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The teaching of the pragmatics of disagreement through local primary English textbooks
in Hong Kong

Abstract

With the acquisition of English as a lingua franca (ELF) becoming a global trend, this is so for the study of English pragmatics for effective communication (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). While many previous studies have investigated the instruction of the pragmatics of various speech acts, few have done so with disagreement as a complex speech act (Augouri & Locher, 2012). This study analyses the speech act of disagreement in Hong Kong children's English learning textbooks on 4 main aspects: 1) the variety of disagreement strategies; 2) the variety of the contexts; 3) the amount of details in the contexts; 4) the appropriacy of the disagreement strategies. The findings suggest a lack of variety with both the mitigated disagreement strategies and their contexts, the presence of ambiguous contexts and an occasional mismatch between strategies used and the contexts, despite the high proportion of mitigated disagreement and contextualisation. A sample unit of lessons is proposed to investigate the problems identified. Recommendations, such as the application of a variety of disagreement strategies, are made.

Introduction

To communicate in a language effectively, language users consider the way speakers of the target language communicate (Adejare, 1995). As part of this awareness, pragmatic competence (PC) refers to one's ability to use language according to the cultural norms of the society associated to the target language, without which could lead to misunderstandings and communication breakdowns, despite high language proficiency (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001).

The development of PC in Second Language (L2) learners has shown to be challenging since PC is never a matter of correctness according to prescriptive rules (Nakajima, 1997). Alternatively, PC is achieved through listening attentively, responding with empathy and compassion, as well as solving problems together (Ng, 2019). Yet, with the exam-oriented education system in Hong Kong in the past two decades and a focus on the recitation of information, students tend to give scripted and unnatural responses like "I agree with your point" in group discussions, instead of truly communicating, negotiating and having dialogues with other interlocutors (Chak, 2019).

As PC is non-salient in L2 classroom (Schmidt, 2001), it requires intentional and focused attention in classroom instruction. Specifically, the expression of disagreement is a complex pragmatic issue that takes different forms in relation to an umbrella of speaker-related factors (Augouri & Locher, 2012). Closely examine, discuss and unpack these contents is vital in the ESL curriculum in order to help students use English appropriately in everyday situations.

Consequently, this study examines and evaluates the current situation with the teaching of disagreement-making in Hong Kong in local children's English textbooks, then explores more effective teaching strategies in the classroom setting. Ultimately, it provides insights into enhancing and sustaining the teaching of disagreement expression and pragmatics in general in the local context.

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Literature review

The pragmatics of disagreement

Disagreement is defined as “both a verbal and non-verbal response of an oppositional stance to an antecedent verbal or non-verbal action” (Kakava, 1993, p. 36). Furthermore, as one of the speech acts - language uses that fulfill certain functions, disagreement expresses “a failure to agree” with any point of view expressed by another party in an interaction (Maiz-Arevalo, 2014). Being the antipode of agreement, disagreement also often implies confrontation with conflicts taking place that are likely to pose negative effects on human relationships (Angouri & Locher, 2012).

The use of disagreement is an everyday phenomenon that is prevalent in a range of occasions such as decision-making, problem-solving, and debates (Gray, 2001). How disagreement is expressed, perceived and understood so that it is skillfully presented to avoid posing a threat to the interactants’ relation (Georgakopoulou, 2001, p. 1897), come under the influence of a number of factors, ranging from the norms of the communities to which the speakers belong, the roles they play in an interaction, the relationships between interactants to the issue to be disagreed with (Angouri & Locher, 2012). When expressed appropriately, disagreement could be a form of “sociable argument”, exchanges that take the form of argument, but lack the serious substance of a real argument (Schiffrin, 1984, p. 331).

Perceptions associated with the speech act of disagreement

The speech act of “disagreement” has often been considered as an undesirable response from the perspective of native English speakers (Pomerantz, 1984), one that causes discomfort in the opposite party (Garcia, 1989). Nonetheless, if disagreement has to be made, it must be well supported and backed by good reasoning (Jacobs & Jackson, 1981, p. 122).

Making disagreement is also believed to be associated with being very impolite. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the term “face” refers to “a public self-image one wants to claim for himself” (p. 61). Such a desire of wanting to lay claim to a public face is regarded as a fundamental human need. As a result, it is what one constantly defends in interactions. Almost an intrinsic nature, humans become emotionally invested and concerned with the face they project. Therefore, they tend to avoid face-threatening acts that fail to project a positive face, that is, an image that will be appreciated and approved by the public (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). Applying Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory, making disagreement will be considered as a face-threatening act that threatens the positive face of the addressee, given the reservation and alienation expressed that are questioning the competence and criticising the self-esteem of the recipient of the disagreement (Kreutel, 2007). This leads to the speaker not being welcomed nor appreciated by the public.

Since disagreement is inherent to scenarios where interactants inevitably negotiate and challenge opposite views (Angouri & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011), recent research and studies have started investigating certain practices that enable speakers to go about making disagreement in a way that is more acceptable and tolerable, especially in

professional contexts that emphasises decision-making and problem-solving. As such, there has been a long growing interest to the study and research of disagreement-making in relations (Locher & Watts, 2005). This research investigates the means through which disagreements could be made taking into account the context and situation where it takes place (Locher & Graham, 2010), so that the relationship between the interactants can be well-maintained and the party who disagrees does not appear injurious (Locher, 2004, p. 94). To do so, speakers tend to mitigate their disagreement and soften the oppositional tone as opposed to giving straightforward disapproval. In fact, mitigation is commonly found across many interactional situations in which the interactants' faces are to be protected and maintained.

The way mitigation works to protect and maintain the participants' faces is by fostering facework, which is the effort one makes to monitor and adapt his own linguistic behaviour to interact as consensually and effectively as possible under the given circumstances (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Specifically, these strategies are fine-tuning devices that promote compromise between what an interlocutor wants to say and what the other is willing to accept. There are various means through which speakers can mitigate their disagreement which include token agreement (i.e. yes, but), the use of hedges, expression of regret, use of positive remarks, suggestions and explanation (Maíz-Arévalo, 2015).

Factors influencing mitigation in disagreement

The power difference between the interlocutors is one of the key factors to consider from the relational perspective. Power refers to one's ability to control the behaviours of the other in a relationship (French & Raven, 1959). While a direct and explicit disagreement with minimal mitigation is common among interlocutors of an equal power status, indirect disagreement with the use of mitigated strategies is preferred in the interaction between interlocutors of great power difference (Brown & Levinson, 1987), where the speaker that has a greater power than the addressee is more likely to use more direct strategies of disagreement, (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The intimacy between speakers is another possible factor to consider (Ishihara, 2016). Often, when there is strong intimacy between the speaker and the addressee, a lower mutual vulnerability of face and less potential of face threats are assumed. Disagreement could even appear as a sign of intimacy that does not pose a threat to the participants' relation (Tannen & Kakava, 1992; Georgakopoulou, 2001). Thus, mitigation may not be necessary with the disagreement made between intimates. Thus, a lack of mitigation in a series of direct disagreement may characterise conversations between intimates like family members (DelPrete & Box, 2014).

Cultural variations in disagreement-making

With English becoming a lingua franca, interlocutors from different sociocultural backgrounds who have a different "preferred way of saying things" (Kecskes, 2007, p. 192) could be using English as the common language. Echoing what Brown (1994) advocated, "a language is a part of a culture" and vice versa (p. 165), a culture implies a certain way of doing things, which then, could be displayed in one's speech acts and affect how one uses words to do things (Austin, 1962). As expected, previous research has revealed drastic variations between disagreements made by native English (NE) and

non-native English (NNE) speakers. The major difference lies in the fact that, the disagreement expressions exhibited by NE speakers show a higher degree of complexity than that of NNE speakers (Kreutel, 2007), in that these expressions reflect the speakers' emotions or intentions in addition to the opposing stance itself. For instance, by means of an initial apology, one expresses a sense of regret, while giving an appreciation or compliment prior to the disagreement reflects the speaker's intention to cooperate.

Often, such complexity is reflected in the use of a range of politeness strategies by NE speakers when disagreeing. For instance, instead of commenting on how inappropriately someone sings by saying, "I don't think you should sing like this," NE speakers may say, "I am sorry but if you are to sing this song, I imagine that you want to slow down, because this is a romantic love song," to minimise the imposition of their negative opinion through giving an initial apology, followed by expressing the stance as a personal opinion with "I imagine", and then giving an elaboration with "because". This is a result of their general perception of disagreement as undesired reactions that causes discomfort (Pomerantz, 1984; García, 1989), unless with good reasoning (Jacobs & Jackson, 1981, p. 122). Therefore, NE speakers utilise strategies like these to bridge the gap between the desire to defend their standpoint and the belief that disagreement is not preferred.

Practically, NE speakers use mitigation to reduce the directness of their disagreement, as opposed to the use of the direct performative "I disagree" (Burdine, 2001). Specifically, they demonstrate token agreement prior to the disagreement where they begin by agreeing the previous interlocutor's stance before raising disagreement. It typically takes the form of "yes, but..." (LoCastro, 1986). Such practice has been widely recognised in several previous empirical studies (Pearson, 1986; Kothoff, 1993; Locher, 2004). The use of modal verbs and hedges, following token agreement, are also common resources employed in softening the negative impact of their disagreement with their listener (Tannen, 1993, p. 28). By using modal verbs to show uncertainty as well as hedges like "I don't know" or "just, I think", speakers successfully free themselves from the responsibility of their words (Aijmer, 1986, p. 6). Last, they also give explanations with an emotive nature to back up their disagreement (Kuo, 1994; Bell, 1998).

On the contrary, NNE speakers express disagreements in a much less complicated manner. Previous studies have indicated them to be formulaic and short (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989), subject to their lack of linguistic resources in English (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999). Therefore, despite holding a disagreeing viewpoint, NNE speakers prefer not to express disagreement at all, which is evident in Pearson's (1986)'s study of the responses of 300 Japanese college freshmen to disagreement. Even they do, it is often delivered in a direct and harsh way with very minimal use of mitigation strategies. Common disagreement expressions observed among NNE speakers include the use of the bare exclamation "no" and the performative "I disagree", which were evident in Bell's (1998) study of Koreans and Pearson's (1986) study of Japanese English speakers. Evidently, cultural differences do result in a corresponding variation that impact speakers' use of language in communication, such as when communicating disagreements.

The frameworks of disagreement strategies employed by English as a lingua franca (ELF) speakers

There have been different frameworks laid out to encapsulate different expressions of disagreement used by ELF speakers. One of them is Pomerantz (1984)'s framework of

varying complexity in disagreement, which advocates the existence of a number of strategies for expressing disagreement from the most simple and direct strategies to the most indirect ones. Typically, direct strategies in the form of direct criticism or negative evaluation such as “that’s not practical,” are the simplest and most straightforward ways of disagreeing, followed by simple positive politeness strategy as token agreement, modality, giving alternative suggestions, reasons and suggesting a compromise, which all portray the speaker’s desire to be approved of and respected by others. At the top of the scale are off-record disagreements in the form of hinting such as “I think someone might have got the wrong idea,” in which the disagreement is presented vaguely. These strategies as in the giving of hints and clues are relatively more complex, since one could hardly express a disagreement diplomatically in this way without a high competency in English and the mastery of complex grammar.

While Pomerantz’s framework reflects how the relatively simple disagreement strategies differ from the complex ones, scholars including Bjørge (2012), Brown and Levinson (1987), Holtgraves (1997), Johnson (2006), Locher (2004), Maíz-Arévalo (2014) and Schnurr and Chan (2011) have developed a list of mitigation devices that expand the more complex strategies presented by Pomerantz (1984), adding to them the use of both fillers like “um” and “uh” as hedges and discourse markers “as well”, “but”, and “or” in delaying responses. The list also includes modal verbs, understaters and downtoners such as “maybe”, as well as initial expression of appreciation or apology as strategies as possible mitigation strategies that reduce the threats of a disagreement. Last, other off-record disagreement strategies such as rhetorical questions and the use of irony were also suggested. Which framework did you adopt and why?

The teaching of the pragmatics of making disagreements in English in Hong Kong

While knowing how to make disagreement is an integral part of mastering interpersonal interaction, instruction and teaching on the expression of disagreement, appears to be minimal in the Hong Kong English classroom. On the level of curriculum planning, disagreement as a communicative function has not been given much consideration. The English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (ELEKLACG) published by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) offers “an overall structure for the organisation of learning and teaching for the subjects of English Language”, and thus, schools should constantly make reference to the document (p. 3). Yet, the document only includes two expressions of disagreement for teachers’ and students’ reference.

Disagreement is put under the section titled “Formulaic Expressions for Interpersonal Communication” and the example given is “No, I don’t think so.” (CDC, 2017, p. A29), which is formulaic, direct, and minimal in nature without much attempt for mitigation. Disagreement-making is even absent in the senior Secondary English curriculum as a language item.

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Research gap and significance of study

In spite of the complexity of the speech act of disagreement, which encompasses a range of strategies in relation to expressing opinion (Burdine, 2001), it has always been overlooked in pragmatics research, compared to other speech acts such as requests and compliments (Kreutel, 2007; Maíz-Arévalo, 2014). As a result, the pragmatics of disagreement is rarely “unpacked and theorised” to offer insights into how it could be approached in a diplomatic way (Angouri & Locher, 2012, p. 1550). Consequently, the availability of the related content in English Language instructional materials has also remained minimal. For instance, Rose and Kasper (2001) have suggested a more direct connection between pragmatic research and the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) to promote a positive effect in ESL instruction and learning (Doughty, 2003), particularly in learners’ acquisition of PC. Oftentimes, the lack of appropriate disagreement strategies makes ESL NNE speakers appear rude and leads to communication breakdown between other interlocutors and themselves (Kreutel, 2007).

While the pragmatics of disagreement tends to be overlooked in previous research, this investigation fills this gap on both that of the speech act itself and its instruction in SLA. By means of a close examination and evaluation of how disagreement is presented in local English textbooks with reference to how NE speakers approach so, the study sheds light and provides insights on how the teaching and learning of the complex speech act of disagreement could be facilitated in ELE in Hong Kong, thereby contribute to the nurture of Hong Kong ESL learners as “communicatively competent language users” (Bachman, 1990). In achieving these purposes, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

Research questions:

- 1) Is there a variety of expressions of disagreement found in local textbooks in Hong Kong?
- 2) To what extent are the expressions of disagreement situated in context? How varied and detailed are they?
- 3) Among the contextualised disagreements, how appropriate are the disagreement strategies used with reference to the contexts where they are situated in?

Methodology

Context

Local English textbooks will be examined to address the above research questions. As the vital backbone for ESL learning that provides language instructions in aspects ranging from grammar, lexis to pragmatics (Vellenga, 2004), English textbooks facilitate the learning of many aspects of pragmatics in English, such as conversational implicatures, the implications and meanings behind utterances in a conversation. Without which, the language learning process could be slow and even impossible (Bouton, 1994). As a result, textbook developers are highly accountable in the inclusion and presentation of contents that promote learners' ESL PC. This also suggests the importance of reviewing English textbooks regarding the presentation of pragmatic knowledge, without which problems such as the decontextualisation and oversimplification of the pragmatic content will persist and hinder the mastery of authentic communication (House, 1996; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004).

As a complement to textbooks, classroom instructions raise students' pragmatic awareness and offer them opportunities for communicative practices (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1997), so that students practise using English appropriately in real world communication in addition to knowing (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005). Thus, it is essential to apply classroom practices that are conducive to ESL learners' acquisition of PC.

Research instruments

Textbook analysis (TA) will be the main research instrument employed to evaluate the existing content covering the pragmatics of disagreement in Hong Kong English textbooks. It is the systematic description of textbooks against set criteria based on learners' needs, language learning goals and certain language teaching approaches (Rubdy, 2003), following a framework of categories generated out of the aims and objectives of the study (Fetsko, 1992). Since textbook design often benefits from research inputs in SLA, analysing textbooks provide useful insights as to what degree is SLA-based principles guiding pedagogical decisions in ESL teaching (Waters, 2009).

