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*Achieving Cohesion in Writing  
Application Letter Using Discourse Markers  
The Case of "Career Center " Students at Ouargla University*

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# *Dedication*

*To Mom and Dad*

*For their devotion to my education*

*And*

*To my brothers and sisters for their patience,*

*Help and*

*Support,*

*All to my family*

*I dedicate*

*This work.*

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## **List of Abbreviations**

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

EBP: English for Business Purposes

ESBP: English for Specific Business Purposes

EGBP: English for General Business Purposes

ELT: English Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

EAP: English for Academic Purposes

EOP: English for Occupational Purposes

NSs: native speakers

NNSs: non-native speakers

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# **General Introduction**

## **General Introduction**

Writing application letters is regarded as important skills. Parsky (1998) states it is a career goal, because writing skills play important role in preparing for career and maintaining a job. To achieve this, the present study investigate how learners of English for specific purposes use discourse markers to achieve cohesion in order to improve and enhance their writing performance in application letters as well as to convince the addressee.

English language is considered as the global language for communication and business. English for specific purposes is considered as the latest linguistic development, and where it combines development of linguistic skills together with the acquisition of specific information, business English (EBP) as a branch of ESP is concerned with the use of language in business fields and the ultimate characteristics of business communication is the writing such as writing application letters, many studies confirm that the using of discourse markers in writing application play a cohesive role in the sense that they relate informational units in the present discourse with informational units in the prior discourse.

To carry out the present study, the following question has been raised: to what extent can discourse markers improve EBP writing for the students of carriers Center at Ouargla University?

To answer this research problem, we suggested the following research questions:

- Will the use of discourse markers enhance the students writing application letter?
- Do discourse markers promote cohesion in writing application letter?

### **Hypothesis**

- The use of discourse markers enhances the students writing of application letter.
- Discourse markers promote cohesion in writing application letter.

To investigate the question of the present study, the descriptive method will be used in order to describe and analysis the usefulness of discourse markers to enhance EBP students in writing business letters in general and application letter in particular.

The sample that is chosen to investigate this research question is thirty students studying in carriers Center at Ouargla University. The instrument that it is used to collect the needed data and to measure the variables is a questionnaire.

This dissertation comprises of four chapters. The first chapter focuses on discourse markers and its role in achieving cohesion in writing skill, the second chapter deals with the definition of ESP and its branches in general, the third one discusses the writing skill in EBP, and the last chapter is devoted to the questionnaire and its analysis.

## **Chapter One**

### **Discourse markers**

- 1.0. Introduction
  - 1.1. Definition of Discourse Analysis
  - 1.2. Text and Discourse
  - 1.3. Definition of Discourse Markers
  - 1.4. Types of Discourse Markers
  - 1.5. The Role of Cohesion in in Written Discourse
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  - 1.8. Function of Discourse Markers
  - 1.9. Properties of Discourse Markers
  - 1.10. Writing Problems
    - 1.10.1. Vocabulary
    - 1.10.2. Grammar
    - 1.10.3. Spelling
    - 1.10.4. Organization of Ideas
- Conclusion

## **1.0. Introduction**

Discourse markers are words or phrases that function as indicators of discourse structure. They are characteristics of connected discourse that is to say they contribute in making cohesion in any writing, so this chapter aims mainly at examining the different connectors that is especially used in application letter.

### **1.1. Definition of Discourse Analysis**

Discourse can be a conversation, speech, piece of writing, texts; it could be spoken or written. Simply, because they are parts of language and both forms (spoken or written) need a context. According to McCarthy (1991) states that discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used (p.5).

### **1.2. Text and Discourse**

Fernández Martínez (2011) explains that the text as a semantic unit in which it is not regarded as a grammatical unit, like a clause or a sentence, it is a unit not of form but of meaning, and it may be of any length. However discourse as the corresponding social practice, a form of language use. Also is defined as an umbrella-term for all the issues that have dealt with the linguistic study of text and discourse.

### **1.3. Definition of Discourse Markers**

According to Schiffrin (1987) proposes that “DMs play a cohesive role in the sense that they relate informational units in the present discourse with informational units in the prior discourse”. Discourse marker as a word or expression which shows the connection between what is being said and the wider context. It is something that a) connects a sentence to what comes before or after, or b) indicates a speaker's attitude to what he is saying.

Both Schiffrin (1987) and Halliday and Hasan (1976) agree that DMs should be considered as linguistic devices that link adjacent unites of talk to make the whole discourse coherent.

