

Teaching Formal Email Writing in English

Katherine SONG

Institute for Foreign Language Research and Education

Hiroshima University

This article presents the results of a continuing action research involving a lesson designed to raise pragmatic awareness of Japanese university students as they engage in status-unequal and high-stakes email communications. A learner-centered approach was taken based on the responses to the beginning of term *Self-introduction / Needs Analysis Questionnaire* of the 34 second year Faculty of Education students enrolled in an elective English language class. For these learners with definite plans to use the English language in their future careers, development of formal email CMC (computer mediated communication) skill and pragmatic competence were deemed equally important as language accuracy. With both English language and email communication skills becoming necessary for increasing numbers of Japanese university students for their future careers, the action research explores whether it will be advisable to include CMC skills in a foreign language class. Questions to explore included whether the instructor's understanding of appropriate formal email writing in U.S. contexts will also be applicable to the Japanese workplaces that the learners will enter upon completion of their studies. In addition, whether such CMC education will be effective in English, a foreign language, will be considered based on follow-up assessment activities and post-lesson prompted and unprompted email communication efforts made by the learners.

BACKGROUND

In Japan, based on the mandates of the national curriculum, English language education has been a compulsory part of current Japanese university students' education from their first year in secondary school. By the time they graduate with their undergraduate degrees, they will have completed eight years of language classes. The widely publicized aim of the current administration is to "create a 'globalized' workforce via educational reforms" specifically in English language education (Mie, 2013). While Japanese university students' information technology literacy is far from limited, especially with mobile phone technology, their language and computer literacy for formal academic and workplace settings appear to need attention.

Based on repeated incidents of extraordinarily inappropriately written messages from students, a decision was made to address the issue as an English language class activity. The design of the study follows the description and guidelines of action research and is context specific and learner centered (Skinner, 2013):

- Develop a plan of critically informed action to improve what is already happening
- Act to implement the plan

- Observe the effects of the critically informed action in the context in which it occurs
- Reflect on these effects as the basis for further planning, subsequent critically informed action and so on, through a succession of stages. (PowerPoint Slide 10)

After having identified what I deemed to be a major problem with students' use of email for CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) in a formal status-unequal context, I sought to seek a better understanding of the causes behind the uncharacteristically inappropriate emails from Japanese university students.

Like Greenfield (2003) the instructional model for the study attempted to incorporate "sound pedagogy, theory, and an integrated curriculum" with "student-centered paradigms," "an integrated approach for combining computers and language learning," and "academically sound pedagogy, methods, and theory for teaching"(p.47). Attempts were also made to discover "student opinions, attitudes, and perceptions"(p. 51) about email use in their present and future contexts. However, there are several major differences between our lesson planning and research focus, i.e., for secondary school students in an ESL context interacting with peers versus university students in an EFL context using email to communicate with higher status recipients, i.e., their instructor. In addition, the focus of my research is on email communication itself, not on collaborative learning or development of English for academic writing purposes.

Other previous studies on email uses sought to compare the medium with other forms of writing, e.g., with chat, face-to-face, and handwriting, (Sotillo, 2000, Lee, 2008, Biesenbach-Lucas & Weasonforth, 2001, as cited in Murray, 2013); however, like Chen (2006), the focus of my study is on the learners' awareness and proficiency with email use outside of the language classroom contexts. However, unlike Chen's study where the language learner is navigating through the established practices in a foreign culture, my concern was on introducing foreign practices for use in Japanese learners' home culture contexts.

As Levy (2007) points out, teaching of culture is highly complex and requires careful consideration as cultural components are selected and introduced as class activities. While language teachers may be the expert of the languages they teach, when one considers the individualized nature of culture, in this case, the rules or guidelines surrounding email communication, it's necessary to consider whether they are also applicable widely enough to be of use to the learners.

With this sense of responsibility, level appropriate reading for the students from a reputable and widely-read publication that supported the instructor's understanding of email use was sought and two were considered: Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL) "Email etiquette for students" and Wikihow's "How to write a formal email." After careful consideration, a decision was made to use the shorter Wikihow article, which was applicable in a wider context, e.g., both in higher education and workplace contexts.

