

Section 6

Notions/Functions

এই বই-এ উপস্থাপিত structure গুলো ভাল ভাবে আয়ত্ত্ব হলে ইংরেজীতে শুদ্ধ বাক্য গঠন করতে কোন অসুবিধা হওয়ার কথা নয়। কিন্তু শুধু শুদ্ধ বাক্য গঠন করতে পারলেই ইংরেজী জানা হয় না। বাক্য গঠন ভাব প্রকাশের জন্য। কোন ভাব কি বাক্য দিয়ে প্রকাশ করতে হবে, কোন structure এর কি কাজ বা function এবং কোন social context বা সামাজিক পরিস্থিতিতে কোনটা উপযোগী তা জানা দরকার। Structure-এর জ্ঞান ভাব প্রকাশের কাজে লাগাতে হবে। ভাষার মাধ্যমে আমরা যে ভাব প্রকাশ করি তাকে ইংরেজীতে notion বা idea বলে এবং যে উদ্দেশ্যে আমরা ভাষা ব্যবহার করি তাকে ভাষার function বলে। কথাটা ইংরেজীতে এইভাবে বলা যায়: Notions are ideas we express through language and functions are the purposes for which we speak and write. আমাদের দেশে ইংরেজী পাঠ্যক্রমের মধ্যে এই ব্যাপারটিকে কোন গুরুত্ব দেওয়া হয় না, অথচ ব্যাপারটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ এবং বিস্তৃত আলোচনার দাবী রাখে, কারণ আমরা একটি ভাষা শিখি মূলত: ব্যবহার করার জন্য। Notions/Functions সম্বন্ধে ধারণা না থাকলে ভাষা সঠিক ভাবে ব্যবহার করা যায় না। উদাহরণস্বরূপ, কেউ হয়ত grammar বা structure ভাল জানেন কিন্তু কাউকে invite বা নিমন্ত্রণ করতে হলে কি ভাষা ব্যবহার করতে হবে তা জানেন না।

A Socializing: This means acts of communications by which we establish and maintain relations with other people. Socializing includes, among other things, the following:

(a) Introducing oneself

At a party you find yourself standing next to someone you don't know. You feel like introducing yourself to him and this is how you can do it:

You : Excuse me, may I introduce myself to you? My name is Ahmed Hossain. I'm an engineer.

Stranger : How do you do? My name is Rafiqul Islam. I'm a doctor.

We normally say *How do you do?* when we meet someone for the first time. And the correct way to reply is to repeat the expression and say: *How do you do?*

(b) You are introducing yourself to another student at the university cafeteria. This is what you say:

You : Hello. I'm Salahuddin. I'm studying English.

Stranger : Hello. I'm Shabuddin. I'm studying Economics.

You : Which year are you in?

Stranger : I'm in my first year.

You : So am I. Where are you from?

Stranger : I'm from Barisal. Where are you from?

You : I'm from Natore.

In informal situations like this we say *Good morning Good afternoon, Good evening* or simply *Hello* or more informally *Hi*. After the introduction the rest of the dialogue between the two students is what is called 'small talk'. The conversation continues with a polite enquiry about other things.

(c) Introducing two people to each other

You work in a bank. A friend of yours would like to open an account. You want to introduce him to the manager.

You : Good morning, Sir. May I introduce my friend Mr Abdul Hakim to you? He is a journalist.

Manager : Pleased to meet you, Mr Hakim. Which newspaper do you work for?

Hakim : *The Bangladesh Observer*. Do you take it?

Manager : I'm afraid I don't. I take the *Inqilab*.

You : Mr Hakim has just come back from a trip to Nepal.

Manager : How interesting!

In introducing someone we give the name and job of the person. We often add some bits of interesting information. For instance, in the above introduction Mr Hakim's trip to Nepal has been mentioned.

Here are some other ways of introducing someone:

I would like you to meet Mr...

Meet my friend... (Informal)

Instead of *Pleased to meet you*, you can say *I am delighted to make your acquaintance*.

(d) Greeting someone you know

Hasan is your neighbour. You meet him on your way out.

You: Good morning, Mr Hasan. How are you?