For Takahara (1998) discourse markers are those devices which signal a sequential discourse relationship showing the boundaries within discourse and the degree of cohesion, and decide the flow of information.

## 1.4. Types of Discourse Markers

Schiffrin (1987) gives a detailed analysis of twelve DMs in English: "so", "because", "and", "but", and "or", "oh", "well", "now", "then", "you know", and "I mean". These discourse markers are divided by other researchers into two types: particles "oh", "well", "now", "then", "you know", and "I mean", and connectives "so", "because", "and", "but", and "or". These DMs are formal and used when speaking in a formal context or when presenting complicated information in writing.

## 1.5. The Role of Cohesion in Written Discourse

The site of onestopenglish (2009) suggests that a text is cohesive if its elements are linked together, and coherent if it makes sense. These are not necessarily the same thing. That is, a text may be cohesive (i.e. linked together), but incoherent (i.e. meaningless).

The exact relationship between cohesion and coherence is a matter of some contention.

While it is true that a sequence of unlinked utterances can make sense, it is often the case that some form of linking, e.g. with discourse markers such as 'and', 'but' and 'so' (or the more formal variants 'moreover', 'however' and 'consequently') makes it easier for the reader (or listener) to process and to make sense of what they read (or hear).

Nevertheless, a text which is poorly organized is not going to be made more coherent simply by 'peppering it' with discourse markers. The following text is an example of a text that is overloaded with discourse markers. It is somewhat typical of the kind of texts that many students produce as a result of an over-emphasis on linking devices at the expense of other ways of making texts cohesive, of which probably the most important is the careful use of vocabulary.

### **The Example Text**

Louie rushed and got ready for work, but, when he went out the door, he saw the snowstorm was very heavy. Therefore, he decided not to go to work. Then, he sat down to enjoy his newspaper. However, he realized his boss might get angry because he did not go to the office. Finally, he made another decision that he must go to work. So, he went out the door and walked to the bus stop.

So cohesion is a formal feature of texts (it gives them their texture), while coherence is "in the eye of the beholder" -that is to say, it is the extent to which the reader (or listener) is

able to infer the writers (or speaker's) communicative intentions. Thus, cohesion is objectively verifiable (you can actually see or hear it), while coherence is more subjective. A text may be coherent to you, but incoherent to me.

Cohesion refers to 'the linguistic elements that help to make a discourse semantically coherent'. The words and phrases used to achieve cohesion are often referred to as discourse markers (also known as cohesive devices, linkers, connectors, transition signals, and signposts).

## **1.6. Types Grammatical Cohesion**

Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify five types of grammatical cohesion: which are reference, identification, ellipsis and conjunction.

### **Reference**

Reference elements include pronouns (he, she, it or they), demonstrative pronouns (this, that), articles and items like every day, each...etc.

### **Identification**

This is the use of determiners such as the, this, that in order to indicate that a noun has been mentioned previously. The first use of the noun is usually preceded by the indefinite article.

Eg: A ship appeared on the horizon. When my companion returned, I pointed the ship out to him.

### **Ellipsis**

When elements are omitted from sentence it is called ellipsis. This becomes a cohesive device if an earlier part of the text allows us to deduce the missing elements.

Eg: Tall students sit at the back of the class; short students (sit) at the beginning.

### **Conjunction**

These are linguistic elements combining sentences in a grammatical order. Discourse analysis investigates their role and distribution they are of two types subordinating conjunctions and coordinating conjunctions. Subordinating and coordinating classified into four categories according to McCarthy (1991) they include: additive (and, in

addition), adversative (but, however), causal (because, consequently), temporal (then, subsequently).

## **1.7. The Role of Discourse Markers**

To achieve cohesion and coherence, students must involve an emphasis on fulfilling cohesion and coherence in real contexts.

### **1.7.1. Cohesion**

Cohesion means the connection of ideas at the sentence level, also it focuses on the grammatical aspects of writing as Widdowson (1981 cited in Bahri, F. 2007) defined: “Cohesion thus refers to all the linguistic ways which the words of the passage, across sentences, cross-refer or link up” (p. 23).

It refers to the surface relation between sentences in a sequence the form of the text (letter) works in accordance with grammatical forms and norms which help the reader to get the meaning and its uses so, cohesion can help the writer of the application letter for the pragmatic applications of the letter such as to sound polite, convincing, sincere, and devoting to the job applied for....so on.

