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**Т.В. ПОЧИНОК**

**ДИСКУРСИВНАЯ ПРАКТИКА  
АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА**

**ПРАКТИЧЕСКОЕ ПОСОБИЕ**

**по теме “Friends and friendship in America”  
для студентов 3 курса специальности 1 – 02 03 06 01(03)  
«Английский язык. Немецкий язык/Французский язык»**

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## Содержание

Введение .....	4
Unit 1 Making friends in America .....	5
Unit 2 Dealing with personal questions. Guiding the topic .....	21
Unit 3 Tough moments of friendship. Making a request .....	27
Список литературы .....	42

## Введение

Практическое пособие по дискурсивной практике английского языка предназначено для студентов специальности 1 – 02 03 06 01(03) «Английский язык. Немецкий язык/Французский язык» при изучении темы «Друг и дружба в Америке».

Пособие направлено на формирование иноязычной социокультурной компетенции, что представляет одну из основных задач в подготовке студентов факультета иностранных языков (языкового вуза) к эффективному межкультурному общению. Пособие предлагает систему полифункциональных заданий, направленных на овладение студентами социокультурными знаниями, развитие социокультурных умений, социокультурных способностей и воспитание социокультурных качеств. Материал представлен разделами, которые отражают основные аспекты изучаемой темы: «Как познакомиться в Америке» (“Making friends in America”), «Как отвечать на личные вопросы и управлять разговором» (“Dealing with personal questions. Guiding the topic”) и «Сложности в дружбе. Как выразить просьбу» (“Tough moments of friendship. Making a request”). Каждый из разделов имеет одинаковую структуру: это культуроведческий текст в виде «ценностной капсулы» и «языковой капсулы», в которых раскрываются ценностные ориентации и национально-культурные особенности речевого поведения носителей англоязычной лингвокультуры, и комплекс ориентировочных и интерактивных заданий для формирования иноязычной социокультурной компетенции.

При составлении данного пособия автор использовал материалы современных учебных пособий, изданных в последние годы в странах СНГ и за рубежом.

В пособии учтена специфика подготовки преподавателей английского языка на факультете иностранных языков, а также современные тенденции иноязычного образования.

## Unit 1 Making friends in America

**Ex. 1 Study the Value Capsule “Friendliness versus Friendship”. In the Capsule find the information about the attitude of Americans to the notions ‘a friend’, ‘friendship’, ‘friendliness’, ‘privacy in friendship’.**

### *Value Capsule “Friendliness versus Friendship”*

What do Americans mean when they use the word “Friend”? The dictionary defines it as: “one attached to another by affection or esteem”. Americans, however, use the word more freely than the dictionary definition. Americans have casual, friendly relationships with many people, but deeper, closer friendships with only a few. True friendships require time and commitment, which many Americans lack.

Many people around the world characterize Americans as friendly. Americans tend to smile and talk easily with others even if they are strangers.

One of the most frequent problems in cross-cultural relationships is that foreigners misinterpret American friendliness as an offer of friendship. On the surface, when Americans are friendly, it may seem that they are initiating a friendship. When an American is unwilling to be a true friend, the foreigner or a newcomer to the United States can get disappointed.

It is important to know that while most Americans value close friendships, they also value privacy and independence. From an American perspective, to have privacy or to give someone privacy is considered positive. For example, if a friend has a problem, Americans may say, “Let me know if there’s anything I can do to help”. If the Americans do not receive a specific request, they may feel that there’s nothing they can do. An American may feel that a friend needs privacy to “work out” a problem. Many Americans want such time alone when they have problems.

There are also cultural differences in what people believe they should do for each other. A person from another culture shouldn’t ask his American friend to do something above and beyond what the American friend expects to be asked.

In general, it’s important to realize that if an American behaves

differently from what you expect in a personal relationship, do not assume that the friendship is over or that the person is not a true friend.

**Ex. 2 Answer the questions to the Value Capsule “Friendliness versus Friendship”.**

1. How do Americans interpret the word “friend”? Is the interpretation the same for the people of your culture?
2. Do you need to be friendly to be considered polite in your culture?
3. Why do people of other cultures misinterpret American friendliness?
4. What are the expectations of friendship for Americans?
5. What are the expectations of friendship for Belarusians/Russians?
6. Do you have any private space from your friend?

**Ex. 3 Study the cross-cultural situation. Highlight the incidents of misunderstanding experienced by people in the cross-cultural situation. Explain the reasons of misunderstanding between the participants. Find the words Jane used before the departure.**

“A Belarusian girl – Olga – is an exchange student at an American university. Once she had a nice talk with an American girl – Jane – at a party. Before the departure Jane said: “It was so nice to meet you. Don’t hesitate to let me know if I can help. We need to talk again. It is so exciting to get to know what is happening in Belarus now. I’ll call you soon”. Over the weekend Olga decided to stay in her room expecting Jane to call and invite her to spend some time together. Nobody called that weekend and the next weekend either. Then Olga met Jane on campus. Jane smiled and waved her hand but didn’t even stop. Next time they met in the dining center. Jane talked lively but didn’t mention either their talk at the party or her promise to call. When Olga asked Jane to help her to learn to use the e-mail provided by the University system Jane answered that it was quite simple and that the lab assistant would be of help. Olga felt lonely and unhappy.

**Ex. 4 There are some statements from the Value Capsule above. Say if they are true of the people of your country. Prove your opinion.**

1. Americans have casual, friendly relationships with many people, but deeper, closer friendships with only a few. Is it true of the people of your country?

2. Americans tend to smile and talk easily with others even if they are strangers. Is it true of the people of your country?

3. When Americans are friendly, it doesn't mean that they are initiating a friendship. Is it true of the people of your country?

4. Most Americans value close friendships, but they also value privacy and independence. Is it true of the people of your country?

5. If a friend has a problem, Americans may say, "Let me know if there's anything I can do to help. Is it true of the people of your country?"

6. One shouldn't ask his American friend to do something above and beyond what the American friend expects to be asked. Is it true of the people of your country?

**Ex. 5 Here are different meanings of the word 'friend'. Choose the meaning of the word 'friend' which is close to you. Explain your choice.**

<b><i>FRIEND</i></b>	Close childhood friend
	Best friend
	New friend
	Family friend
	Classmate
	Teammate
	Colleague
	Roommate or housemate
	Girlfriend or boyfriend
	Acquaintance

**Ex. 6 Here is a questionnaire about your attitude to friendship. Answer the questions. Choose the responses which are influenced by culture. Explain your choice.**

1. *How many years have you known your closest friend?*

a) less than a year; b) one to five years; c) five to twelve years; d) twelve to twenty years; e) more than twenty years.

