

# **THE TYPES OF REQUEST EXPRESSIONS USED IN NOVEL “HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS”: Their Appropriateness to ESL/EFL Teaching for Junior High School Students in Indonesia**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Novels can be authentic sources for learning ESL/EFL, especially in non-English speaking countries. They may present reliable learning references in the absence of native speakers. This article aims to identify the types of request expressions originated in novel “Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets” as well as their appropriateness for teaching ESL/EFL in alignment to current applied curriculum (2006 curriculum) in junior high school level in Indonesia. This research employed a qualitative research which was based on content analysis methodology. The data analysis revealed the types of request expressions (Tsui, 1989) generated out of 110 items uttered by the characters in the novel. 65.5% of the finding matched the nine request expressions learning materials embedded in the 2006 curriculum. Indeed, this finding may significantly contribute to the addition of authentic English learning source, especially in teaching speaking skill.

**Keywords:** *request expressions; English syllabus; speech acts; 2006 curriculum; authentic material*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Learning English as the second language (EFL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) was not intentionally focused on learning a single English skill or aspect. It takes an integrated collaboration between those skills and its aspects to be able to possess the whole comprehension of a language (Hinkel, 2008).

Nonetheless, there were still issues found in Learning English as ESL/EFL in societies in Asia, as greatest concentration the "outer-circle" English using society. Bolton (2008) points out English proficiency as the issue in a number of Asian Society, where the interest to English seems to be driven by market forces. The ability of mastering English was usually measured by a standardized test, such as TOEFL, IELTS, or TOIEC. This test could be hard for ESL/EFL learners; even Raimes (1990) raised some concerns of their application in assessing English native speakers' mastery.

In speaking skill, pronunciation has no longer become the only main learning focus, however as Tarone highlights in Hinkel's handbook (2005) that the goal of pronunciation has shifted from focusing a natively like accent to focusing on intelligibility, where the listeners understand and comprehend the speaker's utterances. In Indonesia, the process of learning English was endorsed at school from the elementary level. It is one of the required subjects taught in educational curriculum. The use of materials in its teaching refers to the textbooks being assigned under the curriculum.

Reading texts out loud has still been seen as popular activities in teaching English in Indonesia while the application of audio-lingual approach has been incorporated into the textbook in 2006 curriculum. Although there is a shift in the focus of the syllabus, there was no such assurance on its application in the field. The scarcity of authentic material in supporting listening and speaking skills remains the focus in teaching English at schools.

Reading is a skill generated from habits. Reading English books or novels may generate further other English skills such as speaking. However, ESL/EFL teaching at schools, especially in Junior High schools in Aceh seems to rely on utilizing the texts in English textbooks. Some teachers have also found that internet surfing as another option in the effort of searching the text. Nevertheless, it was uncommon for the teachers to generate the teaching material from novels.

Harry Potter is one the most famous series of novels in the world. Up until now, seven series have been released publicly in English. Students in Indonesia are quite familiar with the story since it was a well-known novel. The characters in this

novel use a great number of request expressions. Accordingly, the researchers chose a specific novel of the series, "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" as the object of research. In this article, the researchers want to determine the types of request expressions based on Tsui's classification (1989) and their alignment with English teaching materials. Therefore, the purposes of this research are formulated in the following questions:

1. What types of request expressions are found in the novel "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets"?
2. Can these findings contribute to the English learning process at school properly based on Junior High School 2006 curriculum?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Novel as one of authentic learning resources*

Authentic material holds significant effects on the learners; increasing students' motivation for learning is one of them (Guariento & Morley, 2001). Some researchers (Philips & Shettlesworth, 1978; Clarke, 1989; Peacock, 1997, Richard, 2001) also listed other positive influences of authentic material that include providing cultural information, the exposure to real language, relating more closely to learners' needs and supporting a more creative approach to teaching. These advantages may develop a pleasure situation for students in which they are voluntarily involved. Effective ESL/EFL education can be accomplished by triggering the process of natural language acquisition. One way of doing that was by exposing the students to authentic materials (Hwang, 2005).