Cohesion again is a key feature to contrast written discourse to the spoken discourse. One may raise the issue of the well formedness of a written text in which cohesive ties have a role to play.

We shall consider some grammatical regularities observable in well-formed written texts, and how the structuring of sentences has implications for units such as paragraphs, and for the progression of whole texts. We shall also look at how the grammar of English offers a limited set of options for creating surface links between the clauses and sentences of a text, otherwise known as cohesion. McCarthy, M. (1991 p.25).

### **1.7.2. Coherence**

It means the connection of ideas at the ideas level as Celce\_murcia and Olshtain (2000) who explained it that in which participates to the unity of a piece of discourse such that the individual sentences or utterances hang together and relate to each other. In addition Oshima and Hogue (2006) hold that coherence is “the movement from one sentence to the next must be logical and smooth. There must be no sudden jumps. Each sentence should flow smoothly into the next one”

## **1.8. Functions of Discourse Markers**

The site of University of Warwick UK (2012) proposes many discourse markers that express different relationships between ideas. The most common types of relationship between ideas, and the sentence connectors that are most often used to express these relationships, are given in the table below.

<b>Type of relationship</b>	<b>Sentence connectors</b>	<b>Position within clause/sentence</b>
<b>Adding something</b>	Moreover; In addition; Additionally; Further; Further to this; Also; Besides; What is more.	Initial position
<b>Making a contrast between two separate things, people, ideas, etc.</b>	However; On the other hand; In contrast; Yet.	Initial position
<b>Making an unexpected contrast (concession)</b>	Although; Even though; Despite the fact that; In spite of the fact that; Regardless of the fact that.	Initial position Starts a second/ subordinate clause
<b>Saying why something is the case</b>	Because; Since; As; Insofar as.	Initial position Starts a second/ subordinate clause
<b>Saying what the result of something is</b>	Therefore; Consequently; In consequence; As a result; Accordingly; Hence; Thus; For this reason; Because of this.	Initial position
<b>Expressing a condition</b>	If; In the event of; As long as...; So long as...; Provided that...; Assuming that...; Given that...	Initial position Starts a second/ subordinate clause
<b>Making what you say stronger</b>	On the contrary; As a matter of fact; In fact; Indeed.	Initial position

**Table (01):** Functions of Discourse Markers

### **Examples**

The site of English Practice (2012) suggests the most known of discourse markers in writing skill as follow:

### **With reference to**

With reference to is a formal discourse marker used mainly at the beginning of business letters.

Eg: With reference to your order placed on March 12th, we are pleased to inform you that ...

### **Regarding**

The conjunction "regarding "usually comes at the beginning of a piece of discourse.

Eg: Regarding this particular offer, I really don't think ...

### **As far as ... is concerned**

As far as ... is concerned marks a change of subject by the speaker. And it contributes to the achievement of discourse cohesion, but as medium is concerned, it is mostly used in spoken discourse.

Eg: There are no problems about marketing. As far as manufacturing is concerned, I think the best thing is ...

### **Because**

The conjunction because means for this reason. The first independent clause is a statement. The conjunction provides a transition to the reason the statement was made.

Eg: I am taking challenging academic courses, because I want to qualify for a good job.

### **On the other hand**

On the other hand is used to balance two ideas or facts that contrast, but do not contradict each other.

Eg: We've been steadily improving our customer service center. On the other hand our shipping department needs to be redesigned.

## **However and nevertheless**

However and nevertheless show contrast. Note that nevertheless is very formal

Eg: Peter was warned not to invest all of his savings in the stock market. Nevertheless, he invested and lost everything.

Eg: We will meet our humanitarian responsibilities during this financial crisis; however, some capital projects will be delayed.

## **Therefore, consequently**

These conjunctions show that the second statement follows logically from the first statement..

Eg: I have accepted a job at Silly Systems Software; therefore, I shall be leaving Programmers R Us at the end of the month.

Eg: We've lost over 3,000 customers over the past six months. Consequently, we have been forced to cut back our advertising budget

## **1. 9. Properties of Discourse Markers**

Several features of discourse markers are presented by Schiffrin (1987), she discusses them in terms of syntactic position or grammaticality she claims that

Although markers often precede sentences .....they are independent of sentential structure removal of a marker from its sentence initial position, in other words, leaves the sentence structure in act.