2. *In your country, did you have close friends from different countries? If so, which countries?*

3. *In your country are there any societal attitudes that encourage or discourage friendships between people of the opposite sex?*

4. *Do you prefer going out with a group of friends or with one or two friends? Explain your preferences.*

5. *Circle the five qualities that you think are the most important in a friend.*

a) sense of humor; b) intelligence; c) warmth; d) physical beauty; e) loyalty; f) independence; g) complete honesty; h) similar religious beliefs; j) similar educational background.

6. *Which of the following actions would probably end a friendship of yours?*

- a) Your lending money to a friend and not getting it back.
- b) A friend becoming involved with someone the other didn't like.
- c) You or the other person getting married.
- d) You or the other person having children.
- e) You or the other person moving away.
- f) One friend becoming more successful than the other.

**Ex. 7 Study the situation “The Southern gentleman”. Choose the answer you think best explains what is going on in the situation. Explain your choice.**

#### *The Southern Gentleman*

Tomako is a young Japanese woman who lived in Tokyo. In September, she went to Miami, Florida, to study at a university there. Tamako's uncle lived in Miami, so Tamako stayed at his house. When she came to Miami, Tomako began a special program to introduce new students to the university. Here was a young man named Jack, from the southern state of Alabama, who was also in the group of new students with Tomako.

As the new students walked together around the university, Tamako noticed that when Jack was near her, he helped her in many ways. For example, he always opened doors for her. Also, when Tamako asked a question, he always smiled and answered the question kindly. Jack even took Tamako's hand to show her where to go, when the students crossed the street. Tomako enjoyed all this attention very much and stayed near



Jack all day so that she could ask him more questions and he could do more things to help her.

That evening Tamako was very excited. When she came back to her uncle's house, she told her cousin that she now had an American boyfriend. Her cousin was very surprised. Her cousin didn't understand how Tamako could already have a boyfriend after only two weeks in the United States.

*Which answer do you think best explains what is going on in the 'Southern Gentleman'?*

1. Jack visited Tamako in Tokyo last summer. That is why Tamako came to the U.S., but Tamako never told anyone.

2. Jack is a typical playboy-type college man and is trying to use Tamako.

3. Tamako misunderstands what Jack did.

4. The pace of life in the U.S. is very fast. It is not unusual for people to find boyfriends and girlfriends very quickly.

5. In Japan Tamako's parents didn't allow her to have a boyfriend. She came to the U.S. to have more freedom. Tomako is showing her freedom by having a boyfriend.

**Ex. 8 Answer the questions on the situation "The Southern gentleman".**

*Questions to answer:*

1. How does this situation characterize Americans? What characteristic of Americans does the situation prove?

2. How would you understand Jack's behavior in Tomako's place?

3. Is Jack's behavior ordinary in such a situation?

4. Would you think as Tomako did?

**Ex. 9 Study the situation "A Friend of a friend". Identify the reason for misunderstanding between Michael and Mr. Umm.**

*A friend of a friend*

Michael is a graduate student in a foreign university. He is a good friend of Mr. Umm, who lives in the dormitory for graduate students. They share a similar sense of humor and enjoy many activities together. Since

Michael is interested in architecture, Mr. Umm decides that it would be a good idea for Michael to meet his older friend Mr. Tahh, a professor of design at the university. First, he tells Michael all about Mr. Tahh's architectural research. As it turns out, Mr. Tahh's research is exactly what Michael needs for his thesis.

Michael is so excited that the next day he goes directly to Mr. Tahh's office, introduces himself, and briefly mentions Mr. Umm's name. The two men spend several hours discussing their research ideas.

That evening Michael tells Mr. Umm how much he enjoyed meeting Mr. Tahh. Mr. Umm reacts coldly, "Yes, I heard you both met. I hope your research goes well". His serious tone tells Michael that something is wrong. What might be the problem?

**Ex. 10 Discuss the situation "A Friend of a friend" according to the questions below.**

*Questions to answer:*

1. What do you think might be the rules for introductions in Mr. Umm's culture?
2. Michael met Mr. Tahh as he might have met a professor in his American university. Why was this inappropriate in Mr. Umm's culture?
3. How might Michael have avoided the problem?
4. How would you behave in such a situation?

**Ex. 11 Study the Language Capsule 'Initiating small talk in America'. Pay attention to the phrases to begin small talk in America. What groups are these phrases divided into? Which phrases did you use to initiate small talk?**

## *Language Capsule “Initiating small talk in America”*

✓ Conversations in America often begin with ‘small talk’. Small talk is important because it often helps to maintain conversations (i.e., keep them going), and it can lead to interesting discussions. In an introductory meeting, maintaining a conversation is easier when two people find that they have something in common.

✓ In America the usual topics for small talk are:

a) your visit to America:

*Is this your first visit to the U.S.,  
to Chicago?*

*Is this your first time in America?*

*Have you ever been to America  
before?*

*What brings you to America/to  
these parts?*

*How long is your visit?*

*How long are you planning to be  
here?*

*How long are you with us?  
(friendly)*

*How long is your stay?*

b) your impressions about the  
country:

*What do you think of  
America?*

*What do you think of this  
country?*

*How do you like America?*

*Have you been enjoying your  
stay in America?*

*How’s life in this country  
treating you?*

*Is America very different from  
Russia?*

*Is life in America different  
from life in Russia? In what way  
is it different?*

✓ A lot of small talk is “situational”. That is, people initiate a conversation about their common situation. This is often a starting point for further conversation.

✓ Appropriate Questions for initial small talk:

- 1. How long have you lived here?*
- 2. Have you always lived in (for example) New York?*
- 3. What are you studying? (to a student)*
- 4. What do you do? or What is your line of work?*
- 5. What do you think of the weather we’ve been having?*
- 6. Excuse me, is anyone sitting here?/Is this seat taken?*
- 7. Excuse me, am I not interrupting?*
- 8. Excuse me, could you tell me the time?*

9. *Have you been here before? I'm new here.*
10. *Excuse me, haven't we met before?*
11. *Peter, is that you? We haven't seen each other for ...*
12. *Lovely day, isn't it? – Yes, it is.*
13. *Dreadful weather, isn't it? – Isn't it awful?*

✓ The usual phrases to begin conversations in America are:

*How are you?                      How's life treating you?*  
*How are things?                How are you doing?*  
*How's life?*

✓ On the questions of small talk it's better to answer with:

*Fine, thank you/thanks. And you?*  
*Just fine, thank you. And you?*  
*Can't complain, how are you doing?*

✓ To your friends and relatives, you may use more emotional answers:

*Great!/Fantastic!/Stupendous!/Wonderful!*  
*So-so/Not too well.*  
*Awful!/Crummy! Horrible! Lousy! Rotten! Terrible!*

✓ Emotional answer needs the speaker's reaction:

*Wonderful!*  
*Did you finally get the job?*  
*Terrible!*  
*Oh, no, what's wrong?*

✓ In AE the question “*What's the news?*” (used in BE) means that a person has got a letter or a call. They use the phrase “*What's new?*”.

