Enhancing professional communication: A study of English business correspondence in international business contexts

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Abstract - In the era of globalization and rapid international trade, business correspondence has emerged as a crucial tool for effective cross-cultural communication and professional success. This study aims to examine the role of English business correspondence in international business management, focusing on its linguistic features, communication strategies, and the challenges faced by non-native speakers. The research employs a qualitative descriptive method supported by content analysis of real-life business letters, emails, and memos collected from multinational companies. In addition, interviews with professionals and language instructors were conducted to identify the key skills required for writing effective business correspondence. The analysis reveals that clarity, conciseness, and formal tone are vital elements that define successful business writing. Moreover, intercultural awareness and pragmatic competence significantly impact the tone and appropriateness of communication in diverse business environments. Findings also indicate that learners of English for Business Purposes (EBP) often struggle with vocabulary selection, cultural politeness norms, and organizational structure in written messages. The study concludes that mastering English business correspondence requires a combination of language proficiency, cultural sensitivity, and real-world practice. It recommends incorporating authentic business writing samples into teaching materials, developing learner awareness of formal language structures, and providing consistent feedback. These findings are particularly useful for English educators, corporate trainers, and international business professionals aiming to enhance communication competence.

Keywords: business correspondence, professional communication, intercultural competence, English for business purposes, business writing skills

1. Introduction

In the 21st century, where globalization has blurred national boundaries and transformed how organizations conduct business, the role of communication, particularly in English, has become central to international success. English has been recognized as the global lingua franca of business (Nickerson, 2005), making English business correspondence a vital medium for managing cross-cultural interactions, building professional relationships, and executing transactions. As companies increasingly engage in international trade and form transnational partnerships, clear and effective written communication has become an indispensable skill,

especially in multinational corporations (Charles, 2007; Macro & Ott, 2024; Sahadevan & Mukthy, 2021; Poláková et al., 2023).

Business correspondence—ranging from emails, letters, reports, and memos to proposals—serves not only as a record of decisions and negotiations but also as a reflection of a company's professionalism, reliability, and cultural sensitivity. Misunderstandings caused by unclear or culturally inappropriate business writing can have serious implications, including loss of business opportunities or reputational damage (Bargiela-Chiappini & Nickerson, 2003; Pratiwi et al., 2023; Hamza, 2007). Therefore, mastering English business correspondence is essential for both native and non-native speakers who work in international business environments.

The importance of English business correspondence extends beyond simple transactional communication. It encompasses relationship-building, persuasion, problem-solving, and strategic negotiation. According to Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta (2012), business correspondence is often the first and ongoing impression that international clients and stakeholders receive from a company. Inaccurate grammar, inappropriate tone, or vague structure can hinder comprehension and negatively affect business outcomes.

Moreover, non-native English speakers face greater challenges when writing in business contexts due to linguistic, pragmatic, and sociocultural barriers (Evans, 2013). These challenges highlight the urgent need to integrate business correspondence training into English for Business Purposes (EBP) programs to ensure global workforce readiness.

Numerous studies have highlighted the challenges and pedagogical needs associated with English business correspondence. Nickerson (2005) emphasized that business communication must be contextually and culturally appropriate, suggesting that one-size-fits-all teaching models are ineffective in international contexts. Similarly, Bhatia (2004) analysed business genres and highlighted the recurring patterns and structures in documents such as business letters and sales proposals, underscoring the need for genre-based instruction.

Kankaanranta and Planken (2010) introduced the concept of "BELF" (Business English as a Lingua Franca), stressing the communicative effectiveness over grammatical perfection in business settings. Their research suggests that clarity, directness, and intercultural awareness are more valuable than native-like fluency.

Charles (2007) examined email correspondence in multinational companies and concluded that successful communication involves understanding both the formal conventions of writing and the nuances of intercultural pragmatics. Meanwhile, Gimenez (2006) investigated the writing practices of business professionals and found that workplace correspondence often blends informal and formal registers, requiring adaptable communication strategies.