(p.31).

syntactic independence, and placement in the sentence. Also Schiffrin states two features

If discourse markers are syntactically independent, language users can speak or write without using them and still their message is conveyed. That is to say that coherence can be achieved, but cohesion is not sure to be achieved hence optionality seems to relevant to the well formedness of the sentence, and not to its pragmatic effect for instance if discourse

markers occur in a sentence, they reflect a writer of a quite good proficiency in language and of his knowledge of language in use (pragmatic). They are not a mere embellishment of style.

## **1.10. Writing Difficulties**

The writing skill is the most difficult skill to cope, because most of the students while taking their writing tasks, they face difficulties such as: Vocabulary, Grammar, Spelling, and Organization of ideas.

### **1. 10.1. Vocabulary**

Hatch and Brown (1995, P.1, cited in Benttayeb, 2010, p.20-30), explain that vocabulary as "Vocabulary refers to a list of set of words that individual speakers of a language might use." Vocabulary is the most amounts of words that describe a given language, without this Vocabulary, students or learners would be incapable to use and comprehend the target language. In addition to that, they would be unable to express their ideas freely and accurately because of their limited vocabulary.

### **1.10.2. Grammar**

Grammar is very important in conveying accurate and correct messages. Grammar relates to the rules of the language. According to Kane (1988) grammar means the rules which structure and govern our language and all the grammatical rules are implicit and hidden in the speech of all who use the language .As Wilkins says" knowledge of a language demands mastery of its vocabulary as much as of its grammar..." (Wilkins, 1983, p.155 cited in Benttayeb, 2010, pp.20-30). Key grammatical forms include tenses, voices. models, articles, nominalization, punctuation and logical connectors.

### **1.10.3. Spelling**

Spelling is as important as vocabulary .It is also a large problem for learners because in English pronunciation is not a perfect copy of any spelling .It is an irregular language. Lindsay with Knight (2006) express about spelling is that "spelling causes problems for lots of learners because there is no one-to-one relationship between sounds and spelling in English." (p. 87). To rule this problem, Lindsay and Knight (2006) argue that there is only one way to do so which is to select two sounds that sound similar to your learners .Dictate a

short text that contains both sounds then ask your learners to read them back to you .Finally, give practice to your learners with any words that they have difficulties with.

### **1. 10.4. Organization of Ideas**

As Raimes (1983) states that" it is a process of moving back and front from general statements to specific details, of finding appropriate and relevant details and arranging them in the most effective order." (p.116) .According to

Kane (1988) the organization of a piece of writing can be done in two ways which are usually used together, one is by Signposts-words and the other is by Interparagraph transitions.

Signposts: are the initial sentence that contains both the topic and the general plan for treating it. They are categorized into two types intrinsic Signposts such as: in the first place, secondly, ...and extrinsic Signposts like outline or a table of content

Interparagraph transitions: they occur at or near the beginning of the new paragraph .we have different transitions such as: the repetitive transitions, the summarizing transitions, and logical transitions....

The repetitive transition is the repetition of a key word for instance: Behind Huey was the people, and the people wanted these things .And with the people behind him .Huey expanded ominously.

For the summarizing transition: this type of transition begins with a phrase that sums up the previous paragraph and then moves to the new topic.

Concerning the logical transition; Kane (1988) we can link paragraph by words displaying logical relationship such as: therefore, however, for instance, nonetheless, even so, on the other hand, consequently and so on..

### **Conclusion**

As it is mentioned that discourse markers are considered as cues or signals for the reader that make cohesion , in fact these markers are found in various grammatical forms such as additional, contrast, condition .....and so on. Because discourse markers play a cohesive role notably in writing application letter, in addition to that the writer needs to be aware of the problems that s\he may face.

## **Chapter Two**

### **English for Specific Purposes**

- 2.0. Introduction
- 2.1. Origins of ESP
- 2.2. Definition of ESP
- 2.3. Branches of ESP
- 2.4. Definition of EBP
- 2.5. Characteristics of Business English Language
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- 2.6. Types of English for Business Purposes
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- Conclusion

## **2.0. Introduction**

From the early 1960's, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has grown to become one of the most prominent areas of EFL teaching today. In this chapter we will give a definition of English for specific purposes, its origins, as well as defining the terms of the kinds of ESP, and it will be as introduction to the main study.

### **2.1. Origins of ESP**

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) English for specific purposes is an approach to language study, emerged in the late of 1960 through three indirect reasons which are: the demand of a brave new world and this is after the end of the Second World War in 1945 and the Oil Crises of the early 1970s. These reasons create a new generation of learners who know why they were learning a language. A revolution in linguistics where new studies attended to describe the way in which language is used in real communication and the focus on the learners by emphasizing the central importance of the learners and their attitudes to learning.