In this study, disagreement expressions presented in local English textbooks will first be tabulated into a framework generated from combining Pomerantz (1984)'s framework of varying complexity in disagreement and the list of mitigated devices proposed by a number of scholars (Bjørge, 2012; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Holtgraves, 1997; Locher, 2004; Johnson, 2006; Maiz-Arevalo, 2014; Schnurr & Chan, 2011). The synthesised framework divides disagreement expressions into 3 broad categories including the specific mitigated strategies (see Table 1). Given this is a textual analysis, verbal strategy such as the use of pauses were not included as a category, as such usage may not be clearly shown in textual materials.

Table 1: Disagreement strategies commonly employed by ELF speakers

Category	Examples
● Direct disagreement (Criticism; negative evaluation)	I don't think eating at McDonald's is a good idea.

● Mitigated disagreement	
Delay via hedging (e.g. umm, uh, er)	Lunch at McDonald's? Umm... that does not appeal to me.
Delay via discourse markers (e.g. well, but, and, or)	But... / Well... eating fast food does not seem very healthy.
Delay via downtoners (e.g. maybe, perhaps)	Maybe it is not a good time to go there, lots of people there.
Modal verbs	If we eat at McDonald's, we might get too full.
Partial agreement	Yes the new burger looks good, but it looks fatty too.
An initial appreciation or apology	I am sorry, but I don't feel like eating deep-fried food.
Explanation and justification as an added support	McDonald may not be a good choice as mum is having a sore throat. The deep-fried food will make it worse.
Giving alternative suggestions	How about eating at the new Japanese restaurant?
● Indirect disagreement (hinting, rhetorical questions)	Didn't we eat there just last week?

Procedures

Thirty-one Primary 4 to 6 English textbooks across 5 different titles published by English textbook publishers in Hong Kong, **will** first be assembled. They **are** "Primary Longman Express", "Lighthouse for Hong Kong", "Head Start", "My Pals Are Here" and "Ready". Conversations with an exchange of ideas and expression of an oppositional stance between the interlocutors will be selected for examination.

To study the variety of disagreement strategies presented, examples of disagreement found will be compared across titles in terms of their percentages. The percentage of each type of mitigated strategy will be calculated to observe for both the commonly presented disagreement expressions and generally overlooked strategies in local textbooks.

Next, the percentage of training on disagreement situated in context and that without a context will be obtained in all 5 textbook titles. Next, teaching on disagreements with a context from the 5 textbook titles were further organised into the following 6 categories:

- 1) speaker with high power disagreeing in a distant relationship;
- 2) speaker with low power disagreeing in a distant relationship;
- 3) speaker with equal power in a distant relationship;
- 4) speaker with high power disagreeing in a close relationship;
- 5) speaker with low power disagreeing in a close relationship;

6) speaker with equal power in a close relationship.

These categories have been observed from a combination of varying distances in relationships and differences in power between the interlocutors. Examples of disagreement that either do not give information regarding the closeness in relationship or regarding power differences will be classified as ambiguous cases in a separate category. The variety of the 6 types of contexts will be quantitatively analysed. After that, the details of the contexts including information regarding the social roles of the speakers, distance in relationships, power differences and the issues being discussed with students, will be qualitatively analysed.

In order to analyse the appropriateness of the disagreement strategies presented and observe the differences in the strategies used, the contextualised disagreements will be organised into another 3 broad categories based on the extent to which mitigation should be used. The first category includes disagreements made by the speaker of a lower power status and both speakers have a distant relationship, where mitigated and indirect strategies are usually assumed. The second category includes disagreements where there is either a high-power difference or high distance in relationship between the interlocutors and a moderate level of mitigation is generally assumed. In the last category, disagreements made by the speaker with a lower status and between speakers of equal power status in a close relationship are included, as they are assumed to demonstrate the least usage of mitigated strategies.

Results

The variety of disagreement strategies demonstrated

Fig. 1: The percentage of direct, mitigated and indirect disagreements in each textbook title

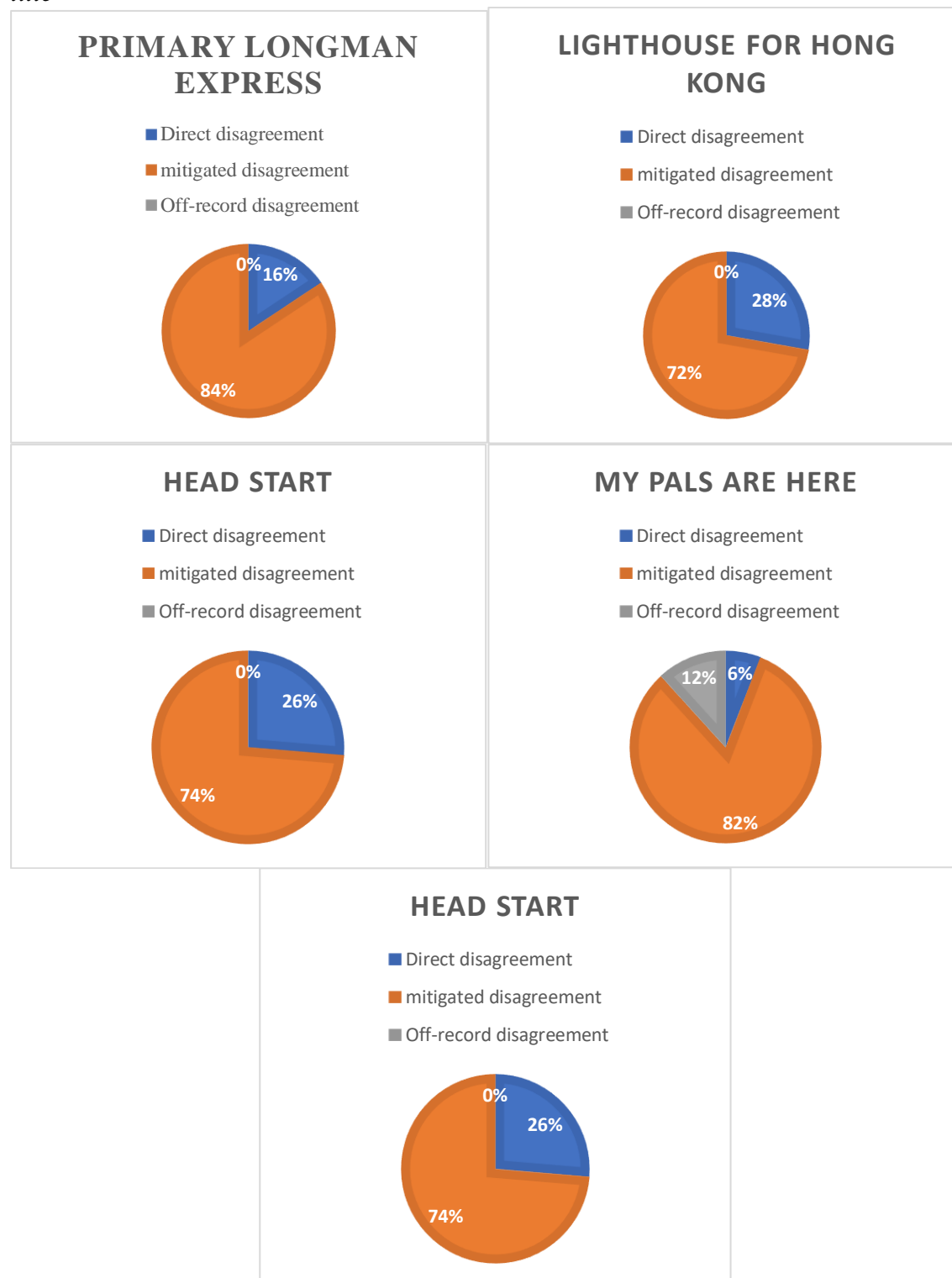


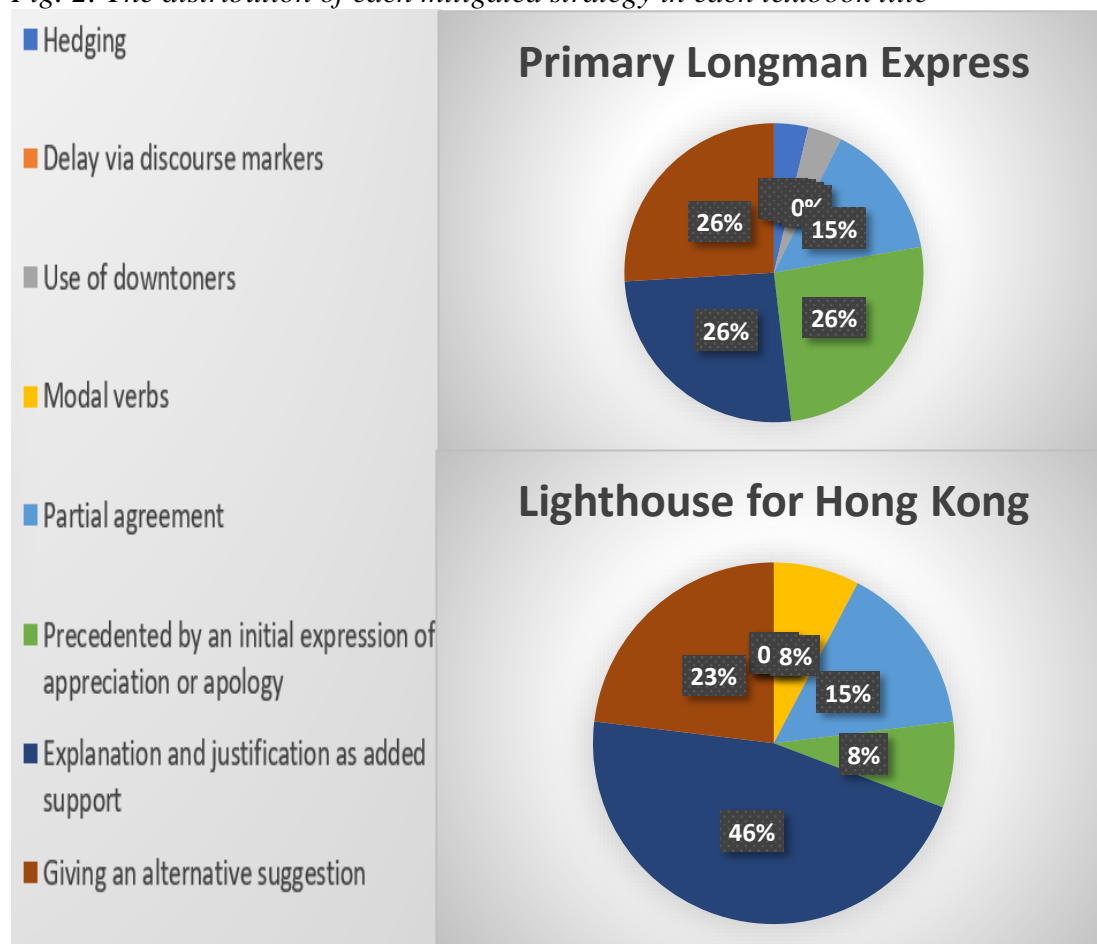
Fig. 1 shows the distribution of the three broad types of disagreement – direct, mitigated and indirect disagreements in the 5 textbook titles examined. A higher percentage of

direct disagreement in the form of direct criticism and negative evaluation in “Lighthouse for Hong Kong”, “Head Start” and “Ready”, takes up more than a quarter out of the total instances of disagreements. On the contrary, the percentage of mitigated disagreement is much higher in these two textbook titles, reaching to nearly 85%.

In comparison, “My Pals Are Here” exhibits the greatest variety of expressions of disagreement compared to the other 4 titles. As shown in Fig. 1., the textbook included almost all types of expressions of disagreement, ranging from strategies of direct disagreement, to a variety of expressions of mitigated disagreement, including the use of downtoners, preceded partial agreement and indirect disagreement strategies like hinting and rhetorical questions. These examples are what the other textbooks fall short of illustrating. For instance, examples of the use of downtoners are rarely found in “Primary Longman Express” textbooks, and only account for approximately 4% of the total mitigated strategies (see Fig. 2). In “Lighthouse for Hong Kong” and “Ready”, such usage is not demonstrated at all. Similarly, the other 4 titles do not illustrate the use of indirect disagreement.

“Primary Longman Express” ranks the second in terms of variety after “My Pals Are Here”. While both fall short of introducing modal verbs as a mitigation strategy, “Primary Longman Express” overlooks the use of discourse markers and indirect disagreement expressions as possible mitigation strategies. However, it is the only textbook title that has examples of hedging as a mitigation strategy (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: The distribution of each mitigated strategy in each textbook title



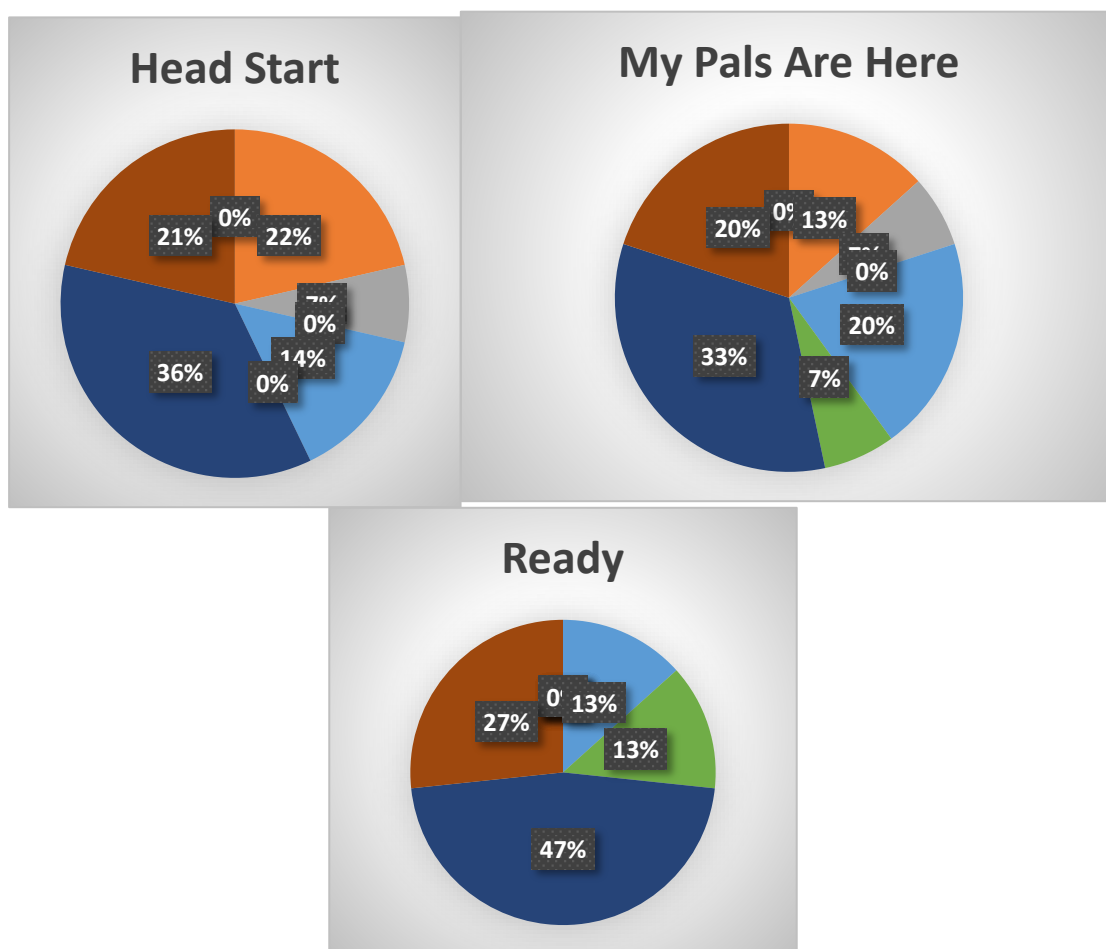


Fig. 2 presents the distribution of each specific type of mitigated strategies demonstrated in each textbook title. The strategy of delaying response through hedging and discourse markers such as an initial “and” and “but”, and modal verbs, are absent in 3 or more of the textbook titles examined. Among them, delaying response through hedging is the least common expression of mitigated disagreement, with only “Primary Longman Express” textbooks presenting this strategy. “Head Start” and “My Pals Are Here” are the two titles that illustrate the use of discourse markers. “Lighthouse for Hong Kong” is the only textbook title featuring the use of modal verbs. Despite “My Pals Are Here” showing the greatest variety of expressions of disagreement, the use of hedges and modal verbs in mitigating a disagreement are not demonstrated. Strategies such as “giving a precedented apology or appreciation” and “partial agreement” are relatively uncommon as well, taking up one-fifth of the total number of strategies across all the textbooks in our study.