Hasan: I'm fine, thanks. How are you?

You: Very well, thank you.

How are you is not a request for details about your health. So the reply should be *Very well, thank you; Fine, thanks* or *Not too bad*. You can also use the informal *Mustn't grumble/can't complain*. The informal expressions suggest the things are not too wonderful or too disastrous.

If you really want to ask about someone's health, the question will be something like this:

How are you feeling?

How are you these days?

How are you today?

(e) Giving and responding to good wishes

A colleague is leaving your firm for another job. This is how you can give him good wishes:

All the very best.

The best of luck.

I wish you success in your new job.

(f) Saying goodbye

A colleague is going abroad and you are seeing him off at the airport:

You : I look forward to seeing you again. Goodbye.
Have a good journey.

Colleague : Thank you for everything you have done.
Goodbye.

B Expressing emotional attitudes

(a) Expressing pleasure/happiness

A friend has called.

You : What's new?

Friend : We have had a baby. It's a boy.

You : How marvellous!

Friend : Thanks.

You : Well. It calls for a celebration in a big way.

Friend : I can't afford a celebration in a big way. But I'm thinking of giving a small party.

You : I look forward to it.

Here are some other ways of expressing pleasure or happiness:

I feel so happy.

pleased

delighted.

thrilled.

That makes me happy.

I feel so	happy	that you have had a son.
	pleased	
	delighted	that you have had a son.
	thrilled	

(b) Expressing displeasure or anger

A friend of yours borrowed some money from you for a couple of days.

The money is overdue.

You : It's about a week since you borrowed some money from me. You wanted it for a couple of days only.

Friend : I'm sorry. It may be some time before I can pay it back.

You : I can't say I'm pleased. As a matter of fact, I'm upset because I need the money badly.

Here are some other ways of expressing displeasure or anger:

He	got		so cross.
I			angry.
You			annoyed.
It	made	me	so angry.
He	makes	you	cross.
			upset.
			furious.

(c) Expressing likes and dislikes

You are at a small party. The hostess offers you, among other things, a lot of sweets. But you push the plate of sweets away. The hostess looks at you, surprised.

Hostess : Why have you pushed the plate of sweets away?

You : I don't like sweets.

Hostess : But I like sweets very much.

You : You were complaining of toothache.

Hostess : Yes, but why do you mention that?

You : Sweets are bad for your teeth.

Hostess : Really?

You : Yes. Moreover, they are full of calories and too many calories are bad for sedentary people.

Hostess : Is that why you don't like sweets?

You : No. I just don't like them. That's all.

Hostess : You have set me thinking. I had better cut down on sweets.

Here are some other ways of expressing likes and dislikes:

I love sweets.

I am fond of sweets.

I enjoy sweets.

I dislike sweets.

I hate sweets.

Sweets make me feel sick.

(d) Expressing surprise

It is your wedding anniversary. You have bought a sari for your wife.

You : Darling, I have got something for you.

Wife : What is it?

You : It's a sari.

Wife : (untying the packet): It's beautiful. What a pleasant surprise!

Here are some other ways of expressing surprise:

Good heavens!

You don't say!

You must be joking!

Well, that's very surprising.

(e) Expressing worry or fear

It is 10 o'clock. Your younger brother Nasim who went out in the afternoon has not come home yet.

Mother : I'm worried sick about Nasim. I wonder why he hasn't come home yet.

You : Don't worry, mother. He has been late before.

Mother : No, he has never been so late before. I'm really frightened. I don't know what to do.

You: Calm down. I don't know what to do. [Nasim walks in]. Here he is.

Mother : I feel so relieved.

Here are some other ways of expressing worry or fear:

The situation is worrying.

The situation worries me.

We are uneasy about the political situation in the country.

I am terrified of living in a big house alone.

C Expressing moral attitudes

(a) Apologizing for unimportant things

You are late for a party.

Host : You're very late. I was wondering if you would show up.

You : I'm sorry. The traffic was terrible. I thought I might not be able to make it.

Host : I'm glad you have made it.

(b) Apologizing for more important things

You have lost a book which you borrowed from a friend.

You : I'm terribly sorry I have lost your book. Someone must have taken it.

