.	Learner's invitations infrequently include all necessary elements. Learner uses structures seen on the instruction infrequently.	Learner's invitations hardly ever include all necessary elements. Learner almost never uses structures seen on the instruction.
Responding to Invitations and Non-invitations	Learner always responds appropriately to invitations and non-invitations.	Learner responds appropriately to invitations and non-invitations most of the time.	Learner sometimes responds appropriately to invitations and non-invitations.	Learner never responds appropriately to invitations and non-invitations.

An ***appropriate response*** is one that would be accepted as polite by the average American English speaker.

The Student will see this page

Text to appear in status box:

•Please START now.

•STOP now. Thank you.

•Now DISCUSS your performance with your tutor.

•Prepare for the next situation.

Help

INVITATIONS

Help screen

Help screen

Help Screen

Help screen