

Unit 1 Getting Acquainted

Theme: meeting people

Language Functions: introductions; greetings; forms of address

Objectives:

- Students shall be able to greet each other in a proper manner and talk about themselves.
- Students shall know how introductions are made and how people address each other.
- Students shall think about their new role of being college students.

I. Warm-up

Follow the steps outlined in the textbook and remind students that they should only focus on the topics given in the instruction. In the last step when students start their chat about the information on the sheet, call students' attention to how they start the chat, since they are probably not familiar with each other. The warm-up activity should take up no more than ten minutes.

II. Activity 1

1. Conversation

This conversation is a typical icebreaker activity at the start of a college class. The “monitor” guides the flow of introduction, prompting each student to share basic personal information and interests. This allows new classmates to become familiar with one another. After reading the conversation, the teacher could ask students to reflect on what information they would share if introducing themselves in this scenario, especially why they chose to attend this college. The teacher could also have students practice introducing themselves in pairs or small groups, using the sample conversation as a guideline for what to include. This provides a structured way for students to become more comfortable while they introduce themselves in English.

2. Group work

- **Focus:** This task allows students to practice introducing themselves and getting to know new classmates by asking and answering personalized questions.
- **Procedures:**
 - 1) Have students brainstorm open-ended questions to get to know each other, such as:
 - What is your full name and does it have any special meaning?
 - Where is your hometown? What's that place like?
 - What hobbies or interests do you have?
 - Why did you choose this university? What are you most excited or nervous about as a freshman?
 - What accomplishments are you most proud of?
 - What are your career ambitions and goals for the future?
 - 2) Instruct students to work in small groups and give them five minutes to ask and answer their brainstormed questions within the group. Encourage follow-up questions to deepen the introduction.

- 3) Have each student introduce one member of their group to the whole class, incorporating interesting details they learned about the person during the introduction.
- 4) Provide feedback on how well they summarized key facts and painted a picture of their classmate's personality and background.
- 5) Remind students to come up with personalized, open-ended questions in future icebreaker activities to allow for detailed responses that help them get to know their peers.

Teaching Notes:

- Have students look at the Greetings and Responses to Greetings sections in the Language Bank. Briefly go over some common English greetings, reminding students that it's a common practice to greet people you meet, whether it's a friend or a stranger. Greeting formulas are very specific and not meant literally. For example, we say "Good morning!" even on a miserable, rainy day. The greeting is usually returned with a similar phrase. You may also want to compare typical Chinese greetings like "Have you eaten yet?" "Where are you going?" and "Where have you been?" to English greetings. Explain that these greetings can sometimes confuse or embarrass English speakers when used as greetings. In addition, remind students that there are different levels of formality to choose from when they talk with others. The level usually depends on the relationship between the two speakers. People tend to use polite and formal speech with strangers and people of higher status, and informal speech with family, friends, and colleagues.
- When meeting someone who you meet for the first time and with whom you want to build a friendly rapport, you may introduce yourself first. The other person will usually follow by introducing themselves in return. When introducing people to each other, include their names, appropriate titles, your relationship to them, and some contextual details about each person. This gives them some common ground to start a conversation. Generally, introduce subordinates to superiors, men to women, and younger people to elders. A reintroduction is appropriate when two people who have previously met encounter each other again.

Activity 2

1. Conversation

This conversation can be used to reinforce the functional expressions students have just learned. It shows Li Zihao and Tian Wenyan reintroducing themselves, as well as Tian Wenyan introducing Li Zihao to her classmate, Zhang Jing. The conversation also incorporates some common greeting expressions. Ask students to pick out the key functional phrases for reintroducing, introducing others, and greeting that are demonstrated in the dialogue.

2. Pair work

- **Focus:** This task aims to build students' summary and retelling skills. Students should identify the key points in the conversation—the relationship between Li and Tian/Zhang, their backgrounds, and Li's problem. Then students can summarize and retell the dialogue by turning it into a role-play.
- **Procedures:** Have students work in pairs to act out the role-play. One student will describe the experience while the other listens carefully and provides feedback. Remind students to use past tense throughout the retelling. Students can also discuss questions like: "What would I say if I ran into an old acquaintance on campus?" Monitor students as they perform, offering advice as needed. After the activity, provide brief overall feedback on students' performance, noting any issues they need improve.