Friend : It's all right. Don't let it happen again.

You : I think I should buy you a copy of the book.

Friend : Don't bother.

If you simply say: "I'm sorry I have lost your book", it does not sound apologetic enough. So in a situation like this, you use one of these expressions: "very/terribly/really/dreadfully sorry".

(c) Expressing regret

I wish ...

What a pity ...

I miss everybody.

This is how you express past regret:

Friend : Did you see the English film last night?

You : No, I didn't.

Friend : It was very good.

You : I wish I had seen it.

When you use "wish" to express present regret, you use past tense in the noun clause: "I wish I *saw* it". When you express past regret, you use past perfect tense: "I wish I *had seen* it"

Here are some other ways of expressing past regret:

If only I had seen it.

What a pity I did not see it!

I should have seen it.

When I left home. I missed my mother's cooking.

D Expressing intellectual attitudes

(a) Expressing agreement or disagreement

You and your friend are watching a drama on television. At an exciting moment the programme is interrupted by commercials.

You : Commercials are a nuisance, aren't they?

Friend : I see what you mean, but don't you think some of the commercials are extremely amusing?

You : Who wants such amusements when you are watching something interesting or exciting? Besides, most commercials are irritating.

Friend : There's a lot in what you say, but you mustn't overlook the interests of the advertisers. They have to sell their products.

You : I'm not saying that commercials should be banned. You can have them, if you like, before and after a programme, but not in the middle of a programme.

Friend : I couldn't agree more.

Expressions of agreement or disagreement:

I couldn't agree more.

I see what you mean.

There's a lot in what you say.

I agree with you entirely.

I disagree.

I couldn't go along with you all the way.

(b) Expressing approval or disapproval

A girl has gone and married a young man without the approval of her parents. Here is a dialogue between her and her mother.

Mother : You should be ashamed of what you've done.

Daughter : I don't see why. I love him and I've married him. What's wrong with that?

Mother : Why didn't you tell us about it? Don't you think you have any family obligations?

Daughter : I thought you might not approve of the marriage. He comes from a poor family.

Mother : And he doesn't have a job, does he?

Daughter : No. I'm sorry.

Mother : I don't approve of this marriage.

Daughter : You're heartless.

Mother : Don't speak to your mother like that.

Expressions of approval or disapproval:

I approve of this.

You have my approval.

We don't approve of this.

Don't speak to your mother like that.

That's not the way to speak to your mother.

(c) Expressing indifference

Your friend is passionately interested in politics, while you are indifferent, and you express your indifference in your conversation with him.

Friend : Some people say that the general election this year has not been fair and impartial. What do you think?

You : I couldn't care less.

Friend : Why is that?

You : Even if it has been fair, what difference is it going to make?

Friend : What do you mean?

You : The election in 1991 was fair and impartial, wasn't it?

Friend : Yes, almost everybody said so.

You : Was the government voted into office in a fair and impartial election able to bring about any qualitative change in the life of the people? If you look around, you will find a dismal picture everywhere. That's why I don't care which party comes into office or goes out of office. It's all the same to me.

These are the expressions you use in expressing indifference:

I couldn't care less.

I don't care.

It's all the same to me.

(d) Seeking permission

You work in a bank. You want to use the manager's telephone.

You : Sir, I want to make a telephone call to a friend in Dhaka on some urgent business. May I use the telephone?

Manager : Yes, of course.

You : I have just talked to my friend. He wants me to go to Dhaka on some personal matter. I wonder if I could have three days' casual leave.

Manager : It's all right.

These are the expressions you use in seeking permission:

May I... formal

Could I ...

I wonder if I could...

Is it all right if ... informal

These are the expressions you use in giving permission:

You may.

Yes, of course.

It's all right.

(e) Expressing obligation or compulsion

A girl is going to a party at a friend's house. Here is a dialogue between her and her mother.

Daughter: Mum. I must rush. It's getting late.

Mother: But you have to ask your father about it.

Daughter: He is sleeping. I don't want to disturb him.

Mother: All right. But you must be back by 6 o'clock.

Daughter: Don't worry. If it gets dark, they will drive me home in their car.

