

Chapter 6

Emails of Inquiry and reply

Contents

In this chapter, the contents include vocabulary, expressions, abbreviations and acronyms frequently used in emails of inquiry and reply. Students are to practice writing both types of letters in both formal and informal tone. Practice using spelling check function in a word processor is included.

Behavioral objectives

1. Students are able write emails of inquiry in formal and informal tones.
2. Students are able write emails of reply in formal and informal tones.
3. Students are able to use spelling check function in a word processor in order to write emails with less errors.

Teaching methods and activities

Teaching method

1. Lecture
2. Class and group discussion

Activities

1. Quizzes and exercises
2. Hand-on practice of writing emails of inquiry and reply.
3. Hand-on practice of using spelling check in word processor.

Teaching materials

1. Textbook
2. Computer notebooks, Internet connection, and electricity

Assessment and evaluation

1. Quizzes and exercises
2. Group activities

Schema building

In business, before you make decision to buy products from a seller, it is common to ask for information (the specification of the products, prices, availability, discounts, handling and shipping costs) until everything is clear.



Above is a poster of the Institute of Language Art and Culture (ILAC) to publicize the language training courses held by the institute. When people see this ad, they might have many questions such as course name, course description, day and date, duration, cost, instructors, etc. To solve these questions, they can make a phone call or send an email to ILAC. Though telephoning may be faster, writing an email of inquiry is a suitable choice to ask questions because the customer can put his/her questions into a list while ILAC can answer each question in writing.

Two emails below are sample of emails of inquiry. Though both of them inquire about the information related to language courses of ILAC, their tone and level of formality are different. The techniques used to differentiate the tones in these two emails are using of word choice, abbreviations, and contractions.

I. Directions: Read two emails below and identify formal and informal email of inquiry

Email A	Email B
<p>Dear ILAC,</p> <p>I saw your ad in the newspaper of 2 January 201X.</p> <p>I'm a university freshman studying in Aviation Business Program and I'm interested in your English courses. Can you send me details of the courses, please?</p> <p>I'm looking forward to hearing from you ASAP.</p> <p>Best wishes,</p> <p>Sirinya</p>	<p>Dear the Director of Institute of Language, Art and Culture,</p> <p>I saw an advertisement of the Institute of Language Art and Culture in the newspaper dated 2 January 201X.</p> <p>I am a freshman who is studying in Aviation Business program. I am interested in your English courses. Could you send me the details of the courses, please?</p> <p>I am looking forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.</p> <p>Best regards</p> <p>Sirinapa</p>

1.1 _____ Which email is formal?

1.2 _____ Which email is informal?

II. Directions: Complete the emails by using phrases provided below. Put letters A-H in the blanks.

A. hearing from you ASAP.	E. the details on the contents, length, and cost of your courses, please?
B. the details of the courses, please?	F. dated 14 February 2012.
C. your Thai cooking courses.	G. your Thai culinary courses.
D. hearing from you as soon as possible.	H. of 14 Feb 2012.

Email A	Email B
Dear BaiPai Thai Cooking School, I heard your ad on the radio _____. 2.1 I'm interested in _____. 2.2 Can you send me _____. 2.3 I'm looking forward to _____. 2.4 Best wishes, Sirinya	Dear the Manager of BaiPai Thai Cooking School, I heard an advertisement of your cooking on the radio _____. 2.5 I am interested in _____. 2.6 Could you able to help send me _____. 2.7 I am looking forward to _____. 2.8 Best regards Sirinapa

III. Directions: Find the words from the more formal email above that share the same meaning with ones written in the informal email below

_____ 3.1 of 14 Feb 201X

_____ 3.2 ads

- _____ 3.3 I'm
- _____ 3.4 Can you send me
- _____ 3.5 I'm looking forward
- _____ 3.6 ASAP

Again, it can be concluded that language used to differentiate the level of formality in the sample emails above are

1. word choice (**of** 14 Feb and **dated** 14 February, **Can** and **Could**),
2. use of abbreviations (**Feb** and **February**, **ads** and **advertisement**, **ASAP** and **as soon as possible**), and
3. contractions (**I'm** and **I am**).

IV. Directions: Write **F** if the expressions below are formal and **IF** if they are informal.

- _____ 4.1 I'd appreciate a reply ASAP.
- _____ 4.2 Please answer ASAP.
- _____ 4.3 Can you send me the 201X brochure, please?
- _____ 4.4 Would you be able to help?
- _____ 4.5 Could you send me the 2012 brochure, please?
- _____ 4.6 Can you help?