English novels can be another authentic learning resource for teaching English. The use of its literature could enhance English skills, such as reading and speaking. The focus and attention on word combinations create a feeling for language recognition and help draw attention to different types of language usage and levels of discourse (Ainy, 2008). The use of literature is also highly recommended to teach both English basic skills and language areas (Hişmanoğlu, 2005). Furthermore, Sánchez and Schmitt (2010) argue that second language learners retained better meaning and spelling as well as meaning and word class above 50% from an authentic novel, where most of the students experienced incidental vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, the use of novels in teaching English

skills can greatly influence students' success in mastering English. Particularly, in a way where these materials could help the teachers in providing alternative authentic learning resources to improve their students' ability in reading comprehension and increase the knowledge of language usage.

Communication as one of language areas is a real form of language usage. When people communicate with others, they may want to express their desires that may include promises, apologies, complaints, compliments, requests and many others. In fact, these expressions can be obtained through written language found in novels.

To meet the need for communication, 2006 curriculum requires the need for materials to cover the topic of request expressions. For instance, in English basic competence 9.2 of 2006 curriculum for grade VIII, the students are required to express how to ask permission which was also in line with English basic competence 3.3 of the 2013 curriculum for grade VIII, where the students are required to apply expression of request for invitation. Therefore, it is pertinent for the students to learn request expressions based on the materials in the curriculum; so that they can apply appropriate expressions of request in English communication appropriately. Consequently, teachers are expected to possess a great amount of authentic learning resources.

Marianingtyas (2007) in her thesis, "An analysis of Requestives in Novel *The Glass House* by Lynn Bushell and Its Implication to Teaching English", observes that both the English teachers and the students should know more about speech acts' theories such as requestives and types of sentences since they are important in teaching English and improving the students' communicative skill.

### ***Speech Acts***

Speech acts are part of pragmatics study. People do not only produce utterance containing grammatical structures and words when they attempt to express themselves, but also perform actions via those utterances. Actions performed via utterances are generally called speech acts (Yule, 1996). Therefore, speech acts are the act performed by a speaker in uttering a sentence. Jucker and Taavitsainen

(2008) emphasize that speech acts mostly obtained are those comprise face-threatening acts, such as requests, apologies, complaints, and thanks. In other words, speech acts are the actions performed by expressing something through utterances. Speech acts also convey the meaning of utterances produced by the speakers.

Yule (1996) also divided speech into three related acts, (1) locutionary act, (2) illocutionary act/force, and (3) perlocutionary effect. The discussion in this article focuses more detailed in illocutionary forces/acts as they are bound with effect (Tsui, 1987). Practically, the illocutionary acts convey the purpose of the speakers whose intention to receive actions to be performed by the listeners.

### ***Request Expressions***

Requests are one of the most important speech acts that occur frequently in day to day situations. The desired aim of the request utterance can involve a diverse number of actions or things (Halupka-Rešetar, 2014). Thus, request expressions cannot be separated with the communication in daily life. Floris and Loanata (2011) define request as an illocutionary act whereby a speaker (requester) conveys to a hearer (requestee) that he/she wants the requestee to perform an act which is for the benefit of the speaker. Therefore, the function or purpose of the request is to involve the hearer in some future actions which have positive consequences for the speaker.

Tsui (1989) elaborated that requests are initiations in which the addressee is expected to respond by a non-verbal action and depends on him/her if he/she wishes to carry out the expected action or not. Moreover, requests are also presented in imperative forms which follow directives. It is as though the speaker is putting pressure on the addressee to comply with the requestives. This indicates his/her sincerity in having the addressee accept the prospected actions. Nevertheless, when presenting requests in this form, the speaker does not have authority towards the addressee. Therefore, the addressee may agree or refuse to comply. In conclusion, request expression is the speech act of the speaker to ask the hearer to do something and get the benefit of it. However, the hearer may agree or disagree to do it.

Tsui (1989) classified requests into five classes, they are:

a. Request for Permission

Request for permission is a request that asks someone to allow something or to ask permission to do something. Request for permission involves the speaker's performance in the future action which is aimed to his or her own benefit.

b. Offer

Offer is a request of offering something to be accepted or refused. It commits the future action and benefit to the addressee. An appreciation and thank are expressed by the addressee.

c. Request for Action

Request for action is a request that asks someone to do something. It prospects addressee's action and it is for the speaker's benefit. A positive response will commit the addressee to some non-verbal actions.