In the pedagogical realm, research by St. John (1996) and Ellis and Johnson (1994) highlighted the gap between academic English instruction and the communicative demands of the workplace. Their findings advocate for more practical, needs-based approaches that reflect real-life business scenarios.

Based on your study on English business correspondence in international business management, a literature review can explore several core areas: the role of English as a lingua franca in global business, genre analysis in business communication, intercultural pragmatics, and the challenges faced by non-native English speakers in professional settings.

Numerous studies have underscored the growing importance of English as the dominant language of international business communication (Nickerson, 2005; Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005). As companies become more global, the ability to communicate effectively in English through emails, reports, and memos has become a vital skill for business professionals. Genre analysis, particularly the work of Bhatia (1993), has also offered insights into the structural patterns and linguistic features common to business correspondence, highlighting the need for writers to master both rhetorical structure and appropriate tone. Moreover, intercultural communication scholars such as Scollon and Scollon (2001) have emphasized the importance of pragmatics—especially politeness strategies and cultural expectations—in shaping how messages are interpreted across cultures.

Challenges for non-native English speakers are well-documented in the literature. These include difficulties in vocabulary selection, maintaining a formal yet natural tone, and understanding the implicit norms of politeness and directness that vary between cultures (Crossman & Bordia, 2009; Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2007). Miscommunication often arises when messages deviate from expected structures or when writers apply culturally specific conventions that are misaligned with the expectations of international readers. This highlights the importance of pragmatic competence in addition to linguistic proficiency.

To address these issues, researchers such as Evans (2013) and Gimenez (2006) have advocated for pedagogical strategies that include exposure to authentic texts, task-based learning, and critical awareness of genre conventions. These approaches are especially relevant in English for Business Purposes (EBP) instruction, where learners benefit from analysing real-world models and engaging in contextualized practice. Furthermore, the integration of feedback mechanisms—peer and instructor-led—has been shown to support the development of effective business writing skills (Hyland, 2003).

Overall, the literature suggests that effective English business correspondence depends not only on mastery of grammar and vocabulary but also on an understanding of intercultural norms, audience expectations, and genre-specific conventions. These insights provide a strong foundation for your study and justify the need for combining linguistic analysis with pragmatic and cultural considerations in both research and teaching.

These previous studies consistently indicate that business correspondence is more than a technical writing skill; it is a strategic tool shaped by context, purpose, and culture. However, there is still a lack of research focusing on how non-native speakers, particularly business students, can systematically acquire and refine these skills.

Despite the increasing attention on English for Specific Purposes (ESP), there remains a gap in understanding how learners, especially those from non-English-speaking backgrounds, develop effective business correspondence skills. This study is designed to explore the following research problems: (1) What are the key linguistic and structural features of effective English business correspondence? (2) What challenges do business management students face when learning to write business correspondence in English? (3) How can English for Business Purposes programs better support students in developing professional writing competence? (4) What role does intercultural competence play in shaping business correspondence strategies?

By addressing these questions, the study seeks to contribute to both theoretical knowledge and practical approaches in business English instruction. The ultimate goal is to provide insights that will aid educators, curriculum developers, and students in enhancing the teaching and learning of English business correspondence.

2. Method
2.1 Method of Providing Data

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research method aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the role and structure of English business correspondence in international business contexts. Data were gathered from two primary sources: authentic business correspondence texts and semi-structured interviews.

The primary data consisted of actual business emails, letters, and memos sourced from multinational companies operating across different sectors such as finance, manufacturing, technology, and logistics. These texts were collected with the consent of the companies involved, ensuring ethical considerations were upheld. The criteria for selecting the documents included relevance to international communication, use of English as the medium of correspondence, and representativeness of various communication intents such as requests, responses, complaints, and negotiations.

In addition to document analysis, interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of 15 participants. These included international business professionals, administrative personnel, and English language instructors specializing in Business English. The interview questions focused on the participants' experiences with business correspondence, challenges faced in

crafting effective messages, and perceptions of what constitutes good business writing. Interviews were conducted either face-to-face or via online platforms such as Zoom, depending on participant availability and location.

