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Learning Softening

(Knowing vs. Using)

Rajesh Kumar

We know ...

Simple Sentences

- Sentence = Subject + Predicate
- Predicate = Verb + Object(s) (adverbs)

Complex Sentences:

- Subject + Predicate [embedded sentence as an object]

Agreement

- Person/Number/Gender

Tense

- Present/Past/Future

Aspects

- Habitual/Continuous/Perfective

Being impactful ...

- We need to know how to say what we want to say.
- The way we use sentences makes all the difference.

Some helpful ways of saying things...

- **In the context of**

- **Questions/Suggestions/Requests**
- **Opinion**
- **Issues**
- **Refusal**

Formal vs. Informal

- Imperatives
- Command and Respect
 - Give me a glass of water.
 - Please give me a glass of water.
- Meet with me at 9 in the morning.
- Please meet with me at 9 in the morning.

Softer version

- Could we meet at 9 in the morning?
- Could we meet at 9 in the morning, please?
- I was wondering if we could meet at 9 in the morning.

Suggestions ...

- Shall I invest in mutual funds?
- No, you should not.

- I think mutual funds are not doing good these days.
- If I were you, I would not.
- If I were you, I would think several times about it.

Issues

- Sir, I have submitted my report on accounts. Hope you liked it.
- You have made a mistake in calculations.
- You have ruined it.

Softening ...

- You seem to have missed a few things. May I suggest a revisit?
- It appears to me that the calculations do not add up. Could you please take a look at it again?

Refusal ... Saying no

- Not difficult, but requires skill
 - Can we go for a cup of tea?
 - Could you please bring me some story books on your way?

Skilful refusal ...

- Can we go for a cup of tea?
 - I have a lot of stuff pending to take a care of.
 - I have a lot of stuff pending to take a care of. Hope you won't mind.
- Could you please bring me some storybooks on your way?
 - I will try my best.
 - The shop seems to have moved as I could not find it.
 - I am not sure if there is any bookstore on my way.

Things to notice ...

- We need to be aware of the context.
- There is not specific rule for these things.
- Being and coming softer in communication is social skill.
- Combining the use of grammatical rules with social skills makes communications effective!