3. Role-play

- **Focus:** This task aims to consolidate students' command of the focal expressions of the unit.
- **Procedures:**
 - 1) Have students work in pairs or groups. Assign each pair or group one of the role-play scenarios provided. Give them a few minutes to read their scenario and prepare.
 - 2) Remind students to use appropriate introductions, greetings, and other functional expressions covered in the lesson.
 - 3) Monitor students as they perform. Ask two pairs or groups to perform their role-plays for the class.
 - 4) Provide feedback on proper use of functional language, clarity, fluency, and acting skills.
 - 5) After each performance, ask the class to identify the key phrases and expressions used.
 - 6) Optionally, have students switch roles and perform the role-play again.
 - 7) Wrap up with a quick review of the main functional expressions for introductions, greetings, etc. Have students provide examples from the role-plays.

Teaching Notes:

- Remind students to adjust their level of formality appropriately for each situation. For instance, the registration scenario requires more formal language than the cafeteria or party scenarios.
- For the cafeteria scenario, encourage students to go beyond basic greetings and have a brief introductory conversation about shared interests like university life.

- For the registration scenario, Student B should lead the conversation and ask questions to fill out the registration form, while Student A responds appropriately.
- Encourage creativity and the use of a variety of recommended expressions when students introduce themselves and others in the party scenario.
- For the final networking scenario, have students stand and mingle as if at a conference. They should take on “fake identities” as influential people from diverse backgrounds. Rearrange the room to allow movement.

Activity 3

1. Conversation

This dialogue highlights the complexities of English address systems and titles. The reporter asks actress Patricia Schultz whether she prefers “Miss”, “Mrs.” or “Ms.” as her title. Schultz becomes unhappy because she feels her marital status is irrelevant to the interview, which is about her acting career.

In formal situations between strangers or people of different status, English speakers often use courtesy titles like “Mr./Mrs./Ms.” plus last names. However, many Americans tend to use first names more casually, even with people they just met. Close friends and family may use first names across age groups and social status.

The reporter explains he is required by newspaper policy to gather background details like marital status. However, addressing Schultz as “Ms. Schultz” would likely be safest here, since her marital status is unknown. Using professional titles like “Dr.” is also recommended when applicable, rather than assuming marital status with “Mr./Mrs./Ms.”

This dialogue provides an opportunity to discuss appropriate titles and addressing people in English. Students could brainstorm better ways the reporter could have handled the situation without offending Schultz.

	Ways of Address	Example
Formal	Title + last name	Dr./Professor Brown
	Courtesy title + last name	Mr./Miss/Mrs./Ms. Brown
Formal/Informal	Full first name	Susan, David

Informal	Short first name	Sue, Dave
	Diminutive first name	Susie, Davy

2. Pair work

- **Focus:** This task aims to clarify proper titles and forms of address in English, particularly when one interacts with people of different status or positions. Students will improve their understanding of when to use professional, academic, and courtesy titles.
- **Procedures:**
 - 1) Have students share their current knowledge about addressing people with various titles in English. Summarize what they cover and fill in any gaps.
 - 2) Introduce the two situations about addressing professors and doctors in professional contexts.
 - 3) Have students work individually to read the situations and answer the questions.
 - 4) Then, have them exchange their answers with a partner.
 - 5) Elicit answers from some pairs and clarify the proper forms of address. Highlight the importance of using appropriate professional titles like “Dr.” and “Professor.”
 - 6) Contrast the formal titles used professionally with more casual address among friends.
- **Suggested answers:**

Situation I: The student should address the professor as “Professor Smith” or “Dr. Smith” since she is a professor. Using “Ms.” or her first name would be too informal, while using the full professional title plus last name shows proper respect when addressing the professor. For a Chinese or Japanese professor, the student would need to determine correctly which part of their name is the family/last name to use after the title. For example, if a Chinese professor’s name is Yuan Longping, then “Professor Yuan” would be correct, since Longping is the last name.

Situation II: There are two main issues in how Laura addressed her email. First, referring to Dr. Hess as “Mr.” automatically assigns a male gender, when the recipient’s gender is not confirmed. Here, Laura should use “Dr.” which is a gender-neutral title.