**Ex. 12 Study the Language Capsule “Keeping small talk in America”. Pay attention to the supplementary questions to keep small talk. Make your own examples of supplementary questions.**

### ***Language Capsule “Keeping small talk in America”***

✓ To encourage your partner and to keep the conversation ball going you may ask supplementary questions. “Where do you work?”, “How many children do you have?”, “Do you play golf?”, Have you

taken your vacation yet?” are not personal questions by American standards. They are a search for common ground. Such questions are meant to be friendly.

- ✓ Supplementary questions can be opinion and description questions:

*Opinion questions*

How was your summer?

How was that?

So, how was Switzerland?

How did you like Italy?

*Possible Answers*

It was busy / great / terrible /  
etc.

It was nice / pretty / good /  
etc.

It was fantastic / beautiful /  
etc.

The food was incredible. /  
The people were very  
friendly.

*Description Questions*

What was your summer  
like?

What was it like?

What's Miller Lake like  
nowadays?

*Possible Answers*

I worked down at the mill. / I  
spent two weeks in Europe.

It was fantastic. / I loved the  
architecture of the cities. ...

It's really deep and has an  
island in the middle of it.

**Ex. 13 Study the Language Capsules above again. Complete the statements below with the information from the Language Capsules.**

*Statements to complete:*

1. Americans begin their conversations with ... because ...
2. In America the usual topics for small talk are ...
3. ... is often a starting point for further conversation.
4. Appropriate questions for initial small talk are ...
5. The usual phrases to begin conversations in America are ...
6. The usual phrases to answer the questions of small talk are ...
7. If you are not OK you may use the phrases ...
8. If you want to keep small talk you may ask ... questions.

9. Opinion questions are ...  
10. Descriptive questions are ...

**Ex. 14 Study the dialogue. Define the phrases from the Language Capsules with which people start the conversation. What topics do they introduce to keep the conversation going? What questions do they ask to keep small talk?**

Sue: Lovely day, isn't it?

Mark: Yes, it is. The weather is really fine.

Sue: Mark, is that you?

Mark: Yes, I am.

Sue: It's nice to meet you. My friend told me about you. Have you lived in Seattle long?

Mark: No, only three months. I'm new here. How about you?

Sue: I moved here three years ago from California.

Mark: Oh really! I'm from California too. Where did you live in California?

Sue: In Gilroy, not far from San Jose.

Mark: This is really a coincidence. I'm from Gilroy, too! I like telling people I'm from the garlic capital of the world. Did you usually go to the summer garlic festival?

Sue: I used to go every summer. How about you?

Mark: I went to most of them. I thought the one in 1980 was great. Did you go to that one?

**Ex. 15 Study the dialogues. Say what phrases the speakers use to keep small talk. From the Language Capsules above choose other phrases suitable to initiate and keep small talk in the dialogues.**

1. Jose: Hello, Dr. Martin

Dr. Martin: Hello, Jose. How are you?

Jose: Fine, thank you. How is your wife?

Jose: Oh, she's a little homesick. By the way, how was the new film?

2. Sam: Hi, Joe.

Joe: Hi, Sam. How's it going?

Sam: OK. How about you?

Joe: Not too bad. By the way, how's your project?

Sam: Oh, I'm busy with my exams now. How was your test on Computer programming?

Joe: It's OK. Thank you.

3. Judy: Hi, Linda.

Linda: Hi, Judy. How are you doing?

Judy: Not so good.

Linda: What's wrong?

Judy: I seem to have caught a cold.

Linda: That's too bad. I hope you feel better soon.

### Ex. 16 Rearrange the phrases of small talk.

1. – Well, Kim and I went to a great movie last night.

– Hi, Harry. How're you doing?

– Oh, Yeah? What was it?

– Not bad. What's new?

– Nothing much. What's new with you?

– Attack of the Frog Men. It was exciting. You should see it sometime.

2. – Not bad. Hey, I hear that you were going to Mexico.

– Thanks!

– Hi, Lilliana. How have you been?

– Well, have fun!

– Yeah, we're leaving next week.

– Fine, thanks and you?

**Ex. 17 Match the questions of small talk on the left with the appropriate answers on the right. Use the Language Capsule "Initiating small talk in America".**

What do you do?	Yes, of course. Could you wait a second, please.
How do you like America?	Wonderful!
How's life?	Never. Everything is so interesting for me!
How long are you planning to be here?	No, it's vacant. I just put my coat here.
What do you think of the weather we've been having?	I'm a manager of a construction firm.

Have you ever been to America before?	Just fine, thank you. And you?
How are you doing?	I hope it's more similar than different.
Is America a lot different from Russia?	Can't complain. How are you doing?
Excuse me, is anyone sitting here?	I don't think so.
Excuse me, could you tell me the time?	It's fantastic!
Excuse me, your face seems familiar to you. Haven't we met before?	I hope, for a week.

**Ex. 18 Choose questions from the Language Capsule “Initiating small talk in America” to initiate small talk in the following situations.**

*Situations:*

1. Ludmila has come to the United States to visit her aunt who lives and works there. Roger, the aunt's American friend, initiates a small talk with her.

2. Lena is waiting for the flight for Minsk at the airport in New York. Mary, an American student, is waiting for the same flight. She initiates a small talk with her.

1. Joe and Sam are at the same college. They meet in the campus.

2. Tatiana has come to America to study law. Her new American group-mates initiate a talk with her.

3. A distant cousin from the USA has come to visit his/her family in Russia. A family party has been organized to celebrate his/her visit. You're sitting next to him/her at the table. Initiate a talk with him.

4. On holiday you meet an old friend whose family immigrated to Australia ten years ago.

**Ex. 19 Here are questions to initiate small talk. React to them, using the Language Capsule “Keeping small talk in America”.**

1. A: How's life in this country treating you?

B: ...

2. A: How are you getting on?



- B: ...
3. A: What do you think of this country?  
B: ...
4. A: How do you like America?  
B: ...
5. A: Is America very different from Belarus?  
B: ...
6. A: How are tricks?  
B: ...
7. A: John, is that you? We haven't seen each other for ...  
B: ...

**Ex. 20 Complete the mini-dialogues with the questions to fit the following reaction. Use the Language Capsule “Initiating small talk in America”.**

1. A: ...?  
B: Wonderful!  
A: ...?  
B: I've got the happiest time there.
2. A: ...?  
B: Terrible!  
A:  
B: I feel under the weather. My head seems to be going to crack.
3. A: ...?  
B: Can't complain, how are you doing?  
A: Fine. ... ?  
B: With pleasure. We may meet at the college.
4. A: ...  
B: Oh, no, what's wrong?  
A: ...  
B: I'm sure everything will work out for the best.