STUDY

Research Questions

With both English language and email communication skills becoming necessary for increasing numbers of Japanese university students for their future careers, there are a number of important questions to explore in the instructional design:

1. Will the learners in question find English language email exchanges relevant enough in their future to justify the time and effort spent in class and the effect on their grades?
2. How would learners respond to the double burden of language and technology use education? Should technology education be conducted in the learner's native language?
3. Are the standards of practice for English language formal email use based on North American contexts applicable for Japanese workplace contexts?

Student emails and responses to classroom tasks have been collected and analyzed as sources of data for the action research. The answers to the first question will be sought in their start-of-term needs analysis questionnaire responses and a follow-up survey at the end of the term. For the second question, pre- and post- email writing tasks and review activities will be used. In addition to the current learners, surveys have been sent out to their 'future selves', i.e., older students and working professionals who regularly use either the English language, email, or both in their academic and workplace contexts in Japan. The latter group was approached to discover similarities between the formal email practices between the instructor's and that of students' cultures.

Participants

The students in the second year elective English language course called CALL Practice (translated from Japanese 'CALL 演習') are students in the Faculty of Education at a Japanese university. They are in two teacher education programs that either focuses on English language education in secondary schools or in elementary schools. According to the beginning of term *Self-Introduction/Needs Analysis* (Appendix A), while not all plan to teach English, all 34 do expect English to be a part of their career.

While there is no prerequisite for the course, they should all have completed at least four English language courses as part of their general university requirement during their first year and all have had experience using CALL rooms, the WebCT learning management system, and other forms of computer and information technologies available and encouraged at the university (Aibara, 2011).

The students in the study (20-21 year olds) would have completed their primary and secondary school education during the years of the national push for English language and computer education. However, while computers and online access have been and continue to be readily available, the degree of educational technology literacy with which Japanese students start their university studies is unclear. In their 1997 conference proceeding, Kitao and Kitao

write about Japan's Ministry of Education's efforts then to increase the access to computers and the internet in primary and secondary schools:

[T]he Ministry of Education is beginning to work to rectify this situation [of limited computer and internet access in primary and secondary schools]. The "One Hundred Schools Project," which started in 1995, provided computer software and Internet connections for more than one hundred primary and secondary schools. The schools chosen for this project are ones that are located in central areas in their prefectures or in their urban areas. While this project is not specifically intended for English language teaching, it has made the Internet available to English teachers and students in junior highs and high schools (Kitao and Kitao, 1997)

Though similar information can be found about the number of primary and secondary schools set up with computers and internet access, information about the degree to which they were part of the current university students' educational experience is unclear.

All 33 respondents to the *Self-Introduction/Needs Analysis* (Appendix A) questions about their CALL experience and English language use outside of classroom have used CALL technologies: e.g., watched *TED Talks* (18) and TV/movies (14), listened to songs (4) and used references like 'Wikipedia' (4), electronic dictionaries and translation programs online or on their smart phones. The responses suggest that the technologies are mostly used for entertainment and reference resources and very few use them as a tool for language practice and production. Only three of the 33 respondents specified that they use CMC (e.g., email, Facebook, or video-conferencing with foreign acquaintances):

6. Independent Activities: What English activities do you practice outside of school? E.g., listen to English songs, watch English language movies / TV programs, keep a blog, spend time with English-speaking friends.

1. "listen to English songs
watch English language movies
send and receive e-mails with my friend in Australia"
2. "Watching English movies for some times.
Sending emails to foreign friends."
3. "write [F]acebook in English, read English articles on the website, listen to short English conversation, talk with exchange student from South Asia"

In addition, informal conversations suggest that for many of the students, the use of computer technology was not particularly integrative as described by Warschauer et al. and cited in Greenfield, 2003, not "handled the way one would incorporate a new textbook into the curriculum, rather than an add-on feature like a guest speaker"(p. 48). Additional conversations with older

students who are not part of the research population also brought up issues of computer education being independent of other subjects and the likelihood of students not having access to computers at home. Apparently, for these students, though they attended computer classes, their tasks in primary and secondary schools were done by hand and handwritten work is common for most of their undergraduate courses.