There are some of the ways of expressing obligation or compulsion:

I must ...

I have to ...

I have got to ...

E Suasion (getting things done)**(a) Making suggestions**

You and some of your friends are planning to go on a picnic. You have not decided on the place yet.

You : Shall we go to Dighapatia in Natore? It's a historical place.

Kamal : We might as well go to Paharpur. It's a more famous place.

Hasan : But it's quite far. How about going to Sonamasjid in Chapai-Nawabgonj? It's really worth-seeing. Near the mosque there is a big pond with trees all around. It is an ideal spot for picnicking.

You : It's a good idea.

All : Let's go to Sonamasjid.

These are the expressions used in the dialogue for making suggestions:

Shall we ...

We might as well ...

How about going to ...

Let's go ...

Here are some other ways of making suggestions:

Why don't we ...
 I tell you what: We'll...
 I suggest we go to ...

(b) Asking for and giving advice

A friend of yours is going abroad for the first time and he is excited, but he is worried too. He has come to see you and ask for advice because you have been abroad before.

Friend : My health is so delicate. What am I going to do if I fall ill?

You : You ought to see the doctor you register with under the National Health Service.

Friend : What am I going to do if I lose my passport?

You : You should report the loss immediately to the police. If they can't find it, you ought to write to our High Commission telling them about the loss and asking for another passport.

Friend : My English is poor. What should I do if native speakers can't understand my English and if I can't understand theirs?

You : If I were you, I wouldn't worry about it. When you go abroad, you are forced to pick up the language quickly.

These are the expressions used in the dialogue for seeking and giving advice:

What am I going to do ...
 What should I do ...
 You should ...
 You ought to ...
 If I were you, I would ...

Here are some other ways of seeking and giving advice:

What do you advise me to do...
 What can I do about ...
 You could see ...
 You had better see ...

(c) Requesting others to do something

A housewife has run out of sugar. She goes to her next-door neighbour to borrow some.

Mrs Ali : Mrs Hasan. I have run out of sugar.
Could you lend me some. Just a cup will do.

Mrs Hasan (smiling) I'm sorry I can't lend you a cup of sugar.
What I can do is to give you a cup of sugar.

Mrs Ali (smiling): All right. Give me a cup of sugar. Oh, there's
one other thing. My telephone is dead. You are on the telephone.
Will you ask the Telephone Exchange to see about it?

Mrs Hasan: Certainly.

Mrs Ali: Thanks a lot.

Mrs Hasan: You're welcome.

In requesting someone to do something the following expressions
have been used in the dialogue.

Could you lend me some sugar?

Will you ask the Telephone Exchange to see about it?

Here are some other ways of making requests:

Would you help me lift this box?

Would you mind switching off the fan?

I wonder if you could help me do the washing-up?

Would you is more polite than *will you* and *could you* is more
polite than *would you*. *Would you mind + ing-form* and *I wonder
if you could + base form of verb* are formal expressions.

(d) Inviting others to do something

You have received a telephone call from a colleague:

Colleague : Hello, are you free next Friday?

You : Yes, I'm.

Colleague : Would you like to come and have lunch with me?

You : Oh, thank you very much. I'd love to.

Here are some other ways of inviting others:

We should be very pleased if you could come and have lunch with us tomorrow evening.

The Managing Director, Agrani Bank, requests the pleasure of your company at a dinner in honour of the Governor, Bangladesh Bank, at 8 p.m on 20th December 1995.

These are formal invitations. If you invite someone informally, you write something like this:

If you are free tomorrow evening, why don't you come and have dinner with me?

Here are some more notions/functions:

Giving directions

A : Excuse me, could you tell me the way to the post office?

B : Yes, Go straight on. Take the first turning on the right. Walk for about two minutes. Then you come to a bridge. Take the second turning on the left after the bridge. About a hundred meters down the road there is a big yellow building. That's the post office.

A : Thank you very much.

B : You are welcome.

A : Excuse me. How do I get to the hospital?

B : I'm sorry. I don't know.

A : It's all right. I'll ask somebody else.

Buying things

Shop assistant : Can I help you?

Customer : Yes. I want a pair of shoes.