Language focus

Polite language

In inquiries, the writer should avoid using imperatives (orders) like send me or inform me. Even in informal email, it is still important to use polite language. Please can be used in every type of inquiries. Though, adding please will make the sentence more polite, it still sounds direct.

“Send me the brochure of your product.”

This sentence sounds like an order.

“Please send me the brochure of your product”.

This sentence is more polite but still sounds direct.

To make enquiries and requests more polite, you have to ask them **INDIRECTLY** by using interrogatives (questions) such as can or could. Be noted that phrases with could and would like are more polite than phrases with can or want.

More formal(more polite)

*“**Could** you please send me the brochure of
your product?”*

*“I **would like** to book a room for two nights.”*

Informal (less polite)

*“**Can** you please send me the brochure of
your product?”*

*“I **want** to book a room for two nights.”*

The following phrases can be used in formal enquiries to the first time contacts. However, they can be considered too formal in email to colleagues or long-time customers.

We would be grateful if you could send us the brochure of your product.

We would appreciate if you could book a room for two nights for us.

Useful expressions: General inquiries

Formal expressions	Informal expressions
I would like to make some inquiries related to your package tour...	Hi, I have a couple of questions about your package tour...
Could you inform me (how to apply for English summer camp scholarship), please?	Can you tell me (how to apply for English summer camp scholarship), please?
Is it possible that you could send me the 201X brochure and price list?	Can you send me (the 2012 brochure and price list, please?)
Could you possibly send me the 201X brochure and price list, please?	Send me (the 2012 brochure and price list, please?)
I would like to know how to apply for English teacher at your institute.	I want to know how to apply for English teacher at your institute.

Useful expressions: Ending an inquiry

Formal expressions	Informal expressions
Any information you could give me would be greatly appreciated.	
I would appreciate your immediate reply.	Please reply asap.
I look forward to receiving your reply.	Looking forward to having your reply.
Thank you in advance.	Thanks in advance.

V. Directions: Complete the emails of inquiry by using appropriate expressions.

Dear

Our company is currently looking for Thai cooking courses for our executives from our headquarters who will visit Thailand during the summer 201X.

_____ 5.1 me some brochures showing the various courses you offer. Moreover, we also would like to know whether it is convenient for you to arrange courses at the hotel our executives stay.

As our executives will be arriving in the next two weeks, I

_____. 5.2

Thanks you very much.

Best regards

James Geerson

HR executive secretary

Technique Focus

VI. Directions: Match the words provided in the box below with the function in email application.

To	CC	BCC
From: sarapol@hotmail.com ▼		
To:	sirinya phophitchayakul (sirinya15@hotmail.com) ✎ ✖	
Cc:		
Bcc:		

_____ 6.1 You put email addresses of the receivers in this box.

_____ 6.2 You put email addresses of the persons whom the copy of this email is sent to, without letting the receivers know.

_____ 6.3 You put email addresses of the persons whom the copy of this email is sent to.

The Emails of Reply

Similar to other types of emails, the emails of reply can be very short and informal or it can be longer and formal. The emails of reply are used to answer the questions or problems asked in the emails of inquiry. To solve the problem of customers, it is suggested the emails of reply should provide sufficient information. However, in any case that the answers are already in a document or a Web page, it is acceptable to attach the document or provided Web links to the recipients.

Thus, the main part of emails of reply is the reply itself. However, the emails will be more courteous if the other parts such as saying thanks, making reference, asking the recipients to ask more questions and giving polite ending, are added into the emails.

Compare the emails below which are the replies from ILAC to the customers' emails of request.

Email A	Email B
<p>Thanks for your email.</p> <p>In the coming semester, ILAC'll open five English courses that are</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English Conversation 2. Grammar in Use 3. General English 4. Preparation for TOEIC, and 5. English for Specific Purposes. <p>For course description and other information (day, date, duration, costs) please check our Web site at www.ilac.dusit.ac.th.</p> <p>Feel free to ask us if you have any questions.</p> <p>Best wishes,</p> <p>ILAC</p>	<p>Thanks you for contacting the Institute of Language, Art and Culture.</p> <p>Regarding to your questions related to English training course, in the first semester of 201X ILAC will open five courses that are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English Conversation 2. Grammar in Use 3. General English 4. Preparation for TOEIC, and 5. English for Specific Purposes. <p>You can find details on course description, day, date, duration, and cost in a document attached in this email.</p> <p>If you need any further assistance, please feel free to contact me.</p> <p>Best,</p> <p>Rungnapa ILAC Customer Service Manager</p>

Useful expressions: Replying to inquiries

Saying thanks

- Thank you very much for your interest in our product.
- Thank you for contacting us.

