

Abstract

Format: Workshop

Time: 45 minutes

Title: "Negotiating Face and Making Requests: Speech Changes and Imposition"

Target Students: Intermediate to advanced

One of the most important skills our students learn is how to use language differently in different situations and with different people. Speeches are not like telephone conversations. Essays are not like newspaper articles. And an email written to a friend is not like an email written to a professor.

The way in which we use language is the most important and effective tool we have for establishing the nature of our relationships with others. Strategies of deference and respect look very different from those of solidarity and intimacy. Our use of language is how we maintain our identity and membership in different discourse groups. It is also how we get what we want from others, whether they be our friends, our bosses or our teachers. Thus, in order to be successful communicators, our students need practice using these strategies.

In this workshop, teachers will review the concept of face negotiation and the two major strategies we use when establishing and maintaining our relationships with others. Then, teachers will examine and practice a lesson in which students explore the type of language used when making requests from. How does the way we use language change when the request is of greater or lesser imposition? Why does this happen and what is its relationship to the overall study of discourse and culture?