Second, Laura should have addressed the email to “Dr. M.S. Hess” since the director is a medical doctor. Using “Mr.” or just the last name without “Dr.” demonstrates a lack of respect for their professional title. In professional correspondences like emails, using accurate titles is important to show proper etiquette. When Laura talks to Dr. Hess in the interview, she should apologize for the oversight of not addressing the director by the proper title.

3. Discussion

- **Focus:** This task aims to increase students’ understanding of differences in courtesy titles and forms of address between Chinese and English. Students will learn to use appropriate professional and social titles in English.
- **Procedures:**
 - 1) Have students brainstorm common Chinese courtesy titles and when they are used.
 - 2) Ask students to suggest English equivalents for titles like “同志”, “师傅” and “大爷.” Explain that literal translations often sound awkward or old-fashioned in English.
 - 3) Contrast professional titles in Chinese like “李老师” and “赵主任” with English conventions. Explain that using professions as titles in English is uncommon and informal.
 - 4) Introduce students to English titles like “Mr.,” “Mrs.,” “Ms.,” “Dr.,” “Professor”, “Sir” , “Ma’am.” Have them practice addressing you and partners appropriately.
 - 5) Wrap up by emphasizing that direct translations of Chinese titles don’t work in English. Appropriate English forms of address depend on the context.
- **Teaching Notes:**

Common Chinese courtesy titles like “同志,” “师傅,” “老师,” “大爷” and “叔叔” often have awkward or outdated translations in English. For example, “同志” is literally translated to “comrade,” but “comrade” is not used as an address in English. “师傅” literally means “master,” implying a hierarchical relationship that is inappropriate in English. Titles like “Teacher Li” or “Grandpa Zhang” also sound very unnatural.

In English, it is better to use more neutral titles like “Mr.,” “Ms.,” “Mrs.,” or “Miss” along with a person’s last name when addressing someone you don’t know well. Other acceptable options are gender-neutral terms like “sir,” “ma’am,” “excuse me,” or “pardon me” to politely get a stranger’s attention. Directly translating Chinese professional and kinship titles into English typically does not work well, and can be regarded as rude or odd. The key is to use titles that show respect while maintaining an appropriate level of formality and distance.

4. Story-telling (Optional)

- **Focus:** This task is designed to engage students in lively conversation and build a positive classroom atmosphere.
- **Procedures:**
 - 1) Divide students into small groups of three or four.
 - 2) Assign each group to come up with an embarrassing story.
 - 3) Monitor each group while they work. Offer vocabulary assistance if needed.
 - 4) Have each group share their story with the class. Praise good storytelling techniques.

Activity 4

1. Mrs., Miss, or Ms.?

This activity is designed to familiarize students with English titles and forms of address by comparing them to customs in China. The teacher should review the commonly used English titles (Mr., Mrs., Miss, and Ms.) with students. Key points are:

- Mr. is used for adult men regardless of marital status.
- Mrs. is used for married women.
- Miss is used for unmarried women.
- Ms. arose as an alternative title used by many professional women seeking equality with men. It does not indicate marital status.

The teacher could contrast this with how people are addressed in China (using titles that convey age, status, profession, and relationship). And encourage students to share examples of Chinese titles and forms of address.

This activity calls students' attention to the significant differences in the English and Chinese address systems. Students will practice using appropriate English titles and forms of address for various situations. The goal is to build their understanding of English-speaking customs and when to use Mr., Mrs., Miss or Ms.

2. Discussion

- **Focus:** This task is designed to encourage students to compare forms of address in Chinese and English and analyze what they reveal about cultural values.
- **Procedures:**

- 1) Have students form small groups of four or five. Assign one student in each group as the leader.
- 2) The leader will guide the group in discussing the questions provided, such as:
 - What are the English equivalents of Chinese terms like “叔叔” and “奶奶”?
 - What cultural values do the different terms reflect?
 - What local or new forms of address exist in China?
- 3) Ask the leader to assign a note-taker to summarize the group’s discussion.
- 4) If time allows, have the note-takers share interesting points from each group with the whole class.
- 5) Wrap up by emphasizing how forms of address provide insight into cultures and values. Highlight key differences and similarities between Chinese and English terms noted during the discussion.