**21. Ask a supplementary question in the dialogues to fit the given reactions. Use the Language Capsule “Keeping small talk in America”.**

1. A: How are you?

B: Wonderful!  
A: ...?  
B: I've got the happiest time there.

2. A: How are things?  
B: Terrible!  
A: ...?  
B: I feel under the weather. My head seems to be going to crack.

3. A: How are you doing?  
B: Can't complain, how are you doing?  
A: Fine. ... ?  
B: With pleasure. We may meet at the college.

4. A: How's life treating you?  
B: Not too well.  
B: Oh, no, what's wrong?  
A: ...  
B: I'm sure everything will work out for the best.

**Ex. 22 Complete the dialogues with supplementary questions to keep small talk. Follow the instructions in brackets.**

1. A: Hi, John. How are you doing?  
B: Not bad. And yourself?  
A: I'm fine. (ask a supplementary question about his weekend)...?  
B: It was fantastic!

2. A: Hi, Peggy! What's new?  
B: Nothing special. Everything is OK. By the way, (ask a supplementary question about the football match he took part in)... ?  
A: Stupendous! The best I've ever had.

A: Hello, Dr. Miller. How are you today?  
B: Fine, thank you. And you?  
A: Can't complain. (ask a supplementary question about her health)...  
B: Oh, she's at home now. She feels much better now. Thank you.  
(ask a supplementary question)... ?  
A: He's fine. He's quite happy with everything he does.

4. A: Hi, Barbara! How are you doing?  
 B: Not so good.  
 A: (ask a supplementary question to find out what is wrong)... ?  
 B: My mum is ill. I worry about her so much.  
 A: She is so optimistic. Everything will be OK.  
 B: Thank you. (ask a supplementary question about her work)... ?  
 A: Oh, I like it as usual. You know, I'm a workaholic!

**Ex. 23 Extend the dialogues to keep a talk.**

1. Situation: Mary and Sara are former group mates. They were at the University of Michigan together. They haven't met for 10 years.

Mary: Is it you, Sara? Can't believe my eyes! So happy to see you!  
 Sara: Hi, Mary. Glad to see you too. I haven't seen you for ten years!  
 Mary: Time flies! How are you?  
 Sara: ...  
 Mary: ...

2. Situation: Kelly and Margaret met at the department store. They are former colleagues. They were very close when they worked together.

Kelly: Hey, Margaret, it's me! I'm ever so glad to see you! How are you getting on?  
 Margaret: Hi, Kelly! I've got a happy day today! I'm fine and you?  
 Kelly: ...  
 Margaret: ...

**Ex. 24 Initiate and keep small talk in the following situations.**

Situations:

1. Greet your friend, Richard, and ask him about the party you both went to last night.
2. Greet Mona, who has been sick for several days.
3. You are in the library. You see Takeshi, who was in a class with you last term.
4. Greet your neighbor, Mr. Barnes, at the bus stop. You don't see him very often.
5. Greet Jane, a good friend. You have not seen her for several weeks.

6. You meet the colleague of your husband's in the hall at the concert during the interval. You know that he's been promoted.

7. At the library you are sitting close to a girl who is getting ready for the same subject.

8. Your friend introduces you to a friend of his from France.

9. A new roommate has just come to share a room with you.

10. At the students café you see a new student at your table.

**Ex. 25 Act out the situation “A Shy Guy”.**

*A shy guy*

A business executive from another country is at a party in London, Ontario. A Canadian man comes up and introduces himself. Then he looks at his feet. He seems uncomfortable. The executive sees that he is very shy. She decides to break the ice. She introduces herself and tells where she is from. She says something nice about the weather or the party. Then she asks him two safe, friendly questions. Soon the Canadian man “warms up”. He answers the questions and asks a few of his own. They find some common ground.

## **Unit 2 Dealing with personal questions. Guiding the topic**

**Ex. 1 Study the Language Capsule “Dealing with personal questions”. Pay attention to the questions you should avoid in conversations and to the tips how to deal with them. What questions are considered impolite in your country? Make examples. Find the most useful tip(s) in dealing with personal questions. Did you use it? If yes, how did it work?**

### ***Language Capsule “Dealing with personal questions”***

✓ In American conversations there are subjects that shouldn't be mentioned. They are considered too personal and impolite. These include questions about a person's age, financial affairs, cost of clothes or personal belongings, religion, love, life, and about why you don't have children.

✓ If you are asked questions which seem too personal, you need not answer them. You can simply smile and say pleasantly that you don't know or “In my country that would be a funny question”. Then follow it quickly with another topic. The American will not be offended, but he will get the point.

✓ If you want to remain polite and avoid answering directly, make use of the following tips:

1. You may refuse politely: “I know a lot of people don't mind talking about such thing, but I guess I'm a little old-fashioned”.

2. You may use humor: “I can't tell you all my secrets”.

3. You may excuse: “Even my hairdresser doesn't know for sure what my natural hair color is”.

4. You may confess that you are embarrassed: “I have to be honest – I feel rather embarrassed by your question”.

5. You may throw the questions back: “Does your question about my

marital status have anything to do with the job?”

6. You may seem vague: “How much do I make? Enough; “I wouldn’t call myself rich, but I get by.”; “Isn’t it strange how people always feel that they need to know the age of a person? I don’t really think that age is important at all”.

**Ex. 2 Study the dialogue. Find the questions which are considered personal according to the Language Capsule. Pay attention to the way the speaker dealt with them. Do you consider these questions personal?**

*Situation:* The train is traveling from Florida to New York. Grandpa is sitting in a compartment. A woman puts her suitcase on the seat next to him.

Elsa: Excuse me. Is this seat taken?

Grandpa: No, it’s not taken.

Elsa: Oh, thank you.

Grandpa: Oh, let me help you with this. (he puts her suitcase in the overhead rack).

Elsa: Oh, thank you.

Grandpa: Do you want to sit by the window?

Elsa: No, no, no. I like the aisle seat better.

(They sit down).

Grandpa: My name is Stewart ... Malcolm Stewart. Pleased to meet you. (They shake hands).

Elsa: I’m Elsa Tobin. How do you do?

Grandpa: Do you leave in New York?

Elsa: No, no. I’m from Florida.

Grandpa: So am I.

Elsa: Where are you from in Florida?

Grandpa: Titusville. It’s near Orlando.

Elsa: Small world. I’m from Titusville, too.

Grandpa: Really? What part?

Elsa: My husband and I live near Spaceport.

Grandpa: I know that area. My house is only a few miles from Spaceport. Do you still live there?

