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Dr.Fatoumata KEITA & Dr.Binta KOITA



**First Edition of the Symposium on English Language
Teaching and Literature Studies (SELLS) : Disciplinary
Debates and Emerging Research Perspectives
March 29th, and 30th, 2023 Université des Lettres et des
Sciences Humaines de Bamako sise à Kabala**



Thème : Disciplinary Debates and Emerging Research



Kurukan Fuga La Revue Africaine des Lettres, des
Sciences Humaines et Sociales

Kurukan Fuga

2^e N° Spécial
Hors-Série
Novembre
2023

*La Revue Africaine des Lettres, des Sciences Humaines et
Sociales*

ISSN : 1987-1465

Actes de la 1^{ère} Edition du symposium sur “English Language
Teaching and Literature Studies (SELLS): DISCIPLINARY
DEBATES AND EMERGING RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES”

tenue les 29 et 30 Mars 2023

2^e numéro spécial -hors-Série de Novembre 2023

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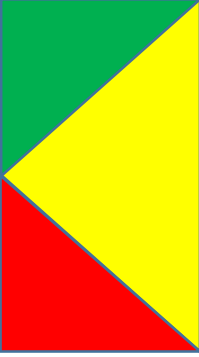
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The journal publishes only quality articles that have not been published or submitted for publication in any other journals. Each article is subjected to a double blind reading. The quality and originality of the articles are the only criteria for publication.



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*Actes de la 1ere Edition du
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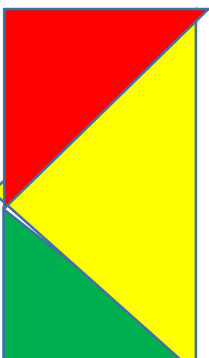
Kurukan Fuga| Hors-Séries N°2 – Novembre 2023

ISSN : 1987-1465

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Call for Abstract
First Edition of the Symposium on English Language
Teaching and Literature Studies (SELLS): Disciplinary
Debates and Emerging Research Perspectives

The Research Community of the English Department at Université des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines de Bamako (Arts and Humanities of Bamako) in collaboration with Ecole Normale Supérieure, Bamako, Mali, organize **the First Symposium on English Language Teaching and Literature Studies (SELLS 2023) on the theme “Disciplinary Debates and Emerging Research Perspectives” at ULSHB located in Kabala campus on March 29th and 30th, 2023.** The Symposium aims to provide a platform to research scholars, graduate students, and doctoral students working in the fields of English language teaching and literature studies to share their experiences and knowledge and discuss new and emerging trends in research and pedagogy in English language teaching and literature written in English language.

The theme of this year, titled: **“Disciplinary Debates and Emerging Research Perspectives”** is an attempt to explore new directions and dynamism of the study and teaching of English language in Mali and other francophone countries. With English taught in a multilingualistic and multicultural environment, researchers and scholars from the English departments will consider through this symposium how English is impacting the social, political, cultural, and economic lives of learners and users at a larger scale. Further, through interdisciplinary junction this symposium will be an opportunity to question and rethink pedagogical modalities of English teaching to reach creative and emerging solutions. Scholars in the field will be offered exciting opportunities to discuss, collaborate and propose emerging linguistic, literary, and communication perspectives to enhance teaching and research in English in the Malian context while paying attention to Global trends.

Areas of Research Focus

Topics to be considered are but not limited to the following:

English Language Studies

Literature in English and criticism

Teaching Literature in English

Applied Linguistics and English Language Education

English Language Curriculum and Teaching Methods

Cross-cultural Communication and English Language Teaching

English Language Policy

English language assessment

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English Language Learning and Acquisition

English Language Testing and Evaluation

Multilingualism and Translation

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Commonwealth Literature
African literature
Women's literature
English, literature and media
Contemporary Literature
Comparative Literature
Postcolonial literature and English
World Literature
Multicultural Literature
Gender, Literature and English Language

Deadlines for submission of the abstracts

Sending of the call: January 28, 2022

Deadline for Submission: February 28, 2023

Notification of acceptance March 15, 2023

Date of the symposium: Thursday, March 29th and Friday 30th, 2023

Abstract Submission

The abstract should be between 200 and 250 words and a list of not more than five keywords. The format of the abstract should be New Times Roman, font size 12. It must have a clearly defined theoretical framework or approach. The abstracts should be sent to the following addresses: binette8fr@gmail.com or fkkeita5@gmail.com or niambeldio20@gmail.com

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EXPLORING HOW TO TEACH WRITING TO EFL STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF A MOTIVATION LETTER

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Abstract

This research work investigates motivation letter teaching at the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Brazzaville in the Republic of Congo. It examines the techniques and strategies EFL teachers used to teach motivation letter and the impact on students' writing ability. In fact, motivation letter lesson is included in the university English teaching curricula. However, students have difficulty writing successful motivation letters by the end of their training. Therefore, the objective is to pinpoint the causes of these difficulties and provide effective teaching techniques and strategies likely to develop students' letter writing ability. The investigation was conducted among EFL teachers and students from grade 3 of a bachelor program. As for the methodology, we used the action research approach and descriptive, quantitative and qualitative methods. To get genuine results, we used three instruments for data collection: (1)- questionnaire, (2)- semi-structured interviews with a didacphone; (3)- tests.

It resulted from our study that many teachers have methodological problems. They do not focus on the basic elements of motivation letter such as the structure (formats, layout) and the writing conventions. They approach this lesson superficially. Consequently, students have problem structuring a motivation letter when writing. They confuse its formats and layout with those of a personal letter. However, the teaching techniques strategies and we suggested with typical writing activities enhanced students' writing ability. There has been considerable improvement in students' writing performance in the post-test.

Key words: EFL students, exploring, formats and layout, motivation letter, writing teaching.