Shop assistant : What colour?

Customer : Black.

Shop assistant : What size?

Customer : Five. I think, but would you measure my foot?

- Shop assistant : Certainly. Yes, five it is. Now how about these?
- Customer : Can I try them on?
- Shop assistant : Of course.
- Customer : They fit perfectly. How much are they?
- Shop assistant : Five hundred, please.
- Shop assistant : Thank you.

Making telephone calls

- Hena : Hello.
- Bina : Hello. May I speak to Mina, please?
- Hena : Just a minute Mina. it's for you.
- Mina : Hello.
- Bina : Mina, this is Bina. Would you like to go shopping tomorrow?
- Mina : Yes, I'd love to, I haven't done any shopping for a long time.
- Bina : Good. I'll pick you up at five o'clock. We must get back before dark.
- Mian : All right. I'll be ready.

Section 7

Formal and Informal English

Formal ও informal English-এর তফাৎ জানাটা শিক্ষার্থীর জন্য খুবই গুরুত্বপূর্ণ কারণ যে উপলক্ষে ভাষা ব্যবহার করা হয় সেই উপলক্ষের সঙ্গে তা সঙ্গতিপূর্ণ হতে হবে এবং যাকে উদ্দেশ্য করে লেখা হয় বা বলা হয় তার সঙ্গে লেখকের বা বক্তার সম্পর্ক অনুযায়ী শব্দ চয়ন বা বাক্য গঠন করতে হয়। তা না হলে ভুল বুঝাবুঝি হতে পারে অথবা হাসির উদ্দেক করতে পারে। যেমন কোন বন্ধুকে যদি বলা হয় “Would you mind closing the door?” তাহলে সেটা appropriate বা যথাযথ হবে না, বরং হাস্যকর হবে কারণ এটা formal language এবং একজন বন্ধুর সঙ্গে আমরা formal language এ কথা বলি না। আবার যদি একজন অপরিচিত ভদ্র লোককে বলা হয় “Shut the door, will you?” তাহলে এটা যথাযথ হবে না কারণ এটা informal language এবং এ ধরনের ভাষা কোন অপরিচিত লোকের প্রতি ব্যবহার করলে তিনি অসুস্ত হতে পারেন বা রেগে যেতে পারেন। তাই শুধু বাক্য শুদ্ধ হলে চলবে না, কোন্ উপলক্ষে বা কোন্ পরিস্থিতিতে কার সঙ্গে কথা বলাছি বা কাকে লিখছি সেটা মনে রেখে শব্দ চয়ন ও বাক্য গঠন করতে হবে। আমাদের দেশে ইংরেজী শেখাতে গিয়ে এই বিষয়টির প্রতি কোন গুরুত্ব দেওয়া হয় না, ফলে আমরা যে ইংরেজী লিখি এবং বলি সেটা প্রায়শঃ অসঙ্গতিপূর্ণ, অভদ্রজনোচিত অথবা হাস্যকর হয়। তাই formal ও informal English সম্বন্ধে পরিষ্কার ধারণা থাকা দরকার।

Formal ও informal English বলতে কি বুঝায়?

Formal English is the type of language educated people use on certain special occasions and in academic, technical and scholarly writing. It is also used in official reports, regulations and business letters.

Informal English (also called ‘colloquial’) is the everyday language of the same group of people. It is used in ordinary conversation, personal letters, private interactions, advertisements, popular newspapers and broadcasting. Informal English is different from and

more often used than formal English. A brief description of the two varieties of English follows.

1. Vocabulary: There are many differences of vocabulary between formal and informal English. Much of the vocabulary of formal English which comes from Greek, Latin and French is long and difficult, whereas the vocabulary of informal English is of Angle-Saxon origin and is short and simple. Here are some examples.

Formal**Informal**

I will *acquaint* him with the facts.

I will *let him know* the facts.

The Foreign Minister *adumbrated* the foreign policy of the Govt. in Parliament.

The Foreign Minister *outlined* the foreign policy of the Govt. in Parliament.

The Govt. will do everything possible to *ameliorate* the lot of the common man.

The Govt. will do everything possible to *improve* the lot of the common man.