Elsa: Oh, yes, yes. My husband’s there now. He couldn’t take time off to come to New York with me. Do you still live there?

Grandpa: No. I sold the house, the furniture, put a few personal things in an old trunk, and shipped it to my children in New York. That's my destination.

Elsa: Are you married?

Grandpa: My wife died four years ago. She was a wonderful woman. A real friend.

Elsa: I'm sorry. Really, I'm sorry.

Grandpa: Lots of wonderful memories. We were married almost fifty years. Well, forty-seven, to be exact.

Elsa: John and I celebrate our fortieth anniversary next month.

Grandpa: Oh, congratulations! That's nice. What does John do?

Elsa: He's an aerospace engineer and works for Orlando Aircraft Corporation. What do you do?

Grandpa: I just retired. Had my own construction company. But I just sold it and retired.

**Ex. 3 Imagine that someone asked you a personal question. What would you feel? Would you be hurt? Would you feel embarrassed? What are the most embarrassing questions for you? How would you react to them?**

**Ex. 4 Choose the questions you consider inappropriate to ask. Give your reasons. Are these questions inappropriate for people of your culture?**

- Have you ever been to America before?
- What is the politician you admire?
- What brings you to America?
- How long are you planning to be here?
- Oh, what a pretty bag! How much does it cost?
- What is your religion?
- How's life in this country treating you?
- What do you think of America?
- What's new in your love life?
- Your hairdo is great today! Does it cost you money?
- Are you married?
- Have you got children? Oh, why?
- Have you been enjoying your stay in America?

- How much money do you earn?
- Is America very different from Belarus?
- What's the natural color of your hair?

**Ex. 5 Match the reactions on the left to the personal questions on the right.**

(1) A: Your hairdo is great today! Did it cost you money? B: ...	I can't tell you all my secrets.
(2) A: How much money do you earn? (B): ...	I feel rather embarrassed by your question. In my country it's considered to be funny.
(3) A: How old are you? B: ...	I'd rather not reveal all my secrets right now.
(4) A: Are you married? B: ...	Doesn't it look so?
(5) A: What a lovely dress! Is it new? B: ...	Let's talk about it a bit later.
(6) A: What is your religion? B: ...	Does your question have anything to do with the relation we've been having?
(7) A: Whom did you vote for? B: ...	Well, I can say that there is always something to look forward to.
(8) A: What is your opinion of our new president? B: ...	I wonder why people are so curious about the age of a person.

**Ex. 6 React to the personal questions in the following dialogues. Use the tips from the Language Capsule "Dealing with personal questions".**

1. A: Hi, Ann. My sincere congratulations on your new job!

B: Oh, thank you so much.

A: You really deserve it, my dear. By the way, can you afford everything you want now?



B: ...

2. A: You look great! A completely new Sara! It's unbelievable!

B: Thank you. I'm so glad you like it.

A: Will you share a secret with me? Have you got a new boyfriend?

B: ...

3. A: You are an ideal couple.

B: I hope we are. Thank you. Are you?

A: ...

B: If so, why don't you have children? You would be lovely parents as well.

A: ...

4. A: I could hardly recognize you! You've changed your hairstyle, haven't you?

B: Year, I needed something fresh. How do you find it?

A: You know I've got used to you with long dark hair. I like it.

B: ...

9. Ask personal questions to fit the given reactions in the following dialogues.

1. A: ... ?

B: Well, I live in a complete harmony now.

2. A: ... ?

B: Hmm? The way I feel is much more important indeed.

3. A: ... ?

B: If you don't mind I'd like to speak about it next time.

4. A: ... ?

B: I'm afraid to get you bored speaking about this. By the way, did you see the documentary about Stalin?

5. A: ... ?

B: I'm happy to be able to afford it.

6. A: ... ?

B: I hope it will be enough for me to get by.

7. A: ... ?

B: What a funny question! I even don't know what to say.

**Ex. 7 Act out the following situations. Mind the instructions in brackets how to deal with a personal question.**

*Situations:*

1. You bump into a friend of yours you haven't seen for some years. You begin talking. She asks you about your private life. *Use humor and switch to another subject.*

2. Your friend asks you about your salary at a new job. *Try to seem vague and throw the question back.*

3. Your former colleague asks you about your vacations. Then she wants to know the total sum of money you spent at the seaside. *Refuse politely and switch to another subject.*

4. Your colleagues congratulate you on promotion. You want to keep it secret for a while because you are a bit superstitious. *Confess that you are embarrassed and make a joke.*

5. You've just got married and your acquaintance asks you about your plans to have children. You'd rather not answer this question directly. *Throw the question back.*

**Ex. 8 Act out the situation “Answering impoliteness with politeness”.**

*Answering impoliteness with politeness*

A student from another culture has been living in Los Angeles, California, for a year. Mr. and Mrs. Carpenter invite the student to dinner. “Just call us Ted and Sarah”, they say. The Carpenters ask many questions. The first three are polite questions and the student answers. The student understands that they want to be friendly. Then they start to ask very personal questions. The student feels uncomfortable. The student answers with a short sentence, uses humor, refuses to answer politely, throws the question back, confesses that he is embarrassed and changes the subject. The Carpenters get the point. They all change the subject of the conversation.

## Unit 3 Tough moments of friendship. Making a request

**Ex. 1 Study the Value Capsule ‘Individual Freedom and self-reliance of Americans’. Single out the information on the following: a) American’s attitude to freedom; b) American’s attitude to self-reliance.**

### *Value Capsule “Individual Freedom and self-reliance of Americans”*

✓ The United States came to be associated with the concept of individual freedom. This is probably the most basic of all the American values. Scholars and outside observers often call this value “individualism”, but many Americans use the word “freedom.” Perhaps the word “freedom” is one of the most respected popular words in the United States today.

By “freedom”, Americans mean the desire and the ability of all individuals to control their own destiny without outside interference from the government, a lulling noble class, the church, or any other organized authority.

✓ There is, however, a price to be paid for this individual freedom: self-reliance. Americans believe that individuals must learn to rely on themselves or risk losing freedom. This means achieving both financial and emotional independence from their parents as early as possible, usually by age 18 or 21. It means that Americans believe they should take care of themselves, solve their problems, and “stand on their own two feet.” Tocqueville observed the Americans’ belief in self-reliance 150 years ago in the 1830s: ‘They owe nothing to any man, they expect nothing from any man; they acquire the habit of always considering themselves as standing alone, and they are apt to imagine that their destiny is in their own hands.’

This strong belief in self-reliance continues today as a basic American value. In order to be in the mainstream of American life – to have power and /or respect – individuals must be seen as self-reliant to keep their

freedom.

**Ex. 2 Here are the statements from the Value Capsule. Say if it is true of people of your country.**

1. Individual freedom is probably the most basic of all the American values. Is it true of people of your country?

2. The word “freedom” is one of the most respected popular words in the United States today. Is it true of people of your country?

