

Formal and Informal Language

3rd lecture

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A video

How to Use Formal and Informal English – English Speaking and Writing Fluency

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FOptwGnD8I>

What is formal language?

Formal language

Formal language is about showing respect to the person you are addressing depending on their office and status.

A person's office is his or her job, and positions held e.g. chairperson, director.

Status refers to the social standing or position in the social hierarchy and is determined by factors like age, education, family background, office and wealth.

Formal language

The more carefully you attend to your speech production, the more formal it becomes, which is appropriate in formal contexts.

The choice of language helps to put a comfortable distance between the speakers.

What is informal language?

Informal language

Informal language is about speaking more naturally and casually, which is appropriate when the social setting is informal and the speakers are of more or less equal status.

So, informal language can show friendliness, equality or a feeling of closeness and solidarity with someone.

Informal language

Too formal and you might sound pompous and ridiculous and elicit remarks like:

He treated me like a VIP. What a laugh!

Informal language

Informal language is more casual and spontaneous.

It is used when communicating with friends or family either in writing or in conversation.

It is used when writing personal emails, text messages and in some business correspondence.

Formal and informal language

Formal and informal language serve different purposes. The tone, the choice of words and the way the words are put together vary between the two styles.

Formal language is less personal than informal language. It is used when writing for professional or academic purposes like university assignments.

Formal language does not use colloquialisms, contractions or first person pronouns such as 'I' or 'We'.

Informal	Mode of Communication	Formal
Text message to a friend	Verbal – Written	Email to a professor
Birthday card for a relative		Resume & cover letter
Grocery list		English paper
Tweet or Facebook status		Online discussion board post
Skyping with a sibling	Verbal – Oral/Spoken	Tutoring
Family dinner		Job interview
Socializing at a club meeting		In-class presentation
Getting to know your roommate		Scheduling a doctor's appointment
Riding the bus	Nonverbal	Sitting in class
Dinner out with a friend		Interacting with customers at work
Watching a movie at home		Turning in a job application
Hugging your mother to say hello		Shaking hands to greet your boss

Why does communication matter?

When you use effective and appropriate communication, other people are more likely to:

- Have a positive impression of you
- Take you seriously; relate to you as a peer and adult
- Offer you assistance when needed

Examples of formal and informal language

Contractions

Informal: The improvements can't be introduced due to funding restrictions.

Formal: Improvements cannot be introduced due to funding restrictions.

Informal: I don't believe that the results are accurate.

Formal: The results are not believed to be accurate.

Informal: The research project won't continue next year.

Formal: The research project will not continue next year.

Phrasal verbs

Informal: The balloon was blown up for the experiment.

Formal: The balloon was inflated for the experiment.

Informal: The patient got over his illness.

Formal: The patient recovered from his illness.

Informal: The results of the study were mixed up.

Formal: The results of the study were confused.

Slang/Colloquialism

Informal: The mob was very rowdy during the protest against cuts to university funding.

Formal: The crowd was very rowdy during the protest against the cuts to university funding.

Informal: Lecturers still count on students to use correct grammar and punctuation in essays.

Formal: Lecturers expect students to use correct grammar and punctuation in essays.

First person pronouns

Informal: I considered various research methods for the study.

Formal: Various research methods were considered for the study.

Informal: We believe the practice is unsustainable.

Formal: It is believed the practice is unsustainable.

Informal: During the interview I asked students about their experiences.

Formal: During the interview students were asked about their experiences.

Formal Conversation (Greetings)

JAMES: Good morning, Professor Austin, how are you doing?

PROFESSOR AUSTIN: Good morning, James. I am doing well. And you?

JAMES: I'm great, thank you. This is my friend Emma. She is thinking about applying to this college. She has a few questions. Would you mind telling us about the process, please?

PROFESSOR AUSTIN: Hello, Emma! It's a pleasure to meet you. I'm more than happy to speak with you. Please stop by my office next week.

EMMA: It's a pleasure to meet you, professor. Thank you so much for helping us.

PROFESSOR AUSTIN: Don't mention it. Hopefully, I will be able to answer your questions!

Informal Conversation (Greetings)

JANE: Hi, Helen! How's it going?

HELEN: Fine, thanks — and you?

JANE: Just fine. Where are you off to?

HELEN: To the library. I've got a history exam next week and need to start studying. Ugh.

JANE: Oh, no. Well, I'll see you later then. Good luck!

HELEN: Thanks. See you later.

Greetings in German

English	German
good morning	guten Morgen
good evening	guten Abend
hello	guten Tag, Hallo (informal)
goodbye	auf Wiedersehen, Tschüß (informal)
How are you?	Wie geht's?(informal), wie geht es Ihnen?(formal)
Fine, thank you.	Danke, gut.
What is your name?	Wie heißen Sie?
My name is ...	Ich heiße ...
Nice to meet you.	Nett, Sie kennen zu lernen.

Formal and informal greetings in Kurdistan

English

Hello

Good morning

Welcome! (on arrival)

Goodbye

Thank you

You're welcome

How are you?

Are you well?

I'm fine, thank you

Sorani Kurdish

Rozh-bash

Beyanee-bash

Be kher bi(t)

Khwa-hafees

Supas

Ser chaw / Sha-ee neeya

Chonee?

Bashee?

Bashem, supas

Kurmanji Kurdish

Rozh-bash

Beyanee-bash

Be kher hati

Khwa-hafees

Supas/Mamnoon

Ser Chaava

Chaawayi?

Bashee?

Bashem, supas

Language and Internet



Language and Internet

Some people call it Internet slang since many abbreviations are mostly used in informal conversations of specific groups in social media networks.

FYI, **ASAP**, as well as other acronyms and abbreviations like **BTW** (By the way), **IMO** (In my opinion), **LMK** (Let me know), **PRB** (Please reply by) have been included to the business email conversation which almost never happens with common slang.





More informality in Internet

So, the language of internet can indicate informality and comfort.

The choice of "u" instead of "you" or rlly instead of really can tell the reader that you're comfortable and relaxed

Using Titles

Using Titles in English

Mr.	Mrs.	Miss	Ms.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pronounced "mister"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pronounced "misses"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pronounced "miss"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pronounced "mizz"
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• usually used with a man's last name.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• usually used with a woman's last name.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• usually used with a woman's last name.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• usually used with a woman's last name.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>For example: "Please give this to Mr. Smith."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>For example: "Please give this to Mrs. Smith."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>For example: "Please give this to Miss Smith."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>For example: "Please give this to Ms. Smith."</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is not possible to know if the man is married or single.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Used to refer to a married woman.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Used to refer to a single woman.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is not possible to know if the woman is married or single.
			
			<p>www.esltopics.com</p>

Using Titles in German

The most common titles in German are:

- **Herr (Mr.)**
- **Frau (Ms./Mrs.)**

Germans expect to be addressed by title; they do not use first names as readily as Americans do. “The name’s Charlie” approach is out of place in Germany. Using a person’s first name in Germany indicates knowing the person well. Germans may work together in the same office for years and still address each other by their last name.