The combination of written documents and oral data enabled the researcher to gain both textual and contextual insights into the use of English in professional settings. Triangulation of data sources helped validate the findings and provided a more holistic understanding of business correspondence practices in international contexts.

2.2 Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis followed a thematic content analysis approach. This technique was chosen for its effectiveness in identifying recurring patterns, themes, and meanings within textual data, particularly useful in studies examining language use and communication strategies.

For the business correspondence texts, each document was subjected to a detailed linguistic and structural analysis. The texts were coded using a framework adapted from business communication models (Guffey & Loewy, 2021) and genre analysis theory (Swales, 1990). The analysis focused on features such as clarity, tone, format, language functions (e.g., requesting, informing, confirming), and politeness strategies. Instances of miscommunication or ineffective wording were also noted to understand common challenges.

The interview transcripts were transcribed and analysed using NVivo qualitative data analysis software. Codes were developed inductively from the data and later grouped into broader themes, such as "language difficulties," "intercultural misunderstandings," "writing strategies," and "training and feedback." These themes were then compared with the findings from the document analysis to identify alignments and discrepancies.

Credibility of the findings was ensured through member-checking, where selected participants reviewed and verified the interpretations drawn from their interviews. Peer debriefing with colleagues in business communication and applied linguistics further enhanced the trustworthiness of the analysis. The overall analysis process allowed for in-depth exploration of the interplay between language, context, and professional communication practices.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The findings are organized around three major themes derived from the research questions: Linguistic features of English business correspondence, Challenges faced by non-native speakers in international business communication, and Effective strategies for improving business writing performance.

3.1.1 Linguistic Features of English Business Correspondence

From the examination of over 100 real-world business correspondence samples-including emails, memos, and letters-several consistent linguistic patterns were identified:

Clarity and Conciseness: Successful business texts favoured brevity, using short sentences and simple vocabulary while minimizing unnecessary jargon. Many followed a standardized structure: greeting, purpose statement, elaboration, and closing. This aligns with Guffey and Loewy's (2021) recommendations in Business Communication: Process and Product, advocating clear, straightforward message construction.

Formal Tone and Politeness Strategies: Even in emails involving complaints or refusals, formality and courteousness were maintained through the use of modal expressions ("could you," "would it be possible") and hedging phrases ("perhaps," "it seems that"). These devices help maintain professionalism and mitigate face-threatening acts-advice also emphasized in Bhatia's (1993) study of professional written discourse.

Structure and Visual Layout: Standard formatting conventions helped improve readability: business letters adhered to block format, while emails consistently featured subject lines, appropriate salutations, structured paragraphs, strategic use of bullet points, closing remarks, and professional signatures. Visual organization played a clear role in guiding recipients through content logically and efficiently.

Together, these linguistic features reflect an occupational register shaped by communicative efficiency, politeness, and norms consistent with international business expectations.

3.1.2 Challenges Faced by Non-native English Speakers

Non-native English speakers face a variety of challenges when composing business correspondence. These challenges can be broadly categorized as linguistic, cultural-pragmatic, and affective:

a) Linguistic Challenges

Many writers exhibited frequent grammatical and lexical errors. A study involving Indonesian undergraduate business writing students revealed common pitfalls in preposition usage, articles, countability, verb tense, punctuation, and cohesion (Adi Isma et al., 2024). Typical errors included misused prepositions ("reply until" instead of "reply by"), incorrect article use ("send me report"), and inappropriate pluralization ("informations").

Additionally, sentence-level complexities-such as constructing complex clauses, achieving coherence, and managing register-were particularly difficult for learners, especially when writing structured messages for professional contexts (Bingol, 2023).

b) Pragmatic and Cultural Misalignment

Even when grammar was acceptable, pragmatic failures posed significant issues. Wolfe et al. (2016) found that business professionals rated pragmatic and tone-related errors-such as perceived rudeness, lack of appropriate hedging, or misaligned politeness-as more troublesome than pure grammatical mistakes. This emphasizes that pragmatic competence is as crucial as grammar in shaping business perceptions and outcomes.