However, explanation as an added support, giving suggestions and partial agreement, are the three most used mitigation strategies introduced across all titles. For example, 2 of the textbook titles, “Lighthouse for Hong Kong” and “Ready”, demonstrate the use of explanation, taking up nearly half of the total mitigated disagreements, while in the rest of the titles explanation accounts for at least one-fourth of the mitigated strategies. Suggestion, on the other hand, accounts for approximately one-fourth of the mitigation strategies in the 5 textbook titles.

Table 2: The percentage of contextualised and decontextualised examples of disagreement in the 5 textbook titles

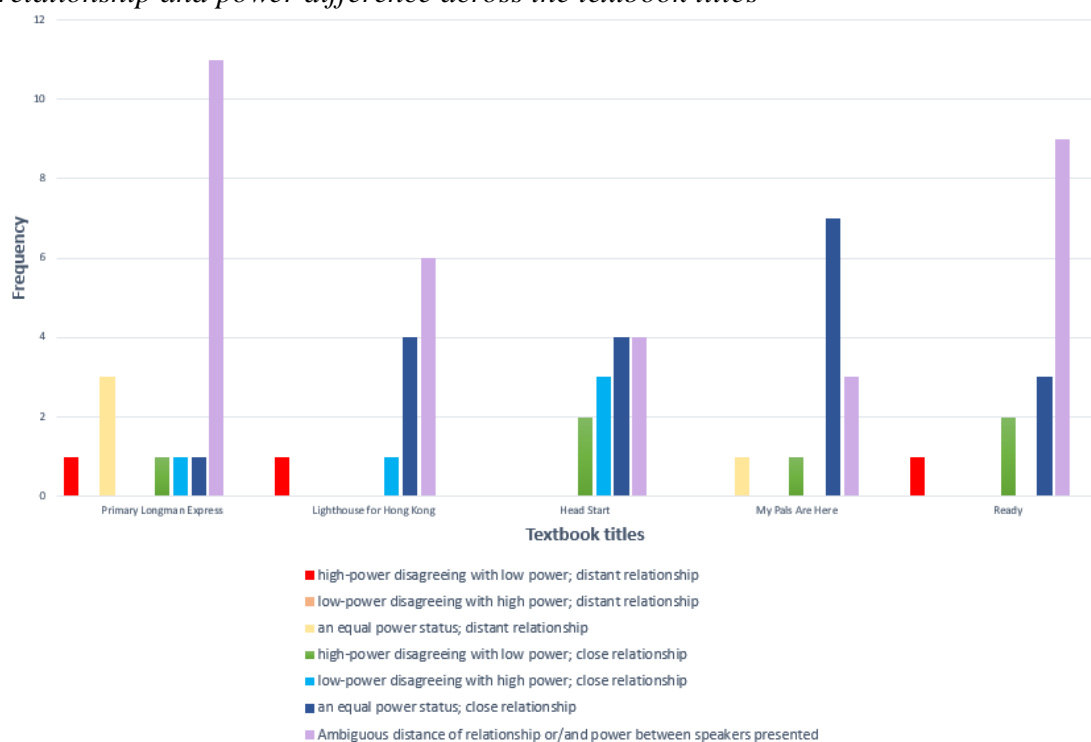
	Percentage of expressions of disagreement WITH a context	Percentage of expressions of disagreement WITHOUT a context
Primary Longman Express	75%	25%
Lighthouse for Hong Kong	~81.2%	~18.8%
Head Start	~81.2%	~18.8%
My Pals Are Here	~85.7%	~14.3%
Ready	~83.3%	~16.7%

The majority of the disagreement examples in the five textbook titles are presented with a context that provides background information of the interaction between the interlocutors. According to Table 2, three-fourths or more of the examples are presented with contextual information. Four of the textbook titles, “Lighthouse for Hong Kong”, “Head Start”, “My Pals Are Here”, and “Ready” have contextualised more than 80% of the examples of disagreement. Among them, “My Pals Are Here” has contextualised approximately 85% of the examples. They are mostly presented as part of a story giving explicit information on the social roles, such as “cousins” and “family members” that imply the relationship between the interlocutors. This is persistently observed throughout the 5 textbook titles. For instance, one of the contexts in book 5A of “Primary Longman Express” is “Matt was going on a study tour to London. His sister Judy was helping him get ready.” (p. 42) This scenario sets the context and informs readers that it is a conversation between siblings who were packing for a study tour.

Among the minority of uncontextualised disagreement examples, some are part of a list of expressions introduced in the appendices where expressions, such as, “No, I think ...”, “I’m afraid that’s not a good idea,” and “I don’t think that’s a good idea,” are compiled for students. Yet, these lists do not demonstrate how the expressions could be used in different situations to foster politeness. Some scenarios are depicted with two people talking to each other without information on their social roles, interrelationship, nor the relationship between the interlocutors. “I disagree with Ben. We will fall ill if we don’t get enough rest and I don’t think work is more important than health,” (p. 55) is a disagreement example from book 6A of “My Pals Are Here” that does not provide information on who Ben and the speaker is, their interrelationship, nor how the discussion had started.

The variety of contexts presented

Fig.3: The frequency of the 6 types of contexts of varying degree of distance in relationship and power difference across the textbook titles



As shown in Fig. 3, an extensive variety of contexts presented does not exist in these volumes. Disagreements between interlocutors with a close relationship are generally more prevalent and common than those with a distant relationship. Among the disagreements within a close relationship, those where the interlocutors have equal power statuses are the most dominant. Approximately half of the contextualised examples of disagreement are presented under such contexts in 4 of the textbook titles. Among them, “My Pals Are Here” demonstrates the most usage of this type of situation in its examples of disagreement. Often, discussions between same-aged friends and classmates in the school setting are used as examples. “I am not good at basketball. Shall we play badminton instead?” (Extracted from “My Pals Are Here book 4A, p. 40) is an example of disagreement made by Tom to his friend of a similar age. “Don't you need to change into loose-fitting clothes and sports shoes first?” is another example of pupils having divergent opinions towards one another (extracted from “My Pals Are Here” book 6A, p. 49). In addition, interactions between family members were also found, such as, “Yes, but you know I have a sweet tooth. The desserts look delicious!” This example is taken from “Primary Longman Express” book 4A (p. 31), and represents a disagreement made by a husband to his wife about his appetite. Previously, his wife assumed that he would not have any more room for food and there was no need to order more food. This was the context in which the above utterance was made by the husband who was requesting dessert.

While also in a close relationship, contexts where the interlocutor has a higher power status disagree, is the next most presented, in the form of interactions between the older and younger generations in a family. Specifically, “I like to keep cool with a paper fan

because it helps save energy.” from “Head Start” book 5B (p. 44) is one where the grandparent disagrees with his grandchildren. “I hope to try something new tonight,” from “My Pals Are Here” book 5A (p. 5) also illustrates how a mother disagrees with her son’s choice of dim sum for dinner. Comparatively speaking, those relationships in which the interlocutor of the lower power disagrees with the other interlocutor in a family, are less prevalent.

However, contexts where interlocutors have a distant relationship were not as prevalent. Instances where the interlocutor of a higher power status disagrees were found in 3 textbook titles, each having one instance only. Those situations in which interlocutors have an equal status are shown in only 2 titles. Furthermore, none of the textbook titles include any situation where the interlocutor of a lower power status disagrees in a distant relationship which usually demands more complex use of strategies in toning down the imposition and showing respect.

Still, some occasions where disagreements could occur in a distant relationship were demonstrated. They range from disagreement between strangers to interactions between teacher and student. An example of the former would be “some of the jokes were a bit rude. I wasn't amused. The other 'Shrek' films were better. This one was disappointing,” from “Primary Longman Express” book 6A (p. 35). This opinion is made publicly on an online forum in the book. “No, as a matter of fact they're very strong and could easily hurt people!” from “Lighthouse for Hong Kong” book 12 (p. 51) was made by an interviewee to the interviewer on a TV interview. An example of the latter can be found in “Primary Longman Express” book 5B, “We must stay on the path.” (p. 2) This example is part of a teacher-student interaction in which a teacher disagrees with her student’s idea of taking the short cut, but insisted on staying on the path to play safe.

The amount of details in the contexts presented

Despite the high percentage of contextualised examples of disagreement presented throughout the textbook titles, 50% or more of the examples found in the textbooks examined do not give detailed contextual information regarding either the closeness of relationship or the power statuses of the interlocutors (see Fig. 3). Sometimes, information related to both factors is not available.

The fact that some of these contexts are imaginary in nature and involve non-human characters, is one of the key causes of ambiguity. These examples persistently appear across the textbook titles examined. For instance, these are two contexts given in two separate texts in Primary Longman Express book 4A: “One day, Peter Pan and Wendy were shopping at Neverland Supermarket” (p. 22) and “The toys sold in the same toy shop were discussing what TV programmes to watch at night, when the shopkeeper was not here,” (p. 62) are contexts where the social roles between the interlocutors, Peter Pan and Wendy, and the toys in the toy shop, are vague and could hardly be deduced by readers themselves because they are imaginary characters.



The ambiguity is also present when the example of disagreement is shown as a sample conversation, where the focus lies on the task and the content to be delivered. In “My Pals Are Here”, there is a conversation between a boy and two girls. One of them disagreed with the boy by saying, “Sorry, I don't want to eat fried food. Let's go to Porridge Restaurant instead” (see Fig. 4). Despite the presence of illustrations showing the girl being shorter than the boy, no additional information regarding her social role in correspondence to the boy and the relationship is given. In fact, one task has instructions that require students to take turns to make a suggestion to their partner using the expression “let's”. This activity orientates users to complete the utterances and discuss using certain linguistic structures instead of exploring how disagreement is made in relation to the context. Other components, such as where the interaction takes place and the interrelationship between the interlocutors are not discussed either.

Another example was found in “Head Start” with the sentence, “Charlie and Rose are discussing the preparations for English Week,” and sets the scene of discussion between two pupils on the time and activities of the English Week (see Fig. 5). Similarly, it is part of the practice requiring students to apply “how about” or “what about” to give suggestions in a discussion. While Charlie and Rose were classmates or schoolmates as they wear the same school uniform, the distance of their relationship remains uncertain resulting in the impossibility to illustrate the appropriateness of disagreement in context. In fact, many of these contexts are found in “Primary Longman Express” too. They tend to be conversations between either a group of children of a similar height, classmates or schoolmates.

Fig. 4: The context from 5A of “My Pals Are Here”(p. 13)

LET'S LISTEN!

Zoe and her parents are discussing whether to go to Dragon Restaurant or Hollywood Restaurant. Listen to the conversation between Zoe and her parents. Then, complete the table below.

	Who agrees?	Who disagrees?
 Zoe suggests going to _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
 Dad suggests going to _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

LET'S TALK!

Kevin suggests going to a new restaurant.

Let's go to Fried Chicken Cafe for dinner.

Sorry, I don't want to eat fried food. Let's go to Porridge Restaurant instead.

Okay!

Work with a partner. Take turns to use **'Let's'** to make a suggestion to your partner. Your partner may agree or disagree. If your partner disagrees, he or she should make another suggestion.

Fig. 5: The context from book 4B of “Head Start” (p. 12)

GRAMMAR (2)
Stage 5 'How about ...?', 'What about ...?', 'Let's ...'

Add -ing to the verbs after 'how about' and 'what about'.

How about catching them with our hands?

What about using ropes? ← Use a question mark here.



Let's use a big net. ← Do NOT change the form of the verbs after 'let's'.



Let's = Let us ← Use a full stop here.



Use these words to make suggestions.



(Suggested answers)

Charlie and Rose are discussing the preparations for English Week. Finish what they say.

① C: How about making the play twenty minutes long?

 make / play / 20 minutes long
 R: I don't think that's a good idea. Let's make the play thirty minutes long.

 make / play / 30 minutes long

② C: What about decorating the classrooms with ribbons?

 decorate / classrooms / with ribbons
 R: I don't think that's a good idea. How about decorating the classrooms with balloons?

 decorate / classrooms / with balloons

③ C: Let's print the invitation cards.

 print / invitation cards
 R: I don't think that's a good idea. What about drawing the invitation cards?

 draw / invitation cards

④ C: How about making some bookmarks?

 make / bookmarks
 R: I don't think that's a good idea. Let's make some cookies.

 make / cookies

* Students can choose one of the structures to make a suggestion.
 That sounds great. / Good idea!

I don't think that's a good idea. How/What about ...? / Let's ...


Charlie Rose

For contexts which are neither imaginary nor a sample conversation, information regarding the social roles and distance of relationship between the interlocutors is most easily overlooked. Often, the social roles of the interlocutors were not explicitly stated and the distance of relationship between the two could only be assumed based on own knowledge, making it vague for the determination of appropriate disagreeing responses. For example, With the context being “Alice and Abby talked about how they felt during the rides at Ocean Park,” (extracted from “My Pals Are Here” book 4B, p. 22) students could only assume Alice and Abby having a close relationship, based on the fact that they went to Ocean Park and play together, which is something they do with their close friends too. There are also instances where, despite the mentioning of the speakers’ social roles, how close they are to each other remains unclear. For instance, the context “The international charity “Save the World” was holding a fair to raise money or flood victims in Pakistan. The Charity Club decided to participate, and the children were talking about what they could do,” from “Primary Longman Express” book 6A (p. 52) tells explicitly that the speakers are the members of a club. However, information regarding whether they meet daily, once a week or once a month, which determines the distance of their relationship, is not mentioned.

The second most overlooked contextual information in these ambiguous contexts is the power statuses and difference of speakers. “Lighthouse for Hong Kong” and “Head Start” both rarely inform students who the older one is among the interlocutors that are siblings. “Jenny and Ray are on holiday to Australia with their parents. They are discussing what to do. Read their conversation,” (p. 36) was taken from book 10 of the former textbook title, where there is no information as to whether Jenny or Ray was the older sibling. Similarly, information regarding power distribution is absent in “Phoebe and Joseph are visiting Hong Kong with their dad. Read their conversation” taken from “Head Start” book 4B (p. 38).