Résumé

Ce travail de recherche porte sur l'enseignement de la lettre de motivation à l'Ecole Normale Supérieure de Brazzaville en République du Congo. Il examine les techniques et les stratégies utilisées par les enseignants d'anglais pour enseigner la lettre de motivation et leur impact sur l'habileté rédactionnelle chez les étudiants. En effet, la lettre de motivation figure parmi les notions à enseigner dans les programmes d'enseignement de l'anglais à l'université. Cependant, les étudiants éprouvent des difficultés à rédiger des lettres de motivation à la fin de leur formation. Ainsi, l'objectif est d'identifier les causes de leurs difficultés et de proposer des stratégies pédagogiques efficaces pour développer leur capacité à bien rédiger des lettres de motivation. L'enquête a été menée auprès des enseignants d'anglais et d'étudiants de 3^{ème} année de licence. Pour ce qui est de la méthodologie, nous avons utilisé l'approche recherche-action et des méthodes descriptive, quantitative et qualitative. Pour obtenir des résultats fiables, nous avons utilisé trois instruments de collecte de données : (1)- le questionnaire, (2)- les entretiens semi-ouverts avec un didacphone ; (3)- les tests.

Il ressort de notre étude que de nombreux enseignants ont des problèmes de méthodologie. Ils ne se focalisent pas sur les éléments de base de la lettre de motivation tels que la structure (formats, présentation) et les conventions de rédaction. Ils abordent cette leçon de manière superficielle. Par conséquent, les étudiants ont du mal à structurer une lettre de motivation lors de la rédaction. Ils confondent ses formats et sa présentation avec ceux d'une lettre personnelle. Cependant, les techniques et les stratégies d'enseignement que nous avons suggérées avec des activités types ont amélioré leur manière de rédiger les lettres de motivation. Il y a eu des améliorations considérables lors du post-test.

Mots-clés : enseignement de la rédaction, étudiants de langue anglaise, explorer, formats et présentation, lettre de motivation.

Introduction

Writing skill is a specific ability, which helps writers put their thoughts into words in a meaningful form and interact with the message. Motivation letter is a letter required while seeking a job in a company or applying for a study program at university. It displays the candidate's qualities, background and experiences to assume a position or follow a program of studies. Then, students need to know how to write a motivation letter, its components and the writing conventions for their future needs. In the Republic of Congo, the university English teaching curricula involve teaching writing skills. Unfortunately, many EFL students face problems related to writing a motivation letter by the end of their university training.

Early in November 2022, during an English speaking and writing techniques course (cours de techniques d'expression anglaise) to EFL students from grade 3 of Ecole Normale Supérieure (E.N.S), we asked them to write a motivation letter for a position in a company or for a study program at a university. The aim was to enquire on students' mastery of the constituents of a motivation letter as well as the writing conventions attached to it. When correcting copies, we noticed that a great majority of students (80%) confuse motivation letter and other types of letters. They have problems with words spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentences and paragraph structures. Normally, they are supposed to study the different categories of letters in the first grade. Therefore, students from grade 3 should be able to distinguish the different categories of letters, and write accurately a motivation letter. Unfortunately, many of them are still unable to write a motivation letter. Therefore, this study intends to pinpoint the reasons why students are unable to write a motivation letter and consider some remedial activities. Our research questions are stated as follows:

1-Central question: what are the factors that prevent students' from writing a successful motivation letter?

2- Secondary question: How can we remediate these students' difficulties?

The research hypotheses are:

1-Central hypothesis: students' difficulties to write a motivation letter might result from the fact that they are not aware of the different formats and layout of motivation letter and the writing conventions attached to it.

2- To remediate the problem, we provide teachers with effective techniques and strategies to teach a motivation letter.

The general objective of this study is to develop students' ability to write motivation letters accurately. So, the specific objectives are: (1) - provide students with formats and layouts of motivation letters; (2) - enhance their letters writing ability through drills.

Knowing to write a motivation letter is a key to get a job position in a corporation or a university study program. The candidate needs to persuade the recruiter that he is the only person suitable for the position or a study program he is applying. Then, some researchers point out different ways to write successful motivation letters. Anne Galloway (2018), for instance, argues that "companies and universities receive many applications while places are limited. Therefore, they need to have a process to ensure that they accept the best applicants and a key part of that process is a motivation letter or a personal statement". In this regard, Anne Galloway adds: "the main function of a motivation letter is to describe how your qualifications match a specific job vacancy or how your interests match with your chosen course of study. It is pointless to send a boilerplate motivation letter that is not tailored to the targeted position or course" (p.10). In other words, the candidate should be able to describe his interests, skills, experiences and motivation to show the link with the profile needed for such a position or a study program. The purpose is to subjugate his employer in a way that others cannot. To do so, he should use words and phrases that show some creativity and ability. While applying candidates are usually evaluated on technical and personal skills and qualities as well. Technical skills can be on computer programming, accounting, designing, operating machine or scientific knowledge. Besides, personal skills and qualities concern the ability to get along with people, persistence, adaptability, accuracy, enthusiasm, and reliability. Then, Anne Galloway insists that candidates should distinguish from others as far as skills are concerned.

However, James Innes (2009) points out some mistakes that a candidate must avoid when writing a motivation letter, among which are:

- Failing to write to the right person: the right person to address the letter is the decider maker.
- Not including one's full contact details: it is vital that the candidate writes not only his or her name but also precise how to contact him or her. So, James Innes recommends that the candidate starts a letter with a professional-looking letterhead. In this regard, he advises candidates to put their name at the very top, followed by their key contact details address, phone number, email address and so on. They should place their address on one line, with their phone numbers on the next, and finish with their email address. Besides, candidates should avoid using fun or jokey emails. They are inappropriate and may lead to disqualification.
- Losing the reader's interest with the opening sentence: the opening paragraph must explain the reader why you are writing to them and your interest for that offer. Therefore, the opening

paragraph should capture the reader's attention.