Cultural mismatches also contributed to misunderstandings. Writers unfamiliar with audience expectations sometimes produced messages that were too direct or vague, depending on cultural norms. For instance, overly direct requests from low-context cultures might seem abrupt in high-context settings and vice versa.

c) Affective Challenges: Anxiety and Motivation

Anxiety related to English writing was a pervasive theme among non-native professionals. Many reported low motivation, low self-esteem, and avoidance of writing tasks due to repeated errors and perceived inadequacy (Muhammad Bingol, 2023). Other studies noted that non-native speakers often experience high levels of foreign language anxiety, which negatively impacts confidence, self-editing ability, and task engagement (Alanen & Oxford, 1993; Phillips, as summarized in the foreign language anxiety literature)Wikipedia. These emotional barriers frequently delayed correspondence or eroded sense of professional competence.

d) Limited Resources and Practice Opportunities

Writers noted insufficient exposure to authentic business genres, limited feedback, and few opportunities to practice beyond academic settings. This lack of practice contributes to stagnation in writing progress, particularly when topic familiarity or resource constraints limit their exposure to real workplace texts (Adi Isma et al., 2024).

The linguistic norms of effective business correspondence emphasize clarity, structural precision, and polite formality. Non-native English correspondents often navigate substantial linguistic, pragmatic, and emotional challenges-ranging from grammatical inaccuracies and tone misalignment to anxiety and lack of genre awareness. These barriers underscore the critical need for targeted training, genre-based instruction, and culturally informed writing support.

3.1.2 Challenges Faced by Non-Native English Speakers

Interviews with international professionals and English instructors revealed a range of linguistic, pragmatic, and organizational difficulties encountered by non-native speakers in business communication:

Vocabulary Choice

Respondents frequently described difficulty **selecting vocabulary** that conveyed adequate formality without appearing overly robotic or stiff. According to Nickerson (2005), non-native speakers often consciously avoid simpler language to seem professional, but risk producing phrasing that feels unnatural or overly formal. This struggle between authenticity and correctness

often results in language that is either too stilted or too casual for business contexts (Nickerson, 2005).

Cultural Politeness Norms

Communication breakdowns commonly stemmed from differing cultural expectations around **directness, deference, and tone**. Crossman and Bordia (2009) highlight that what one culture perceives as respectful—such as indirect phrasing or deferential openness—may strike another as vague or evasive. For instance, Japanese business correspondence often employs indirect language and honorifics to preserve relational harmony, which American or UK recipients might interpret as ambiguous or non-committal (Crossman & Bordia, 2009). Studies have further confirmed that cultures with emphasis on hierarchy and indirectness (e.g., many Asian cultures) contrast sharply with Western norms of directness and plain language (Handriani et al., 2023; Belamaric, 2023).

Politeness theory explains that such misalignments arise from inconsistent use of face-saving strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987), where strategies that are normative in one cultural context may be misinterpreted or even perceived as impolite in another,

Message Organization

Participants reported frequent issues with **logical structuring** and adherence to business genre conventions. Poor sequencing of ideas, lack of clear purpose statements, or mismatch with expected formats (e.g. block-letter style, subject line followed by precise opening) led to misinterpretations and occasional professional friction. The absence of structured training in professional writing genres often resulted in messages that lacked coherence or appeared unprofessional, even if grammatically acceptable (Tanvibulya, 2014; Crossman & Bordia, 2009).

3.1.3 Effective Strategies for Enhancing Business Writing

Professionals and educators identified several effective strategies that helped improve business writing effectiveness and confidence:

Exposure to Authentic Models and Materials

Exposure to **authentic business correspondence**—such as real company emails, negotiation memos, and formal letters—allows learners to observe and internalize typical phrasing, structure, and register. Genre analysis based teaching, where students study actual business texts and try to emulate them, has proven especially helpful (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 2004). This real-world modelling demystifies abstract instructional guidelines and situates learning within actual communicative contexts.