### **2.2. Definition of ESP**

Since 1960, ESP becomes a vital activity within the teaching of English as a foreign or a second language movement. Several definitions were given to ESP by different writers such as Duddly and Magie (1998) defined ESP by using absolute and variable characteristics; ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learners and it uses the methodology of the discipline it serves (absolute characteristics). ESP is may be related to specific discipline and designed for adult learners, also it may use a different methodology, and it is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students but it can be used for beginners.

Hutchinson and waters (1987) ESP is an approach not a product in which all decisions as to content and method are based on learners' reason for learning, and an approach to language teaching like General English that is directed by specific purposes (which are the needs) for learning. It is an approach to language teaching because it is based on learning and communication theory and when we teach we apply an approach

Stevens (1988cited in Duddly and Magie) holds that ESP makes a distinction between four absolute characteristics which are designed to face specified needs of learners, related to content to particular fields, focused on language appropriate to those activities in

syntax, semantics and so on. And it is different from general English. As well as two variable characteristics are may be limited as to the learning skills to be learned and may be not being taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

Robinson (1991 cited in Duddly and Magie) is definition concentrates on two criteria; ESP is "normally a goal directed" and generally an ESP course is constrained by "limited time period". ESP course is developed from analyzing the needs of the learners.

### **2.3. Branches of ESP**

Duddly and Magie (1998) stated that ESP was dominated by two branches; English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). The EAP Refers to any English teaching that relates to a study purpose, however in the late of the 60s and early 70s, there was a focus on written language where business learner learns standard letter formats and others. In the mid of 70s to 80s, the emphasis changed to the spoken language, also the term EOP refers to English that is not academic purposes, it consists professional purposes in administration, law and so on. In addition Duddly and Magie (1998) explained it as

Medical students, for example, have to read textbooks, articles and writes essays and short clinical reports. These are EAP needs. And Practicing doctors have different needs; as well as reading specialists articles. They may prepare papers and slide presentations for conferences and, if working in an English speaking -country, interact with the patients in English. These are EOP needs.

(p.49)

Also Kennedy and Bolitho said that EAP "is taught generally within educational institutions to students needing English in their studies". (p.4). However EOP is "taught in a situation in which learners need to use English as part of their work or profession". (p.4)

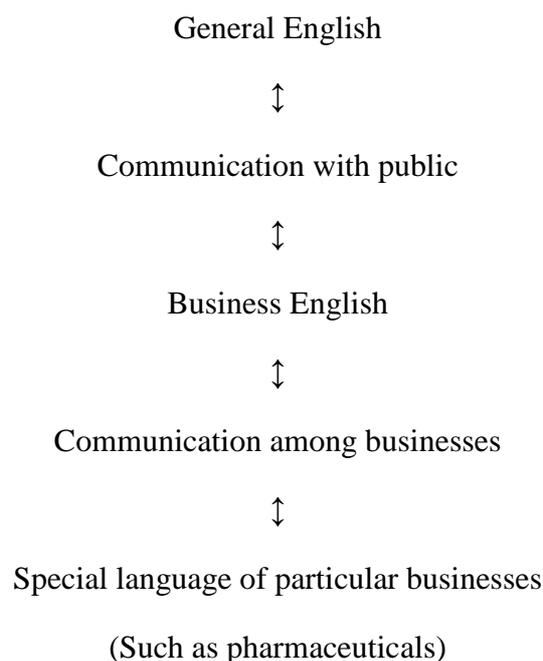
### **2.4. Definition of EBP**

Duddly and Magie (1998) believed that English for Business Purposes is considered with adult learners and workers or preparing learners to work in a business context and dealing with business English on occupational situations. The users of business English are non-native speakers to non-native ones using the international English. There is more than

one face to business communication; communication in business can be with public and within a company or between companies.

## 2.5. Characteristics of Business English Language

Duddly and Magie (1998) view that English has become the international language for communication, and the ultimate business English communicators are non-native speakers (NNSs) to non-native speakers (NNSs), and the English they use is international English, for this reason they need English for professional and practical purposes rather than academic ones. In addition Duddly and Magie (1998) saw that NSs want to learn business English although English language is their L1, because business English is simply a general English word deal with certain context, used by certain people and certain domains, it is the communication used in the world of business. According to Pickett's (1986 cited in Duddly and Magie, 1998, p. 55) uses a diagram to set English at certain levels according to its purposes.