Even with such possible limitations, these university students will likely be expected to use both English language and email in their careers. The likelihood of such needs was further supported by the regular use of emails from current and former students and other Japanese undergraduate and graduate students' seeking help. Furthermore as future English language educators, they will also be faced with having to use technology in their teaching careers. With these future application issues in mind, steps were carried out to diagnose, educate, and assess the students' understanding of email along with other CALL tools.

Data Collection and Analysis

Two main sets of data have been collected from university students and working professionals. From the current learners, the 34 second year Faculty of Education students, pre- and post-instructional writing attempts and post-instructional comprehension quiz data (Appendix B) were collected and analyzed in order to assess the need for CMC instruction and its effectiveness. From their 'future selves', i.e., older students and Japanese professionals currently using both English and email in their careers in Japan, responses to the survey *Formal Emails in English vs. Other Languages (NOV/DEC 2013)* (Appendix C) about workplace email writing practices are being collected. At the time of this report, of the 34 responses collected, 25 responses were from 11 older Japanese students with similar educational background and/or career goals involving English. The 14 Japanese professionals include former secondary school teachers, current language pedagogy professors and administrative staff at the university and secondary school teachers on sabbatical to work on their graduate degrees.

On the first day of class, in addition to the *Self-Introduction/Needs Analysis* (Appendix A) questionnaire, 19 of the 34 enrolled students in attendance were assigned the following writing task:

1. Log on to WebCT
2. Go to email & write an email to the teacher, Katherine Song:
3. You want to take a popular class (e.g., CALL Practice); however, there is not enough space for all the students. Write a message to the teacher asking her to allow you to take the class.

The learner responses to the writing task, a status unequal high-stakes email, were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The qualitative and interpretative analysis were of the language choices and message content and the number of emails following the guidelines from the Wikihow article "How to write a formal email" (Leroux et. al) were counted. Of the 19 students,

three (16%) used the ‘subject header’ effectively, 10 (53%) used ‘proper salutation’, 16 (84%) “introduc[ed] themselves in the first paragraph,” 11 (58%) wrote “the actual message [without too many unnecessary words/details],” 11 (58%) “avoid[ed] informal writing,” 12 (63%) “use[d] the correct form of leave-taking,” 12 (63%) “sign[ed] with their full names,” and 10 (53%) appeared to have proofread their message for content, spelling, and grammar.

In order to determine the effectiveness of the formal email writing lesson, two assessments were administered. The first assessment was a multiple-choice task with students having to explain their choices in an open-question (Appendix B) followed by a revision of their initial email attempt. At the time of writing, a plan is in place to collect further data for analysis from additional classroom writing tasks and email communication attempts initiated by the students, i.e., unrelated to the class activity.

A week after the initial email writing attempt, the review of the 19 student emails was conducted with 33 students in attendance. The students were told to read the Wikihow article, “How to write a formal email” (Leroux et al, n.d.), discuss the content with their classmates, review their classmates’ emails, and complete the multiple-choice ‘Email Etiquette Review’ assessment set up on WebCT (Appendix B). Afterwards, the 19 students who did the pre-instructional writing task were told to revise their email and the rest to submit their first email writing attempt. Thirty-three students completed the post-instruction review task on WebCT: 32 of the 33 in attendance completed the task in class and one student who was absent as a homework task. The post-instruction revision or first writing attempt were assigned as homework tasks and were completed by 23 students: 16 as revisions and 5 as first writing attempts. The numbers in the following table represent an interpretative analysis of the number of students who appear to be able to identify and include important components of formal email in their writings.