- Not mentioning what job position or study course, you are applying for: James Innes suggests that candidates state their position or study course in the beginning of their letter along with any reference number(s) quoted in the job advert to avoid any confusion. They can illustrate some points with specific relevant examples from their own experience and show how this will be of interest and potential benefit to the reader.
- Repeating what is written in your curriculum vitae: the candidate should not repeat too much what they have mentioned in their C.V. On the contrary, they should definitely highlight certain key aspects of your CV in their motivation letter, and should avoid simply copying and pasting.
- Bringing up the question of salary: it is a fatal mistake to raise the question of salary in the motivation letter, because it sends a clear message to the reader that you more focus on your own needs than on theirs.
- Giving the reader I-strain: though the motivation letter should be written in the first person, James Innes (2009) advise candidates to not overuse the pronoun "I". It conveys an impression of boastfulness and egocentricism. Rather, they might rephrase sentences beginning with 'I' using other words such as 'you', 'your'; this shows that the focus is on the reader and not on the candidate.
- Lack of coherent structure: candidates should make sure that their letter is structured in logical fashion: introduction (personal information, what/where/why are you applying to), body (be factual as possible, show your achievements, use metrics if possible) and conclusion (mention future plans, thank the reader and conclude). Paragraphs should be coherent (p.115-120).
In the same vein, Hacker and Sommers, (2012) point out that: "a paragraph should be unified around a main point. The point should be clear to readers, and every sentence in the paragraph should relate to it." (p.50). Besides, Andrei kurtuy (2020) suggests two main ways to structure a motivation letter: "(1)- the main classic paragraph structure with an introduction, a body and a conclusion; (2)- five (5) to seven (7) paragraphs structure which consists in dividing the main body paragraph into smaller sentence paragraphs (one to three) according to the points" (p.3).

However, Alison Doyle (2021) underlines the content of each paragraph. According to him the first paragraphs is to say why you are writing. The candidate should offer specific, focused information about the job he is seeking or a study course he wants to attend. A few core strengths that demonstrates your suitability for the position. The second paragraph is what do you have to offer to the company; the candidate highlights examples of the work he or she performed and the results achieved. The third paragraph concerns the knowledge of the company. In other words, the candidate shows that he or she did some researches about the company expectations, and shows to what extent he or she can contribute. The fourth one regards the closing. The candidate summarizes what he or she intends to bring to his or her position and requests, for next steps, if possible a meeting or a call.

Besides the paragraphs must not be too long, and they should avoid linguistic mistakes (spelling, grammar and syntactic mistakes) (p.1).

I. Research methodology

We used the action research method for this research work. It consists in taking a critical look at students' ability to write a motivation letter and, after in-depth reflection and observation provide them with efficient writing techniques for effective motivation letters. Besides, we used descriptive, quantitative and qualitative methods.

1.1. Participants

We selected three (3) EFL teachers and forty-six (46) EFL students from grade 3 of languages and literatures department of the "Ecole Normale Supérieure" of Brazzaville.

1.2. Instruments used for data collection

To get genuine results, we used three (3) instruments for data collection: (1)- questionnaire; (2)- semi-structured interviews with a dictaphone; (3)- tests.

1.2.1. Questionnaire.

In order to get information about the teaching of motivation letter, we designed two questionnaires one for learners another for teachers. The aim was to check if this notion is taught productively. A total of three (03) teachers and forty-six (46) students filled in the different questionnaires administered. We will present the results of this study in the next section.

1.2.1. Semi-structured interviews

We conducted semi-structured interviews among the forty-six (46) EFL students who filled in questionnaires. The objective was to know about their ability to write a successful motivation letter. We recorded the interviews and interpreted them.

1.3. Methods of data analysis

The quantitative method allowed us to collect numerical data from questionnaires and tests, whereas the qualitative method the non numerical data from interviews with a Dictaphone. We used Excel software to analyze statistical data and the formula for percent proportion in order to appreciate the participants' responses and tests scores:

$$\begin{array}{l} N \Rightarrow 100\% \quad \Rightarrow \% = \frac{100 \times n}{N} \\ n \Rightarrow ? \quad \quad \quad N \end{array}$$

N: The entire number of respondents

n: The partial number of respondents

2. Results

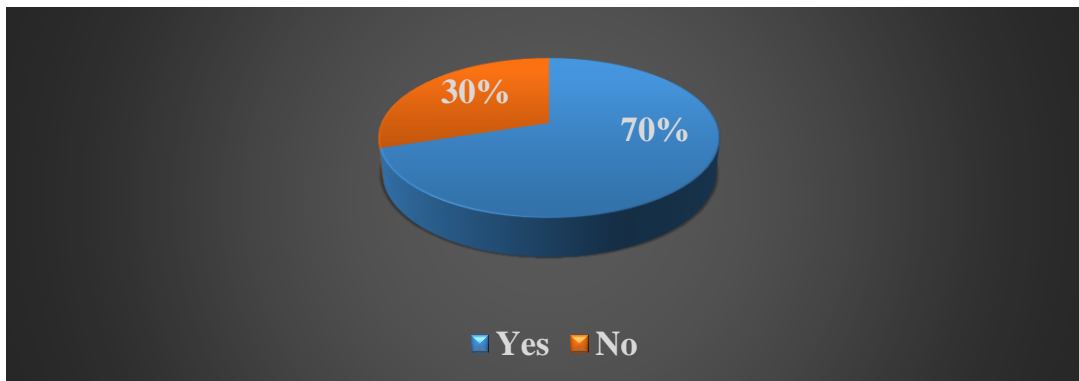
This section is concerned with the results from questionnaires designed for students and teachers, semi-structured interviews and tests.

2.1. Results related to the questionnaire for students

Question n°1: Are you aware of a motivation letter?

We designed this question to check if students are aware of the motivation letter.