**Figure (2.5.):** Pickett's diagram represents English language from general to specific level (from Pickett's 1986 cited in Duddly and Magie, 1998, p. 55)

In addition Ellis and Johnson (1994) demonstrate that business English characterized by three elements which are sense purpose, social aspects and clear communication.

### **2.5.1. Sense Purpose**

“Users of business English need to speak English primarily so that they can achieve more in their job” (p.7), because language in this field must be objective rather than subjective for instance in discussions and meetings, it will be more appropriate to evaluate facts from an objective standpoint.

### **2.5.2. Social Aspects**

Business people always communicate with strange people whom they have never met before, there is a need for an internationally accepted way doing things so that business people from different cultures, and from different mother tongues, however in the same time they feel comfortable with each other.

### **2.5.3. Clear Communication**

The words and the expressions should be indicating the logical process for example :”as a result”, “in order to” .....and so on. There is often a need to be concise especially when communicating by telephone, or letters.

However Frenco (2005) explains that the English language that is used in business is not necessarily the same English that native speakers use. Frenco demonstrates that “it is a lingua franca; it may even be considered a new type of English which has developed and is developing to meet the needs of its users” (p.7).

## **2.6. Types of English for Business Purposes**

Duddly and Magie (1998) divided English for Business Purposes (EBP) into English for General Business Purposes (EGBP) and English for Specific Business Purposes (ESBP).

### **2.6.1. English for General Business Purposes**

EGBP courses are designed for pre-experience learners or for the beginners who are in early stages of their carrier. EGBP courses are similar to those of general EFL.

### **2.6.2. English for Specific Business Purposes**

ESBP courses run for job-experienced and learners who bring business knowledge and skills to the language learning situations. The courses focus on one or two skills and specific communicative events.

### **Conclusion**

All in all, it can be said that ESP is a movement that has its own characteristics and plays a role in ELT. The major change was the emergence of business English as a branch of ESP teaching that given a great Importance, because it is needed in many work situations, it is taught to people who are interested in business or in companies. Its primary concern is to enable learner or worker to communicate effectively in the work situation.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Writing in EBP**

#### 3.0. Introduction

#### 3.1. The Structure of Writing in EBP

#### 3.2. The Context of Writing

##### 3.2.1. Audience

##### 3.2.2. Purpose

##### 3.2.3. Response

##### 3. 2.4. Style

##### 3. 2.5. Organization

#### 3.3.Parts of Business Letter

##### 3.3.1. Letterhead

##### 3.3.2. Date

##### 3.3.3. File Number

##### 3.3.4. Confidential

##### 3.3.5. Inside Address

##### 3.3.6. Attention Line

##### 3.3.7. Salutation

##### 3.3.8. Subject Line

##### 3.3.9. Complimentary Close

##### 3.3.10. Signature

##### 3.3.11. Additional Information

##### 3.3.12. Postscript

##### 3.3.13. Mailing Instruction

#### 3.4. Format of Business Letter

##### 3.4.1. Block

##### 3.4.2. Modified Block

##### 3.4.3. Modified Semi-Block

##### 3.4.4. Simplified

#### 3.5. Writing Application Letter

##### 3.5.1. How to Write an Application Letter

##### 3.5.2. Example Format of Application Letter

### 3.5.3. Tips in Writing Application Letter

Conclusion

### **3.0. Introduction**

Writing business letters is not a natural skill, but learned one. Any one learns simply the structure of application letter, because millions of us write letters as a part of our work; however few of us know the keys to create an effective business letter. So this chapter provides a thorough definition and highlights the major principles of application letter.

### **3.1. The Structure of Writing in EBP**

Frendo (2005) explains that the structure of writing must follow how paragraphs and sentences work together, to achieve this, there are two ways: the first way is cohesion, which is the grammatical or lexical relationships between different elements of texts; however the second way is coherence which is the individual sentences or utterances connected to each other.

### **3.2. The Context of Writing**

Frendo (2005) demonstrates that Business writing occurs in context; it must related to specific setting, in the other words that business writer needs to take into consideration for each business learner the audience, the purpose, the response , the style and the organization, in order to achieve effective business letter.

#### **3.2.1. Audience**

According to Frendo (2005) holds that "The readers of a piece of business writing may be experts, or customers, or laypersons. They may come from different cultural context from that of the writer, and what works in one cultural setting may not work in another". (p.5) However the audience will also impact the style of the letter if it is formal or informal, because international business documents needs to be kept as easier as possible whether the audience is not a proficient at English as the writer.