The appropriateness of the disagreement strategies to the context

Table 3: The use of mitigation across the continuum of decreasing power difference and increasing intimacy in “Primary Longman Express” and “Lighthouse of Hong Kong”



	Primary Longman Express	Lighthouse for Hong Kong
Low disagrees with high distant		
Equal power status distant	14) Brother 1 (to a stranger): Mmm... Maybe we should go with you. (hedging; downtoners)	
high disagrees with low distant		(13) The reporter/interviewer: I suppose it's a good thing that giant pandas are not very dangerous... The interviewee: No, as a matter of fact they're very strong and could easily hurt people! (added support)
Low disagrees with high close		
Equal power status Close		
High disagrees with low close	12) ...she (the younger sister Judy) said excitedly. "Maybe you can be in a magazine too!" "I don't think so," said Matt. (direct strategy)	(1) "...Is he the thief?" asked Jimmy. "No, I don't think so," Tracy (a classmate) replied. (direct strategy)

With reference to Table 3, the disagreements in “Primary Longman Express” and “Lighthouse for Hong Kong” are generally expressed appropriately in the given contexts. In interactions between two strangers such as (14) from “Primary Longman Express” book 5A (p. 31), the interlocutor mitigated his disagreement towards the man’s idea of walking through the forest by hedging as is evident in the interjection “umm” and toning down his attitude with the downtoner “maybe”. As for (12) (extracted from book 5A, p. 42), where the interaction was between siblings in an intimate relationship, the elder brother directly discarded his younger sister’s thoughts of him being able to appear on the magazine by responding with, “I don’t think so.” Similarly, in “Lighthouse for Hong Kong”, contexts either show a distant relationship or high-power difference and demonstrate the use of one mitigated strategy on average. For instance, (13) took place in a TV interview (extracted from book 12, p. 51). The interviewee mitigated his disagreement by elaborating on his point as added support when talking to the interviewer. As for disagreements between interlocutors with either an intimate relationship or low power difference, direct disagreement strategies were mainly used. (1) would be one example extracted from book 7 (p. 9), where a girl directly disagreed with her friend’s idea of who the thief was with, “I don’t think so.”

Although direct strategies are used in this interaction between strangers as in “Some of the jokes were a bit rude. I wasn't amused. The other 'Shrek' films were better. This one was disappointing,” in “Primary Longman Express” book 6A (p. 35), which is unexpected, it could be a result of the fact that the interaction is not face-to-face, but virtual. As a result, the tendency of this disagreement to pose an immediate threat to the addressee’s face, is low. Another exceptional case was extracted from book 5B of “Primary Longman Express”, “We must stay on the path,” she (Miss Chow) said,’ (p. 3) is a disagreement made by the teacher who was of a higher status compared to her student in a distant relationship. While mitigation is recommended in this context, the teacher directly turned down the student’s idea and insisted on her own idea with the modal verb of obligation “must”. This rhetoric might be used if the issue is not negotiable. In this case, though, the short cut could be risky and dangerous, so that the teacher insisted on staying on the path.

Mismatches between the expressions of disagreement and the context, however, were occasionally found in both “Head Start” and “My Pals Are Here”, although mitigation was used by the interlocutor of a lower power status and direct strategies were used among close classmates in (4) and (5) (see Appendix 4). There is an example in which a high degree of mitigation was applied in contexts where mitigation is not assumed, “Maybe I’m old-fashioned, but I like listening to music on a record player, because the sound is nicer,” (extracted from “Head Start” book 5B, p. 44) is a disagreement made by the grandfather to the grandchildren, implying a minimal need for mitigation. However, the grandfather used 3 mitigated strategies when talking to his grandchildren who were of a lower power status and close to him. These strategies include the use of “maybe” as a downtoner, the use of “but” as a discourse marker that delays the disagreement, and the word “because” to give justification. Another instance was found in book 5A of “My Pals Are Here”, “I hope to try something new tonight,” said by a mother to her child (p. 5). Again, the mother was disagreeing indirectly through hinting while talking to her son, who is of a lower power status and, as such, indirectness is not assumed.

There is no significant difference, however, with the mitigation applied in the contextualised disagreements found in “Ready” textbooks, since they are mainly disagreements in close relationships, either between interlocutors with an equal power status, such as, “I don’t want to walk three kilometres. Let’s take a taxi. We’re right next to the taxi rank,” (extracted from “Ready” book 5A, p. 4) which is a suggestion by a girl to her teammates on a city hunt. Or relationships are illustrated with a speaker of a higher power status disagreeing, such as in, “That’s not true. Jessica helped you with that. You couldn’t button your clothes by yourself until you were five.” (extracted from “Ready” book 5A, p. 24) This latter example is a disagreement made by a grandmother to her grandchild. These disagreements generally show the use of one mitigation strategy in the form of suggestions and explanation as added support.

Discussion

The results address the research questions of this study. They suggest some variety of expressions of disagreements, ranging from direct disagreement strategies to some mitigated strategies such as explanation, partial agreement and giving suggestions, while strategies such as that for delay and indirectness are generally overlooked. While the majority of the expressions are contextualised, the contexts centralises in a close relationship between interlocutors, as opposed to a distant relationship. In addition, the lack of contextual details such as the social roles and closeness of relationship between interlocutors is a prevalent issue, resulting in ambiguity in contexts and hindering the evaluation of appropriacy of the disagreements. Even among the contextualised disagreements, mismatch between disagreement strategies and their context occasionally occurs in some textbooks, where the same extent of mitigation was demonstrated across contexts with varying distance in relationship and power between interlocutors.

The findings regarding the variety of the disagreement expressions partly agree with and partly contradict to that of previous studies, looking into how ESL speakers disagree and the commonly employed expressions. While many previous studies such as that of Pearson on the disagreement made by the ESL Japanese speakers and that of Bell (1998) with Koreans have suggested the tendency for formulaic and short responses in the form of bare exclamation “no” and the performative “I disagree”, ESL textbook publishers in Hong Kong manage to demonstrate mitigation in disagreement with some variety of mitigated strategies such as explanation, partial agreement and giving suggestions, in addition to generally formulaic and direct disagreement strategies. The fact that they are generally recognised by NNE speakers as more efficient tools for effective negotiations and rapport building (Bjørge, 2012) could result in a tendency for local textbook publishers in Hong Kong to include them over the other mitigated strategies. On the contrary, strategies such as the use of downtoners and hedges tend to be more commonly used in face-to-face disagreement, which ESL Asian speakers such as Japanese speakers tend to avoid (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989). As a result, they may be less covered in local Hong Kong ESL textbooks. In addition, they are more complicated strategies that demand speakers to first acquire the knowledge on the corresponding language behaviours and how the devices could be appropriately employed in the conversation (Norris, 2001). Thus, a systematically planned-out unit on the use of mitigation in disagreement is possibly more ideal, as opposed to instructions via the implicit showing of examples of disagreement via textbooks.

The trend found in the variety of contexts presented generally resembles what previous research suggests, in that the examples of disagreements are mostly situated in contexts where there is the absence of either a distant relationship or high difference in power between the interlocutors, or both. This could be subject to NNE Asian speakers’ general fear for face loss and the fact that power-unequal disagreements are dispreferred in Asian contexts, which result in the reluctance in disagreeing with power-unequal interlocutors: a similar observation made by Walkinshaw (2007) in her study of disagreement strategies used by Japanese learners of English. According to her, power implies censure where opposition is not preferred. Thus, the more frequent presence of disagreements within a close relationship or a low difference in power between interlocutors in ESL textbooks published in Hong Kong is justifiable. The situations presented in Hong Kong ESL textbooks are also dominated by interactions between same-aged classmates or friends, while that between strangers, across power statuses such as between student and teacher are less emphasised, similar to what McGroarty & Taguchi (2005) found in their study of

high school oral communication textbooks in Japan, where there is a limited number of such situations, hindering the learning of communication in different social situations.

Despite the high percentage of contextualised examples of disagreement, which is not to be expected based on previous research that shows the frequent decontextualisation of pragmatic contents (McCarthy, McCarten & Sandiford, 2005), the ambiguity of the contexts and mismatch between disagreement strategies and their contexts are all possible issues that could arise from the use of textbooks as instructional materials for pragmatic-related topics. For instance, in a recent study conducted by Nguyen (2011) on high school textbooks and workbooks in three Vietnamese high schools, there was a consistent lack of instruction as to what expressions are appropriate in different given contexts and the reasons behind the choices. Similarly, Ishihara and Paller (2016)'s study reveals the absence of sufficient information and instructions regarding the contexts in which the strategies were used in ELT materials in general. They all indicate how ELT textbooks tend to position important information in relation to the fostering of PC as peripheral, which is of no exception to the ELT textbooks published in Hong Kong that were examined in this study as well.

Overall, the results point to the need for more demonstrations of how a variety of mitigated disagreement strategies could be used in real communicative settings, a greater variety of contexts entailing disagreements between interlocutors of a distant relationship or a high difference in power, more explicit instruction on both the contexts themselves and the rationale behind the choosing of different disagreement strategies over one another, subject to the given contexts in local ELT textbooks. As a result, several suggestions have been proposed in response to the above issues observed with the instruction of the pragmatics of disagreement via ELT textbooks. To illustrate how the issues could possibly be addressed, a sample unit on the topic “Disagreeing Politely”, which consists of materials and resources for 2 lessons that teachers could implement, has been designed.

In response to the lack of examples of commonly overlooked mitigated strategies, it is recommended that teachers introduce these expressions explicitly to students through self-made materials, demonstrating how they could be used to tone down a disagreement, making it sound more polite in context.

With reference to the sample lessons, teacher could introduce to students how modal verbs such as “may”, downtoners “maybe” and an initial apology with the phrase “I am sorry, but ...” could be embedded into conversations between two people who are discussing over a notion. In this case, students could see how they could be part of the disagreement and the effects they have on the disagreement expressed. For example (see Appendix 5), teachers could first introduce the purpose of “may” and “maybe” to reflect one’s unsure about his ideas, and a willingness to discuss. Then, he could demonstrate their contextualised usage by showing a discussion between two people, where the teacher could explain how “maybe” could be used to give an alternate suggestion and “may” to state one’s concernss behind the disagreeing stance. In fact, a previous study conducted by Jeon and Kaya (2006) on ESL pragmatics instruction also recommends the implementation of explicit pragmatics instruction, by stating directly the expressions students should master and the metapragmatic explanations behind their usage, as an effective strategy to promote the acquisition of pragmatics.

In response to the occasional mismatch between the expressions of disagreement and the context, teachers may raise students' awareness towards the identity of, the relation and difference in power between the interactants as the mental process involved in giving contextually appropriate disagreement. To reinforce the undergoing of such mental process in students, teachers could "think aloud" this process with students.

In the first sample lesson (see Appendix 5), teachers first draws students' attention to two factors that they should consider **to know** how polite they should be, which are the distance in relationship with the other speaker and their age. By looking at the age of the speakers, students evaluate and determine the power difference by knowing which of the speakers is older and younger in relation to themselves. Next, as the class studies different scenarios, 2 questions could be asked, which are "Is this person close with you or distant to you?" and "Is this person older, younger or same age as you?" The teacher could first "think aloud" these questions himself by voicing out how he/she arrives at the answers to these questions, by saying, "Since the new class teacher is both distant to us and older than us, so a lot of polite devices should be used." With the next scenario, teacher could allow students to undergo this mental process and think of the answers to these same questions. Then, teacher could assist students in drawing linkages from the answers to the use of polite devices by asking prompt questions such as "When our addressee is older than us but close with us, do we use a lot of polite devices, or some will do too?" It is suggested that teacher designs homework that requires students to answer these questions before writing their disagreement so that such mental process could be persistently reinforced until it becomes natural to students when they consider how to disagree with someone (see Appendix 6). Such approach of drawing students to notice the link between the disagreement strategy used and their addressee likely facilitates form-context mapping, a process that promotes L2 pragmatic acquisition (Ishihara & Paller, 2016, p. 24).

With self-made materials, the teacher may enjoy the flexibility of creating a range of scenarios with the combination of varying distance in relationship and difference in power when teaching this topic. While current textbooks tend not to display disagreements happening in situations where there is a distant relationship between speakers, teachers could fill this gap by designing such scenarios such that not only can the variety of situations be expanded, but a more authentic application of polite devices could be fostered. The authenticity of the disagreement presented is another minor issue found in the textbooks arising from the dominance of disagreements in a close relationship over that in a distant relationship. With the addition disagreements in a distant relationship such as those made by students to their teachers for instance, students may better experience the urge of being more polite and applying the polite devices to mitigate and tone down their disagreement, like how respectful and polite they should be when talking to their teacher generally. In fact, research has shown that it is desirable when students could use the target expressions in environment relevant to their lives for effective acquisition (Ishihara & Paller, 2016, p. 25).

Limitations

Given that this is a small-scale study, it has only examined the variety and appropriateness of the disagreements presented in local textbooks on the pragmatic issues regarding disagreement. Other issues such as the content of the disagreement and how reasonable and justifiable the disagreements are, were not studied. The current study would probably have benefitted more in this aspect, if it was of a larger scale, looking into the quality of the disagreements presented. Investigation into related issues could be useful. In fact, Hong Kong students are always found struggling with giving sound explanations when exchanging ideas, according to an experienced local English teacher.

The presentation of the sample lessons as a possible suggestion to improve the teaching of the pragmatics of disagreement is another limitation of this study. Due to school suspension resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic when this study was conducted, the sample lessons could not be implemented in the real classroom setting. The validity of the suggested activities in educating students on the target topic would have been verified with empirical evidence. Moreover, the actual implementation would validate the practicality of the learning activities by discussing possible challenges and common struggles students experience with such instruction. This would possibly contribute to further depth to this study, benefitting pre- and in-service teachers as they could take note of issues they should pay attention to when implementing lessons like these and avoid them before their teaching.

Conclusion

This study has explored the current situation concerning the teaching of the pragmatics of disagreement-making in English through local children's English textbooks in Hong Kong given its inevitability in daily interactions and complexity that involves facework to avoid appearing offensive. Specifically, related contents in local English textbooks have been analysed based on the variety of disagreement expressions presented, the variety of contexts representing a range of possibilities with varying distance in relationships and the power difference between speakers, how the contexts are presented, and how well the disagreement strategies used match the given contexts.

While existing textbooks manage to present a high percentage of mitigated disagreements and situate them in varying contexts, deficiencies are apparent such as the lack of variety in the mitigated strategies and the contexts presented, the ambiguity of contextual information and the mismatch between the disagreement expressions demonstrated and their contexts. Thus, it is recommended that textbook publishers consider these problems when designing new textbooks by including a greater variety of disagreement expressions, mitigated strategies and contexts, and also ensuring the match between disagreement expressions and their contexts.

One limitation of this study is that areas such as the relevance of the content of the disagreement to the notion presented and how reasonable the person is in justifying the negative opinion have not been investigated in such a small-scale study. Thus, this study is just an initial step into the evaluation of the textbooks analysed and the necessary enhancement of the teaching of pragmatics of disagreement in the local context. Consequently, further research is needed to examine the notion more comprehensively so that suggestions for improvement could be made on various dimensions to improve instruction of this topic in Hong Kong.

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Appendix 1: Examples of disagreement and the corresponding contexts under which the disagreements were presented in the textbook titles

	Is there a context / contextual information provided (YES = Y ; NO = N)	The examples of disagreement	If yes, what is the context. How is it presented?
Primary Longman Express	Y	1) "Cola is the most delicious drink," said Peter. "It's cheaper than orange juice," he added (Extracted from book 4A, p. 22).	Read the story. How did Wendy and Peter Pan discuss what to buy? "One day, Peter Pan and Wendy were shopping at Neverland Supermarket."
		2) "It's true that orange juice is more expensive than cola," said Wendy, "but juice is better for you." (Extracted from book 4A, p. 22).	
		3) "Eight? That's 160 altogether! Said Wendy. "That's too expensive!" "No, it's fine," said Peter. "Look!" He showed Wendy a notice (saying buy one get one free) (Extracted from book 4A, p. 22)	
	N (There is only a picture of two children talking being shown)	4) "What about cola?" "Sorry, I don't like cola." (Extracted from book 4A, 24)	N/A (from the list of disagreement expressions in the appendix of the book)
		5) "What about cola?" "I'm afraid I don't like cola." (Extracted from book 4A, 24)	
	Y	6) "Yuck!" said Starman, the robot. "I don't want to watch a pop music show or a drama. They're both silly." (Extracted from book 4B, p. 63)	The toys sold in the same toy shop were discussing what TV programmes to watch at night, when the shopkeeper was not here.
		7) "No!" said Charlie, the caterpillar. "I don't like sports programmes. I don't like the news either." (Extracted from book 4B, p. 63)	
	Y	8) Mrs Ho: ... You eat like a bird sometimes! Mr. Ho: Yes, but you know I have a sweet tooth. The desserts look delicious! (Extracted from book 4A, p. 31)	A couple, Mr. and Mrs. Ho, are looking at the menu and deciding on what to eat at the restaurant, together with their children.
	N	9) No, I think ...(extracted from book 4B, 5B & 6B)	N/A
		10) I'm afraid I don't think so (extracted from book 4B, 5B & 6B).	
		11) Excuse me. But I don't think...(extracted from book 4B, 5B & 6B).	