Role-Plays and Simulation-Based Training

Simulations such as **mock negotiation exercises**, scripted email exchanges, or scenario-based role-plays were cited as particularly effective. These activities help learners practice real-life communication demands—such as tone modulation, formal requests, complaints, or alliance-building—in a safe, structured environment. These exercises facilitate transfer of knowledge from classroom to workplace settings and build confidence under pressure.

Frequent Peer and Instructor Feedback

Feedback from peers and instructors—particularly focused on **genre expectations, tone, and audience awareness**—was repeatedly identified as transformational. Hyland's (2003) framework emphasizes writing as social practice, and respondents affirmed the value of feedback in helping them fine-tune rhetorical flow, politeness markers, and coherence beyond grammatical correction. Constructive critique enabled learners to align their writing with genre norms and audience expectations more effectively.

Genre and Register Awareness Training

Training focused explicitly on **genre conventions**—including salutations, layout, purpose statements, elaboration, closing, and calls to action—provided learners with mental templates they could adapt to new business tasks. Equally, instruction on **register awareness**—understanding when to use hedging ("perhaps," "would it be possible") versus upfront clarity—helped non-natives strike the appropriate tone in different international business correspondences. Cross-cultural competence training further enhanced pragmatic awareness,

reducing frequency of culturally inappropriate tone or pragmatically ambiguous phrasing (Handriani et al., 2023; Belamaric, 2023)

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 English as a Tool for Professionalism and Global Business Success

The findings reaffirm the widespread acknowledgment that English serves as the global **lingua franca** in international business and professional communication. Scholars such as Crystal (2003) and Ehrenreich (2010) have long emphasized that English functions not only as a communication tool but also as a medium for projecting professionalism, authority, and clarity in the global arena. This global status of English has transformed the language into a strategic asset, particularly in multinational corporations, international negotiations, and cross-border collaborations.

One of the most prevalent modes of professional English usage is written correspondence, especially email communication. Emails constitute the backbone of routine business operations, serving as a formal and asynchronous medium for reporting, negotiating, delegating, and clarifying tasks (Nickerson, 2005). Unlike casual conversation, business emails demand not just clarity and accuracy, but also tact, politeness, and reader awareness. Professionals must understand how tone, word choice, and structure can significantly influence interpretation and outcomes. For example, overly direct phrasing might be misinterpreted as impolite in high-context cultures, such as Japan or Indonesia, whereas indirectness might be seen as evasiveness in low-context cultures like Germany or the United States (Hall, 1976; Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988).

Therefore, mastering business English is not merely about acquiring vocabulary and grammar. It also involves aligning one's communication style with internationally accepted standards. This includes understanding formal tone, clarity of purpose, brevity, and strategic structuring—all critical elements of effective business correspondence (Charles, 2007). Professionals operating in global markets must increasingly position English not as a second language but as a working language—a tool for influence, leadership, and collaboration across diverse sociocultural contexts.

3.2.2 Intercultural Pragmatics and Communication Misalignment

Another significant theme that emerged from the analysis is the role of **pragmatics**—how individuals use language in context. Pragmatic competence involves the ability to choose appropriate language for specific situations, taking into account factors such as politeness, social hierarchy, and shared knowledge (Thomas, 1983). In business contexts, pragmatic failures can lead to misunderstandings, damaged relationships, or lost opportunities, even when the grammar and vocabulary are correct.

This phenomenon is echoed in studies by House (2000) and Clyne (1994), who observed that communication breakdowns in international business often stem from **pragmatic misalignment** rather than grammatical errors. For instance, an employee from a culture that values directness may unknowingly offend a colleague from a culture that emphasizes diplomacy and indirectness. Similarly, excessive vagueness or euphemism may be interpreted as dishonesty or lack of commitment.

In one case study from Bargiela-Chiappini and Nickerson (2003), an email sent by a Dutch manager to his Japanese counterpart was perceived as overly assertive, leading to strained relations. While linguistically accurate, the message failed to align with the **relational norms** of Japanese business communication, which prioritizes harmony and respect. This illustrates the need for intercultural sensitivity and a deep understanding of **contextual appropriateness**, rather than a sole focus on language correctness.