#### **3.2.2. Purpose**

According to Dugger (2002) investigates that there are different letters sent with a specific subject and audience ,however are not clear in their purpose, when the writer wants

to send a letter, s/ he must know why s/ he sending the letter, is the letter to inform, is it to apply for an job .....and so on. All of these are different purposes.

### **3.2.3 Response**

Frendo (2005) sees that" the important thing with any document is to ensure that learners try and place themselves in reader's shoes and ask". (p.6) and learners should be known the relationship between them and the reader or the company they work for.

### **3.2.4. Style**

According to Dugger (2002) states the" 7 C"s of style which helps the writer to become more effective:

#### **1. Conversational**

The writer should write in the way s/ he speaks, for instance: why say" due to the fact that" instead of "because" .....and so on.

#### **2. Clear**

The purpose of clarity is that the reader understands exactly what the writer say, and the language of the letter should be appropriate to the recipient. Also Dugger (2002) point that "clarity means organizing your letter so each paragraph deals with only one main idea and presenting your ideas in logical order"(p.6)

#### **3. Concise**

A concise letter removes all in appropriate words, for example why use four words in "in as much as" instead of the word "because", however the longer letter becomes ineffective, because concise letter is read and remembered.

#### **4. Complete**

The writer should make sure that s/ he included all the information that the reader needs to know. For example, don't say, "When we last spoke about the situation," when you can say, "When we spoke on June 8 about hiring a new administrative assistant."

## 5. Concrete

The writer must be use specific words that cannot be ambiguity, and the language should be realistic and authentic. For example, don't say, "The large order that we requested has not arrived." Say, "The order for 10,000 basins that we requested on May 3, 20XX, has not arrived as of June 20." Identify names and numbers.

## 6. Constructive

The writer should use the expressions and the phrases that play a positive tone, because they have a good impression to the reader such as: proud, success, and so on.

## 7. Correct

It is the last step in any writing business letter, because the letter that we want to send is considered as an image on our paper. And each writer should be revising his/her letter from spelling, grammatical, and typological errors in order to send an effective letter.

### 3.2.5. Organization

The basic organization for the body of business letter is as follow:

**Part One of the Body:** state the purpose and this part is always a short paragraph.

**Part Two of the Body:** this is a heart of the letter, it is explains the information you are giving, also it explains what you want the recipient to do.

**Part Three of the Body:** this part has three things:

### 1. Conclude

This permits the writer to indicate the most important topic or design all the key points into one statement.

### 2. Request action

In this part, the writer should give to the reader what to do and when to do it.

### 3. Thank the Reader

It is simply a thank you for the recipient's attention, response, or concern.

### **3. 3. Parts of Business Letter**

Dugger (2002) said that there are a lot of parts to a business letter, some wanted, and some of them are optional, so the parts of business letter as follow:

#### **3.1.1. Letterhead**

Dugger (2002) explains it as" if you are writing a personal business letter or your firm does not use letterhead, and then you need to include your firm's address in the heading". (p.10)

#### **3.3.2. Date**

If the writer uses the heading instead of letterhead the date should be in the first line and the address on the following line.

#### **3.3.3. File Number**

The file number should be separated from the date by two spaces.

#### **3.3.4. Confidential**

This expression used when the person to whom, the letter is addressed is the only one should read the letter.

#### **3.3.5. Inside Address**

It is consists the name of the person that we writing to such as: the name of the firm, or the firm's address.

#### **3.3.6. Attention Line**

It is used when the writer does not know the name of the person such as: the letter that is sent to a company.

#### **3.3.7. Salutation**

The salutation is used in all formats, except the simplified letter such as: Dear sir, or Dear madam....and so on. Also it is better to write people name's address, because people are more likely to read a letter with their names in the salutation.

### **3.3.8. Subject Line**

It announces the subject of the letter and introduces the summary of the letter, and it is commonly used in the simplified letter.

### **3.3.9. Complimentary Close**

It is found in all business, also it varies in the degree of formality such as: very truly yours, sincerely.....and so on.

### **3.3.10. Signature**

It is used immediately after typing the name.

### **3.3.11. Additional Information**

It is optional, and includes the sender's initials in capital letters followed by a colon, then the typist's initials in small letters.

### **3. 3.12. Postscript**

The postscript shed light additional information that have been placed in the letter, however might have for some reason was not.

### **3.1.13. Mailing Instruction**

The purpose of mailing instruction is to give the reader deadlines or relevant information on mailing a reply.