	Y	12) ...she (the younger sister Judy) said excitedly. "Maybe you can be in a magazine too!" "I don't think so," said Matt (extracted from book 5A, p. 43). 13) "...It's a book about Hong Kong," said Matt. Judy pulled a face. "A book?" she said. "I have a better present. Wait here." (Extracted from book 5A, p. 42)	"Matt was going on a study tour to London. His sister Judy was helping him get ready."
	Y	14) Ng Ho: I'll walk through the forest. It's the quickest way. Brother 1: Mmm...Maybe we should go with you. (Extracted from book 5A, p. 31)	The ten brothers saved Ng Ho from the tiger. Ng Ho was then showing the ten brothers his belongings.
	Y	15) "Maybe we can take a short cut," he (Tommy) suggested. "We must stay on the path," she (Miss Chow) said (extracted from book 5B, p. 3).	Tommy and his sister Susan were late at going to the country park. Their teacher, Miss Chow, came to pick them up and walked with them to meet the others.
	Y	16) "Although travelling by minibus is comfortable, it's expensive. Although travelling by MTR is uncomfortable, it's cheap..." (extracted from book 5B, p. 15) 17) "Although travelling by by MTR is convenient, it's crowded. Although travelling by the ferry is inconvenient, it's not crowded. Let's go by the ferry." (extracted from book 5B, p. 15)	The children want to go to a concert at City Hall. They are talking about how to get to Central from their homes.
	Y	18) "The jokes were funny. It was very amusing." "Some of the jokes were a bit rude. I wasn't amused. The other 'Shrek' films were better. This one was disappointing." (Extracted from book 6A, p. 35) 19) "...I thought the film would never end!" "I disagree. I thought the plot was exciting. I watched open-mouthed." (Extracted from book 6A, p. 35)	Some people have posted their opinions of different films on a website.
	Y	20) "Shall we sell raffle tickets for Save the World?" suggested Betty. Helen groaned. "I'd rather do something else," she said. "We always sell raffle tickets and it doesn't raise much money." (Extracted from book 6A, p. 52)	The international charity "Save the World" was holding a fair to raise money for flood victims in Pakistan. The Charity Club decided to participate, and the



		(21)...said Dan. "We can either make crafts or bake cakes." "Betty looked doubtful. "Neither Helen nor I can bake," she said. "Last time we tried to bake cakes, we nearly burnt down the school kitchen." (Extracted from book 6A, p. 52)	children were talking about what they could do.
	Y	(22) "...Shall we put on a drama?" asked a boy. "I'm afraid I'm not good at acting. Let's put on a concert instead." replied a girl. (Extracted from book 6A, p. 54)	The children are discussing what to do on Charity Day. Finish what they say. Dear Charity Club members, Charity Day is coming soon. Please help us on this day! Here are the things you can do...
	Y	(23)"...Shall we put on a plashow?" asked a child. "I'm afraid I'm not good at singing or acting. Let's run a stall instead." said another child. (Extracted from book 6A, p. 58)	Get into groups. Discuss which country / place you want to help and what event you want to organise in Charity Week next month.
	N	(24) "I think it's better to ... Instead." (Extracted from book 6B)	N/A (from the list of disagreement expressions in the appendix of the book)
Lighthouse for Hong Kong	Y	(1) "...Is he the thief?" asked Jimmy. "No, I don't think so," Tracy replied. (Extracted from book 7, p. 9)	Something strange happened at Tracy's school last week. Read the story. Last Monday morning, Tracy was playing with her friends, Jimmy and peter, in the playground before lessons started.
	N	(2) "I don't agree. I think Space Town is the most ..." (Extracted from book 7, p. 59)	N/A
	Y	(3) "We can take the beautiful, round, red hot-air balloon," suggested Michelle. "I think the short, rectangular, blue high-speed train is better," said Jason. (Extracted from book 7, p. 75)	Michelle and her friends cannot find any helicopters that go to Gumtree City. They need to find another way to get there. Complete what they say.



		(4) ... "I like the big, oval, purple submarine. It looks cool," said Harry. (Extracted from book 7, p. 75)	
		(5) ... "Let's take the cute, long, golden lorry. It's convenient," said Jenny. (Extracted from book 7, p. 75)	
	Y	(6) "Don't worry! I'm sure you can do better this time. Cindy (the granddaughter): I don't think so. My classmates are fast runners. I am shorter than Iris, and I'm weaker than Helen. How can I win the race? (Extracted from book 7, p. 22)	Cindy's grandpa lives in the UK. Cindy seldom sees him, but she talks to him on the phone almost every day. One day, Cindy was very sad. She called Grandpa.
	N	(7) "Shall we explore the swamp?" "Sorry, I don't think that's a very good idea." (Extracted from book 8, p. 49)	N/A
	Y	(8) "This is crazy, Cosmo! Why did you order so much?" Luna asked Cosmo after the waitress flew into the kitchen. (Extracted from book 9)	Cosmo and Luna went to an award-winning restaurant last week. Read the story.
	Y	(9) "I hear that there are so many tourists there (Sunshine Beach) before noon. It'll be very crowded. There'll be so little space for us to lide down on the sand." (extracted from book 10, p. 36)	Jenny and Ray are on holiday to Australia with their parents. They are discussing what to do. Read their conversation...
		(10) "How about visiting Australia Zoo? It's the home of The Crocodile Hunter." (Extracted from book 10, p. 36)	
	Y	(11) "I don't think that's a good idea." (extracted from book 10, p. 39)	Leo and Helen are discussing the activities for a trip. Finish what they say.
		(12) "I don't think that's a good idea. What about ...?" (Extracted from book 10, p. 39)	

	Y	(13) The reporter/interviewer: I suppose it's a good thing that giant pandas are not very dangerous... The interviewee: No, as a matter of fact they're very strong and could easily hurt people! (Extracted from book 12, p. 51)	I've managed to track down Andy Wood, one of the zookeepers (that rescued the panda in the accident), for an interview.
	N	(14) "I agree that doing voluntary work is a good thing. However, I do not think it is necessary for every student to do voluntary work in their spare time. Voluntary work requires time and effort. Students with poor exam results should spend more time on studying. What's more...it is not the only way (to help people)." (extracted from book 13, p. 56)	N/A
	Y	(15) "What about the school playground? It's big enough," suggested a student. "Yes, but we'll have to change the venue if it rains on that day," replied the student's group member. (Extracted from book 12, p. 30)	Form groups of four. You and your group members are planning an art fun day on the theme of sport...Discuss the venue, time, judges and prizes for the art fun day.
Head Start	Y	(1) Joseph: Let's go on the Lantau Island Tour. Phoebe: Can we join the Peak Tour instead? (extracted from book 4B, p. 38)	Phoebe and Joseph are visiting Hong Kong with their dad. Read their conversation.
		(2) Phoebe: ... We can also see the sunset from The Peak. Joseph: But I think watching Chinese white dolphins is more interesting... (extracted from book 4B, p. 38)	

	Y	(3) "I don't think that's a good idea. How/What about ...? / Let's ...", said Rose (Extracted from book 4B, p. 12)	Charlie and Rose are discussing the preparations for English Week. Finish what they say.
	Y	(4) Josh said, "Lions are the fattest animals." Eddie replied, "No, Cheetahs are the fattest animals." (Extracted from book 4A)	Read a story about Daisy and her friends doing a project on wild animals.
		(5) Ruby said, "Eagles are the biggest birds." Daisy argued, "Ostriches are bigger than eagles. Ostriches are the biggest birds." (Extracted from book 4A)	The children did a project on wild animals yesterday.
	Y	(6) "I don't agree. I think (another place) is more attractive than (this place)." (Extracted from book 4A)	Kylie took photos of some other places in Hong Kong. Talk with your friend. Use the words in the box to compare the places.
	Y	(7) "...Mine is the worst!" replied Gary's dad. "Yours is not the worst. Mine is the worst. It's salty! Why?" said Gary. (Extracted from book 4A)	Read a story about three families going to Family Cooking Day. Jake, Lucy and Gary joined Family Cooking Day yesterday.
	Y	(8) "Maybe I'm old-fashioned, but I like listening to music on a record player, because the sound is nicer." Said Grandpa. (Extracted from book 5B, p. 44)	The picture below shows what happens in Grandparents' Day Surprises Scene 2.
		(9) "It's so hot. No one keeps cool with a paper fan these days. Can we turn on the air-conditioner, please, Grandpa?" Asked the grandson. "I like to keep cool with a paper fan because it helps save energy." Replied the grandfather. (Extracted from book 5B, p. 44)	
		(10) "I know, Grandpa. But it's really hot. Can we switch on the air-conditioner, please?" Asked the granddaughter. (Extracted from book 5B, p. 44)	
	Y	(11) Calvin: I've made eighty so far. Is that enough, Dad? Uncle: I don't think so. We didn't have enough last year.	Jenny is staying at her uncle and aunt's home in London. Read about how they



		(Extracted from book 5A)	prepare for a special event. Calvin and Bella are the cousins of Jenny.
		(12) Aunt: There are different kinds of dumplings. Uncle: But you've only made pork dumplings for us. (Extracted from book 5A)	
		(13) Uncle: But you've only pork dumplings for us. Bella: No, Dad. Mum has also made shrimp dumplings before. (Extracted from book 5A)	
	N	(14) "I don't think that's a good idea." (Extracted from book 4B)	N/A
		(15) "I don't think so." (Extracted from book 4B)	
		(16) "That's true, but..." (Extracted from book 4B)	
My Pals Are Here	Y	(1) "This palace is too small. I wish to have a grand palace," he said to the queen. "But I like our small palace," said the queen. "I am happy here." (Extracted from book 4A, p. 2)	Here is a story about a king who had three wishes. There was once a happy king. He lived in a small palace with his queen.
	Y	(2) "Yes, but I think the lion was smarter to attack them one by one." (Extracted from book 4A, p. 6)	"I have borrowed a book of fables from the library. Let's read it together," Rose said to Peter. Rose and Peter talked about what they thought of the characters in the fable.
	Y	(3) "Let's play basketball!" "I am not good at basketball. Shall we play badminton instead?" (Extracted from book 4A, p. 40)	It is Sunday. Tom and his friend plan to play together at the park.
	Y	(4) "There's a problem though. We don't have a lot of money - only 50 dollars." (Extracted from book 4B, p. 5)	The next day, Anne called May to thank her for her e-mail. They also talked about Aunt Pam's birthday.
	Y	(5) "I was very bored when we were on the Bird Paradise tour. It is the most boring place that I have visited". "Well, I guess you are simply not interested in birds." (Extracted from book 4B, p. 23)	Alice and Abby talked about how they felt during the rides at Ocean Park.
	Y	(6) "Sorry, I don't want to eat fried food. Let's go to Porridge Restaurant instead." (Extracted from book 5A, p. 13)	Kevin suggests going to a new restaurant.



	Y	(7) "I would like to have dim sum for dinner." Suggested the son. "I hope to try something new tonight." said Mum. (Extracted from book 5A, p. 5)	A few days later, Kevin and his family decided to go to a food court near their home for dinner.
	Y	(8) "Shall we go jogging tomorrow?" Asked a pupil. "I am not sure. If it rains, we will not run on the track." (Extracted from book 6A, p. 47)	The pupils made plans to exercise together the next day.
	Y	(9) "Let's start playing now!" Suggested a female pupil. "Don't you need to change into loose-fitting clothes and sports shoes first?" Said the male pupil. (Extracted from book 6A, p. 49) (10) "Don't you need to change into loose-fitting clothes and sports shoes first?" Said the male pupil. "That's so troublesome. Besides, we won't be playing for long." (Extracted from book 6A, p. 49) (11) "That's (changing into sports outfit) so troublesome. Besides, we won't be playing for long." Said the female pupil. "Yes, but we should still change into suitable clothes. Besides being more comfortable, they prevent us from injuring ourselves." Replied the male pupil. (Extracted from book 6A, p. 49)	Anna and Alex reached the sports hall first. They decided to play badminton.
	N	(12) "I disagree with Ben. We will fall ill if we don't get enough rest and I don't think work is more important than health." (Extracted from book 6A, p. 55)	N/A
	Y	(13) "The butterfly lays eggs on a leaf and ... " "No! I think that's wrong!" Said a male pupil. (Extracted from book 6B, p. 57) - a group discussion between a group of students) [The male student was immediately stopped by another student, telling him that he should not interrupt when other's speaking. But instead, wait for his own turn to speak.]	Sue is explaining the life cycle of a butterfly. Joe and Ben are listening to her. Work with a partner to discuss who is a good listener and who is not.
	N	(14) "We can learn more about nature if we keep the mini zoo." Suggested a male pupil. "I understand your point of view. However, having a basketball court would encourage pupils to play sports and exercise more often." Said a female pupil. (Extracted from book 6B, p. 69)	N/A



Ready	Y	(1) "I think the true story is touching." Suggested Andy. "I think the true story is more touching than the love story." Suggested Andy's cousin, Jamie. (Extracted from book 4A, p. 35)	Andy and his cousin, Jamie are talking about some books in the library. Role-play with your partner.
	Y	(2) "We can listen to Part 2 next time. Now let's go home." Suggested Andy. "Can we stay?" Jamie asked... "The story is more exciting than I thought. I can't wait to read the next part of the story!" (Extracted from book 4A, p. 33)	It was Friday afternoon. Andy met his cousin Jamie in the library.
	Y	(3) "Princess Milky, maybe you should eat less chocolate!" Advised the cooks. "No. I want more chocolate!" Replied Princess Milky (to the cooks). (Extracted from book 4B, p. 12)	The next day, the cooks asked Princess Milky what she wanted for breakfast, lunch and dinner. "Chocolate, chocolate, chocolate! I only want to eat chocolate!" the princess answered. Day after day, the princess ate nothing but chocolate. The cooks were worried.
	Y	(4) Bob: The Dinosaurs Exhibition sounds interesting too..." Jack: That's not fun. Let's do something else! (Extracted from book 4B, p. 24)	Now, Andy and his friends are visiting the Science Museum. What do they want to see? Let's read.
	Y	(5) "Go and ride on the real Ferris wheel!" Suggested Dumpty the clown. "Oh, I can't do that. It makes me feel funny." Replied Humpty the other clown. (Extracted from book 4B, p. 33)	Since Humpty, one of the clowns, wanted to ride on a balloon Ferris Wheel, Dumpty, the other clown, was suggesting him to go and ride on the Ferris Wheel.
	Y	(6) Zookeeper Danny: The hippo is about 300 kilograms, I guess? Zookeeper James: That's not possible. A hippo is very heavy. (Extracted from book 4B, p. 53)	It is morning, Zookeeper Danny and James are on the stage looking at the open cages.



