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C F -L3 Students

LECTURE 1

FORMAL AND INFORMAL ENGLISH

Working out when to use formal language and when to be informal is a big part of mastering a language.

In English, formal language is used in situations that are more serious, for example when you're in a job interview or emailing your university professor. It can also be used when you're speaking to someone you don't know very well and want to make sure you sound respectful.

Informal language is used in more relaxed, everyday situations. Of course, this includes conversations with friends, family and other people you know well. Unlike many other languages, though, most English speakers tend to use informal language with people they've just met, too.

In fact, if you start a conversation with someone on the train or speak to someone working in a shop, they will usually find it strange if you use very formal language!

But what's the difference between them?

Formal English uses longer, full sentences and perfect grammar. Often, there are lots of sub-clauses to explain details, and few unnecessary words.

For example, if you were describing a trip you went on in a formal context such as an essay, you might say something like:

"Last week, my sister and I took the train to Brighton, a popular seaside town in the South of England. Although it's a pebble beach, and despite the cloudy weather, the beach was crowded with sunbathers and families. One group nearly lost their picnic when a strong wind blew their blanket and paper plates away."

On the other hand, if you were telling the same story to a friend, you would be more relaxed about your grammar. You might use short or broken sentences, everyday phrases or slang, and plenty of delaying, qualifying or correcting expressions. For example:

"Oh, did I tell you me and my sister went to Brighton last week? We got the train down, it was really fun. I mean, it was really cold and there's no sand, just, you know, stones, but it was still pretty good. All these people were trying really hard to sunbathe and have picnics"

and stuff, and then there was this, like, big gust of wind and all the plates and blankets were flying everywhere. So funny!”

We use formal English much more often when we’re writing and use informal English much more when we’re speaking, but that isn’t *always* the case.

For example, you would use more formal language when you’re giving an academic presentation or speech, and you would use informal language when you’re writing a message to friends.

If you’re unsure whether you should be using formal or informal language in a conversation, especially when you’re talking to someone older than you, or in a work situation, pay attention to how they speak to you and try to do the same. If you’re emailing or writing to someone and you’re not sure, it’s a good idea to use formal language. This makes sure that you always sound polite and professional.

ACTIVITY:

1) Say if these sentences are written with Formal or in Informal language

Hi Toney, it’s Sam! What’s up man?

- a. Dear Madam; am very glad to accept me for the interview.....
- b. Ahmed writes an email to the head office of the bank.....
- c. Are you free this afternoon? Am going to invite you into a lunch.....
- d. I’m so happy to hear from you guys, it’s such a nice day. Thank you.....
- e. Pleased to know you’re coming next week. I’ll come and pick you up at the airport.....

I look forward to meet you soon. Yours sincerely.

LECTURE 2

Economy of Algeria was largely based on agriculture. During the 1960s and 1970s oil revenues began to rise dramatically and thus the government shifted its economic sights to the oil industry.

Unfortunately, oil prices fell in the 1980s, negatively impacting on Algeria's economy which had become almost completely dependent on oil. Algeria is currently the world's second-biggest exporter of gas and it possesses the world's fifth largest natural gas reserves. The hydrocarbons sector makes up approximately 52% of budget revenues, 95% of the

country's export earnings, and 25% of the GDP i.e., gross domestic product. Even with efforts to develop the Algerian economy, the government has not been able to do much about unemployment or raise the population's living standards.

The government is working hard to improve Algeria's economy and the situation of its people. With increased foreign interest and investment, the country can look forward to growth in the future, particularly as the economy becomes more multiple.

Part One: Reading Comprehension

1- Answer the following questions according to the text :

- 2) Give a title to the text.
- 3) When did the oil prices fall?
- 4) Is Algeria the world's first biggest exporter of gas? Illustrate.
- 5) What does this item GDP refer to?
- 6) Has the government succeeded in eliminating unemployment?

2- Translate the following words into Arabic or French:

- f. Economy
- g. Government
- h. Oil prices
- i. Sector

3- Say if these sentences are written into Formal or Informal language (05pts)

1. Hi Rita! Pleased to hear you're coming next week.
2. Dear Ms. Randall I will come and pick you up at the airport.
3. I look forward to meeting you. Yours sincerely.
4. Dear Tommy, What's up man! Are you free for a game of Tennis?
5. This email is to confirm that you won the job.

4- Complete the table:

| Adjective | Opposite |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Friendly | |
| | Uncomfortable |
| Beautiful | |
| | Bad |

Part Two: Written Expression

Note: Choose One Topic to do

Topic 01:

Finish the conversation using the following adjectives: Unreliable; unhelpful; rude; dirty; expensive; uncomfortable.