3. Americans believe that individuals must learn to rely on themselves or risk losing freedom. Is it true of people of your country?

4. Americans believe that children should have financial and emotional independence from their parents as early as possible, usually by age 18 or 21. Is it true of people of your country?

5. Americans acquired the habit of always considering themselves as standing alone. Is it true of people of your country?

6. Self-reliance is a basic American value. Is it true of people of your country?

**Ex. 3 Study the situation. Choose the statement which explains the reason for the American to refuse to help his Belarusian friend. Prove your choice, using the Value Capsule. What would you do in this case if you were a Belarusian/American? If your friend refused to help you with money, would it be the end of your friendship with him?**

‘A person from Belarus asked the American to co-sign a loan; in other words, the American’s signature would indicate a willingness to pay back a loan to a bank if the Belarusian immigrant was not able to do so. The American, with his sense of financial responsibility to his family, felt that the favor asked was excessive, even though he was almost sure that his Belarusian friend would be able to repay the loan. The Belarusian, who felt very close to the American, didn’t see this as an unreasonable request. The American ended up telling the Belarusian that, although he would like to help him, he would not co-sign the loan. After that, the Belarusian never called him, and when the American called him, the wife said, “He’s busy now.” Neither person did anything internationally wrong to end the friendship; in fact, both felt bad about what had happened’.

*Statements to choose:*

1. The American doesn't have enough money to pay for the loan in case the Belarusian couldn't pay it back.
2. They were not close friends.
3. The American believed that the Belarusian should rely on himself.
4. The American didn't like to lend money to anybody.

**Ex. 4 Study the situation 'Five mothers'. Find in the situation the facts that prove individualism and self-reliance of Americans. Explain the facts, using the Value Capsule "Individual Freedom and self-reliance of Americans".**

*Five mothers*

One summer, I went on a ten day hiking trip with a group of Belarusian friends. We were a group of six – 2 men and 4 women. Although they were only two, the men insisted on carrying everything. They carried their own bags and the women's bags too. They wouldn't let me carry a single thing.

One day I was thirsty and I asked my friend Larisa where I could find drinking water. In response she asked Alex, her husband, to walk to a nearby town and buy some. At first he said to me, "We have tea, Sharon. Can't you drink tea?" But I didn't want tea; I wanted water. Tea doesn't satisfy thirst like water, and I was getting very thirsty. I would have been glad to walk to town myself – as I enjoy a good hike and seeing new places and things – but Alex insisted on going. As Alex was about to leave I asked, "Can I come with you?" He said, "No, I'm going to run very fast. You won't be able to keep up, but I really wanted to see the town, and it was only one mile away, so secretly I followed. When Alex saw me in town he looked very upset.

Another day as we were hiking, it got hot and I took off my sweater. Alex said, "Sharon, give me your sweater. I'll carry it in my pack." But I insisted on carrying it myself. I'm a very experienced hiker, and in America women carry all their equipment themselves. I was determined to carry my own sweater at the very least.

The following day it began to rain as we were putting up the tent. Alex made a place for me to sit down under the shelter of a tree and said, "Sharon, sit down!" I said, "No, really, I prefer to stand." For the third time

he said, “Sharon, come on, please sit down!” Again I refused. Finally Larisa said, “Okay, I’ll sit down then”.

Later Larisa took me aside and said. “Sharon, you have a really bad attitude. Everyone is trying to do everything for you and you have a really bad attitude.”

I wished they would stop trying to do so much. It was like having five mothers. At least on the train back to Minsk they let me walk around by myself. I know they were trying to be helpful and hospitable, but I felt controlled and oppressed.

**Ex. 5 Study the situation. What is Brad’s problem? Why can’t he say ‘No’? Do you share his point of view? Choose the point of view below you think reasonable. What would you recommend to him to say ‘No’?**

*Situation ‘Brad’s problem’:*

I have a problem. Actually, I’m not sure what my problem is. But whatever it is, I need help. It seems like I’m always doing favors for people, and I never have time for myself. I mean, I like people, and I want them to like me, but it’s getting to be too much. You see, like this week, I’m taking care of Rex. It’s a dog that belongs to a woman in my office. How did I end up taking care of this dog? I don’t even like dogs. Sheila asked me to help with her dog and I said: ‘Oh, no problem’. Why did I say that? I just couldn’t say ‘no’. I always seem to get into this kind of situation.

Yesterday my brother needed help with fixing a broken window. I drove two hours to his house to help. It only took ten minutes to repair, but my whole day was shot. And Rex chewed up my sofa while I was gone. These sorts of things happen to me all the time. Tell me, please, how to say ‘no’?

*Points of view on Brad’s problem:*

1. Brad needs to learn to say no. He should refuse to help people.
2. Brad should help only his family and close friends.
3. Brad is lucky that people need him. He should be happy that he can help people.

**Ex. 6 How do you feel about helping other people? What would you do in situations below?**

*Situations:*

A friend asks you to lend him some money.

A friend asks you to help him to move to a new apartment.

A friend asks you to let him live in your apartment for some time.

4. A friend asks you to look after his pet.

5. A friend asks you to give him a ride home.

6. A friend asks you to help with a home repair.

7. A friend asks you to let her wear your new dress for the party.

**Ex. 7 What would your reaction be if your friend refuses to help you in the cases above? In what cases would you try to understand him? How would you justify your friend? In what cases would you be hurt?**

**Ex. 8 Study the Language Capsule “Making a request”. Pay attention to the phrases to request for something. Choose the phrases you know and the phrases new for you; formal and conversational phrases.**

***Language Capsule “Making a request”***

✓ If you want to make a request you should avoid being direct. Use the following:

- Would you repeat the question, please?
- Could I possibly trouble you to repeat the question, please?
- Would you like to find me an eraser?
- Could I ask you to do me a favor?
- Could you do me a favour?
- I would be eternally grateful to you if you could ...
- Could I get a Pepsi?
- I’d like one ticket to “The Piano”, please.
- Could I get my groceries put in a plastic bag, please?
- Excuse me, please. Do you happen to know where the restrooms are?

- Do you mind ...?
- Will you please ...?
- Would you mind if I did ...?
- I wonder if you could ...
- I don't suppose you'd be able to...
- I'm not sure I can ask you...

**Ex. 9 Study the Language Capsule “Reacting to a request”. Pay attention to the way Americans say ‘No’ to a request. Which tips to say ‘No’ do you use in your native language?**

### *Language Capsule “Reacting to a request”*

✓ To say ‘Yes’ use the following:

- Sure/OK;
- Yes, of course/Certainly;
- I’d/I’ll be glad to.
- By all means.

