

Language Function Lesson

I. Presentation

Scene 1: *Anna and Virginia are good friends and neighbors. They are in Anna's apartment studying hard for an ESL exam. Virginia is concentrating on her textbook.*

Anna: Could I look at your notes from January 12th?

Virginia: What?

Anna: Could I look at your notes from January 12th?

Virginia: Oh, sure. Here they are.

Scene 2: *Anna is helping her boss, John, prepare for a business trip. John is alone in his office when Anna walks in.*

Anna: Here are your tickets, John. And this is your schedule.

John: When is my meeting with Frank Johnson?

Ana: Sorry?

John: When do I meet with Frank?

Ana: Your meeting with Frank is on Tuesday at 10:00, right after your meeting with the Honda people.

John: OK. Thanks.

Scene 3: *Howard is a waiter at an elegant restaurant. His customers are Jay and Manuel.*

Jay: I had fabulous crab cakes here last month. Waiter, do you have them today?

Howard: I'm sorry. What did you say?

Jay: Can I get crab cakes today?

Howard: No, sir. I'm sorry. We don't have them today.

Scene 4: *Virginia Smith is in a business meeting with her supervisor, Susan Stein.*

Susan: Miss Smith, do you have enough copies of the Jones report for everyone here?

Virginia: Pardon me?

Susan: Can everyone get a copy of the Jones report?

Virginia: Yes, certainly. I made extra copies this morning. Here they are.

Scene 5: Suzanne is walking down Pennsylvania Avenue on her lunch break. She is stopped by Lilly and Joe, tourists from Kansas.

Lilly: Excuse me. Could you tell us what subway line to take to the Phillips Gallery?

Suzanne: Pardon me?

Lilly: We want to go to the Phillips Gallery. Can you tell us which subway line to take?

Suzanne: I'm sorry, but I don't know where the Phillips Gallery is.

II. Highlighting

1. What is similar about these six dialogues? _____

2. Circle the sentence in each dialogue that makes that dialogue similar to the others.

3. Which of the dialogues occur in situations that require formal or more polite language?

Which scenes allow for more informal or familiar language?

informal/ formal/

familiar more polite

Scene 1: Anna and Virginia ____ ____

Scene 2: Anna and John ____ ____

informal/ formal/

familiar more polite

Scene 3: Jay and Howard ____ ____

Scene 4: Susan and Virginia ____ ____

Scene 5: Lilly and Suzanne ____ ____

4. Complete this grid using the sentences that you circled in the five dialogues.

Asking for repetition with language that is informal/familiar:	Asking for repetition with language that is formal/more polite:
scene #__	scene #__
scene #__	scene #__
	scene #__

5. Write four examples of situations that require formal or more polite language and four examples of situations that permit informal or casual language. Include these: good friends talking privately, a supervisor and a new employee in a meeting, a doctor and patient during a physical exam, a sister and brother talking on the phone, classmates talking about their homework, a store clerk answering a question from a customer.

Informal or casual language permitted Formal or more polite language required

III. Controlled Exercise

How could you ask someone to repeat what they said in these circumstances?

Scene 1: *Luis is at the doctor's office. He has a fever and a sore throat.*

The relationship between Luis and the doctor is
informal/formal.

Dr. Jones: I want to listen to your lungs with my stethoscope. Please take deep breaths through your mouth.

Luis: _____

Dr. Jones: Please breathe deeply through your mouth.

Luis: OK.

Scene 2: *Julie is talking to her sister Nicole on the telephone.*

The relationship between Julie and Nicole
is informal/formal.

Nicole: So, I was really too tired last night to do anything but watch TV.

Julie: Me, too. Have you seen that new show, "What Will You Do for \$1,000,000?"

Nicole: _____

Julie: Have you seen the new show called "What Will You Do for \$1,000,000?"

Nicole: No. Was it on last night?

Scene 3: *George is talking with his supervisor, Mr. Lopez.*

The relationship between George and Mr. Lopez is
informal/formal.

Mr. Lopez: Do you think you can have all this work done by 5:00?

George: _____

Mr. Lopez: Will you be finished by 5:00?

George: I might have to work until 5:30 tonight, sir.

Scene 4: *Frank is in the check-out line at the supermarket.*

The relationship between Frank and the cashier is
informal/formal.

Cashier: Good morning! How are you?

Frank: Fine, thanks. And you?

Cashier: Fine. Would you like the Cokes bagged?

Frank: _____

Cashier: Do you want me to put the case of Cokes in a bag?

Frank: Yes, please.

Scene 5: *Cheryl is having lunch with her best friend, Betty.*

The relationship between Cheryl and Betty is
informal/formal.

Cheryl: Did I tell you about the cute guy in my computer class?

Betty: _____

Cheryl: There's a really cute guy in my computer class. Did I tell you about him?

Betty: No. What's he like?

Scene 6: *Peggy is talking with her brother Ed.*

The relationship between Peggy and Ed is
informal/formal.