TABLE 1. Learner Recognition and Use of Formal Email Components

Formal email components	Pre-instruction writing (n=19)	Post-instruction review identification (n=33)	Post-instruction revision / writing attempt 1 (n=23)
1. Effective subject header	3 (16%)	18 (56%)	22 (96%)
2. Proper salutation	10 (53%)	31 (94%)	20 (87%)
3. Self-introduction	16 (84%)	23 (70%)	21 (91%)
4. ‘Actual message’	11 (58%)	21 (64%)	22 (96%)
5. Closing & leave-taking	3 (16%)	31 (94%)	21 (91%)

That is, the first row shows how 3 (16%) of the 19 students who completed the pre-instruction email writing task demonstrated the ability to use the subject header effectively based on the Wikihow article, “How to write a formal email”:

2 Use a short and accurate subject header. Avoid saying too much in the subject header, but make sure it reflects the content of your email to a person unfamiliar with you. If possible, include a keyword that will make the email content easier to remember and/or search for in a crowded inbox. For example, “Meeting on March 12th” is specific enough that the email topic won’t be mistaken for anything else but not so specific as to be distracting (ex. “Schedule, Guest List, Lunch Requests, and Meeting Overview for March 12th”). (Leroux et al, n.d.)

In case of the email writing assignment, in an email requesting a spot in a course, only three students included the course name in the subject header. After the class instruction and activity, 18 (56%) of the 33 students who completed the task were able to identify an effective header, as deemed by the instructor, among the ones used by their classmates. Among the 23 students who elected to do the follow-up writing task, 22 (96%) included the course name information in the subject header.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

These numbers in the table suggest that a CMC lesson in English was effective for this particular group of learners and helps to answer one of the research questions posited earlier: How would learners respond to the double burden of language and technology use education? However, in order to support the need for such a lesson, and to help answer the remaining questions (i.e., Will the learners in question find English language email exchanges relevant enough in their future to justify the time and effort spent in class and the effect on their grades? Are the standards of practice for English language formal email use based in North American contexts applicable for Japanese workplace contexts?), a survey on email use in Japanese contexts was sent out via email and 25 responses from the participants’ ‘future selves’, i.e., older students in similar educational contexts and with career goals and professionals who have achieved the said career goals.

The 25 responses to the *Formal Emails in English vs. Other Languages (NOV/DEC 2013)* (Song, 2013) supports the likelihood of both of the remaining questions. In response to the question, “Do you think email writing like the advice above should formally be taught,” all 25 respondents selected “Yes, it should be formally taught in both first/native language(s) and in English.” In addition, most of the advice in the article appears to be relevant also in Japanese contexts:

TABLE 2. Formal Email Advice Also Applicable to Japanese Emails

Formal email advice based on Wikihow "How to Write a Formal Email"(n=25)	Applicable
1 "Use a neutral e-mail address." "Never use an unprofessional address."	15 (60%)
2 "Use a short and accurate subject header."	22 (88%)
3 "Use proper salutation."	25 (100%)
4 "Introduce yourself in the first paragraph."	24 (96%)
5.1 "Write the actual message [without too many unnecessary words/details]."	22 (88%)
5.2 "Try to break up the message into paragraphs by topic to make your message more logical and digestible."	22 (88%)
5.3 "The email should be no more than 5 paragraphs long and each paragraph should be no more than 5 sentences long."	6 (24%)
5.4 "Insert a line break between each paragraph."	18 (72%)
5.5 "Be sure to avoid informal writing."	23 (92%)
6 "Use the correct form of leave-taking."	17 (68%)
7.1 "Sign with your full name" (e.g., family and given).	22 (88%)
7.2 "If applicable, include your job title, company name or website after your full name."	23 (92%)
7.3 "[O]nly include a career-related website or blog, not hobbies or interests."	19 (76%)
8 "Proofread [i.e., check for and fix errors in] your message for content. Make sure you haven't omitted any important details (or repeated yourself)."	23 (92%)
9 "Proofread your message [i.e., check for and fix errors in] spelling and grammar."	22 (88%)

A key consideration of the instructional design as stated earlier is the focus on the current and future needs of the learners. While it should be a goal of language educators to provide a safe and protected environment for language learners, it is also advisable to help the learners understand the realities outside the educational contexts. Communication occurring in the real world will likely place a much heavier burden on the learners. As studies have shown, in real world communication contexts, e.g., chat rooms or email, language learners will likely be faced with interactants far less understanding and patient with their learner language (Chen, 2006, Levy 2007). In the case of emails, there is also an added expectation that its users will take advantage of the time afforded by the asynchronous CMC to focus on form (Sotillo, 2000, as cited in Murray, 2013). However, in reality, as with other forms of technology, availability and access do not necessarily mean use by the learners (Fischer, 2007). In order to help insure learners take advantage of the benefits of CALL technology, learner training is crucial.