✓ To say ‘No’ use the following tips:

1. Be indirect, especially when giving negative responses:
2. Make your excuses as tactful and truthful as possible:

Untactful: ‘The manager asked me to come in to talk about my project on Wednesday, and I completely forgot we’d decided on a lunch meeting that day.’

Tactful: ‘Jim, the company set up a project meeting on Wednesday, and that’s the day we were going to meet for lunch.’

3. Acknowledge inconvenience briefly. Suggest alternatives swiftly.

4. Fill up time for thinking your answer over:

– Start with fillers or hesitation devices – ‘Oh, er ..., well, you see, as a matter of fact, actually ...’

– Start with an apology – ‘I’m sorry but ..., I’m afraid I can’t ...’

– Start by seeming to agree – ‘I know it would be a good time to do it, but...’

– End with an explanation or justification – ‘We’ve already been invited somewhere else that evening; I promised my mother that I wouldn’t do that until I am 18 ...’



- ✓ To say No Americans use:
- I'm afraid I can't help you there;
- I wish I could help you but I can't;
- I just can't;
- I can't help you;
- It's out of my hands;
- It's outside my jurisdiction;
- It's not in my power;
- Forget it;
- Not in your life;
- No way;
- Absolutely not;
- What, are you nuts/crazy!
- No way.

**Ex. 10 Study the dialogue and find the phrases the speakers use to make a request/to react to a request.**

Tom: Hello, Dad. How did things go at the office today?

Mr. Bradford: Quite well. Nothing special happened. Is your mother in?

Tom: No, she's at work. Shall I phone her to tell her you're home?

Mr. Bradford: She'll be back soon, I expect. I wonder where she put my slippers.

Tom: She probably took them up to the bedroom, Dad. Would you like me to fetch them for you?

Mr. Bradford: No, it's all right. Here they are.

Tom: Dad, will you do me a favour, please?

Mr. Bradford: It depends on what it is.

Tom: May I borrow the car tomorrow night? I'm taking Janet to a party.

Mr. Bradford: Well, let me see ... All right, I'll lend you the car, Tom, if you don't drink. Then you can drive it home yourself.

Tom: Thanks, Dad. Can I phone Janet and tell her it's all right?

Mr. Bradford: Yes, yes. But before you do, would you mind telling your mother I'm home?

**Ex. 11 Study the dialogue. Interpret the feelings of an English businessman, taking a quiz.**

Bill: How was the meeting with Nigel?

Mary: Much better than I expected!

Bill: What happened? Did you explain everything to him?

Mary: Yes. I told him we're very sorry, but we simply cannot meet the deadline.

Bill: And?

Mary: He just said, "Well, that's a bit of a nuisance" and changed the subject!

Bill: Great! I'm so glad he's not upset. I thought he was in a hurry and I was worried.

*Interpretation quiz.* Answer the following questions about the meeting and conversation Mary has described. Choose (a) or (b).

1. How do you think Nigel feels?
  - a) Nigel is not upset. He understands that the document will be late and does not mind waiting.
  - b) Nigel was upset and is sure Mary understood that he is not happy.
2. Nigel said, "Well, that's a bit of a nuisance". What do you think Nigel meant?
  - a) Nigel meant what he said. "It's a small problem, it's really nothing to worry about."
  - b) Nigel was being indirect. "That's a bit of a nuisance" is an understatement. Nigel really meant "That's a problem indeed."
3. Nigel changed the subject. Why do you think Nigel did this?
  - a) Nigel wanted to talk about something new – the document was not on his mind any more.
  - b) Nigel did not want to discuss the document being late, he was upset about it.

**Ex. 12 Work in pairs to solve the problem presented in the letters to the Cultural Advisor. Give your solution to the Cultural Advisor. The Cultural Advisor should agree or disagree with your solution and make the final decision.**

*A letter to the Cultural Advisor:*

‘Dear Cultural Advisor, I am very friendly to my next-door neighbors. We have dinner together regularly. Today they informed me that the grandmother has become gravely ill, and they are going to her place for what will probably be an extended stay – everyone, that is, but the youngest boy, 9 years old, whom the family do not want to take out of school. Instead they would like him to stay with me until they return. I explain that I study all day and don’t get home until late in the afternoon, but they say that this schedule coincides with his school schedule. I know this is not an unusual request for close friends to make of each other, but I can’t imagine looking after a 9-year-old boy for the next month. What should I do?’

**Ex. 13 Complete the dialogue with other phrases to make a request from the Language Capsule “Making a request”. Follow the instructions in the brackets.**

Tom: Hello, Dad. How did things go at the office today?

Mr. Bradford: Quite well. Nothing special happened. Is your mother in?

Tom: No, she’s at work. (*request*) ...

Mr. Bradford: She’ll be back soon, I expect. I wonder where she put my slippers.

Tom: She probably took them up to the bedroom, Dad. (*request*) ...?

Mr. Bradford: No, it’s all right. Here they are.

Tom: (*request*) ...?

Mr. Bradford: It depends on what it is.

Tom: (*request*) ...? I’m taking Janet to a party.

Mr. Bradford: Well, let me see ... All right, I’ll lend you the car, Tom, if you don’t drink. Then you can drive it home yourself.

Tom: Thanks, Dad. (*request ...*)?

Mr. Bradford: Yes, yes. But before you do, (*request*) ...?

**Ex. 14 How would you make a request in the following situations? Choose the phrases from the Language Capsule “Making a request”.**

*Situations:*

You want to ask to:

1) help you with a computer error;

- 2)bring a new film for you to see;
- 3)give you a lift to the nearest Metro station;
- 4)print out some information for you;
- 5)translate something from French;
- 6)help you with the project;
- 7)buy some medicine for you.

**Ex. 15 How would you react to the following requests? Use the phrases from the Language Capsule “Reacting to a request”.**

*Situations:*

1. In the cinema hall a stranger asks you to swap seats for he wants to sit together with his friend.
2. A stranger asks you to help him to look for a one-pound coin that he dropped.
3. A teacher is carrying a pile of books. She can't open the door to the classroom. She asks you to help.
4. A person close to you in the train compartment asks you to give him today's paper to read.
5. Your neighbor is in a hurry and asks you to give him a lift ... You are driving in the same direction.
6. Your friend asks you to lend him some money for the bus ticket.

**Ex. 16 How would you say ‘No’ to the following requests? Consult the Language Capsule “Reacting to a request”.**

*Situations:*

1. Your neighbor asks you to fix something in his bathroom, but you are really short of time. What would you say?
2. Your friend asks you to help him to move out, but you've got a splitting headache. What would you say?
3. Your friend asks you to let him live with you for some time, but your parents object to it. What would you say?
4. You're waiting for your fiancé in a heavy rain. A young man is also waiting for somebody and asks you to share your umbrella with him. But your fiancé is very jealous. What would you say?
5. Your relatives ask you to look after your niece, but tomorrow you'll take an exam and you need time to study. What would you say?