- A. Have you tried Tim's Taxi Services?
B. Yes, and they're terrible! The drivers don't say 'hello', they're so
- A. Do the drivers arrive when you call them?
B. No, they're always late, they are really
- A. Do they carry your bags?
B. Never, they just sit in the car, they're so
- A. And what about the cars? Are they clean?
B. They never clean the Taxis, they look
- A. And are they comfortable?
B. They use small cars, so you always feel
- A. What about the fares?
B. They're so! You pay so much!

Lecture 3

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VOICE

Sentences can be active or passive. Therefore, tenses also have "active forms" and "passive forms." You must learn to recognize the difference to successfully speak English.

Active Form

In active sentences, the thing doing the action is the subject of the sentence and the thing receiving the action is the object. Most sentences are active.

[Thing doing action] + [verb] + [thing receiving action]

Examples:

Passive Form

In passive sentences, the thing receiving the action is the subject of the sentence and the thing doing the action is optionally included near the end of the sentence. You can use the passive form if you think that the thing receiving the action is more important or should be emphasized. You can also use the passive form if you do not know who is doing the action or if you do not want to mention who is doing the action.

[Thing receiving action] + [be] + [past participle of verb] + [by] + [thing doing action]

Examples:

Active and Passive Overview

| Tense | Active | Passive |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Simple Present | Once a week, Tom cleans the house. | Once a week, the house is cleaned by Tom. |
| Present Continuous | Right now, Sarah is writing the letter. | Right now, the letter is being written by Sarah. |
| Simple Past | Sam repaired the car. | The car was repaired by Sam. |
| Past Continuous | The salesman was helping the customer when the thief came into the store. | The customer was being helped by the salesman when the thief came into the store. |
| Present Perfect | Many tourists have visited that castle. | That castle has been visited by many tourists. |
| Present Perfect Continuous | Recently, John has been doing the work. | Recently, the work has been being done by John. |
| Past Perfect | George had repaired many cars before he received his mechanic's license. | Many cars had been repaired by George before he received his mechanic's license. |
| Past Perfect Continuous | Chef Jones had been preparing the restaurant's fantastic dinners for two years before he moved to Paris. | The restaurant's fantastic dinners had been being prepared by Chef Jones for two years before he moved to Paris. |
| Simple Future will | Someone will finish the work by 5:00 PM. | The work will be finished by 5:00 PM. |
| Simple Future be going to | Sally is going to make a beautiful dinner tonight. | A beautiful dinner is going to be made by Sally tonight. |
| Future Continuous will | At 8:00 PM tonight, John will be washing the dishes. | At 8:00 PM tonight, the dishes will be being washed by John. |
| Future Continuous be going to | At 8:00 PM tonight, John is going to be washing the dishes. | At 8:00 PM tonight, the dishes are going to be being washed by John. |
| Future Perfect will | They will have completed the project before the deadline. | The project will have been completed before the deadline. |
| Future Perfect be going to | They are going to have completed the project before the deadline. | The project is going to have been completed before the deadline. |
| Future Perfect Continuous will | The famous artist will have been painting the mural for over six months by the time it is finished. | The mural will have been being painted by the famous artist for over six months by the time it is finished. |
| Future Perfect Continuous be going to | The famous artist is going to have been painting the mural for over six months by the time it is finished. | The mural is going to have been being painted by the famous artist for over six months by the time it is finished. |
| Used to | Jerry used to pay the bills. | The bills used to be paid by Jerry. |
| Would Always | My mother would always make the pies. | The pies would always be made by my mother. |
| Future in the Past Would | I knew John would finish the work by 5:00 PM. | I knew the work would be finished by 5:00 PM. |

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Future in the Past Was Going to | I thought Sally was going to make a beautiful dinner tonight. | I thought a beautiful dinner was going to be made by Sally tonight. |
|------------------------------------|---|---|

Passive and active voice activity:

1. He teaches English. / English by him.
taught
is taught
was taught
2. The child is eating bananas. / Bananas by the child.
are eaten
are being eaten
have been eaten
3. She is writing a letter. / A letter by her.
is written
is being written
has been written
4. The master punished the servant. / The servant by the master.
is punished
was punished
has punished
5. He was writing a book. / A book by him.
was written
had written
was being written
6. Who wrote this letter? / By whom?
was this letter written
was this letter being written
had this letter written
7. Somebody cooks meal every day. / Meal by someone every day.
is cooked
has cooked
is cooking
8. He wore a blue shirt. / A blue shirt by him.
wore
was wore
was worn
9. May God bless you with happiness! / with happiness.
May you blessed
May you be blessed
May blessed you be
10. They are building a house. / A house by them.
is built
is being built
was built
11. I have finished the job. / The job by me.
has finished
has been finished
is finished
12. I sent the report yesterday. / The report yesterday.
is sent
was sent
had sent

LECTURE 4

Some 'rules' of word stress:

There are patterns in word stress in English but, as a rule (!), it is dangerous to say there are fixed rules. Exceptions can usually be found.