Graph n°1: students' awareness of a motivation letter

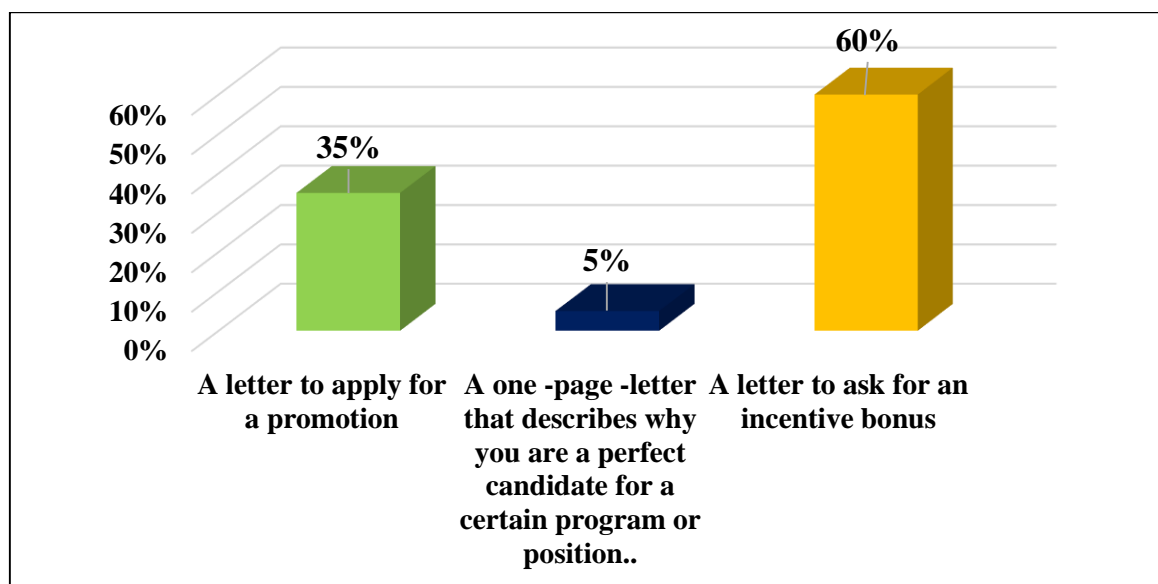


From the results of the above graph, we notice that many students (70%) are aware of the motivation letter, which shows that it is not a strange thing for these students.

Question n°2: Among the following sentences, which one matches the definition of a motivation letter?

We asked this question to know if students really know what the motivation letter is.

Graph n°2: Students’ definition of the motivation letter

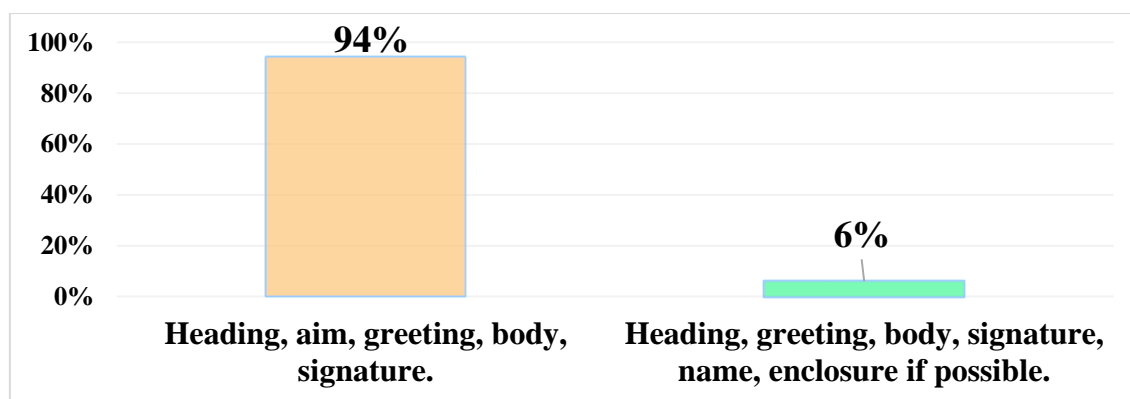


The results from the above graph show that the majority of students (60%) confuse the motivation letter with a letter for an incentive bonus, which is a letter a worker writes to ask the boss a reward for his or her performance. However, the motivation letter is required for candidates to prove their potential for a job position or a study program. Thirty-five percent (35%) students took the motivation for a letter written to ask for promotion. Only few students (5%) knew the meaning of the motivation letter.

Questionnaire n°3: According to you, how to lay out a motivation letter properly?

We designed this question to check if students know the structure of a motivation letter.

Graph n°3: students’ knowledge of a motivation letter layout.



The results of the above graph reveal that most students (94%) do not know the layout of a motivation letter. Normally, its layout is as follows: heading, greeting, body, signature, name of the sender, and the enclosure if possible. Few students (6%) only knew it.

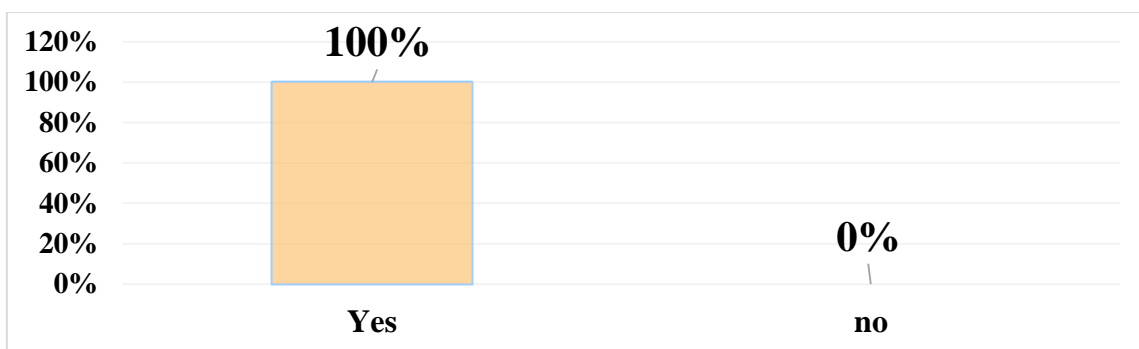
2.2. Results related to the questionnaire for teachers

We present here the results of the questionnaire designed for EFL teachers in charge of the English speaking and writing techniques course (cours de techniques d’expression anglaise).