	Y	(7) Zookeeper: Why do you want ice-cream anyway? It makes you fat. Tiger: I'm not fat. I'm only 158 kilograms... (Extracted from book 4B)	Tiger and Bear are inside their cages in the zoo. The zookeeper enters with a large bucket.
	Y	(8) Grace: The yellow cards will help us find the treasure. Let's hurry! Or else there won't be any yellow cards left. Jess: Take a look at the map. The yellow cards are all over the place. We should split up. (Extracted from book 4B, p. 44)	Grace and her friends are doing a treasure hunt at the campsite.
	Y	(9) "...We can go over that footbridge and walk to the hotel." Suggested Chris. "I don't want to walk three kilometres," Anna shouted. "Let's take a taxi. We're right next to the taxi rank." (Extracted from book 5A, p. 4)	Ben and his friends Betty, Chris and Anna took part in a city orienteering race last Saturday.
	Y	(10) Anna: ...Can you ask Oscar to button his clothes by himself?" Grandma: Don't be silly! Oscar is only 4 years old. (Extracted from book 5A, p. 24)	Anna and Grandma are babysitting Anna's little cousins.
		(11) Anna: I could button my own clothes by myself when I was four. Grandma: That's not true. Jessica helped you with that. You couldn't button your clothes by yourself until you were five. (Extracted from book 5A, p. 24)	
	N	(12) I don't think so (Extracted from book 5A)	N/A
		(13) That's true, but ... (Extracted from book 5A)	
		(14) I'm afraid that's not a good idea. (Extracted from book 5A)	

	Y	(15) "Let's go to Singapore...we can have lots of chances to practise English." One groupmate suggested. "Although Singapore is a nice place to go, we need to go there by plane. That's too expensive for us." Replied another groupmate. (Extracted from book 6A)	You would like to have a school exchange trip during the Easter holidays. In groups of four, write a proposal to the principal about the trip.
	Y	(16) "...let's have the camp from ... to ..." suggested a student. "I think (this time) is too early/late." Replied another student. (Extracted from book 6B)	Your class is planning a graduation party. The party will be about three hours long. In groups of four, discuss the details of the party and complete the table.
		(17) "Shall we have our graduation party on ...?" Asked a student. "I don't agree because..." Another student replied. (Extracted from book 6B)	
	Y	(18) "...Then, I want to take a nap in the afternoon," said Karen. "I'm afraid you can't. We'll play tug of war at two fifteen. Everyone has to take part in it," said Rex. (Extracted from book 6B)	The children are at the graduation camp now. They had lots of fun activities at the camp yesterday. They discussed what activities to join the next day.



Appendix 2: The distribution of contexts across combinations of varying degree of power differences and relationship distance

	Contexts in “Primary Longman Express” (context no.)	Contexts in “Lighthouse for Hong Kong”	Contexts in “Head Start”	Contexts in “My Pals Are Here”	Contexts in “Ready”
1. speaker of high-power disagreeing with low power; distant relationship	15,	13,			3,
2. speaker of low-power disagreeing with high power; distant relationship					
3. speaker disagreeing with another speaker of an equal power status; distant relationship	14, 18, 19			4,	
4. speaker of high-power disagreeing with low power; close relationship	12,		9, 11	7	10, 11
5. speaker of low-power disagreeing with high power; close relationship	13,	6,	7, 10, 13		
6. speaker disagreeing with another speaker of an equal power status; close relationship	8	1, 3, 4, 5	4, 5, 8, 12	1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11	4, 8, 9,
7. Ambiguous distance of relationship or/and	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23	8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15	1, 2, 3, 6	2, 6, 13	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 15, 16, 17, 18



power between speakers presented					
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Appendix 3: Aspects of contextual information presented in the contexts found in the 5 textbook titles

	The context / contextual information presented	The social roles of the speakers	The distance in relationship between the speakers	The power difference	The issue/notion being discussed/disagreed
Primary Longman Express	Read the story. How did Wendy and Peter Pan discuss what to buy? “One day, Peter Pan and Wendy were shopping at Neverland Supermarket.” (Extracted from book 4A, p. 22)	N/A	N/A	N/A	What to buy at the supermarket
	The toys sold in the same toy shop were discussing what TV programmes to watch at night, when the shopkeeper was not here (extracted from book 4B, p. 62-63).	N/A	N/A	N/A	What TV programmes to watch at night, when the shopkeeper was not here
	A couple, Mr. and Mrs. Ho, are looking at the menu and deciding on what to eat at the restaurant, together with their children (extracted from book 4A, p. 31) .	Mr. Ho and Mrs. Ho (a couple)	Relatively close to each other	Likely of an equal power status	The fact that Mr. Ho will eat the appetite of a little bird and can't afford eating dessert
	“Matt was going on a study tour to London. His sister Judy was helping him get ready.” (Extracted from book 5A, p. 52-	Matt (the older brother) and Judy (the younger sister)	Likely close to each other	One of the speakers (Matt) has a higher power	The fact that Matt could appear on the magazine with English outfit

	53)				
	The ten brothers saved Ng Ho from the tiger. Ng Ho was then showing the ten brothers his belongings (extracted from book 5A, p. 31).	Ng Ho and The ten brothers (strangers)	Relatively distant	Likely of an equal power status	The fact that Ng Ho would walk through the forest to the Governor's house
	Tommy and his sister Susan were late at going to the country park. Their teacher, Miss Chow, came to pick them up and walked with them to meet the others (extracted from book 5B, p. 3).	Tommy and Susan (the students) and Miss Chow (the teacher)	Relatively distant	One of the speakers (Miss Chow) has a higher power	Whether to take the short cut or stay on the path
	The children want to go to a concert at City Hall. They are talking about how to get to Central from their homes (extracted from book 5B, p. 15).	Some children	N/A	Likely of an equal power status	What transportation to take to travel to their destination
	Some people have posted their opinions of different films on a website (extracted from book 6A, p. 35).	Some people (strangers)	Relatively distant	Likely of an equal power status	How much the "Shrek" movie appeals to the individual
	The international charity "Save the World" was holding a fair to raise money or flood victims in Pakistan. The Charity Club decided to participate, and the children were talking about what they could do (extracted from book 6A, p. 52).	The children as part of the charity club	N/A	Likely of an equal power status	What to do to raise money at the fair

	<p>The children are discussing what to do on Charity Day. Finish what they say.</p> <p>Dear Charity Club members, Charity Day is coming soon. Please help us on this day! Here are the things you can do...(extracted from book 6A, p. 54)</p>	Charity club members	N/A	Likely of an equal power	What to do on Charity Day
	Get into groups. Discuss which country / place you want to help and what event you want to organise in Charity Week next month (extracted from book 6A, p. 58).	Possibly classmates (an in-class task)	N/A	Likely of an equal status	The place/country to help and the event to be organised in Charity Week
Lighthouse for Hong Kong	<p>Something strange happened at Tracy's school last week. Read the story.</p> <p>Last Monday morning, Tracy was playing with her friends, Jimmy and peter, in the playground before lessons started (extracted from book 7, p. 9).</p>	Classmates	Relatively close to each other	Likely of an equal status	Who the thief is.
	Work in groups of three. Compare your town with your friend's town (extracted from book 7, p. 59).	Probably classmates (an in-class task)	N/A	Likely of an equal status	One's perception towards Space Town
	Michelle and her friends cannot find any helicopters that go to Gumtree City. They need to find another way to get there.	Michelle and her friends	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	Whether they should take the hot-air balloon or not



	Complete what they say (extracted from book 7, p. .75).				
	Cindy's grandpa lives in the UK. Cindy seldom sees him, but she talks to him on the phone almost every day. One day, Cindy was very sad. She called Grandpa (extracted from book 7, p. 22).	Cindy and her grandfather	Relatively close *[Cindy seldom sees him, but she talks to him on the phone almost every day.]	One of the speakers (Grandpa) has a higher power status	Cindy denies her grandfather's idea that she would win.
	Invite your friend to different places for an adventure (extracted from book 8).	Between Friends	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	The suggestion of exploring the swamp
	Cosmo and Luna went to an award-winning restaurant last week. Read the story (extracted from book 9).	N/A	N/A	N/A	The amount of food being ordered was too much.
	Jenny and Ray are on holiday to Australia with their parents. They are discussing what to do. Read their conversation... (extracted from book 10, p. 36)	Siblings	Likely to be close	N/A	Where to visit and what to do while travelling.
	Leo and Helen are discussing the activities for a trip. Finish what they say (extracted from book 10, p. 39).	N/A	N/A	N/A	What activities to do for the trip
	I've managed to track down Andy Wood, one of the zookeepers (that rescued the panda in the accident), for an interview (extracted from book 12, p. 51).	Interviewer and interviewee	Relatively distant	The interviewee (Andy Wood) is likely to have a higher status due to his more in-depth understanding of the topic	The fact that pandas could be very strong and hurt people easily
	Form groups of four. You and	Group members	N/A	Likely of an	Whether to set the venue of the art



	your group members are planning an art fun day on the theme of sport...Discuss the venue, time, judges and prizes for the art fun day (extracted from book 12, p. 30).			equal status	fun day at the school playground.
Head Start	Phoebe and Joseph are visiting Hong Kong with their dad. Read their conversation (extracted from book 4B, p. 38).	Between siblings	Relatively close	N/A	Which tour to join / what things to do when visiting Hong Kong
	Charlie and Rose are discussing the preparations for English Week. Finish what they say (extracted from book 4B, p. 12).	Between classmates	N/A	Likely of an equal status	The preparations to be done for English Week
	Read a story about Daisy and her friends doing a project on wild animals. The children did a project on wild animals yesterday (extracted from book 4A).	Between classmates	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	The traits / appearance of different wild animals when compared
	Kylie took photos of some other places in Hong Kong. Talk with your friend. Use the words in the box to compare the places (extracted from book 4A).	Between friends	N/A	Likely of an equal status	How is a certain place when compared to another place.
	Read a story about three families going to Family Cooking Day. Jake, Lucy and Gary joined Family Cooking Day yesterday (extracted from book 4A).	Between son and dad	Relatively close	One of the speakers (Dad) has a relatively higher power status	Whose fruit tart tasted most awfully.

	The picture below shows what happens in Grandparents' Day Surprises Scene 2 (extracted from book 5B, p. 44).	Between grandchildren and grandparents	Relatively close	Grandpa has a relatively higher power status to the grandchildren	The perceptions towards listening to music using an MP3 player or a record player, as well as keeping cool with paper fan or the air-conditioner
				Grandpa and Grandma have relatively equal power status	
	Jenny is staying at her uncle and aunt's home in London. Read about how they prepare for a special event. Calvin and Bella are the cousins of Jenny (extracted from book 5A).	Between a couple	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	Whether there are enough dumplings made.
		Between son/daughter and dad		One of the speakers (Dad) has a relatively higher power status	Whether mum made other types of dumplings before other than pork dumplings.
My Pals Are Here	Here is a story about a king who had three wishes. There was once a happy king. He lived in a small palace with his queen (extracted from book 4A, p. 2).	Between a couple (the king and the queen)	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	The perception towards having to live in their small palace
	"I have borrowed a book of fables from the library. Let's read it together," Rose said to Peter. Rose and Peter talked about what they thought of the characters in the fable (extracted from book 4A, p. 2).	Between two children from the same school	N/A	Likely of an equal status	The perception towards a character in a fable they read

	from book 4A, p. 6).				
	It is Sunday. Tom and his friend plan to play together at the park (extracted from book 4A, p. 40).	Between friends	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	What to play at the park together
	The next day, Anne called May to thank her for her e-mail. They also talked about Aunt Pam's birthday (extracted from book 4B, p. 5)	Between cousins	Relatively distant	Likely of an equal status	What to buy for Aunt Pam's birthday
	Alice and Abby talked about how they felt during the rides at Ocean Park (extracted from book 4B, p. 23).	N/A	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	The feelings of taking the rides at Ocean Park
	Kevin suggests going to a new restaurant (extracted from book 5A, p. 13).	N/A	N/A	N/A	Which restaurant to go to
	A few days later, Kevin and his family decided to go to a food court near their home for dinner (extracted from book 5A, p. 5).	Between the son and the mother	Relatively close	One of the speakers (the mother) has a relatively higher power status.	The perception towards having dim sum for dinner.
	The pupils made plans to exercise together the next day (extracted from book 6A, p. 47).	Between classmates	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	Whether to go jogging tomorrow or not
	Anna and Alex reached the sports hall first. They decided to play badminton (extracted from book 6A, p 49).	Between classmates	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	Whether Anna should change into loose-fitting clothes and sports shoes first before playing.
	Sue is explaining the life cycle of a butterfly. Joe and Ben are listening to her. Work with a partner to discuss who is a good listener and who is not	Between classmates / schoolmates	N/A	Likely of an equal status	The life cycle of a butterfly

	(extracted from book 6B, p. 57).				
Ready	Andy and his cousin, Jamie are talking about some books in the library. Role-play with your partner (extracted from book 4A, p. 35).	Between cousins	N/A	Likely of an equal status	Which story is more touching to each of them?
	It was Friday afternoon. Andy met his cousin Jamie in the library (extracted from book 4A, p. 33).	Between cousins	N/A	Likely of an equal status	Whether to go home now or to stay and listen to part 2 of the story.
	The next day, the cooks asked Princess Milky what she wanted for breakfast, lunch and dinner. "Chocolate, chocolate, chocolate! I only want to eat chocolate!" the princess answered. Day after day, the princess ate nothing but chocolate. The cooks were worried (extracted from book 4B, p. 12).	Between a princess and her servants	Relatively distant	One of the speakers (the princess) has a relatively higher power status	Whether the princess should have chocolate for every meal.
	Now, Andy and his friends are visiting the Science Museum. What do they want to see? Let's read (extracted from book 4B, p. 24).	Between friends	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	Whether to go to the dinosaur exhibition or not.
	Since Humpty, one of the clowns, wanted to ride on a balloon Ferris Wheel, Dumpty, the other clown, was suggesting him to go and ride on the Ferris Wheel (extracted from book 4B, p. 33).	N/A	N/A	N/A	Whether to ride on the real Ferris Wheel or not.
	It is morning, Zookeeper Danny	Probably	N/A	Likely of an	The fact that the hippo at the zoo



	and James are on the stage looking at the open cages (extracted from book 4B, p. 53).	colleagues		equal status	weighed 300 kg.
	Tiger and Bear are inside their cages in the zoo. The zookeeper enters with a large bucket (extracted from book 4B).	The zookeeper and the animals to be looked after	N/A	One of the speakers (the zookeeper) has a higher power status	The tiger disagrees with the zookeeper not giving him ice-cream. It thinks that he is not fat and could eat ice-cream.
	Grace and her friends are doing a treasure hunt at the campsite (extracted from book 4B, p. 44).	Between friends	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	Jess disagrees with hurrying to find the yellow cards right away. He suggested split
	Ben and his friends Betty, Chris and Anna took part in a city orienteering race last Saturday (extracted from book 5A, p. 4).	Between friends	Relatively close	Likely of an equal status	While Chris suggested walking to the hotel via the footbridge, Anna disagreed and suggested taking the taxi instead.
	Anna and Grandma are babysitting Anna's little cousins (extracted from book 5A, p. 24).	Between the granddaughter and the grandmother	Relatively close	One of the speakers (the grandmother) has a higher power status	Grandma disagreed with Oscar being able to button up his shirt at the age of 4, as well as the fact that Anna could do the same when she was at the same age.
	You would like to have a school exchange trip during the Easter holidays. In groups of four, write a proposal to the principal about the trip (extracted from book 6A).	Between classmates	N/A	Likely of an equal status	One of the students disagree with going to Singapore for the school exchange trip.
	Your class is planning a graduation party. The party will be about three hours long. In groups of four, discuss the details of the party and complete the table (extracted from book 6B).	Between classmates	N/A	Likely of an equal status	The suitable time to hold the graduation party
	The children are at the	Between	N/A	Likely of an	Rex disagreed with Karen being

	graduation camp now. They had lots of fun activities at the camp yesterday. They discussed what activities to join the next day (extracted from book 6B).	schoolmates of the same cohort (Primary 6 students)		equal status	able to take a nap in the afternoon tomorrow.
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Appendix 4: Contextualised examples of disagreements categorised into 6 combinations of varying power difference and relationship distance