- Here are some general tendencies for word stress in English:

| Word | Type of word | Tendency | Exceptions |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--------------------|
| apple table happy | two-syllable nouns and adjectives | stress on the first syllable o o apple | hotel lagoon |
| suspect import insult | words which can be used as both nouns and verbs | the noun has stress on the first syllable o o "You are the suspect !" the verb has stress on the second syllable o o "I suspect you." | respect witness |
| hairbrush football | compound nouns | fairly equally balanced but with stronger stress on the first part o o hairbrush | |

How I help my students

Students can be alarmed when they meet words which are similar but have different stress patterns:

o o o O oo O o o o o o O o

equal equality equalise equalisation

A useful thing you can do is to help students see connections with other word families. Patterns can usually be found, for example:

O o final
neutral

o O oo finality
neutrality

O o o finalise
neutralise

o o o O o finalisation
neutralisation

There are some recognised differences in word stress which depend on the variety of English being used, for example:

o o O o Caribbean aluminium (British English)

o O o o Caribbean aluminum (American English)

These differences are noted in good learner dictionaries. If words like these come up in class, point them out to students. Ask if there are similar cases of differences in word stress in their own language - this will heighten awareness and interest.

In the classroom

- **Raise awareness & build confidence**
You can use the same questions with your students that I have used in this article. These will help to raise the students' awareness of word stress and its importance. Some learners love to learn about the 'technical' side of language, while others like to 'feel' or 'see' the language more, hearing the music of word stress or seeing the shapes of the words. Try to use a variety of approaches: helping students to engage with English in different ways will help them in their goal to become more proficient users of the language. Build students' confidence by drawing their attention to the tendencies and patterns in word stress that do exist.
- **Mark the stress**
Use a clear easy-to-see way of marking stress on the board and on handouts for students. I use the big circle - small circle (O o) method. It is very easy to see and has the added advantage of identifying the number of syllables in the word, as well as the stressed syllable.

Students also need to be aware of the way dictionaries usually mark stress - with a mark before the stressed syllable, e.g. 'apple. By knowing this, students will be able to check word stress independently.

- **Cuisenaire rods**
These different sized, small coloured blocks are great for helping students to 'see' the word stress. The students build the words using different blocks to represent stressed and unstressed syllables. (Children's small building blocks are a good substitute!)
- **Integrate word stress into your lessons**
You don't need to teach separate lessons on word stress. Instead, you can integrate it into your normal lessons. The ideal time to focus students' attention on it is when introducing vocabulary. Meaning and spelling are usually clarified for students but the sound and stress of the word can all too often be forgotten.

Quickly and simply elicit the stress pattern of the word from the students (as you would the meaning) and mark it on the board. Drill it too!

Students can use stress patterns as another way to organise and sort their vocabulary. For example, in their vocabulary books they can have a section for nouns with the pattern **○ ○**, and then a section for the pattern **○ ○ ○**. Three syllable words can be sorted into **○ ○ ○** (Saturday, hospital) and **○ ○ ○** (computer, unhappy).

Remember what I noted before: The more times students mentally engage with new vocabulary, the more they are likely to actually learn it. Engaging students through word stress helps to reinforce the learning of the words.

- Troubleshooting

Initially, many students find it difficult to hear word stress. A useful strategy is to focus on one word putting the stress on its different syllables in turn. For example:

○ ○ ○ computer ○ ○ ○ **computer** ○ ○ ○ computer

- Say the word in the different ways for the students, really exaggerating the stressed syllable and compressing the unstressed ones. Ask the students which version of the word sounds 'the best' or 'the most natural'.

By hearing the word stressed incorrectly, students can more easily pick out the correct version.

A personalised and effective way of getting students to hear the importance of correct word stress is by using people's names as examples. I introduce word stress with my name:

- "How many parts/syllables are there in my name?"
- "Which is the strongest - the first or second?"
- "Is it **Emma** or Emma?"

Then you can question students about their own names - this will give them a personalised connection to the issue of word stress, with a word they will never forget!

Conclusion:

Any work on aspects of pronunciation can take a long time to show improvements and be challenging for both the students and the teacher.