Question n°1: Does the undergraduate program for EFL students of E.N.S include the lesson about the types of letters?

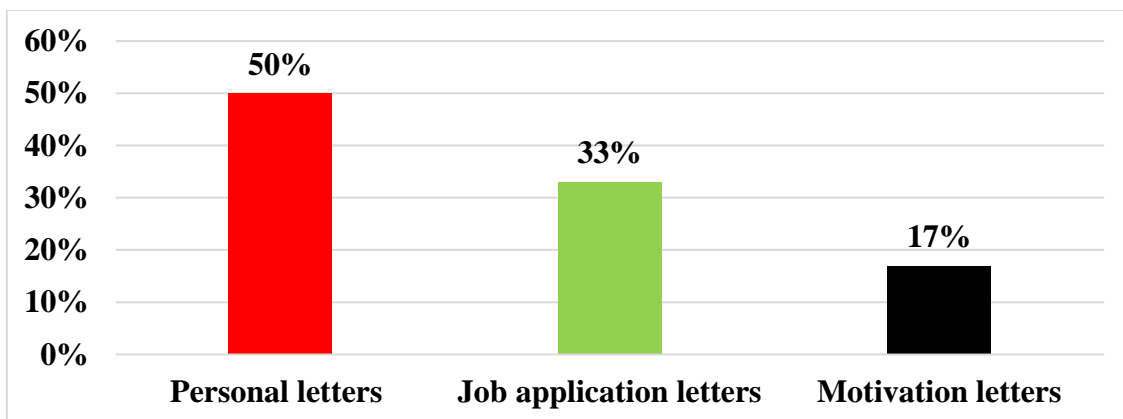
We asked this question to know if the English teaching syllabus includes the teaching of different types of letters (personal and business).

Graph n°4: Teachers’ responses about the teaching of different types of letters



The results displayed in the above graph reveal that the teaching of different types of letters is part of the subjects matters included in the English teaching syllabus for the teachers’ training institute “E.N.S” of Congo. In fact, all teachers (100%) confirmed.

Question n°2: Which of the following types of letters do you focus on more during instruction: personal letters, job application or motivation letters?

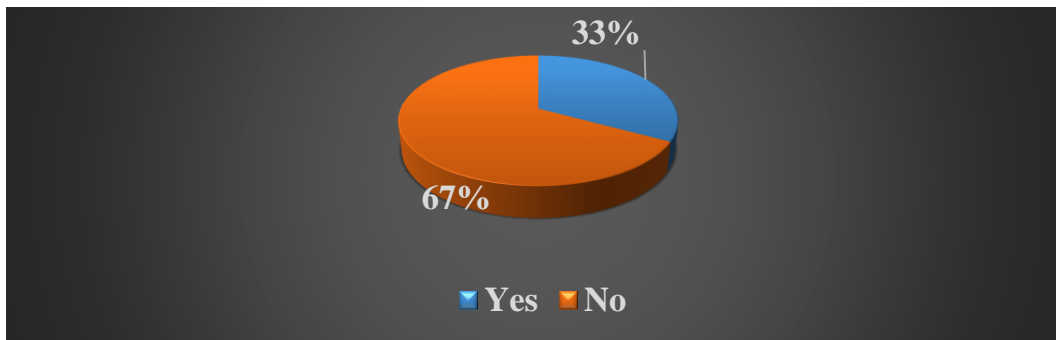


The above graph unveils that half of the teachers (50%) focus more on personal letters while teaching letters. However, thirty-three percent (33%) insist on job application letters. Only few of them (17%) focus on motivation letters; which is a letter giving more details about the candidate for a job position or a study program at a university. It is worth knowing its formats and layout because corporations and universities usually require a motivation letter.

Question n°3: Do you know the structure of the motivation letter?

We asked this question to inquire whether teachers really know the structure of a motivation letter.

Graph n°6: Teachers' viewpoints about the mastery of the structure of a motivation letter



From the above results, we notice that only few teachers (33%) have knowledge of the structure of the motivation letter. The majority (67%) has no mastery of its structure. It might be that they ignore the importance of the motivation letter in the academic and professional area.

2.3. Results related to students' interview

We focused on two items: (1)-different formats and layout of a motivation letter; (2)-paragraphs limit number. The questions of the interview are as follows:

1)-Have you already applied for a job position or a study program at a university abroad? If yes, where did you get the university address?

The aim of this question was to know whether students have ever applied for a job position or a study program abroad and where they found the address.

- Concerning this question, many students (52%) answered affirmatively. However, others (48%) answered “no”. Among those who answered “yes”, thirty-two (32%) of them said that they applied for master study programs at different universities abroad. However, twenty percent (20%) applied for a job position in different in firms.

- Regarding the place they found addresses, twenty-five (25%) responded that they found out addresses of universities and firms in magazines and seventeen (27%) found them in internet.

2)-Did those universities or firms require you for a letter justifying your background, qualities or capacities? If yes, how did you write the heading? How many paragraphs did you write and why?

We asked this question to know about the formats and layout the students used while writing a motivation letter (the heading and the number of paragraphs).

- Regarding this question, these students (52%) answered “yes”. However, they wrote differently the heading. Thirty-percent (30%) said that they wrote the date and their full name and address at the top left and the firms or university address at the top right. Twenty-two percent of them (22%) did the contrary.