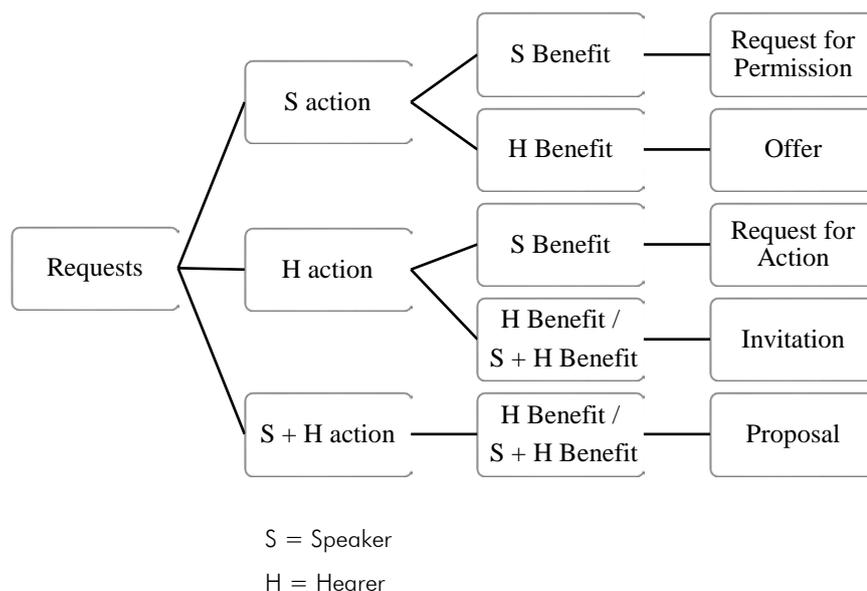
d. Invitation

Invitation is a request that prospects the addressee's action. The addressee's action is for the benefit of the addressee himself and the speaker. The addressee will perform the non-verbal action if there is a compliance response.

e. Proposal

Proposal is a request of suggestion that the speaker and the hearer perform non-verbal action and it is beneficial for both the speaker and hearer.

Chart 1. System Network of Requestives (Tsui, 1989)



The above chart discloses that should the action performed by the speaker for the speaker's benefit, it is called request for permission, such as, "May I use the car?", or for the hearer's benefit, which is called offer, in which the example of it is, "Can I help you?". Another example is when the action performed by the hearer for the speaker's benefit, then it is called request for action. "Could you open the door, please?" is the example of request for action.

## METHODOLOGY

### *Research Design*

Our research was conducted by employing qualitative content analysis. It focused on analyzing the types of request expressions presented by the characters in the novel "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" by J.K. Rowling. The data of this research were identified in a conscientious way that took several attempts of reading the novel, highlighting the dialogues containing the request expressions, classifying the data and coding them to ensure the research validity and reliability aspects. The researchers used data coding to classify the findings into the five categories grounded on Tsui's theory (1987). Additionally, those data were also analyzed further to check their relevance to the topics being taught to the junior high school students. This includes creating the documentation checklist, comparing these expressions to request teaching material in Junior high school 2006 curriculum, and drawing conclusions.

### *Material of Analysis*

The research object in this research are the request expression generated from the "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets". It is the second novel of Harry Potter series written by J. K. Rowling. It was published in the United Kingdom on 2 July 1998 by Bloomsbury and in the United States on 2 June 1999 by Scholastic Inc. Moreover, it was debuted at No. 1 on UK bestseller lists and in June 1999, it went straight to the top of three US bestseller lists. It consists of three hundred and forty one pages and eighteen chapters. Furthermore, the Harry Potter books are distributed in over 200 territories, are translated into 68 languages and have sold over 400 million copies worldwide.

