

Introduction to formal and informal language

Exercise 1: Formal/informal language

A) Read the following letter and try to identify all instances of informal language.

Hi,

Just heard about the conference. I would be definitely great as one of the presenters! I've already presented at other conferences so I think I'm the best choice. I know a lot about this particular area, especially when it comes to the application of psychology onto domestic mice. Just shoot me an email!

Cheers!

Bartoloměj

B) Look at the text again. What were the aspects of the text that you identified as informal? What is it about them that makes them informal?

C) Look at the corrections you made for the previous exercise. Find a partner and rewrite it into a proper formal letter.

General Academic Language

- Standard usage and grammar
- Standard vocabulary
- Distance between the writer and reader
 - Common use of third person
 - Common use of passive voice
- Authoritative and neutral
 - Not aggressive, timid, or too enthusiastic

Exercise 2: Using academic language

- A) Look at the following paragraph and identify its problematic parts.**
- B) Revise the following paragraph to make language more academic while keeping the factual information the same.**

If you bury into the stereotype of girls chatting away on their cell phones, you should think again. One of the major wireless companies surveyed 1021 cell phone owners for a period of five years and—surprise!—reported that guys talk on cell phones more than girls do. In fact, guys were way ahead of girls, using an average of 571 minutes a month compared to 424 for girls. That’s 35 percent more time on the phone! The survey also asked about conversations on home phones, and while girls still beat the field, the guys are catching up.