The DC *apprised* the Govt. of the flood situation.

The DC *informed* the Govt. of the flood situation.

Please close the door behind you.

Shut the door behind you, please.

The examination will *commence* on 20th January.

The exam will *begin/start* on 20th January.

I *deem* it my duty to help the poor.

I *think* it my duty to help the poor.

He endeavored to make an impression on the girl.

He *tried* to make an impression on the girl.

She *evinced* great interest in his paintings.

She *showed* great interest in his paintings.

We must *expedite* the development work.

We must hasten the development work.

Please do not expectorate on the bus.

Do not *spit* on the bus, please.

We will *extend* all possible help.

We will *give* all possible help.

He <i>felicitated</i> me on my promotion.	He <i>congratulated</i> me on my promotion.
He hails from Barisal.	He <i>comes</i> from Barisal.
I located him in the library.	I <i>found</i> him in the library.
She <i>obtained</i> a first class in the MA examination.	She <i>got</i> a first class in the MA examination.
The soldiers <i>proceeded</i> to the front.	The soldiers <i>went</i> to the front.
He has <i>purchased</i> a car.	He has <i>bought</i> a car.
The flood <i>rendered</i> many people homeless.	The flood <i>made</i> many people homeless.
He <i>resides</i> in Gulshan.	He <i>lives</i> in Gulshan.
We <i>require</i> help.	We <i>want</i> help.
The old man <i>retired</i> for the night.	The old man <i>went to</i> bed.
Please <i>step</i> this way.	<i>Come</i> this way, please.
We have <i>transmitted</i> the information to the authorities.	We have sent the information to the authorities.
Khaled was a <i>valiant</i> general.	Khaled was a brave general.
The project is not <i>viable</i> .	The project is not <i>workable</i> .

2. In informal context native speakers tend to use phrasal verbs (two-word verbs) in place of single lexical items which usually occur in formal or neutral (neither formal nor informal) context.

Formal/Neutral

She *alighted* from the train.

He *arises* at 6 o'clock.

We are *awaiting* the arrival of the guests.

They *demolished* the building.

Distribute the leaflets.

Some prisoners *escaped* from the jail.

Informal

She *got off* the train.

He *gets up* at 6 o'clock.

We are *waiting for* the arrival of the guests.

The *pulled down* the building.

Give out the leaflets.

Some prisoners *got away* from the jail.

They have <i>issued</i> a statement.	They have put out a statement.
About a hundred people <i>attended the meeting</i> .	About a hundred people <i>showed up</i> at the meeting.
The other day I <i>met</i> an old friend unexpectedly.	The other day I <i>ran into</i> an old friend.
Have you <i>recuperated</i> from the shock?	Have you <i>got over</i> the shock?
He <i>reiected</i> the offer of help.	He <i>turned down</i> the offer of help.
<i>Submit</i> the tutorials tomorrow.	<i>Hand in</i> the tutorials tomorrow.
When did you <i>return</i> ?	When did you <i>get back</i> ?
The chairman has <i>postponed</i> the meeting.	The chairman has <i>put off</i> the meeting.
The workers have <i>withdrawn</i> the strike.	The workers have <i>called off</i> the strike.
The army <i>surrendered</i> .	The army <i>gave in</i> .
Will you <i>increase</i> the volume of the radio?	Will you turn up the volume of the radio?
He <i>resembles</i> his father.	He <i>takes after</i> his father.
I <i>need</i> a cup of tea.	I could <i>do with</i> a cup of tea.

3. Contracted verb forms are used only in informal English.

He does not smoke.	He doesn't smoke.
He has not seen the film.	He hasn't seen the film.
We are not native speakers of English.	We aren't native speakers of English.
You have got a nice house.	You've got a nice house.
You are very kind.	You're very kind.
I hope you will come to my party.	I hope you'll come to my party.
I would like to stay with you for a week.	I'd like to stay with you for a week.

4. Formal language is impersonal. It also uses passive voice and sentences beginning with introductory *it*. Informal language, on the other hand, has a personal touch.