Peggy: I'm thinking about having a party for Mom's birthday on Saturday the 27th. Would you be able to come?

Ed: _____

Peggy: Could you come to a party for Mom's birthday on the 27th?

Ed: Oh, sure. That's a great idea. I'll help you.

Scene 7: *Hoa Chin is meeting her son Lu's mathematics teacher, Mr. Simpson, at a school reception for parents and teachers.*

The relationship between Hoa and Mr. Simpson is
informal/formal.

Mr. Simpson: I'm very pleased to meet you, Mrs. Chin. Lu's work this semester has been quite remarkable.

Hoa: He is a good student?

Mr. Simpson: Oh, yes! His GPA for the semester is 3.8.

Hoa: _____

Mr. Simpson: His grade point average is 3.8. That's 95 percent.

Hoa: Oh, that is good!

IV. Semi-Controlled Exercise

Select a relationship for the people in each of the next four dialogues. Either choice will be acceptable. Then decide how someone in the relationship you selected could ask for repetition.

Scene 1: *Two people are working together on a report. They are:*

___ *George and his new supervisor, Sam Donaldson*

(or)

___ *George and his classmate Sam Donaldson.*

Sam: I'm not sure Section III of this report is clear enough.

George: _____

Sam: _____

George: Maybe we should add a picture of the equipment.

Scene 2: *Two people are in a department store. They are:*

___ *Joe and his friend Jack*

(or)

___ *Joe and the sales clerk, Jack.*

Joe: I can't find this sweater in a large.

Jack: _____

Joe: _____

Jack: I'll see if any of the sweaters on this table are larges.

Scene 3: *Two people are in a restaurant. They are:*

___ *Rosa and her friend Alberto*

(or)

_____ *Rosa and the waiter, Alberto.*

Rosa: This chicken is too salty!

Alberto: _____

Rosa: _____

Alberto: Would you like to try another dish?

Scene 4: *Maria is telling Victoria about her stomach pain.*

_____ *Victoria is Maria's sister*

(or)

_____ *Victoria is Maria's doctor.*

Victoria: Is the pain more intense after you eat?

Maria: _____

Victoria: _____

Maria: No. It's the same all the time.

Scene 5: *Myra and Sylvia are standing at a bus stop.*

_____ *Myra is Sylvia's mother*

(or)

_____ *Myra and Sylvia are strangers.*

Myra: Does the 28C go all the way to the college?

Sylvia: _____

Myra: _____

Sylvia: Yes, it stops next to the main building.

Scene 6: *Victor and Dunia are having dinner in a restaurant.*

_____ *Dunia is Victor's supervisor, and they have to finish writing a big report before they can go home.*

(or)

_____ *Dunia is Victor's wife, and they promised the babysitter they would be home early.*

Dunia: The service is really slow here tonight.

Victor: _____

Dunia: _____

Victor: Yes, it is. This is frustrating.

V. Practice Speaking

A. Using Cue Cards

Half of the students will begin this exercise as "initiators." The other half will be "responders." After five minutes, each initiator will give his or her cue card to a responder and everyone will switch roles.

Initiators:

You will receive a cue card that will tell you who you are in a particular relationship. You must go up to someone who does not have a cue card (a "responder"), tell him or her who you are and what your relationship is, and then say something. The card will give you a general idea what to say, but you will decide exactly how to say it. (You can say different things to different people if you want to.) The responder will ask you to repeat. You will then repeat what you said or say the same thing using slightly different language.

The responder will then make up an appropriate response to what you said. If the responder does not understand you, he or she will tell you. Then you must try to use different words to make the responder understand, so he can make up a response.

After you receive a response, say goodbye and find another partner to practice with. Keep changing partners until the time is up.

Responders:

An initiator will come up to you and tell you what your relationship is with him or her. The initiator will then say something you to. Ask the initiator to repeat, using language that is appropriate for the situation. After the initiator repeats the statement or question, give a brief response.

If you do not understand what the initiator is saying after the second time he or she says it, then you should say that you don't understand. Then the initiator will try to repeat the statement or question using different language, so you can make up a response. After you give a response, the initiator will say good-bye, and you will both find a new partner to practice with.

B. Making dialogues

When do you find it most difficult to understand native speakers? Make a list with your partner of four situations that are difficult. Decide whether those situations permit informal language or require the use of formal or more polite language. Then select one situation and make a dialogue to perform for the class.

Difficult situations informal/formal

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____

VI. Wrap Up

In this lesson, you have practiced four ways of asking someone to repeat what they said. What other expressions have you heard people use? Try to think of two expressions -- one for formal situations and one for informal situations. Present your ideas to your small group. Then, agree within your group on the two best expressions to suggest to the class.

Other Ways of Asking for Repetition

My ideas:

Informal situation	Formal situation

My groups's ideas:

Informal situation	Formal situation

Ideas from other groups:

Informal situation	Formal situation