

3E: Thanks! TEACHER NOTES

In this activity, students will...

- Become aware of how context (the people involved in the communicative situation) changes the words we use.
- Understand that even one single word can be translated in many ways and change the way the speaker is seen.
- Practice paraphrasing.

Time estimate

How to use these materials

30 minutes

STAGE 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share the list of words meaning thanks (you can project it or hand out copies of it) and ask the students what all the words on the list have in common, until they agree there are different ways of thanking people.• Ask them why there are different ways of saying thank you. Does it have to do with the people involved in the situation? Do they say thanks in the same way to their friends, their teachers and their parents?	3'
STAGE 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the class to get in groups of five (there might be some of three or four).• Hand out the context cards, numbered 1 to 5, so that each student in the group gets a different context (if there are smaller groups, you may leave out contexts number 4 and 5, for instance).	2'
STAGE 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask each student to come up with a way to say thank you in the context given to them in the card, without using the words “thank” or “grateful” or any of their other forms (thanks, gratitude).• Give them some examples to make sure they understand: for instance, if my boss decided to give me a promotion, I could say “I’m most obliged”, or if my best friend invited me to have dinner at my favourite restaurant, I could say “You’re the best!” or “You shouldn’t have!”.	10'
STAGE 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the board, write all the different forms the students have come up with.• Start by writing all the answers of the different groups for context card number 1, after reading aloud the context for all the class, so that all the class can discuss the specifics of every context (if it is likely or not, if it was difficult to come up with an answer and why)• Ask the students what they think would happen if we used the expressions of context number 1 in context number 5.	10'
STAGE 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask your students: “Would you have chosen the same words if you had been allowed to use ‘thank’ and ‘gratitude’?” “How many words and expressions do we know but never or rarely use because we just stick to the ones we have the habit of using?”• As a group, reflect on translation practices: Imagine we were to say thank you in a different language... Would it be enough to know one way to say thank you in the other language? What could happen if the words we know are not appropriate for the context?	5'

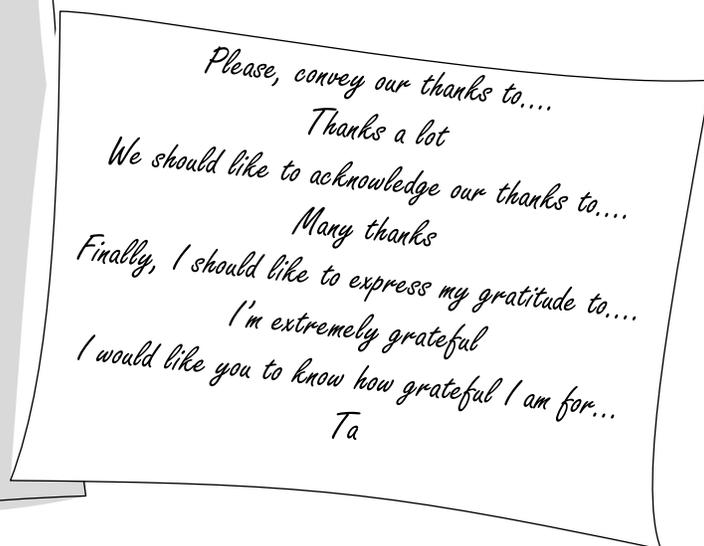
Prep time suggestions

- Print out the context cards and cut up paper strips.
- Read chapter 3, section 3.2 of the Teacher’s Book *Inclusion, Diversity and Communication Across Cultures* [available online](#) for some background information on the topic of context and translation.

Variations

- You might want to prepare more context cards, so that they can fit other situations your students might relate to.

3E. Thanks!



1. For your birthday, your best friend buys you tickets to go and see your favorite sports game (or favourite band), and you say...
2. You wanted really badly a new phone and your parents said they were not going to buy it. Suddenly, a great aunt you don't see very often comes to visit and gives you the phone you wanted, what do you say to her?
3. You are queuing to get in a major event you are very interested in and when you are about to get in, with only four people in line before you, they announce that all the seats are taken and only two more people can get in. One of the girls who is in the line before you, who is your same age, tells you that, since they are together and they cannot all get inside, they are leaving and you can get in in their place. What do you say to her?
4. Last week you had a very bad day and you failed an exam. The teacher comes to see you and says that you probably didn't have a good day, because you usually do better and so he's going to give you another opportunity to take the test some other time. What do you say to him?
5. You represented your school in an academic contest and you won. Now, the Prime Minister is giving you a badge of honor and, during the ceremony of awards, when he shakes your hand, you say...