Concerning the number of paragraphs. Fifteen percent students (15%) wrote six (6) paragraphs; whereas nineteen percent (19%) of them wrote eight (8) paragraphs. Eighteen percent (18%) of students said that they used nine (9) paragraphs.

Besides, we assigned students a test to know more about their writing ability.

2.4. Results of the writing tests.

As aforementioned, we submitted students from grade 3 to letter-writing tests to assess their ability to write a motivation letter. We administered two tests; the first took place on November 10, 2022 and the second on Mars 05, 2023. We asked students to write a motivation letter for a job position opportunity. The duration time was an hour and a half. For the validity of scores, two EFL teachers corrected copies.

2.5. Scoring scheme of the oral proficiency test

For the writing proficiency test, we focused on (1) - the formats and layout of a motivation letter; (2) - the writing conventions.

Table n°1: Assessment criteria for a motivational letter.

I. FORMAT:	Y/N?	Notes:
Full page but not overcrowded		
Same header as resume or standard business letter format.		
Professional e-mail is listed		
The letter is dated and addressed to a specific person or department.		
Total of 3-4 paragraphs with a line skipped between each paragraph.		

II. INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH:	Y/N?	Notes:
States specific position you are applying for.		
Expresses interest and informs the organization why you want to work for them in this specific role.		
Highlights 2-3 key skills relevant to the position you are applying for.		
Appropriate length, typically 3–5 sentences.		

III. BODY OF LETTER (1 or 2 paragraphs):	Y/N?	Notes:
Each paragraph should focus on 1-2 of the skills you highlighted in the introductory paragraph.		
Provide results-oriented examples of when you used those skills in the past.		
Explain how your previous experience prepares you for specific aspects of the job.		

IV. CLOSING:	Y/N?	Notes:
Reiterate interest/eagerness to contribute your skills to their organization’s team.		
Thank them for their time and consideration.		
Indicate that you would appreciate the opportunity for an interview.		

V. BEFORE YOU SEND:	Y/N?	Notes:
Check grammar and spelling; look for typos.		
Convert letter to a pdf.		

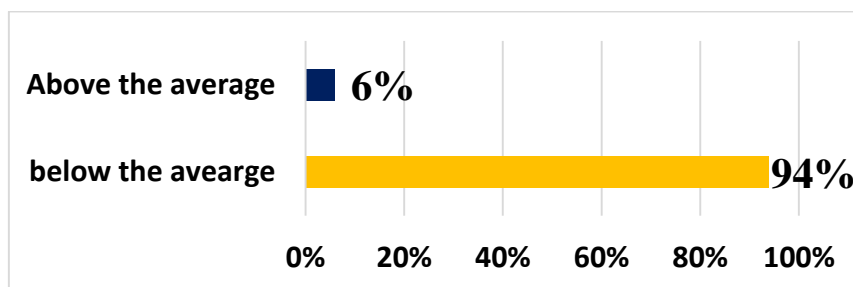
Give the document a professional, descriptive title, such as “Smith, Cover Letter.”		
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Adapted from: Willamette university rubric to assess motivation letters

- **First test results**

The results of the test were not satisfactory. In fact, only three (3) students (6%) out of forty-six (46) were above the average. Many students (94%) failed because they have no knowledge of the layout and the constituents of each section of a motivation letter. Moreover, they did not care about the writing conventions.

Graph n°4: Students’ performances.



The above graph shows that few students only were above the average. The great majority (94%) failed. Therefore, we designed some letter writing activities as displayed in the table below:

Table n°2: strategies to teach a motivation letter

<p>Presentation of a motivation letter lesson</p> <p>1- Meaning of a motivation letter Show students that a motivation letter describes why you are a perfect candidate for a certain program or position. It is a one-page document, in which you include your resume as part of your application for a job.</p> <p>2- Different purposes for which a cover letter is required</p> <p>a)- For Admission: If you are applying to a university or college to get enrolled in an educational program for any level (undergraduate or postgraduate).</p> <p>b)- For Training/Internship: If you want to get into a full-time internship with an organization.</p> <p>c)- For Employment: When you want to apply for a job profile at an organization, a corporation.</p> <p>d)- For Jobs in Social Sector especially NGOs: Non-profit organizations generally demand motivation letter to analyze the interests and intentions of job aspirants.</p> <p>3-Types of motivation letter formats Description of different formats: full block, block and modified block. Full block format is the most common format in use today. Every line begins at the left margin, the return address, complimentary closing, signature, and even the first line of each paragraph. Paragraphs are separated by a double space.</p>
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Block format is a style of organizing parts of a letter that is seen frequently in business correspondence today. It is similar to full block, except that the heading, complimentary closing, and signature are placed to the right of the centerline of the letter. The spacing between parts remains the same.

Modified block was very popular a few years ago, but it is not used too often today in the business. It is, however, a good format to use when you are writing a letter by hand. It is exactly the same as the block format except that the first line of each paragraph, like that of a friendly letter, is indented at least five spaces.

4-Motivation letter layout: the different parts

Describe the three sections of a letter: heading, body, and conclusion.

-Heading: It consists of sender address, date, addressee's address, salutation (greeting)

-Sender address: the position is on the top right hand corner, if the sender is an individual. If the sender is a firm, it should be in the middle, and this is called *letterhead*. The letter sent by an individual should *never* contain his or her name; the only place where the name of the sender can be seen is at the bottom of the letter, after the signature.

The sender's address should contain, on different right-hand aligned, lines, the street, the city and postcode, and the country (only if the letter is to be sent to a different country).

- Date: dates can be written in different ways in English. Some of them are the following: November 10, 2023 or November 10th, 2023.

- Addressee's address: write the name of the addressee, preceded by the title (Mr, Miss, Mrs, Ms, etc.). English people give great importance to their titles; example: Mr Brown...

If you are writing to a firm and you do not know who you are writing to, start by the name of the Department (Sales Department, Customer Services) and then continue with the firm and the address.