● **Suggested Answers:**

- 1) The terms “叔叔” and “奶奶” usually refer to one’s uncle and grandmother respectively in Chinese. However, they are also commonly used to address people who are around the same age as one’s uncle or grandmother, even if they are strangers. This reflects the Chinese cultural tendency to view relationships in terms of family roles. Using familial terms for non-relatives shows intimacy and friendliness. The terms “小哥哥” and “小姐姐” literally mean “younger brother” and “younger sister.” When used for strangers, they convey youthfulness and approachability. Addressing someone as “小哥哥” or “小姐姐” is a way to pleasantly initiate conversation without awkwardness. The terms themselves indicate the speaker’s intention to be polite and friendly. In summary, the Chinese address terms for non-relatives reveal the cultural values of intimacy and relationship-building. Their use builds connection and intimacy. The English equivalents do not convey the same nuance.
- 2) 略
- 3) 略
- 4) The term “老铁” (“*laotie*”) originated in Northeast China as a way to address close friends or “bros.” It literally means “old iron” and implies a bond between friends as strong as iron. While “*laotie*” emerged from northeastern slang, its use has now spread across China. People across China have adopted “*laotie*” as a term of endearment and friendship, especially among young men sharing common interests or experiences. On the

internet and social media, strangers may affectionately call each other “*laotie*” to signal a sense of kinship and belonging, even if they have never met in person. The evolution of “*laotie*” from regional slang to nationwide phrase reflects how internet culture and media have enabled Chinese neologisms to gain popularity across different geographies and demographics. Although “*laotie*” arose in a particular local youth culture, its embedded connotations of loyalty and solidarity have enabled its adoption far beyond its original context.

III. Supplementary Activity

1. Introducing a guest speaker

The goal of this activity is to teach students how to give a formal introduction for a prestigious speaker at an event. To prepare students, the teacher should first have them identify each key element of an introduction (name, title, rationale for choosing the speaker, the speaker’s accomplishments) in the example. Students can then practice writing introductions for speakers in their own field, focusing on all the necessary components and showcasing the speaker’s expertise.

2. Mini-speech

- **Focus:** The task allows students to practice giving formal introductions of prestigious speakers, as might be required when they host an event.
- **Procedures:**
 - 1) Divide students into groups of three or four.
 - 2) Have each student decide who they will introduce—they can choose one of the provided speakers or their own professor.
 - 3) Give 5 minutes for students to prepare their introduction, reminding them to:
 - Use formal language appropriate for the prestigious speaker and situation.
 - Include the speaker’s full name, titles/credentials, accomplishments.
 - Establish why the speaker was chosen and their expertise on the topic.
 - 4) Students then take turns to give their mini-introduction speeches within their small groups.
 - 5) Each group selects one student to give their introduction in front of the class.
 - 6) Provide feedback on how well students included key elements like speaker’s credentials and rationale for selection. Praise creative introductions that grab attention.

- **Suggested Answers:**

Introduction for Florence Chia-ying Yeh:

Good morning esteemed guests! It is my great honor to introduce our distinguished speaker for today's event, Professor Florence Chia-ying Yeh. Professor Yeh, a highly respected poet and sinologist, was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1990 in recognition of her significant contributions to literature and Chinese cultural studies. She taught Chinese classical poetry at the University of British Columbia for over 20 years before retiring as Professor Emerita in 1989. Since then, Professor Yeh has been sharing her expertise by teaching at numerous prestigious universities in China including Nanjing University and Fudan University. She is also the founding director of the renowned Institute of Chinese Classical Culture at Nankai University. We are so fortunate to have Professor Yeh here today to share her knowledge and passion with us all. Please join me in warmly welcoming Professor Florence Chia-ying Yeh.

Introduction for Xie Jun:

Honored guests, it is with great excitement that I introduce our speaker this morning, Mr. Xie Jun. Mr. Xie currently serves as the deputy chief designer of China's revolutionary BeiDou Navigation Satellite System and is the chief designer of the BeiDou third-generation satellites. He has dedicated himself to China's aerospace industry since graduating top of his class from the prestigious National University of Defense Technology in 1982. Mr. Xie first began his pivotal work on the BeiDou program in 2004 when he was selected as the chief designer for the second-generation satellites. His brilliance and expertise have been crucial to the success of the BeiDou system over the past two decades. We are so fortunate that Mr. Xie has taken time out of his demanding schedule to be with us today and share his invaluable insights. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Xie Jun!