Though the university curriculum may focus on developing communicative competence and computer literacy, attention to form should also remain a consideration. While superficial errors like capitalization and spelling may not hinder communication, their appearances in professional email communications can lead to serious questioning of the sender's language

ability, or even competence. Such doubts can also lead to far reaching negative consequences, e.g., not being considered for academic and workplace promotional opportunities. While simpler register and less strict adherence to grammatical accuracy are common in CMC (Murray, 2013), their use should be a choice by the users, and not made based on ignorance. The language teachers' role remains important in helping our learners make such informed decisions and efforts should continue to be made toward using CALL technology to its best advantage.

APPENDIX A

Self-Introduction / Needs Analysis (WebCT Assessment)

For full credit, write clearly using complete sentences.

1. Name: What is your full name and what would you like to be called in class? (Points: 10)
Ex. My name is Katherine Song. Please call me Katherine or Ms. Song.
2. Goals: What are your goals for this class? (Points: 10)
What do you hope to accomplish by end of this term?
3. Strengths: What can you do especially well in English? (Points: 10)
Be specific, e.g., I can understand and respond to simple questions, e.g., “Where are you from?”
4. Weaknesses: What specific areas do you want to improve during this term? (Points: 10)
Be specific, e.g., I want to learn to make short presentations without reading notes.
5. CALL Experience: What technology have you found useful for your language learning and development? (Points: 10)
E.g., websites (e.g., Youtube, TED), software (e.g., Anki), smart phone applications, etc.
6. Independent Activities: What English activities do you practice outside of school? (Points: 10)
E.g., listen to English songs, watch English language movies / TV programs, keep a blog, spend time with English-speaking friends.
7. Abroad Experience: Have you ever been abroad? (Points: 10)
Explain, e.g., Where did you go? How long were you there? How old were you? Why were you there? (to study, to work, for vacation, etc.)
8. English Classes: Describe your recent English classes. (Points: 10)
Include the following information:
 - What classes did you take? (e.g., speaking, listening, presentation, writing, etc.)
 - When did you take the classes? (e.g., Fall 2010)
 - Where did you take the classes? (e.g., Hiroshima University)
 - What language was used to teach the class? (e.g., mostly English, mostly Japanese, English and Japanese equally)
9. Self-Introduction (100 words): (Points: 20)
Include information that will help your teacher understand you better as an English learner and technology user.

APPENDIX B

Email Etiquette Review

Select the best choices and explain your reason based on the assigned task: Write an email to the teacher, Katherine Song:

You want to take a popular class (e.g., CALL Practice); however, there is not enough space for all the students. Write a message to the teacher asking her to allow you to take the class.

1. Best Subject line: (Points: 10)

1. Subject: 10/2 call 演習
2. Subject: A Request for taking your class
3. Subject: About a class register
4. Subject: About the CALL Practice class
5. Subject: About the class
6. Subject: About your class
7. Subject: B12**** Taro
8. Subject: B12**** Taro Suzuki
9. Subject: CALL Practice
10. Subject: Hello Katherine
11. Subject: Hello. THis is Taro Suzuki
12. Subject: I wanna take your class
13. Subject: Nice to meet you.
14. Subject: The reasons why I want to take this class
15. Subject: Why I want to take this class
16. Subject: Writing a message 26 Taro 2013/10/02
17. Subject: a
18. Subject: a request for taking the class
19. Subject: CALL 演習 Class Registration Request

2. Explain your choice for the best subject line: (Points: 10)

3. Best Salutation: (Points: 10)

1. Dear Katherine
2. Dear Katherine Song
3. Dear Ms. Katherine Song
4. Dear Ms. Song
5. Dear Song
6. Dear, Katherine Song
7. Hello Proffessor Song
8. Hello, Ms. Song.
9. Hello, professor Katherine Song.