According to the readers, this novel is popular because it can entertain the readers with the magical world and interesting story line. It has many great characters and teaches the moral values about friendship, standing up in the face of adversity, loyalty and love. When the readers read the novel, they can feel the imaginary nuance of the wizard world. Also, this novel attracts most adolescents as the readers as Trites (2001) utilized the novel as the case study for understanding the adolescent literature. The author, Rowling, was voted as the author of the year in 1999 by British Book Awards (Nibbies). In the year of 2000, she won the WH Smith Children's Book of the Year.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Types of Request Expressions*

The data collected exposed 110 items of request expressions located in the novel. These data fell into requests for action, permission, offer, invitation, and proposal. The total data found were presented as follow:

Table 1. The Types of Request Expressions found in the Novel "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets"

Types	Data number	Sum
Request for Actions	2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19, 23, 28, 29, 33, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 45, 47, 54, 56, 58, 59, 64, 70, 71, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 90, 91, 93, 94, 97, 98, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 107, 108, 110	56
Request for Permission	1, 21, 32, 34, 35, 50, 63, 66, 72, 109	10
Invitation	15, 22, 31, 41, 53, 92	6
Offer	5, 6, 7, 18, 20, 48, 49, 51, 52, 62, 88, 89	12
Propose	4, 14, 16, 17, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 44, 46, 55, 57, 60, 61, 65, 67, 68, 69, 75, 80, 81, 95, 96, 99, 106	26
Total		110

### 1. Request for Action

Datum 42/RA/Asking for Services

"Will you sign it?" said Colin eagerly.

"No," said Harry flatly.

*The Context of Situation*

The situation took place on the spiral staircase. The participants were Collin and Harry. Collin came to Harry and showed him a photograph and it was the photograph of Harry and Professor Lockhart. Collin adored Harry Potter so much that he attempted to get Harry to sign the photo. Harry felt uncomfortable as he did not feel like having fans.

*Analysis of Request Expressions*

Collin's utterance is the request for action. In a request for action, the speaker prospects the addressee's action. The future action of the addressee is beneficial to the speaker. In this case, Collin expects Harry's response. He asked Harry to sign the photograph. Should Harry undertake the action, Collin will get the benefit from the action. Collin will be glad to have the signed photograph of Harry's. In fact, Harry responded negatively to Collin's request. Hence, Collin's request refers to ask for service. He asks for Harry's service to sign the photograph.

*Datum 59/RA/Asking for Facts*

"You're making fun of me," she said,

"No. Honestly, didn't I just say how nice Myrtle's looking?" said Hermione, nudging Harry and Ron painfully in the ribs.

"Don't lie to me," Myrtle gasped,

"Oh, dear," said Hermione sadly.

*The Context of Situation*

The conversation happened at the Nearly Headless Nick's party. The participants were Peeves, Hermione, Myrtle, Harry, and Ron. Hermione avoided meeting Myrtle. She told Harry and Ron that Myrtle was a moaning ghost that haunted the girls' bathroom. Peeves informed Myrtle that Hermione was talking about her. Myrtle sensed Hermione's suspicion and confronted her about it.

*Analysis of Request Expressions*

Myrtle's utterance is the request for action. She asked Hermione to tell her the truth. If Hermione tells the truth, Myrtle will know the fact. It makes her feel satisfied. Hermione responded it regretfully. Myrtle's request refers to ask for facts.

Datum 54/RA/Asking for Agreements/Asking for Opinion/Asking for Services

"Do you think you could possibly mention to Sir Patrick how very frightening and impressive you find me?"

"Of – of course," said Harry.

*The Context of Situation*

Harry and Nearly Headless Nick walked along the corridor together. Nearly Headless Nick would host a party, and Sir Patrick who was the leader of Huntsmen was one of the invitees. Earlier, he refused Nearly Headless Nick to join the Headless Hunt, because he did not meet the requirements. He asked Harry whether he could help him.

*Analysis of Request Expressions*

Nearly Headless Nick's utterance is the request for action. He asked Harry to inform Sir Patrick how frightening and impressive Nearly Headless Nick was. Thus, it can make Sir Patrick think that Nearly Headless Nick is qualified enough to join the Headless hunt which gives the benefit for Nearly Headless Nick. Nearly Headless Nick asked Harry's help by asking his opinion and he sought for Harry's agreement. Harry gave a positive response to it. Nick's request refers to ask for the opinion, ask for the agreement, and implies asking for service.