Making reference

- Regarding your queries about... (the rate of our hotel during the school break).
- In response to your questions...(related to the inkjet printer model TH 1200).
- Here is the information you requested.
- As requested, I am sending you... (our company's new catalogue and price list).
- Below you will find the answers to your questions...
- With reference to your request for... (discount of our facial cleansing foam, the discounted price for bulk purchasing are listed below).

Asking for details

- Before I can answer your questions,... (I need (the phone model number.)
- further details are the following:
- Before I can do anything, I need ...
- Could you tell me exactly why you need x.

Telling recipients they can ask for further info

- Please feel free to email, fax, or call if you have any questions.
- Any questions, please ask.
- Hope this is OK. Please contact me if you need any further details.
- If you need any further details do not hesitate to contact me.
- Should you have any questions please let us know.
- Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need any further clarifications.

Ending

- Please let me know if this helps.
- I hope to be able to give you a definite answer soon.
- Once again, thank you for contacting me.

VII. Directions: Write LF if the statements are less formal and MF if they are more formal.

_____ 7.1 A: Thank you for your email.

_____ 7.2 B: I'm sending you our new price list.

_____ 7.3 C: I am sending you the 201X catalogue in an attachment.

_____ 7.4 D: Thanks for choosing ILAC.

_____ 7.5 E: We are working on your request

_____ 7.6 F: We hope you are happy with this.

_____ 7.7 G: Thanks for your email.

_____ 7.8 H: Let us know if you need more help.

_____ 7.9 I: Your request is being processed.

_____ 7.10 J: Thank you for your interest.

_____ 7.11 K: We hope you find this satisfactory.

_____ 7.12 L: Do not hesitate to contact use If you require further assistance.

_____ 7.13 M: Please find attached the 201X catalogue.

_____ 7.14 N: I am pleased to send you our new price list.

VIII. Directions: From the exercise above, match the less formal statements which share the same meaning with more formal statements.

___ MC ___ 8.1 (Example)

_____ 8.2

_____ 8.3

_____ 8.4

_____ 8.5

_____ 8.6

_____ 8.7

IX. Directions: Complete the emails of reply by using appropriate expressions.

Dear Mr Geerson,

_____ 9.1 Unfortunately, the brochures you requested is currently out of print but prices and courses of this year have remained the same and are also available on our Website. The new brochure will be sent by post as soon as it's available.

For your question related to having cooking courses at the hotel your executive will stay,

_____ 9.2

We _____ 9.3

_____ 9.5

Regards

Sirinya Phophitchayakul

Language Focus

Abbreviations

Abbreviation is a short form of a word or phrase, made by leaving out some of the letters or by using only the first letter of each word.

X. Directions: Match the abbreviation with its meaning.

	asap	Tue	Feb	at the mo	bw	attn	rgds	pls	w/e
_____	10. 1	Tuesday							
_____	10.2	Weekend							
_____	10. 3	At the moment							
_____	10.4	February							
_____	10.5	Regards							
_____	10.6	As soon as possible							
_____	10.7	Best wishes							
_____	10.8	Please							
_____	10.9	Attention							

XI. Directions: Match abbreviation with its meaning.

Thx	Tia	Re	FAQ	CU	FYI	Rgds	BTW	Fwd	REQ	IMO	ATB
-----	-----	----	-----	----	-----	------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

- _____ 11.1 You write this when you want to wish someone well.
- _____ 11.2 You write this when you want to say what you think.
- _____ 11.3 You write this when you want someone to help you.
- _____ 11.4 You do this when you want to send the same email on to your friends or colleagues.
- _____ 11.5 You write this when you want to give some more information.

- _____ 11.6 This is a short form of closing.
- _____ 11.7 You write to say that reply is unnecessary.
- _____ 11.8 You write this at the end of your email.
- _____ 11.9 You see this on Web sites to answer questions on questions people frequently ask about.
- _____ 11.10 You can see this in the subject line and in the body of email, and it means “about.”
- _____ 11.11 You write this to the person who is going to help you.
- _____ 11.12 You write this to the person who has helped you.