	Primary Longman Express	Lighthouse for Hong Kong	Head Start	My Pals Are Here	Ready
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low disagrees with high distant 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal power status distant 	<p>14) Brother 1: Mmm...Maybe we should go with you. (hedging; downtoners) (extracted from book 5A, p. 31)</p> <p>18) "Some of the jokes were a bit rude. I wasn't amused. The other 'Shrek' films were better. This one was disappointing." (direct strategy) (extracted from book 6A, p. 35)</p> <p>19) "I disagree. I thought the plot was exciting. I watched open-mouthed." (explanation) (extracted from book 6A, p. 35)</p>			(4) "There's a problem though. We don't have a lot of money - only 50 dollars." (added support) (extracted from book 4B, p. 5)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high disagrees 	15) "Maybe we can take a short cut," he	(13) The reporter/interviewer:			(3) "Princess Milky, maybe you should eat less chocolate!" Advised

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> with low distant 	<p>(Tommy) suggested. "We must stay on the path," she (Miss Chow) said. (Direct strategy) (extracted from book 5B, p. 3)</p>	<p>I suppose it's a good thing that giant pandas are not very dangerous... The interviewee: No, as a matter of fact they're very strong and could easily hurt people! (added support) (Extracted from book 12, p. 51)</p>			<p>the cooks. "No. I want more chocolate!" Replied Princess Milky (to the cooks). (Direct strategy) (extracted from book 4B, p. 12)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low disagrees with high close 	<p>13) "...It's a book about Hong Kong," said Matt. Judy pulled a face. "A book?" she said. "I have a better present. Wait here." (alt. suggestion) (extracted from book 5A, p. 42)</p>	<p>(6) "Don't worry! I'm sure you can do better this time. Cindy (the granddaughter): I don't think so. My classmates are fast runners. I am shorter than Iris, and I'm weaker than Helen. How can I win the race? (added support) (extracted from book 7, p. 22)</p>	<p>(7) "...Mine is the worst!" replied Gary's dad. "Yours is not the worst. Mine is the worst. It's salty! Why?" said Gary. (explanation) (extracted from book 4A)</p> <p>10) "I know, Grandpa. But it's really hot. Can we switch on the air-conditioner, please?" Asked the granddaughter. (partial agreement; alt. suggestion) (extracted from book 5B, p. 44)</p>		

			13) Dad: But you've only pork dumplings for us. Bella: No, Dad. Mum has also made shrimp dumplings before. (added support) (extracted from book 5A)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal power status Close 	8) Mrs Ho: ...You eat like a bird sometimes! Mr. Ho: Yes, but you know I have a sweet tooth. The desserts look delicious! (partial agreement) (extracted from book 4A, p. 31)	(1) "...Is he the thief?" asked Jimmy. "No, I don't think so," Tracy replied. (direct strategy) (extracted from book 7, p. 9)	(4) Josh said, "Lions are the fattest animals." Eddie replied, "No, Cheetahs are the fattest animals." (direct strategy) (extracted from book 4A)	(1) "This palace is too small. I wish to have a grand palace," he said to the queen. "But I like our small palace," said the queen. "I am happy here." (delay through discourse) (extracted from book 4A, p. 2)	(4) Bob: The Dinosaurs Exhibition sounds interesting too..." Jack: That's not fun. Let's do something else! (alt. suggestion) (extracted from book 4B, p. 24)
		(3) "We can take the beautiful, round, red hot-air balloon," suggested Michelle. "I think the short, rectangular, blue high-speed train is better," said Jason. (direct strategy) (extracted from book 7, p. 75)	5) Ruby said, "Eagles are the biggest birds." Daisy argued, "Ostriches are bigger than eagles. Ostriches are the biggest birds." (direct strategy) (extracted from book 4A)	(3) "Let's play basketball!" "I am not good at basketball. Shall we play badminton instead?" (alt. suggestion) (extracted from 4A, p. 40)	(8) Grace: The yellow cards will help us find the treasure. Let's hurry! Or else there won't be any yellow cards left. Jess: Take a look at the map. The yellow cards are all over the place. We should split up. (alt. suggestion) (extracted from book 4B, p. 44)
		(4) ... "I like the big, oval, purple submarine. It looks cool," said Harry. (direct strategy)	(8) "Maybe I'm old-fashioned, but I like listening to music on a record player, because the sound is nicer."	(5) "I was very bored when we were on the Bird Paradise tour. It is the most boring place that I have	(9) "...We can go over that footbridge and walk to the hotel." Suggested Chris. "I don't want to walk three kilometres," Anna shouted. "Let's take a taxi. We're right next to the taxi



		(extracted from book 7, p. 75)	Said Grandpa. (downtoners; delay via discourse markers; explanation) (extracted from book 5B, p. 44)	visited". "Well, I guess you are simply not interested in birds." (delay through discourse markers) (extracted from book 4B, p. 23)	rank." (alt. suggestion) (extracted from book 5A, p. 4)
		(13) The reporter/interviewer: I suppose it's a good thing that giant pandas are not very dangerous... The interviewee: No, as a matter of fact they're very strong and could easily hurt people! (extracted from book 12, p. 51)	(12) Aunt: There are different kinds of dumplings. Uncle: But you've only made pork dumplings for us. (delay through discourse markers) (extracted from book 5A)	(8) "Shall we go jogging tomorrow?" Asked a pupil. "I am not sure. If it rains, we will not run on the track." (use of downtoners and understaters) (extracted from book 6A, p. 47) (9) "Let's start playing now!" Suggested a female pupil. "Don't you need to change into loose-fitting clothes and sports shoes first?" Said the male pupil. (indirect strategy – rhetorical question) (extracted from book 6A, p. 49)	

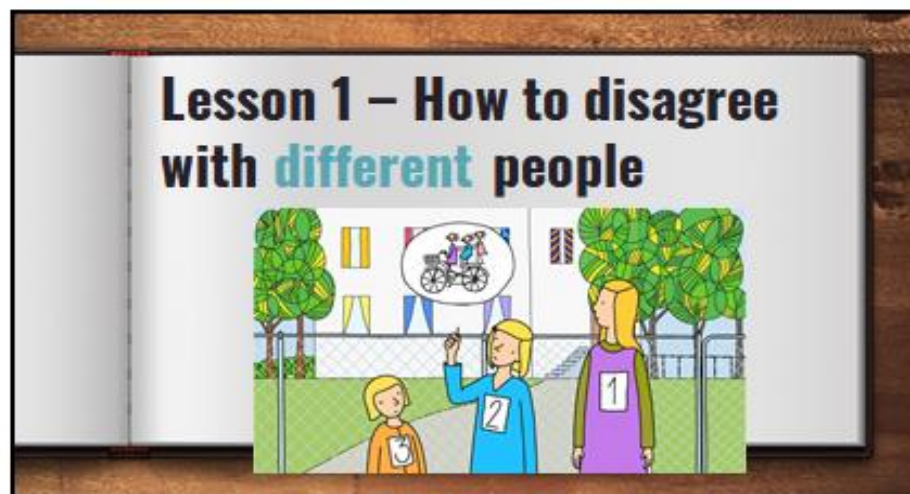
				<p>(10) "Don't you need to change into loose-fitting clothes and sports shoes first?" Said the male pupil. "That's so troublesome. Besides, we won't be playing for long." (added support) (extracted from book 6A, p. 49)</p> <p>(11) "That's (changing into sports outfit) so troublesome. Besides, we won't be playing for long." Said the female pupil. "Yes, but we should still change into suitable clothes. Besides being more comfortable, they prevent us from injuring ourselves." Replied the male pupil. (added support) (extracted from book 6A, p. 49)</p>	
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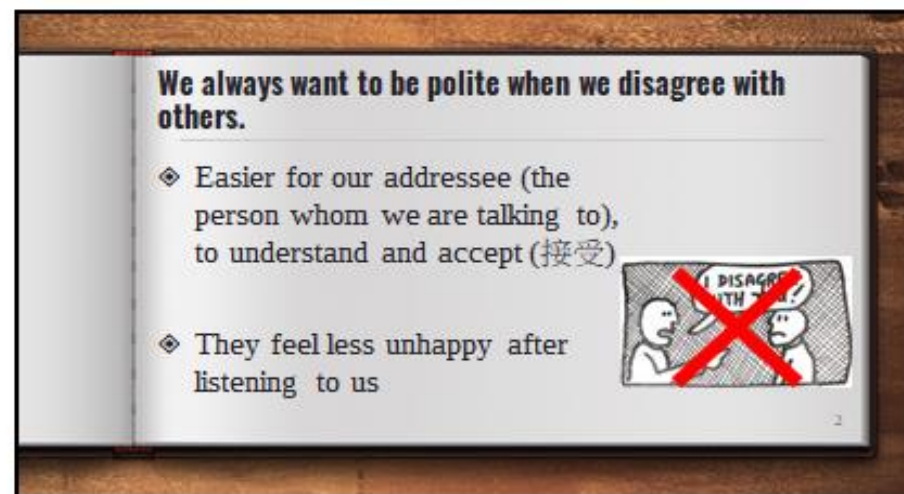
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High disagrees with low close 	12) ...she (the younger sister Judy) said excitedly. "Maybe you can be in a magazine too!" "I don't think so," said Matt. (direct strategy) (extracted from book 5A, p. 43)		(9) "It's so hot. No one keeps cool with a paper fan these days. Can we turn on the air-conditioner, please, Grandpa?" Asked the grandson. "I like to keep cool with a paper fan because it helps save energy," replied the grandfather. (explanation) (extracted from book 5B, p. 44)	(7) "I would like to have dim sum for dinner." Suggested the son. "I hope to try something new tonight." said Mum. (indirect strategy - hinting) (extracted from book 5A, p. 5)	(10) Anna: ...Can you ask Oscar to button his clothes by himself?" Grandma: Don't be silly! Oscar is only 4 years old. (added support) (extracted from book 5A, p. 24)
			11) Calvin: I've made eighty so far. Is that enough, Dad? Dad: I don't think so. We didn't have enough last year. (added support) (extracted from book 5A)		(11) Anna: I could button my own clothes by myself when I was four. Grandma: That's not true. Jessica helped you with that. You couldn't button your clothes by yourself until you were five. (added support) (extracted from book 5A, p. 24)



Appendix 5: Powerpoint of lesson 1



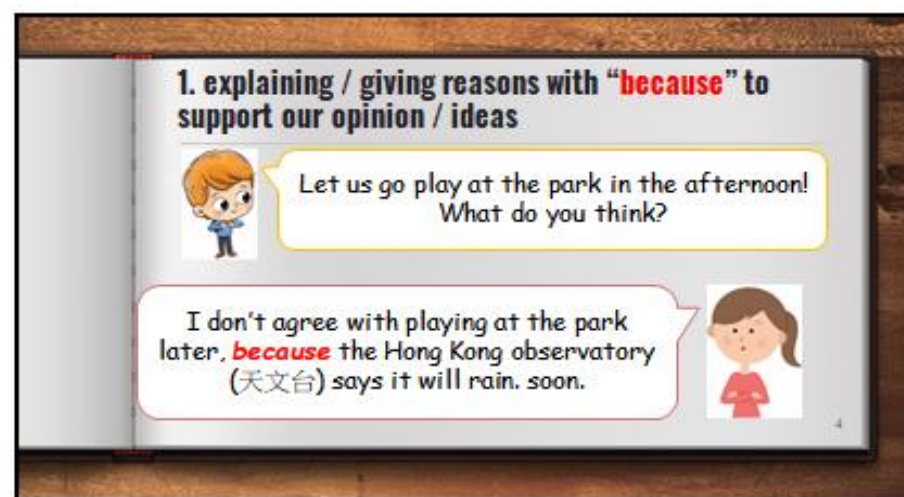
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2



3



4

2. First say **what you agree with**, then what you **don't agree with** with "**but**"



Let us go to the Central Library to study for the exam together tomorrow! It is a quiet place. How is that?

I agree that the library is a quiet place to study, **but** we cannot talk and discuss things we don't understand.



05

5

3. Say that you are sorry for having a different opinion / idea with "**I am sorry, but...**"



I think we can make a birthday cake for mum's birthday! How is that?

I am sorry, but I don't think we can make a good cake. We are just children and we are too young.



06

6

4. Give a new suggestion and **explain why it is good** with "**What about ...**".



I think we can make a birthday cake for mum's birthday! How is that?

What about drawing a birthday card for her? **It is easier than** making a cake.



07

5. Use "**may**" or "**maybe**" to show you are not sure about your ideas, and you want to discuss with the addressee.



Let us go to Disneyland this Sunday! We can ride on roller coasters and take photos with the Disney characters! What do you think?

Maybe we can go to Disneyland on Monday and watch movie with mum and dad on Sunday? They want us to go together. There **may** be less people in Disneyland on Monday.



08

8



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When to use polite devices

9

“
The more polite devices we use in disagreeing, the more polite and respectful (尊重) we are.”

I understand what you are saying, however...
Hmm, I'm not sure it can work like that.
I don't think I can agree with you.



10

We use **some** polite devices when...

Addressee = distant to (= NOT close with us)
OR older than us.

e.g.



our parents
(close with us; **older than us**)



our new classmate
(**distant to us**; same age)

11

We use **as many as possible (a lot of)** polite devices when,

Addressee = distant to (= NOT close with us)
AND older than us.

e.g.



the school principal
the teachers

They are **distant to us** and **older than us**.

12

We can use **less** polite devices when,

Addressee is **close** with us and **younger than / same age** with us

e.g.



our younger sister/ brother
(close with us; younger than us)

13

13

If your addressee is... ^{1,2}	Number of polite devices to be used ³
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Distant (not close) with you; older than you¹ 	As many polite devices to be used as possible ³
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Distant (not close) with you; same age¹ → Distant (not close) with you; younger than you¹ → Close with you; older than you¹ 	some polite devices to be used ³
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Close with you; younger than you / same age¹ 	less polite devices to be used ³

***the more you see, the more polite devices we use.^{1,4}

14

Are these people distant to / close with us; older / younger / same age with us?

situation 1:



Class, I think I am going to choose two class monitors and monitresses. They will help us for

You should use a lot of polite devices when you disagree with him!

Is he younger than, same age as you, or older than you?
(older / same age / younger)

15



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15

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If you wanted to disagree with your new class teacher, which is a better disagreement?

situation 1:

Your new class teacher



Class, I think I am going to choose two class monitors and monitresses. They will help us for the whole year. What do you think?

A)

Mr. Chan, I don't agree with having the same two class monitors for the whole year! Everyone needs to try!

B)


Mr. Chan, I agree that having the same two class monitors may be less troublesome (麻煩), but other classmates will not be able to try being class monitors. What about changing monitors every two months?

16

Are these people distant to / close with us; older / younger / same age with us?

situation 2:

Your classmate Tom. He was your classmate too last year



It is John's birthday next week. I think we can treat him lunch at Pizza Hut! How is that?

You can use less polite devices when you disagree with him!


Is he younger than, same age as you, or older than you? (older / same age / younger)

17

If you had to disagree with Tom, which is a better disagreement?

situation 2:

Your classmate Tom. He was your classmate too last year



It is John's birthday next week. I think we can treat him lunch at Pizza Hut! How is that?

A) Tom, what about buying his favourite robot to him? He can play with it all the time!

B) Tom, I am sorry, but I don't think treating him Pizza Hut is a good idea, because he cannot keep this present with him. What about buying his favourite robot to him? He may keep it and play with it. How is that?