Datum 77/RA/Asking for Clarifications

Harry looked up nervously at Lockhart and said, "Professor, could you show me that blocking thing again?"

Lockhart cuffed Harry merrily on the shoulder. "Just do what I did, Harry!"

*The Context of Situation*

The situation was in the Great Hall. The participants were Harry, Professor Snape, Professor Lockhart and Malfoy. School held a dueling club. Professor Lockhart taught how to block unfriendly spells, but he did it carelessly. Professor Snape then chose Harry to try dueling with Malfoy.

*Analysis of Request Expressions*

Harry's utterance is request for action. He asked Professor Lockhart to show again how to block the spells, because he did not explain it clearly. Unfortunately,

he refused Harry' request. His request refers to ask for clarifications. He asks Professor Lockhart to show it again clearly.

## 2. Request for Permission

Datum 66/RP/Asking for Thing

"Hermione, let me read your composition," said Ron desperately,

"No, I won't," said Hermione, suddenly severe.

*The Context of Situation*

The conversation took place in the library. Ron, Harry, and Hermione got the assignment from Professor Binns to write three feet long composition. Ron has written eight inches, while Hermione has done four feet. Ron asked to read Hermione's composition before the bell rang.

*Analysis of Request Expressions*

Ron's utterance is the request for permission. In a request for permission, the speaker asked the addressee to allow him to do something and it is for the benefit of the speaker. Here, Ron asked Hermione to give a permission to read her compositions. If Hermione permits it, Ron will copy Hermione's writing. Nevertheless, Hermione gave a negative response. Ron's request refers to ask for things indirectly. When Ron asks to read Hermione's composition, he asks for her composition indirectly.

Datum 109/RP/Asking for Certainty

"Professor Dumbledore," he said hurriedly. "Can I give that diary back to Mr. Malfoy, please?"

"Certainly, Harry," said Dumbledore calmly.

*The Context of Situation*

The conversation took place in the corridor. The participants were Harry, Professor Dumbledore, Mr. Malfoy and Dobby who is Mr. Malfoy's house elf. Mr. Malfoy was abusive to Dobby. Harry could not stand it and wanted to help setting Dobby free. Dobby could be free if his master gives him something. Harry planned something with Mr. Malfoy's diary. He asked the diary from Professor Dumbledore.

*Analysis of Request Expressions*

Harry's utterance is the request for permission. Harry asked Professor Dumbledore's permission to give back the diary to Mr. Malfoy. If Professor Dumbledore agrees, Harry could be sure that what he would do was good. This request refers to ask for certainty.

### 3. Invitation

Datum 53/IV/Inviting

"I'm holding a party down in one of the roomier dungeons. Friends will be coming from all over the country. It would be such an honor if you would attend. But I dare say you'd rather go to the school feast?" He watched Harry on tenterhooks.

"No," said Harry quickly, "I'll come."

*The Context of Situation*

The conversation occurred in the corridor. The participants were Harry and Nearly Headless Nick. Nearly Headless Nick would hold a party, his friends would be coming from all over the country and he invited Harry to his party. He expected Harry to be able to come to his party.

*Analysis of Request Expressions*

Nearly Headless Nick's utterance indicates the invitation. He asked Harry to attend his party. It was clear that his utterance showed that he was looking forward to Harry attending his party that may benefit Harry and himself. Harry gave a positive response. Nearly Headless Nick's request refers to Inviting.

### 4. Offer

Datum 51/OF/Offering something

Nearly Headless Nick took several deep breaths and then said, in a far calmer tone, "So – what's bothering you? Anything I can do?"

"No," said Harry.

*The Context of Situation*

Harry met Nearly Headless Nick in the corridor. Harry looked like he was in trouble. So, Nearly Headless Nick asked what Harry's problem was and offered to help.

### *Analysis of Request Expressions*

Nearly Headless Nick's utterance is in the offer type. He offered himself to help Harry and his action would benefit Harry. Nevertheless, Harry gave a negative response. Nearly Headless Nick's utterance refers to offer something, particularly offering help.