Short forms

The email writer could make their messages short by omit some words such as articles (a, an, the), pronouns (I, he, she it) and auxiliary verbs (is, am, are, has, have). You have studied them already in chapter one; remember?

I'm looking forward to hearing from you → *Looking fwd to hearing from you.*

Thank you in advance for your help. → *Tia for yr help.*

I will be in touch tomorrow with updated figures → *Be in touch tomorrow with updated figures*

Contractions

Emails often reflect the spoken language and often use contractions instead of the full form.

Here is → *here's*

I am → *I'm*

We are → *we're*

Be noted that apostrophe should not be left out when using contraction or the meaning would be changed.

I will → *I'll* ≠ *ill*

We will → *we'll* ≠ *well*

It is → *it's* ≠ *its*

XII. Directions: Correct the following sentence by putting apostrophe (') appropriately into its place.

Well prepare the material and ship it to you immediately.

_____ 12.1

Were happy that you decide to stay with us.

_____ 12.2

Id like to introduce you the new promotion this month.

_____ 12.3

Lets have a meeting within this week before the long holidays.

_____ 12.4

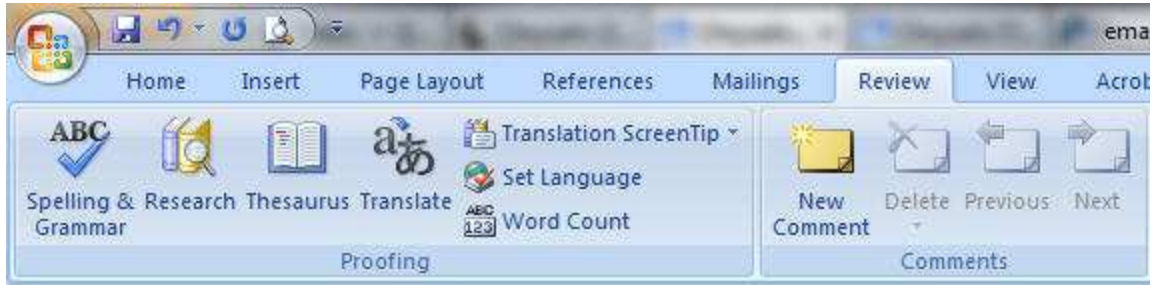
If you haven't received our new brochures, please let me know. Ill send it on.

_____ 12.5

Technique focus

Spelling and grammar checker

It is recommended that whenever you compose an important email, you should draft it first on your word processor. You should do that with two reasons. First, if something went wrong with your email or Internet connection, you still have a draft on your word processor. Secondly, most word processor can help you check spelling and grammar and correct any mistakes before you send that email.



The checker will show you what're wrong with your spellings (in red) and your meanings (in blue).

“Following is a grief overview of my skills.”

“Hope to hear from you, shorty.”

“I can type without looking at thekeyboard.”

“My experience include filing, billing, printing and coping”

XIII. Directions: Copy below statements and paste them on your word processor. Use → spelling and grammar checker to correct the mistakes.

“Following is a grief overview of my skills.”

_____ 13.1

“Hope to hear from you, shorty.”

_____ 13.2

“I can type without looking at thekeyboard.”

_____ 13.3

“My experience include filing, billing, printing and coping”

_____ 13.4

However, it is also recommended that you should not totally trust the checker. In some cases, the words are correctly spelled, but they are not appropriate to the context and the checker cannot detect them. Thus, if the letter is important such as job application letter, you should review it carefully. If you are not sure of spelling; use dictionary.

XIV. Directions: Correct the following statements.

“I’m attacking my resume for you to review.”

_____ 14.1

“I am experienced in all faucets of accounting.”

_____ 14.2

“Directed \$25 million anal shipping and receiving operations”

_____ 14.3

“I am anxious to use my exiting skills”

_____ 14.4

“Speak English and Spinach”

_____ 14.5

“Dear Sir or Madman,”

_____ 14.6

“Instrumental in ruining entire operation for a North-eastern chain store”

_____ 14.7

“Demonstrated ability in multi-tasting”

14.8

Tasks

1. In groups, write an email to ask for more information of products or services provided by other students' company and send the carbon copy to ajansarapol@gmail.com.
2. In groups, write an email to reply the inquiries from other students and send the carbon copy to ajansarapol@gmail.com.