10. Hello. Ms. Katherine Song.
11. Nice to meet you Ms Song.
12. Dear Ms. Song:
13. Dear Professor Song:
14. All of the above.
15. None of the above.

4. Explain your choice for the best salutation: (Points: 10)

5. Best first paragraph opening: (Points: 10)

1. Hello! My name is taro suzuki. I major elementary school education.
2. Hello, I'm Taro Suzuki and a Kyoei student.
3. Hello, I'm Seiko Tanaka and 2nd-year-Kyoei student.
4. Hello, my name is Taro Suzuki. I am a Kyoei24 student, and I didn't go abroad to study last term.
5. Hello, this is Seiko Tanaka.
6. Hello,my name is taro suzuki.
7. Hello. My name is Taro Suzuki. I am a second year student and major in English.
8. Hello. My name is Taro Suzuki.
9. Hello. My name is Taro Suzuki. I'm a 24 student from the English Education department.
10. Hi,my name is Taro Suzuki. I major in elementary school education,but I want to become a English teacher in high school in the future.
11. I am a second grade student of faculty of English education .
12. I am Seiko Tanaka. I am a one of a member of KYOEI.
13. I am Taro Suzuki, Hiroshima university student.
14. I took Katherine's class in 2 semester.
15. I want to take this class because I don't think that my English capacity is enough to teach at school.
16. It is Taro Suzuki, a student in the department of Education.
17. My name is Seiko Tanaka. I major in English and I want to be an English teacher in the future.
18. My name is Taro Suzuki.
19. My name is Taro Suzuki, I'm a student at Kyoei

6. Explain your choice for the best first paragraph opening. (Points: 10)

7. Most convincing reason: (Points: 10)

1. I major elementary school education. I want to be a elementary school teacher, but want to be an English teacher in junior high school too. So I must brush up my English skill more. If I take this class, I especially hope to improve my speaking skills. I'm not

good at speaking. English pronounces are difficult for me. I know Ms.song have good skills. Please tell me!

2. I am a Kyoei24 student, and I didn't go abroad to study last term. So I took a Pronunciation Practice Class. As a matter of fact, I'm not good at English. Especially, I can hardly speak English. So I take this class to be good at speaking and writing English. I will make a lot of effort to practice English. So Please allow me to take this class.
3. I send an email to you because I really want to take a CALL Practice this semester. I tried to register CALL Practice but this class is very popular and I couldn't it. Probably many students want to take this class and some of them have already registered it . But I think this class is very useful for me, and I want to learn many things in this class. If you can accept students more in this class, I really want to take this class
4. I am a second grade student of faculty of English education . I'm writing this message to ask you if I can take your class which is held every thursday, from 10:30. I was looking for the lesson where I can speak English in practise and I found your lesson would be the best lesson to improve my English, especially in speaking. What I think your lesson very attracting and original is that you use media and computers with which we can do interpersonal activities.
5. I am a one of a member of KYOEL I am really interested in your class. I think this is the best way to learn English from a native speaker.You will motivate me to study. I also would like to be an English teacher and I have a friend who had already took this class last year. I heard this class was so great if I want to be an English teacher. I want to learn a lot of things from this class. I want to ask you to allow me to take this class.
6. I major in English and I want to be an English teacher in the future. This is why I would like to take your class. When I took your class last year, I was able to improve my English skills very much, so I want to take your class this year, too. I know there is not enough space for all students, but I am going to study very hard, so please let me take your class.
7. My faculty is English education and I want to be an English teacher. I think I should study English more, so I want to take this class and study English. I have never learned English with computer assisting until taking your class in first semester. I love this studying style, so I want to take this class. I forgot another big reason, I want to take this class because I love your nice smile
8. I major in elementary school education, but I want to become a English teacher in high school in the future. However my English skill is very poor. So I take this class because I have to improve my English skill with the students who major in English education.
9. I want to develop listening power in this class. recently, my English power decrease. But while I'm Hiorshima university student I want to talk man speaking English. So this class's space don't have problem in my thinking.
10. I decided to take this class because I want to improve my English abilities, especially

