

MASTER'S THESIS

A comparison of business correspondence writing conducted in two contexts: the classroom and the workplace

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M.A. in Language Studies

**A COMPARISON OF BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE
WRITING CONDUCTED IN TWO CONTEXTS:
THE CLASSROOM AND THE WORKPLACE**

BY

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Abstract

This study investigates and compares two aspects of business writing: (1) the linguistic and structural features of the school memoranda and the authentic corresponding texts written by people in the workplace; (2) the considerations affecting the writing of business correspondence in the classroom and working contexts. The data comprises model texts of memoranda used in the commercial schools and the authentic memoranda written by people in the workplace. Furthermore, the informants were all interviewed and two of them participated in an in-depth observation.

The move-structure approach suggested by Swales (1990) is adopted when analyzing the linguistic and structural features of the memoranda. In investigating the considerations affecting business writing, the commercial school teachers were interviewed and an in-depth observation was conducted in order to account precisely for the writing behaviour of the two informants in the workplace.

The findings suggest that both similarities and differences exist in the linguistic and structural features of the two sets of memoranda. It is found that some considerations which are made in the professional setting cannot be found in the classroom context. Broadly speaking, the business writing that takes place in an organizational context is quite different from what occurs in the classroom context.

Contents

1 Introduction

(1.1.) Background of the study	1
(1.1.1.) Questions raised from the teaching of business correspondence based on model texts	2
(1.2.) Aims of the study	2-3
(1.2.1.) Justification for comparing both the product of writing and the considerations affecting writing	3-5
(1.3.) The outline of the study	5

2 Review of Literature

(2.1.) The approach of analyzing the structural organization of business correspondence	6-9
(2.2.) The process of composing texts	9-13
(2.3.) Summary of the section	14

3 The Investigation

(3.1.) Subjects	15
(3.2.) Texts collected for the present study	16-17
(3.3.) Method of investigation	17-20
(3.4.) Findings of the preliminary study	21-26
(3.5.) Summary of the section	26

4 The Linguistic and Structural Features of Memoranda

(4.1.) Approach of analysis	27-29
(4.2.) Definition of data	29-31
(4.3.) The linguistic and structural features of the twelve school memoranda	31-42
(4.3.1.) Move 1: The Headings	
(4.3.2.) Move 2: The Body	
(4.3.3.) Move 3: The Ending	

(4.3.4.) The appearance of the obligatory and optional elements in the structure of the school memoranda	
(4.3.5.) The sequence of individual steps identified in the twelve pieces of school memoranda	
(4.4.) The linguistic and structural features of the authentic memoranda	43-53
(4.4.1.) Move 1: The Headings	
(4.4.2.) Move 2: The Body	
(4.4.3.) Move 3: The Ending	
(4.4.4.) The appearance of the obligatory and optional elements in the authentic memoranda	
(4.4.5.) The sequence of individual steps identified in the twenty- four pieces of authentic memoranda	
(4.5.) A comparison of the appearance of the obligatory and optional elements in the memoranda collected from the classroom context and the working context	53-55
(4.6.) A comparison of the linguistic features identified in the school memoranda with the authentic memoranda	56-57
(4.7.) Summary of the section	58
5 Considerations Affecting the Writing of Business Correspondence	
(5.1.) Source of data	59
(5.2.) Considerations affecting the writing of business correspondence in the classroom context	60-62
(5.3.) Considerations affecting the writing of business correspondence in the working context	62-81
(5.4.) Comparisons of the considerations affecting the writing of business correspondence in the classroom context with those in the working context	81-82
(5.5.) Summary of the section	82-83

6 Conclusion and Implications	
(6.1.) Conclusion of the study	84-86
(6.2.) Implications of the study	86-91
(6.2.1.) Educational implications for the design of business writing courses	
(6.2.2.) Implications for further research work	
(6.3.) Limitations of the study	92-93
References	94-96
Appendices	
Appendices A: School Memoranda (Text 1-12)	97-109
Appendices B: Authentic Memoranda (Text 13-40)	110-142