- Salutation: there are two possibilities: (1)- indented form (where each paragraph begins slightly a little way out of the margin; (2)- Block form (where each line begins upright with the other). You have the following possibilities:

Dear Mr, Mrs, Miss (surname), if you know the person's name and title. Dear Sir or Madam, if you are writing to a person whose name you do not know (The Sales Manager, The Staff Secretary). After the salutation, you may use a comma (,). Afterwards, dive into the main body of it.

5-Body: write no more than three or four paragraphs

-In the first paragraph, say clearly which job you are applying for and how you found out that the job was available. If you are including a resume, say so.

- In the second paragraph, tell the reader about specific skills and work experience that relate directly to the position the company is trying to fill. Focus on the skills and abilities you can offer the company. Never say you want the job because you need the money. The employer wants someone who will give something important to his business, not someone who just takes a cheque.

- In the third and last paragraph, state the purpose of your letter and ask for an interview. Be sure to thank the reader for looking at your letter and resume.

- Sometimes, a resume may not be necessary. In this case, mention your education, work experience, school/community involvement appropriate to the job and the names of two or three references. Do not go into great detail in the letter. A list, or brief paragraph, outlining your background is sufficient. Remember, end the letter by asking for an interview at the employer's convenience and be sure to provide a telephone number where you can be reached.

6-Closing , signature and enclosure

-Finally, to conclude, you can wrap up your letter and read it thoroughly before sending. Here are some of the points to help you with the concluding paragraph of the Motivation letter.

-Summarize your major points such as “*I believe that I would be an appropriate fit for the program because of _____*”

-Mention your long term goals: “*I would be obliged to be a part of _____, as it would allow me to _____*”

- Finally, pay regards to the reader with a ‘thank you’. **Sincerely, Regards, Yours truly, and Yours sincerely** are the simplest and most useful letter closings to use in a formal business setting. Best regards, Cordially, and Yours respectfully fill the need for something slightly more personal.

7- View on writing convention: mechanics (spelling, grammar), punctuation, sentence and paragraph structures (arrangement of details) the letter.

- **Font:** use a standard, easy-to-read font like Times New Roman or Arial. It should be 12pt or slightly bigger.

-**Spacing:** you need to single space the body of your cover letter, but leave spaces between the heading, the greeting, each paragraph, and your sign-off.

-Work together with students on some typical motivation letters;

- Teach the basic rules of paragraphing, spelling and punctuation;

Give that some assignments to check students’ understanding

Allembé Rodrigue Lézin, (researcher of the present study) 2022-2023.

Samples of formats

Full block format

**123 Centre Street
Yorkton, NS B4T 1Y9
February 21, 2015
John Clancy
Personnel Manager
Greenbay Publishers Inc.
99 Hollingshead Road
Fredericton, NB
E3B 2C3**

Dear Mr. Clancy

**We are pleased to _____

_____ your account.**

**In addition, _____
_____ the
work.**

**It would be our pleasure _____
_____ contact us.**

**Yours truly
Shirley Paterson
Shirley Paterson
Director of Research**

Block format

9 Parker Lane
Westhill, PE C4K 1Y0
March 16, 2012

Phil Smith
222 Victoria Avenue
Moncton, NB E2C 1P9
Dear Phil:

This is just _____
_____.

I am sure _____

_____.

Thank you for _____

Sincerely,
Martha Mason
Martha Mason

Modified block format

16 McNab Crescent,
Hampton, NB E4D 2G0,
June 1, 2016.

John Doyle,
Public Works Department,
Town of Hampton,
Box 119,
Hampton, NB E3D 2Y7.

Dear John:

I represent _____
_____.

We are _____
_____.

Please contact us _____
_____.

Yours truly,
Fred Bacon
Fred Bacon

Sample of Job Application Letter

158 rue Lenine Ouenzé
Brazzaville Congo
Phone number: (00242) 05 525 16 33
E-mail: allembe.rodrigue@gmail.com
March 2, 2023

Mr. George Gilhooley
XYZ Company
87 Delaware Road
Hatfield, CA 08065
(909) 555-5555

Dear Mr. Gilhooley

I am writing to apply for the programmer position advertised in the *Times Union*. As requested, I am enclosing a completed job application, my certification, my resume and three references. The opportunity presented in this listing is very interesting, and I believe that my strong technical experience and education will make me a very competitive candidate for this position.

The key strengths that I possess for success in this position include:

- I have successfully designed, developed, and supported live use applications
- I strive for continued excellence
- I provide exceptional contributions to customer service for all customers

With a BS degree in Computer Programming, I have a full understanding of the full life cycle of a software development project. I also have experience in learning and excelling at new technologies as needed.

Please see my resume for additional information on my experience. Thank you for your time and consideration.

I look forward to speaking with you about this employment opportunity.

Sincerely,

Rodrigue ALLEMBE

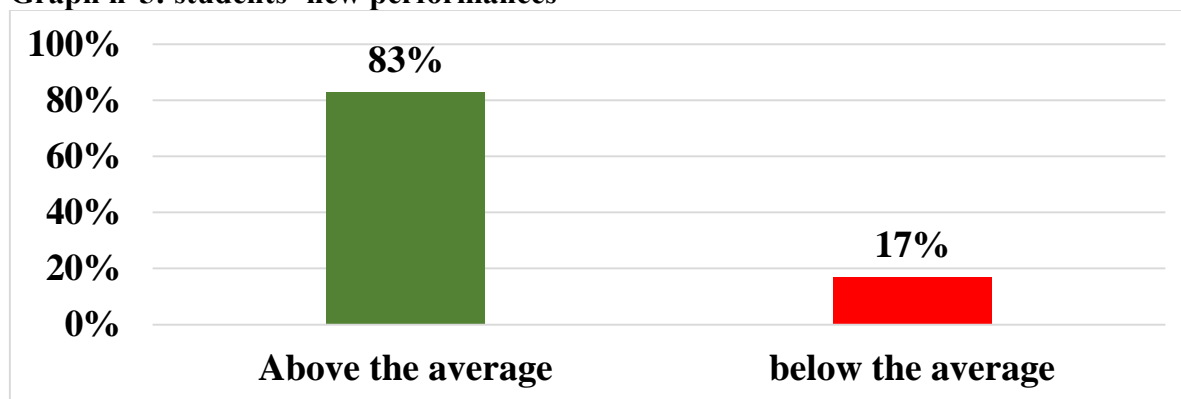
The activities lasted three months from December 2022 to February 2023; we had two sessions of an hour and a half per week. A total of twenty-four (24) sessions or thirty-six (36) hours of training. Afterwards, on March 5, 2023, we submitted students to a test to check whether they have assimilated the lesson. The topic was: write a motivation letter for a job opportunity to 'Thales' junior secondary school. The test duration was an hour and a half. For the validity of the results, we selected two EFL teachers for papers correction. The reliability coefficient was obtained by comparing the score of two correctors. The correlation is found to be (0.96) and