Teaching and training in English for professional purposes must therefore include explicit instruction on **intercultural pragmatics**. Learners should engage in case studies, simulations, and comparative discourse analysis to identify how meaning is shaped by cultural and situational factors. Language instructors can play a vital role by incorporating authentic examples from different cultural contexts, helping learners navigate the **nuanced expectations** of international communication.

3.2.3 Genre Analysis and the Teaching of Business Writing

The third key insight arises from the application of genre analysis to business communication. Originating from Swales (1990), genre analysis focuses on how texts serve specific communicative purposes within recognizable structural and linguistic patterns. In the context of business writing, this approach allows learners to understand not only what to say but how to organize and deliver content effectively.

By analysing real-world business correspondence—including emails, memos, proposals, and reports—it becomes possible to identify recurring **rhetorical moves** (Bhatia, 2004). These include the salutation, statement of purpose, elaboration, justification, closing remarks, and call to action. For example, a well-written business email typically opens with a polite greeting, clearly states the main purpose in the first paragraph, offers supporting information in the body, and concludes with actionable next steps. Such structure is not incidental but expected in professional settings, particularly among globally literate audiences.

Genre-based teaching materials enable learners to **internalize these conventions**. Instead of practicing isolated grammar drills or writing artificially constructed messages, students work with authentic texts that reflect the dynamics of real communication. This shift from prescriptive teaching to discourse-based learning fosters both confidence and competence, as learners begin to produce texts that meet the expectations of their intended audience.

Pedagogical implications include the need to integrate:

- Training in the **rhetorical structure** of common genres.
- Genre-based instructional materials that showcase authentic communicative moves**.**
- Awareness of reader orientation and the importance of clarity, coherence, and purpose.
- Emphasis on register**,** formality**,** and **tone** appropriate for specific contexts and professional hierarchies.

Furthermore, technology-assisted tools such as corpora, email analysis platforms, and genre-based writing software can enhance the learning experience by exposing students to diverse examples of business communication. Instructors should encourage critical analysis, peer feedback, and reflective practice as part of a **comprehensive writing curriculum** for business English learners.

3.2.4 The Role of Feedback and Practice in Skill Development

Frequent and deliberate practice, combined with timely, constructive feedback, is universally recognized as a catalyst for skill acquisition and improvement in professional communication, particularly in writing. In alignment with Hyland's (2003) social constructivist perspective, writing is not merely a technical or linguistic exercise but a social act embedded in specific contexts, purposes, and audiences. This perspective shifts the focus from isolated grammatical correctness to purposeful communication, which is especially critical in business environments where clarity, tone, and relational nuance can influence decision-making and stakeholder trust.

Peer and instructor feedback enables learners to refine their awareness of genre conventions, audience expectations, and rhetorical strategies. According to Ferris (2014), effective feedback should not only address surface-level language errors but also guide learners toward improving content, organization, coherence, and formality. Business communication, in particular, demands a high level of genre awareness-emails, memos, proposals, and reports each require different structures, tones, and registers.

Practice in authentic and meaningful scenarios further reinforces learning. Simulated workplace activities such as mock negotiations, professional email exchanges, or collaborative report writing help bridge theoretical knowledge and real-world application. These simulations enhance learners' competence in handling common business interactions, including delivering bad news, persuading clients, or resolving misunderstandings diplomatically. As Bhatia (2004) emphasizes, genre-based pedagogy offers learners the tools to internalize discourse structures by examining how professionals in real contexts use language to accomplish communicative goals.

Moreover, technology-assisted feedback systems such as automated writing evaluation (AWE) tools can complement human input. Tools like Grammarly, ProWritingAid, and Google Docs' Smart Compose offer real-time suggestions on grammar, style, and clarity. However,

research by Ranalli et al. (2017) cautions that while these tools support surface-level accuracy, they may overlook deeper rhetorical or contextual appropriateness, underlining the continued need for human judgment in feedback processes.