## **5. Proposal**

Datum 25/PO/Inviting

"Let's go together, we've only got a minute," Ron said to Harry.

Harry made sure that Hedwig's cage was safely wedged on top of his trunk and wheeled his trolley around to face the barrier. He felt perfectly confident; both of them bent low over the handles of their trolleys and walked purposefully toward the barrier.

### *The Context of Situation*

The situation took place at King's Cross station. The participants were Ron, Harry, Ron's mother, and Ginny. Ron's mother would take Ginny to Hogwarts, she told Ron and Harry to come after them. Ron asked Harry to go together.

### *Analysis of Request Expressions*

Ron's utterance is the proposal. A proposal prospects both the speaker's and the addressee's action. Ron asked Harry to go together. His utterance actually prospects both Ron's and Harry's actions. Harry responded Ron's utterance with nonverbal action. Both of them walked together. Ron's request can refer to inviting because he invites Harry to go together.

The discussions above clearly indicated that "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" Novel has five types of request expressions. They were requests for action, requests for permission, offer, invitation, and proposal.

### *Appropriateness to 2006 Curriculum*

In meeting their purposes as the authentic sources in teaching English as the second or foreign language, the researchers obtained 72 data which are in line with

nine materials based on basic competences applied in 2006 curriculum. The following table shows the grouping of data into each material.

Table 2. Request Expressions in the Novel "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" Based on Junior High School 2006 Curriculum

Material	Data Number	Sum
Asking for service	12, 36, 37, 40, 42, 47, 54, 70, 73, 76, 94, 100, 103, 107, 108	15
Asking for things	2, 3, 9, 21, 35, 64, 65, 79, 86, 87, 97, 104	12
Asking for facts	59	1
Asking for opinion	54	1
Asking for clarifications	77	1
Inviting	14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 24, 25, 27, 30, 31, 41, 44, 53, 55, 57, 60, 67, 69, 75, 92, 95, 96	22
Offering something	5, 6, 7, 18, 20, 48, 49, 51, 52, 88, 89	11
Asking for agreement	1, 54	2
Asking for certainty	34, 50, 61, 63, 90, 100, 109	7
Total		72

The above table indicated that 65.45% of the expressions ascertained in the novel were appropriate for teaching English material at the junior high school level. The request expressions originated from Novel "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" serve nine materials allocated in basic competences of Junior High School 2006 Curriculum. Most data that matched the topic for teaching request expressions at the Junior High Schools was to serve the purpose of inviting as many as 22 data. Secondly, 15 data matched the topic on *Asking for service*. Then, 12 data matched the topic on *Asking for things* 11 data matched the topic on *Asking for offering*. The 12 remaining data of expressions matched the topics on *Asking for certainty*, *Asking for agreement*, *Asking for clarification*, *Asking for facts*, and *Asking for opinions*.

A slight difference persists between Tsui's classification and the 2006 curriculum where the curriculum grouped the invitation and proposal into the invitation learning material, for instance:

Datum 25/PO/ Inviting

"Let's go together, we've only got a minute," Ron said to Harry.

The request expression expected both the speaker's and the hearer's action. Consequently, it would be more appropriate to classify the expression into the request to propose. Unlike the request to propose, invitation only expects the hearer action such as in the following:

Datum 53/IV/Inviting

"It would be such an honor if you would attend." He watched Harry on tenterhooks.

Additionally, the topics on request expressions materials were found in basic competences of grade VII and VII.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The objective of this paper is to analyze the types of expressions used in "Harry Potter and The Chamber of Secret" Novel and their usefulness in English learning process at schools. After analyzing the data, the result revealed five types of request expressions originated in the novel, which are requests for action, permission, invitation, offer, and proposal. These expressions served nine topics on teaching English speaking material for junior high school level. Therefore, the expressions generated from the novel could be used as authentic materials for teaching request expressions in additions to the textbook used at schools.

The researchers also would like to emphasize on incorporating these findings into learning activities at schools since they will enrich teachers' authentic learning resources in teaching as well as developing students' excitement in learning English. Hence, the students are more exposed to the use of English in its natural context and could potentially expand their English skills.

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