this was considered a high and stable coefficient. The graph below displays students' new performances.

Results of students' scores at the second test

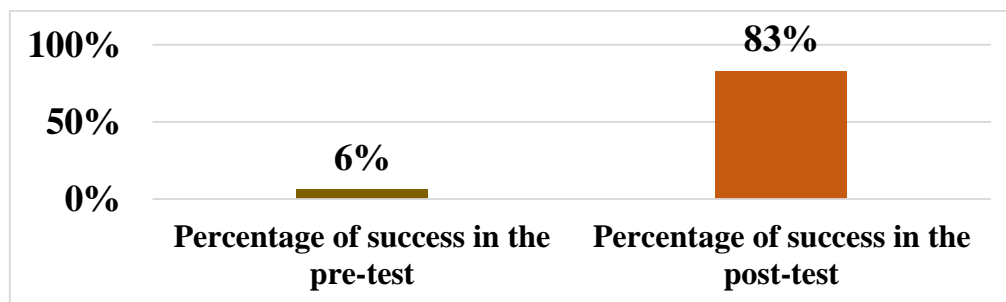
We present the students' new performances after the implementation of effective teaching strategies and activities on motivation letter writing.

Graph n°5: students' new performances



The above graph reveals the results of the post-test after an intensive training. In fact, thirty-eight (38) students (83%) out of forty-six (46) got marks above the average. Only eight (8) students (17%) failed; there had been some noticeable improvements.

Graph n°6: Comparison of students' success percentages between the pre-test and the post-test.



There had been a significant difference rate of success (77%)

Discussion

In this section, we examine the results obtained through this research work. We focus our discussion on the strategies to teach a motivation letter productively.

Knowing that a motivation letter is a formal one-page document that highlights someone's qualification when seeking a job or applying for a university study program, teachers should teach students its different formats and layout. They must also insist on the number of the required paragraphs, the content of each one and the writing conventions. In this connection,

Raisa V. Dorogikh, Liubov I. Teplova (2017) argue that: “there are certain standards for formal letters writing which the addresser should know and follow. For those who do not know the conventions of formal letters and/or are not trained to do this writing can be really stressful and time consuming” (p.5). Therefore, the teacher should provide more typical writing activities to help students assimilate the basic writing aspects, so that they can be able to write successful motivation letters. Arslan (2019) considers a teacher as a trainer who should “act as facilitator and counsellor who could help the trainees to understand the content and solve the problems through introducing some techniques and methods” (p.240). Otherwise, the teacher should use effective methods to make students assimilate a lesson. Unfortunately, EFL teachers of the Ecole Normale Supérieure do not do so in their teaching strategies. Students’ responses evidence this, the majority of them (94%) has no knowledge of the motivation letter layout (Cf. question n°3 from student’s questionnaire). This shows plainly that some teachers approach this lesson superficially. Normally, the teacher begins a motivation letter lesson by the presentation of its structure (formats and the layout), which are the basic notions to teach to students. It might be that as Anna Maria Malkoc (1988) writes: “some teachers have not had special training in this area and feel unsure of their writing competence. This is true for native-speaking as well as non-native-speaking teachers of English”. This is obvious because only few of teachers (33%) affirmed that they have knowledge of the structure of the motivation letter (Cf. question n°3 from teachers’ questionnaire). Whatever the case, teachers should work collaboratively in research teams, this helps to catch up initial training gaps. In fact, through collaborative teams, teachers can learn from one another, coordinate lessons, discuss data or share ideas. In this regard, Schleifer, Rinehart and Yanisch (2017) argue that: “when teachers work more collaboratively, student outcomes can improve, teachers can be more satisfied in their jobs and teacher turnover can decrease” (p.3). It is obvious that some teachers focus on other types of letters to veil their gaps. The students’ scores in the pre-test displays some weaknesses in the teaching strategies, the great majority of them (94%) was below the average. However, the implementation of remedial techniques and strategies, there have been significant improvements. Students wrote convincing motivation letters.

Conclusion

This research work explores the writing of a motivation letter by EFL students from grade 3 at the “Ecole Normale Supérieure” of Brazzaville. Our hypotheses were as follows: Students’

difficulties to write a motivation letter might result from the fact that they have no knowledge of the different formats, layout and the writing conventions.

The investigation revealed that although many students are aware of a motivation letter, the great majority of them (94%) do not know the different formats and layout. Otherwise, they do not know how to lay out the different sections: heading, greeting, body, signature, name. Besides, they have problems with mechanics (grammar, spelling), punctuation and sentences and paragraphs structure (Cf. Graph n°3, questionnaire for students and the results of the interview). So, the implementation of remedial writing techniques and activities develop students' ability to write effective motivation letters with respect to mechanics, punctuation, and paragraph structures. Therefore, teachers should teach students how to write motivation letters, which is of paramount importance.

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