Making Requests in Spanish, (40 minutes)

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This activity is designed for university learners of Spanish in the U.S. who are at the intermediate-mid proficiency level according to ACTFL guidelines. It is assumed that the learners are aware of a range of request-forming strategies and understand that the level of directness of the request is dependent on the situation and context in which it is made.

LEARNING OUTCOMES. Learners will be able to:

Knowledge:
- Recognize situations in which requests would be used, as well as the vocabulary and grammatical structures relevant to these situations.
- Understand the difference between direct and indirect requests.

Analysis:
- Explain how power, distance, and severity inform what type of request strategy is most appropriate in a given situation.

Subjectivity:
- Decide which types of requests they are comfortable making and which they are not. Learners must be aware of the possible misunderstandings that could occur if they were to use a request strategy that is atypical of a certain situation.

Awareness:
- Recognize whether a particular request strategy is understood and well-received by the hearer. If it is not, learners are able to explain what went wrong and why.

MODE(S): Interpretive, Presentational

MATERIALS: Pens/pencils, a red pen for marking, Service Request Scenarios Worksheet

PROCEDURE

Explanation of Activity (5 minutes):

1. Preface this activity by explaining that requests differ depending on distance (how well people know each other), power, and severity. What is grammatically correct or appropriate in one context is not always appropriate in another.

2. Divide the class into groups of 3-5, depending on class size. Provide each group with the handout.

3. Learners should read all four conversations, determine which one is the most appropriate given the distance, power, and severity, and use the red pen to mark any atypical words or phrases in the other three conversations.

Group work (20 minutes):

1. Each group has ~20 minutes to read the four conversations, follow the prompt, and discuss why they came to the conclusions they did.

Class Discussion (15 minutes):

1. Call on a few groups to discuss what they determined and why. They reveal which conversation was the "appropriate one" and the subsequent words and phrases that made the other three less appropriate.

2. Conduct a class conversation on distance, power, and severity in relation to the activity.