A prompt reply to the letter will be appreciated.	I'll appreciate a prompt reply to the letter.
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This is to inform the applicants that the interview will be held on 15 th February.	I'm writing to inform you that the interview will be held on 15 th February.
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The delay in making payment is regretted.	I'm sorry for the delay in making payment.
---	--

It is suggested that you send the manuscript to another publisher.	Why don't you send the manuscript to another publisher?
--	---

5. In addition to the above differences between formal and informal English, there are many words, phrases, expressions and sentences which are formal. Some of these and their informal equivalents are given below.

Formal**Informal**

Hello,

Hi

Thank you.

Thanks.

Goodbye.

So long.

It is a pleasure to meet you.

Nice to meet you.

I am afraid I have no idea.

I don't know.

I do not think we have met before.

I don't know him.

I beg your pardon.

What?

Would you pass me the salt?

Pass me the salt, will you?

Would you like another piece of cake?

Have another piece of cake.

Could I have some more rice?

Can I have some more rice?

I think you might be mistaken.

I don't think that's right.

Would you like to go for a walk? Let's go for a walk?
walk?

He has a great deal of experience. He has a lot of experience.
experience.

6. Structures: There are also differences of structures between formal and informal English. Examples:

- (a) Use of *there are* with plural nouns is formal; *there's* predominates in informal English.

There are too many political parties in Bangladesh There's too many political parties in Bangladesh.

There are two chairs in this room. There's two chairs in this room.

- (b) Use of the initial preposition to introduce a relative clause is formal; a construction with a final preposition is informal.

I have read the book about which you spoke. I have read the book you spoke about.

This is the man to whom I talked yesterday. This is the man I talked to yesterday.

The man with whom I am staying is a friend of mine. The man I am staying with is a friend of mine.

- (c) Use of *be* in the passive voice is formal or neutral; *get* is informal.

Formal

He was hurt in the accident.

He was married last year.

Informal

He got hurt in the accident.

He got married last year.

- (d) Use of non-finites is formal; finite clause and coordination are informal.

Formal

Having sung the national anthem, the boys went into the classroom.

The meeting over, Kamal came home.

Informal

The boys sang the national anthem and went into the classroom.

Kamal came home after the meeting.

- (e) Nouns such as time and weather are formal;
- it is*
- informal.

Formal

The time now is 10 o'clock.

The weather today is wet.

Informal

It's now 10 o'clock.

It's wet today.

- (f) Use of 'of'-possessive is formal; 's signals informality.

Formal

The songs of Tagore are very popular.

Informal

Tagore's songs are very popular.

- (g) The substitutes
- that, those*
- are typical of formal English, whereas
- one*
- and
- ones*
- substitutes occur in informal English.

Formal

The novels he wrote 10 years ago are more interesting than those he is writing now.

Informal

The novels he wrote 10 years ago are more interesting than the ones he is writing now.

- (h) Use of generic personal pronoun
- one*
- is formal, whereas generic
- you*
- is informal.

Formal

One should take regular exercise.

One never knows what will happen tomorrow.

Informal

You should take regular exercise.

You never know what will happen tomorrow.

- (i) Use of
- whom*
- is formal;
- who*
- is informal

Formal

Whom did you meet yesterday?

Whom do you want to marry?

Informal

Who did you meet yesterday?

Who do you want to marry?

- (j) In informal English if the first verb in a conditional clause is 'had' 'should', the verb can be put at the beginning of the clause and 'if' can be omitted.

Formal

Had I known I would not have gone there.

Should you decide to give up smoking, he would welcome it.

Informal

If I had known, I would not have gone there.

If you should decide to give up smoking, he would welcome it.

Now the important question is; how do you decide whether to use formal or informal language? You decide according to the situation you are in. If the situation is formal, you use formal language. If the situation is informal, you use informal language. The next question is: how do you know whether the situation is formal or informal? You should take four things into consideration in deciding the nature of the situation.

- (a) The Setting: the place or the occasion
- (b) The Topic: what you are writing or talking about.
- (c) Your Social Relationship: friend, stranger, employer, employee
- (d) Your Psychological Attitude: What you feel about the topic or the other person

All four factors combine to influence your choice of the level of formality*.

* See also the section on Notions/Functions.