18



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Appendix 6: Homework worksheet of lesson 1

Look at the situation below. First, decide if the addressee is close with or distant to you; if he or she is older than, younger than or the same age. You are 10 years old.
Next, circle the letter of the better disagreement.

Situation 1:



Cousin, let us play hide and seek at the park together after lunch! It is a very exciting and fun game! How is that?

Your 10-year-old cousin,
Brian. He lives in USA.

1. Is Brian distant to or close with you? (distant to you / close with you)
2. Is Brian older than, younger than or same age as you? (older / younger / same age)

3. If you want to disagree with Brian, which disagreement is better?

A)

Brian, I am sorry, but I don't think it is a good time to play hide-and-seek later because I did not sleep well yesterday and I feel very tired now. What about we sleep in the afternoon and go to play hide-and-seek tomorrow morning.

We may have more time to play too!



B)

Brian, I don't agree with playing hide-and-seek after lunch, because I am very tired now.



Situat



Brother, let us by this toy car for mum. I think mum will like it! I like it too! How is that?

Your five-year-old
brother, Daniel

4. Is Daniel distant to or close with you? (distant to you / close with you)
5. Is Daniel older than, younger than or same age as you? (older / younger / same age)
6. If you want to disagree with your brother Daniel, which disagreement is better?

A)

Daniel, I don't think mum will like toy cars. What about buying her a bottle of hand cream? She can use it all the time.



B)

Daniel, I am sorry, but I think mum may not like toy cars. She may want something she can use all the time like hand cream. What about we buy a bottle of hand cream for her? I think she will like it because her hands get dry easily.



Situation 3:

Son / Daughter, let us go to the hairdresser to have your hair cut after lunch. It is too long now.



Mum

7. Is Mum distant to or close with you? (distant to you / close with you)
8. Is Mum older than, younger than or same age as you? (older / younger / same age)
9. If you want to disagree with Mum, which disagreement is better?

A)

Mum, I don't agree with going to the hairdresser. I have to go to the stationery house to buy some more pens for school.



B)

Mum, I am sorry but I don't think I will go to the hairdresser, because many of my pens have no more ink (墨水) and I cannot use them at school tomorrow. What about going to the stationery house to buy some new pens first?



Appendix 7: The lesson plan of lesson 1

Disagreeing appropriately (Plan of lesson 1)

Subject: English Language (Pragmatics in disagreement)

Topic: The pragmatics of disagreement

Grade level: Primary 4

No. of sessions: 2

Session: 1

Duration of each session: 40 mins

Learning objectives:

By the end of this session, students should be able to:

- Identify the 2 decisive pieces of information of the addressee to the use of polite devices while disagreeing, which is:
 - 1) how close the addressee is to us (the speaker)
 - 2) if the addressee is older, younger or at the same age as the speaker.
- Apply the analysis of these two pieces of information by disagreeing with addressees of different identities from immersing in different daily-life scenarios.

Resources:

- A pre-test question-and-answer sheet for each student (see Appendix A)
- Powerpoint slide of lesson 1 (see Appendix B)
- A worksheet on selecting the better disagreements subject to the identity of the addressee (see Appendix C)

Lesson procedures:


Time	Procedures	Resources
15 mins	<p><u>Pre-test:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher explains to students that they are going to see 6 situations where you don't like or don't agree with what the others said. The instructions on the pre-test is written as follows:● "Read to understand what is happening in each situation. If you were the "you", what would you say to tell the others? Write what you would say onto the lines." Teacher has the time internally set for this pre-test as 15 mins.• Teacher collects the pre-tests from students online as an online response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A pre-test question-and-answer sheet for each student (see Appendix A)
13	<p><u>Introduction of key concepts:</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Powerpoint slide

mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher lets students know that they are going to learn how to disagree with different people we meet in life, like our friends, our family members and our teachers etc. (ref. to slide 1) Teacher points out to students that, it is very important to be polite when we are disagreeing with others (=saying “no” to others’ ideas), as this makes our addressees accept our disagreement easily and feel less unhappy about that. (ref. to slide 2) Teacher introduces 5 polite devices that students can use when disagreeing with others to show politeness. During the process, teacher explains to students the effects / the use of each strategy with reference to the sample response, such as <i>“Maybe we can go to Disneyland on Monday...there MAY be less people on Monday. So with the girl saying maybe, she shows that she is not very sure too, and she is just giving another suggestion, she can talk to the boy and see if he agrees with it or not.”</i> Teacher tells students that the more polite devices we use when disagreeing, the more polite and respectful to the addressee we are. Then, teacher tells students that we have to be more polite and use more of these devices when we talk to people who are distant to us or/and older than us. <p>If we are talking to people who are both distant to us and older than us, like the school principal and teachers, we use a lot of these polite devices.</p> <p>If the person we are talking to is close with us and younger /same age with us, we can use a few polite devices, like our younger brothers and sisters.</p> 	of lesson 1 (see Appendix B)
8 mins	<p><u>Application of key concepts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher analyses 2 situations with students as an example. At each of the scenario, teacher draws students’ attention to the distance in relationship and the age of the addressee, then guides students to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Powerpoint slide of lesson 1 (see Appendix B)

	decide if they use a few, some or a lot of polite devices with these people. Last, look at the two disagreements on the slide and decide which one is a more suitable one.	
5 mins	<p><u>Wrap-up</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher assigns students a piece of homework, which they do the exact same thing as in the 2 situations just now. They are going to look at 4 situations. They look at 2 situations at a time, decide if the addressee is distant to or close with them, and if they are older, younger or at the same age, then circle the more suitable disagreement in each situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A worksheet on selecting the better disagreements subject to the identity of the addressee per student (see Appendix C)

Appendix 8: Powerpoint of lesson 2

Lesson 2 – The structure of a disagreement



1

Can you find the different parts in a disagreement?

No, I don't agree with having dinner at KFC with grandpa and grandma, because I know they don't like deep-fried food. What about having dinner at the Taiwanese restaurant? Grandpa and grandma love Chinese food.

Topic sentence - telling people we disagree with their idea

Why we disagree
OR / AND

Giving a suggestion and why it is good

2

Expressions we can use to start to disagree



3

1. I don't agree with + (other's idea)

Let us go play at the park in the afternoon! What do you think?

I don't agree with playing at the park later, because the Hong Kong observatory (天文台) says it will rain soon.

Why she disagrees

4



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2. I don't think (other's idea) is a good idea



Let us go to the Central Library to study for the exam together tomorrow! It is a quiet place. How is that?

I don't think going to the Central Library to study for the exam **is a good idea**.
What about going to your home? We can talk and discuss our homework.



Giving a suggestion and why it is good.

5

Always check that your disagreement has...

- ✓ a topic sentence (e.g. I don't think ... is a good idea.)
- ✓ The reason why you disagree / a new suggestion and why it is good.
- ✓ Polite devices we learnt in lesson 1!



6

How would we disagree with these people?

situation 1:



I think we can eat at home for the Chinese New Year dinner. I can cook. There is still a

You should use some polite devices when you disagree with him!

distant to you)

Is Grandpa younger than, same age as you, or older than you?
(older / same age / younger)



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How would we disagree with these people?

situation 1:



I think we can eat at home for the Chinese New Year dinner. I can cook. There is still a lot of food in the fridge.

- What idea do you disagree with? What is Grandpa's idea?
- Why do you disagree? Any new suggestions?
- Some polite devices!


Grandpa, I am sorry, but I don't think eating at home is a good idea, because you may feel very tired after cooking. What about eating in the Chinese restaurant near home?



8

How would we disagree with these people?

situation 2:

Your younger  Sister, let's play Wii Sports after lunch! We have not played it for a long time!

You can use less polite devices when you disagree with her!


Is your sister close with you or distant to you? (close with you / distant to you)

Is Grandpa younger than, same age as you, or older than you? (older / same age / younger)


9

How would we disagree with these people?

situation 2:

Your younger sister  Sister, let's play Wii Sports after lunch! We have not played it for a long time!

- What idea do you disagree with? What is Grandpa's idea?
- Why do you disagree? Any new suggestions?
- Fewer polite devices!

 Sister, I don't agree with playing Wii Sports now, because Mum asked us to tidy our bookshelves and sweep the floor first.

10



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Appendix 9: Homework worksheet of lesson 2

Name: _____ Class: _____ () Date: _____

If you were in these situations and these six people were talking to you? What would you say to them to disagree with them? Circle the correct information about the addressee. Then, write down what you would say to disagree. For example:

Situation 1:



I am thinking of cancelling the ETV session during lunch time. I think you should all concentrate on eating your lunch.

The school principal

Is your school principal distant to or close with you? (distant to you / close with you)

Is your school principal older than, younger than, or same age with you? (Older / same age / younger)

You don't agree with what your principal said, because you love ETV and you think you can learn a lot from it. What would you say to disagree with him?

E.g. Umm...principal, I agree that it is good for us to concentrate on eating our lunch, but I know that my classmates all love watching ETV. We can learn a lot from it. We might not have time to watch it after school. I am sorry but I still want to keep the ETV session.

Situation 2:



Hey, let's watch Frozen 2 together! I love Disney cartoons!
How's that?

Your best friend, Yuki

Is Yuki close with you? (Yes / No)

Is Yuki older than you? (Older / same age / younger)

But you don't want to watch Frozen 2 together, you want to watch Avengers together. It is more exciting with more exciting actions. What would you say to disagree with her?

E.g. I don't want to watch Frozen 2! I like Avengers. It is more exciting!

Situation 1a:



Your grandmother

My sweetheart, come with me to watch Chinese opera (粵劇) at the community centre later! You will like it!

But you want to play chess with her at home in the afternoon. How would you disagree with her?

Is your grandmother distant to you or close with you? (distant to you / close with you)

Is your grandmother older than, younger than or same age with you?

(older / younger / same age)

Situation 1b:



Your school principal

I am planning to buy snacks for all students as Christmas presents and give them during Christmas party! I think everyone will love them! What do you think?

But you believe that your classmates and you don't like snacks. You like some other things as Christmas presents. How would you disagree with your principal?

Is your school principal distant to you or close with you? (distant to you / close with you)

Is your school principal older than, younger than or same age with you? (older / younger / same age)

Situation 2a:



Your mum

Son / Daughter, I think you should not go to dance class these 3 weeks, because there are exams very soon. You should study at home. What do you think?

But you still want to go to dance class. You think it helps you to relax (放鬆) and feel less nervous about the exam. How would you disagree with your mum?

Is your mum distant to you or close with you? (distant to you / close with you)

Is your mum older than, younger than or same age with you? (older / younger / same age)

Situation 2b:



Your 4-year-old brother

Brother, mum said we have half an hour to play before dinner! Let us go to play hide-and-seek at George Park! I like it a lot! Let's go!

But, George park is too far away. You think you should play with something else. How would you disagree with your brother?

Is your brother distant to you or close with you? (distant to you / close with you)

Is your brother older than, younger than or same age with you? (older / younger / same age)

Situation 3a



Your best friend, Henry

Hey, let's play Monopoly together, you know I love this game. Play it with me!

But, you don't like Monopoly. You just played it yesterday. You want to play another board game. How would you disagree with your best friend?

Is your friend distant to you or close with you? (distant to you / close with you)

Is your friend older than, younger than or same age with you? (older / younger / same age)

Situation 3b:



The class
monitor of 4E

I think P4 students can ride on Nyeong Ping 360 Cable Car and go shopping at the shopping centre on the mountain for school picnic. What do you all think?

You don't think that is a good idea, because there are usually many people lining up and it may take a long time. How would you tell this school mate what you think?

Is your school mate distant to you or close with you? (distant to you / close with you)

Is your school mate older than, younger than or the same age with you? (older / younger / same age)



Appendix 10: The lesson plan of lesson 2

Disagreeing appropriately (Plan of session 2) – control lesson

Subject: English Language (the structure and content in a disagreement expression)

Topic: The structure and content of a disagreement expression

Grade level: Primary 4

No. of sessions: 2

Session: 2

Duration of each session: 40 mins

Learning objectives:

By the end of this session, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate the use of the connective “because” and the phrase “If so...” to explain the problems and consequences of one’s idea when disagreeing.
- Identify and apply the use of the phrase “What about ...” and the structure “I prefer (the better idea) to (the addressee’s idea)” to give new suggestions after the explanation.

Resources:

- Powerpoint slide of lesson 2 (see Appendix B) (ref. to slide 19-31)
- A worksheet on giving explanation and suggestion in a disagreement (see Appendix D)
- Post-test (see Appendix E)

Lesson procedures:

Time	Procedures	Resources
5 mins	<u>Review:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Teacher reviews with students that they have learnt 2 ways to state their disagreement, which are “I don’t agree with (the addressee’s idea),” and “I don’t think (the addressee’s idea).” Also, they have learnt two words and phrases to explain the problems and consequences of the addressee’s idea, which are “because” and “If so...”.	/
10 mins	<u>Introduction of key concepts:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Teacher lets students know that, for today, they are going to learn how to give a new suggestion after disagreeing and explaining the problems of the addressee’s idea.● Teacher shows students two phrases they can use to start giving a new suggestion when disagreeing, which are “What about ...” and the structure “I prefer (the better idea) to (the addressee’s idea)”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Powerpoint slide of lesson 2 (see Appendix B)

	<p>As teacher introduces these two expressions to students, teacher role-play the two conversations to illustrate how the expressions could be used in the topic sentence. Teacher could also explain how these two phrases could be used to give suggestions as follows:</p> <p><i>“The girl responded, ‘What about drawing a birthday card by ourselves? Because she can look at it all the time!’ Here, she is offering a new idea to the boy – drawing a birthday card. Then, she explains why it is better – because...mum can always look at it.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher lets students know that, it is always good to try giving a new suggestion after we explain why we disagree with our addressee, because very often, two brains think better than one. ● Teacher instructs students that, they are going to look at two situations and think about how they would disagree with the addressees. They are going to explain why they disagree with the help of mind maps and give a new suggestion in each situation. 	
10 mins	<p><u>Application of key concepts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher presents two situations to students, each with a different addressee that they need to disagree with. In each situation, teacher guides students to identify the addressee’s idea by looking at what he/she has said. • Next, teacher guides students to brainstorm problems and not-so-good consequences in each situation using a mind-map. Teacher allows students some time (i.e. 2 mins) to think of some problems and consequences, then suggests some possible ideas on the mind map. • After that, teacher asks students to think about what they can do so that there will not be these problems. Again, teacher gives students 1-2 minutes to think, then teacher suggests an idea that avoids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powerpoint slide of lesson 2 (see Appendix B)

	<p>those problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last, teacher shows students how they can put the ideas from different parts together. Teacher reminds students that, they should start with the topic sentence, then the explanation; using the ideas from the mind-map, followed by the suggestion that prevents the problems and why it is good. 	
5 mins	<p><u>Wrap-up</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher assigns students a piece of homework, which they do the exact same thing as in the 2 situations just now. They are going to look at 3 situations. Again, brainstorm possible problems and not-so-good consequences of the addressee's idea and put them down onto the mind map. Next, think of what can be done so that the problems will not be there. Last, write a disagreement with a topic sentence, an explanation of why to disagree and give the new suggestion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A worksheet on giving explanation and suggestion in a disagreement (see Appendix D)
15 mins	<p><u>Post-test</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After submitting the homework of this lesson, students take 15 mins to work on a post-test, in which they look at 6 situations where you don't like or don't agree with what the others said. The instructions on the pre-test is written as follows: • "Read to understand what is happening in each situation. If you were the "you", what would you say to tell the others? Write what you would say onto the lines." Teacher has the time internally set for this pre-test as 15 mins. • Teacher collects the post-tests from students online as an online response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A post-test question-and-answer sheet for each student (see Appendix E)