- speaking. Though I went to the UK. to study English for 4 months, I could less able to speak fluently than I'd imaged. I want to make use of this class and to improve my English. Thank you.
11. I want to take this class because I don't think that my English capacity is enough to teach at school. And I want to go to other country where used English,so I need to use good English.
 12. I sent you this e-mail to ask you to allow me to take your class "CALL Practice". I want to take the class but there is not enough space for all the student, so could you allow me to take the class somehow? I promise you to study sincerely in your class if you allow me to.
 13. I want to take your "CALL" class. I don't have enough English skill to get an English teacher lisenche. To get this lisenche, we need to get enough English speakeing, listening and writing skills. And then I think your class is good for improving these skills so I hope to take your class, and improve my English skills. I hope I can take your class.
 14. I took Katherine's class in 2 semester. I enjoyed to learn pronunciation. So I want to take Katherine's class again. To tell the truth, I don't like English. However, I try to do my best.
 15. The reason I send you a message today is relatd to Call Practice class. To my regret, i hear there is not enough space for all the students, however I should be able to take the class. There is a reason. In Call Practice class, students can learn many important things, which they cannot do in other classes. For example, speaking with other student in English using microphones is really enjoyable and it is an important opportunity to speak English.
 16. I wrote this letter to you because I am interested in your CALL Practice class. I know it's a very popular class but I need to improve my English before going abroad, so I would appreciate it if you give me a chance in taking your class.
 17. I went to the University of Edinburgh in the UK the first semester this year and had a lot of good experiences, meeting many foreign people or visiting some famous sightseeing places and so on. I'm going to take the popular class, but I heard that there's no enough space for all students, however I have to take this class for my future career and I'm strongly interested in the wonderful class, so I'm wondering whether you could change the classroom so that it could capacitate everyone who wants to take it
 18. I would like to take your class "CALL Practice" but I heard that there is not enough space for all of those who are longing to take the class, and so I ask you to allow me to take it because I am a member of the DELCE and this class is necessary for licenses of English teacher. Also, your class sounds very interesting and I am sure I will do my best. I will be the best student since ever you started your carrer as a teacher. I hope my name is on the big screen in J101 on 1st October.
 19. I would like to take your class, "CALL Practice". I have got two reasons for it. One of

them is that I am thinking of becoming an English teacher in the future and I need to study how to use a computer for my English class. The other is that I want to improve my English. In the class, I can learn how to communicate in English as well. My English is really poor for being a teacher and I need to improve it.

8. Explain your choice for the most convincing reason: (Points: 10)

9. Best Closing / Leave-Taking: (Points: 10)

1. Best regards Taro Suzuki
2. Best regards, Taro Suzuki
3. If you can accept students more in this class, I really want to take this class.
4. Kind Regards Seiko Tanaka
5. Taro Suzuki, Tazuki Hiroshima university Faculty of English education
6. Please tell me!
7. Regard, Seiko Tanaka
8. Regards, Seiko
9. Regards, Seiko Tanaka
10. Taro Suzuki Hiroshima University b12****@hiroshima-u.ac.jp
11. Sincerely, Taro
12. So I take this class because I have to improve my English skill with the students who major in English education.
13. So this class's space don't have problem in my thinking.
14. Thank you, Taro Suzuki B12****
15. Thank you.
16. Thank you. Best wishes Hiroaki Okihara (Kyoei 2nd grade)
17. To tell the truth, I don't like English. However, I try to do my best.
18. Yours sincerely, Taro Suzuki

10. Explain your choice for best closing / leave-taking: (Points: 10)

APPENDIX C

Formal emails in English vs. other languages (NOV/DEC 2013)

Advice for email communication in English (US) and other languages,

Please read the following advice for writing formal emails in English in the US and other English-language contexts. Is the advice also applicable in the formal communication contexts in your culture and your first/native language(s)? Your first / native languages in the following responses will be assumed to be the language(s) you previously provided.