**Ex. 17 In what situations would you use the following reactions to a request?**

1. I wish I could help you but I can't;
2. It's not in my power;
3. I'm afraid I can't help you there;
4. Absolutely not;
5. I can't help you;
6. It's out of my hands;
7. Forget it.

**Ex. 18 React to the following requests saying 'No'. Use the tips and the phrases from the Language Capsule.**

1. – A: Could I ask you for the favor of giving me a wake-up call at 6 a.m.?

– B: ...

2. – A: I would eternally grateful to you if you could help me to do my flat before my birthday.

– B: ...

3. – A: Could you make me some coffee?

– B: ...

4. – A: Tomorrow we are going to the party and I have nothing suitable to wear.

Will you please give me your grey evening dress?

– B: ...

5. – A: I'm not sure I can ask you to lend me some money.

– B: ...

6. – A: I wonder if you could walk my dog tomorrow. I'll come home late.

– B: ...

**Ex. 19 Complete the mini-dialogues with the requests. Consult the Language Capsule “Making a request”.**

1. – A: ...?

– B: It’s not in my power. I have to follow the necessary regulations. That’s my duty.

2. – A: ...?

– B: I wish I could help you but I can’t. Tomorrow I’m going to Moscow to take part in the conference.

3. – A: ...?

– B: What, are you crazy! Never ask me about it ever again!

4. – A: ...?

– B: I’m sorry but I will be busy at that time. You know I am always ready to help you if I can.

5. – A: ...?

– B: Well, you see, I have to keep silent for some time.

6. – A: ...?

– B: I know you would like me to do it, but I think I’m not able to do it properly. Let’s ask Jane. She’s so artistic.

**Ex. 20 Act out the situation “Neighbors’ request” according to the scheme.**

*Situation “Neighbors’ request”:*

You are very friendly to your next-door neighbors. They regularly invite you to meals, and you spend a lot of time at their house. Today the mother of the family informs you that the grandmother has become gravely ill, and everyone is going to her town for what will probably be an extended stay – everyone, that is, but the youngest boy, 9 years old, whom the family does not want to take out of school. Instead they would like him to stay with you until they return.

Missis Mitchell greets Laura, her	Laura greets Missis Mitchell and
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neighbor. She asks her how she is.	asks how she is doing.
Missis Mitchell says that there is a problem in their family. The grandmother has become gravely ill.	Laura is sorry to hear such news. Laura asks how Missis Mitchell is now.
Missis Mitchell says that the grandma is getting better but she needs care.	Laura agrees. She shows that she is following.
Missis Mitchell says that they are going to visit her soon to stay there for a week or so. But the problem is David. They don't want him to miss school.	Laura shows that she is listening attentively.
Missis Mitchell asks if Lora could look after David for some time.	Laura hesitates and takes some time to think. She didn't expect to hear such a request.
Missis Mitchell makes a request again. She says that they trust Lora very much and David loves Laura.	Laura says that she would like to help with great pleasure but in a week she will take her exams. She needs much time to make a project and to get ready for the exams properly. She wouldn't be able to spend time with David.
Missis Mitchell shows that she understands everything. She says that David will stay with his father, Mr. Mitchell, and she will go to the grandmother alone.	Laura says that she sympathizes sincerely. She asks to excuse her again. She wishes Missis Mitchell all the best.
Missis Mitchell thanks Laura.	Laura thanks Missis Mitchell for understanding.

**Ex. 21 Study the situation and act it out. Try to understand your friend's position. Explain his reasons. What would you do if it happened to you? Have you got some personal space in relations with your close friend?**

*Situation: 'A Parental visit':*

Your parents have just finished a whirlwind trip to the country, where you take courses at high school. It didn't give them time to visit the out-of-the-way and hard-to-get-to part of the country you live in. Accordingly, you met them in the capital and accompanied them on a two-day swing through the tourist hot spots. You have returned to your site after seeing your parents off and have recounted the story of their trip to your best friend. When you finish, she's wearing rather a long face, and you ask her what the matter is. She says she would have enjoyed meeting your parents greatly and feels hurt that you didn't think she was a good enough friend to introduce her to them. After all, she has taken you to her parents' house in the capital several times [Ошибка! Источник ссылки не найден., с. 18–19].

**Ex. 22 Act out the cross-cultural situation.**

Jane, an American student, was approached by her Russian friend and classmate Irina for answers to the take-home examination given in a biology class that both students were taking. Irina missed many classes, didn't do most of the readings, and scored poorly on the midterm exam. Jane said no to her request. Irina was very angry.

**Ex. 23 Act out the cross-cultural situation.**

*Nyet becomes da!*

An American visitor to Moscow finally checks into a hotel after a long and difficult journey, only to realize that he is hungry and has no rubles!

Making my way down the long, dim hall, I approached the dyezhurnaya (floor manager) for my floor. A feature of many Russian hotels, they are women who keep the keys and provide hot water for tea or instant coffee (if asked politely). Inquiring about the location of the currency exchange office, I was told it had closed for the day.

“Shto delat?” (What to do?), I asked.

Shrugging her shoulders, she looked me over indifferently. Here was the making of a classic confrontation between a Western visitor and the Soviet system, which was not designed to serve individuals with special requests.



From past experience in Russia I knew not to retreat, so I stood my ground, changed the subject and began to converse with the old woman. We talked about my long trip from the States, the purpose of my visit, the Moscow weather, where I had learned to speak Russian, the current shortages in Moscow, her children and mine, how nice it was for me to be back in Russia again. After a while, I returned to the subject of my hunger and asked if she had any suggestions as to what I might do.

“I’ll lend you some rubles,” she replied, reaching for her sumka (satchel) under the desk, “and you can pay me back tomorrow.”

My approach had worked. The lesson of this story is simple. Russia can be a cold and impersonal place, where a visitor’s requests are met with an automatic “nyet.” But Russians respond to a human approach, and they can be warm and helpful once a good interpersonal relationship is established. Nyet becomes da. That is the key to understanding Russians.

**Ex. 24 Act out the situation in which the participant makes a request.**

*Situation:*

1. Imagine that you are very friendly to your neighbors. The father of this family is a colleague of yours. Now, a most delicate problem has arisen in the office. You have discovered, in your position as an accountant, that the father of your neighbors’ family has stolen money from the company. You confronted him with your evidence, and he broke down and wept. He said he needed the money for the operation which his youngest daughter had just undergone and that he planned to pay it all back over the next few months. He asks you for trust to keep everything in secret. You refuse to help him and explain your grounds.

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**по теме «Друг и дружба в Америке»**

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