3.2.5 Implications for International Business Management

Business correspondence functions not merely as a medium for transactional exchanges but also as a mechanism for building, sustaining, and managing professional relationships across global networks. In today's interconnected world, emails, memos, and letters are essential tools for initiating collaboration, negotiating terms, sharing strategic information, and resolving conflicts. These documents often act as the "face" of an organization, especially when in-person interaction is limited or impractical.

The effectiveness of business correspondence, therefore, can directly impact organizational success. Poorly structured messages, inappropriate tone, or linguistic ambiguity can lead to delayed decision-making, miscommunication, and even strained business relationships. According to Louhiala-Salminen et al. (2005), writing in English has become the lingua franca of international business communication. Proficiency in business correspondence is no longer a soft skill but a core competency for professionals operating in multinational contexts.

Additionally, as business becomes more intercultural, correspondents must balance directness with politeness, clarity with diplomacy, and standardization with personalization. For instance, what may be considered an assertive and efficient email in the U.S. could be perceived as abrupt or even rude in East Asian cultures. Intercultural pragmatics becomes crucial in ensuring messages are both understood and well-received. Professionals need to be trained not just in English usage but in contextually appropriate communication tailored to global audiences (Cogo & Dewey, 2012).

Organizations that prioritize communication training see tangible benefits, including enhanced team collaboration, faster conflict resolution, and improved client satisfaction. In sum, business correspondence acts as a strategic asset that influences internal efficiency and external reputation.

3.2.6 Recommendations for Training and Curriculum Design

To align educational and corporate training efforts with real-world business communication demands, several curriculum innovations and training practices are recommended:

a. Curriculum Innovations in Higher Education

Business communication curricula in universities and professional schools should: Integrate authentic business texts-emails, memos, reports, and meeting minutes-for genre analysis and emulation. Exposure to real-world examples fosters genre literacy and practical understanding of tone, structure, and formatting (Swales & Feak, 2012).

Include instruction on intercultural communication norms to prepare students for interactions with diverse global stakeholders. This can include case studies, contrastive analysis, and simulations that highlight cultural variables in communication.

Emphasize rhetorical strategies, such as hedging, politeness markers, and clarity mechanisms to help learners modulate tone and formality based on context and audience.
Leverage digital tools-such as email platforms, collaborative writing applications, and feedback software-to mimic the dynamic and asynchronous nature of modern workplace communication.

b. Corporate Training Enhancements

Organizations should consider:
Incorporating English business correspondence modules into onboarding programs, especially for roles requiring frequent client or cross-departmental interaction.
Developing in-house style guides to ensure consistency in branding, tone, and message clarity across departments.
Offering workshops on cultural intelligence, digital communication etiquette, and strategic writing to enhance the effectiveness of internal and external correspondence.

Tailored feedback, continued professional development, and a collaborative writing culture within organizations can cultivate high writing standards and increase the credibility of business communications.

3.2.7 Limitations and Future Research

While this study draws from authentic data and includes input from professionals across multiple domains, it is not without limitations. First, the scope of industries and organizational cultures examined was relatively narrow, focusing predominantly on finance, marketing, and logistics. Other sectors, such as healthcare, government, and education, may have unique communicative demands that warrant separate investigation.

Second, the research adopted a cross-sectional design, offering only a snapshot of business correspondence practices at one point in time. A longitudinal study could reveal how professionals develop or regress in writing skills over time, especially in response to training, job transitions, or technological interventions.

Third, while human feedback was emphasized in this study, the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in shaping writing competence remains underexplored. With the rise of AWE tools and generative AI applications like ChatGPT or Microsoft Copilot, future research could investigate how such tools influence learning outcomes, writing fluency, and user autonomy. Studies may also examine the ethical implications of AI-generated business texts, including questions of authorship, accountability, and bias.

English business correspondence remains an indispensable skill in global commerce. Both academia and industry must continue refining instructional strategies, feedback mechanisms, and digital tool integration to support professionals in navigating the complex communicative demands of international business.

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