Formal Email Advice 1 “Use a neutral e-mail address.” “Never use an unprofessional address.”*
“Use a neutral e-mail address” (e.g., ksong@hiroshima-u.ac.jp). “Never use an unprofessional email address” (e.g., drunkensquirl-radio.mycolor1004@docomo.ne.jp). Are these advice for FORMAL email writing in the US applicable in your first/native language(s) context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 2 “Use a short and accurate subject header.”*

Is this advice for formal emails also applicable in your culture and for your first/native language(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 3 “Use proper salutation.”*

“Use a proper salutation. Addressing the recipient by name is preferred. Use the person's title (Mr. Mrs. Ms. or Dr.) with their last name.” Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 4 “Introduce yourself in the first paragraph.”*

“Introduce yourself in the first paragraph (if necessary). Also include why you're writing, and how you found that person's e-mail address, or the opportunity you're writing about...” Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).

- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 5.1 “Write the actual message [without too many unnecessary words/details].”*

“Be sure to get your point across without [using too many words]; if it [contains a lot of unnecessary details], the reader may glance over the important details.” Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 5.2 “Try to break up the message into paragraphs by topic to make your message more logical and digestible.”*

Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 5.3 “The email should be no more than 5 paragraphs long and each paragraph should be no more than 5 sentences long.”*

Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 5.4 “Insert a line break between each paragraph.”*

Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 5.5 “Be sure to avoid informal writing.”*

Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).

- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 6 “Use the correct form of leave-taking.”*

“Use the correct form of leave-taking (e.g., ‘Yours sincerely’, ‘Yours cordially’, ‘Respectfully,’ ‘Best,’ etc.). Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 7.1 “Sign with your full name” (e.g., family and given).*

Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 7.2 “If applicable, include your job title, company name or website after your full name.”*

(E.g., Katherine Song, Lecturer, Institute for Foreign Language Research & Education, Hiroshima University) Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 7.3 “[O]nly include a career-related website or blog, not hobbies or interests.”*

Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 8 “Proofread [i.e., check for and fix errors in] your message for content. Make sure you haven't omitted any important details (or repeated yourself).”*

Is this advice for formal email writing also applicable in your first/native language context(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice 9 “Proofread your message [i.e., check for and fix errors in] spelling and grammar.”*

Is this advice for FORMAL email writing in the US applicable in your home culture and first/native language(s)?

- Only when writing formal emails in English
- Also when writing formal emails in my first / native language(s).
- I don't know.
- Other:

Formal Email Advice (Other):

Are there other advice that an email user should follow in a formal context in English and / or your first/native languages? What other advice would you give to foreigners who wishes to communicate effectively in a formal / professional context in your culture?

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- WebCT 6 [Learning Management System]

要 約

フォーマルな英語 E メールライティングの指導

キャサリン・ソング

広島大学外国語教育研究センター

本論文は、日本人大学生が、社会的地位が違う相手に対して重要度の高いEメール文書を書く際の、実務的意識を高めることを目指した授業における、継続的なアクション・リサーチの報告をしようとするものである。選択英語科目を履修登録した教育学部生34名による学期初めの自己紹介やニーズ分析調査への回答に基づき、学習者中心の手法が用いられた。将来の職業において英語を使う確かな展望を持った学生にとって、フォーマルなメールを書くためのCMC (Computer Mediated Communication: コンピューターを介したコミュニケーション) スキルや実務能力の向上は、言語使用の正確性と等しく重要であると思われる。将来の職業において、より多くの日本人学生が英語力とEメール・コミュニケーション能力が必要とされるので、外国語授業の中でCMCスキルを取り入れるべきかをについて調査した。授業担当者による米国コンテキストにおける適切なEメール・ライティングの理解が、学生が卒業後に入る職場にも応用可能かどうかという点についても探求した。加えて、外国語である英語において、このようなCMC指導が有効であるかについて、指導後の評価活動と学生による事後課題や実際に送付されたEメールの本文などに基づいて吟味する。