## **3.4. Format of Business Letter**

Dugger (2002) proposes different forms to business letter, the most commonly forms are: block, modified block, modified semi-block and simplified form.



### 3.4.2. Modified Block

Modified block has the same form to the block format; however the date, signature, and closing are placed to the right near to the center of the letter.

**Italics Unlimited**  
231 W. 40th Street • Camden, NJ 08618 • (623) 555-2678

August 10, 20XX

Terry Lancaster  
Capital Supply  
657 Minden Ct.  
Des Moines, Iowa 54687

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

XX  
XX  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XX  
XX  
XXXXXXXXXXXX

Sincerely,  
  
Signature  
  
Joan McAllister

JFM:eer

**Figure (3.4.2.)** Modified block format example<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>.Adapted from Dugger,2002 p.18.

### 3.4.3. Modified Semi-Block

The form of modified semi-block has the same to modified block except that the paragraphs are indented five spaces.

**Italics Unlimited**  
231 W. 40th Street • Camden, NJ 08618 • (623) 555-2678

August 10, 20XX

Terry Lancaster  
Capital Supply  
657 Minden Ct.  
Des Moines, Iowa 54687

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

XX  
XX  
XXXXXXXXXXXX

XX  
XX  
XXXXXX

Sincerely,  
  
Signature  
  
Joan Mc Alester

JFM:eer

**Figure (3.4.3.)** Modified semi-block format example<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>.Adapted from Dugger,2002 p.19.



### **3.5. Writing Application Letter**

Galko (2001) suggests that before you ever start a job, you will begin practicing your business writing skills. So application Letters are key tools to getting a job. Like all forms of business writing, Application letters have a specific format and style. A standard Application letter usually has five paragraphs.

#### **3. 5.1. How to Write an Application Letter**

Parsky (1998) states that writing skills play important role in getting a job, however writing application letter must see as professional or businesslike, if the letter is sloppy or incomplete, the employer will be left with bad impression about the sender.

A letter applying for a job should consist the following:

1. The main purpose of the first paragraph is to convince the reader to keep reading. You indicate to the job and how you learned about it. (See figure 3.4.5.)
2. In the second paragraph, you Supply some information about yourself: the name of your school, courses completed that may relate to the job.....and so on. (See figure 3.4.5.)
3. In the third paragraph, list past work experience; demonstrate how it prepared you for the job which you are applying. (See figure 3.4.5.)
4. In the fourth paragraph, list two or three personal references with address. (See figure 3.4.5.)
5. In the last paragraph, demand an interview. (See figure 3.4.5.)

### 3.5.2. Example Format of Application Letter

	3466 Boulevard East Apartment 2E Dallas, TX 75232 May 5, 19_
Fidelity National Bank P.O. Box 42 B Dallas, TX 75221	
Dear Sir or Madam	
Please consider me as an applicant for the teller trainee position listed in today's Dallas Tribune.	
I am 18 years old. I will graduate from North High School in June. Since my sophomore year, I have been taking business courses. I have taken Accounting 1 and 2, Business Law, Economics, and Word Processing.	
During my junior year, I was in the CO-OP Program in which I attended school one week and worked the alternate week. My work placement was at the Western Insurances Company, where I learned basic accounting procedures. I am currently employed part-time as a cashier at a Pathway Supermarket. These positions helped me to develop skills and confidence for handing large sums of money.	
The following people have given me permission to use their names as references:	
Ms. Marjorie Thompson, Supervisor, Western Insurances Co., 20631 Memorial Parkway, Dallas, TX 75221	
Mr. Roberto Gonzalez, Manager, Pathway Supermarket, 2148 Anderson Avenue, Dallas, TX 75242	
Ms. Betty Wong, Co-Op Coordinator, North High School, 4293 Columbus Avenue, Dallas, TX 75232	
I would be glad to come for an interview at your convenience. My telephone number is 775-2684. I look forward to hearing from you.	
Sincerely,	
<i>Thomas Gupton</i>	
Thomas Gupton	

**Figure (3.4.5.)**Application letter Example<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup>.Adapted from Parsky.ph.D,1998 p.65.

### **3.5.3. Tips in Writing Application Letter**

Many people need help in writing application letter. If you don't know to write an application letter, it can be difficult to do. The site of application letter suggests the following steps to make it easier:

1. Address your cover letter to a real person.
2. Open with an attention-grabbing first sentence.
3. Less is more. Clear, focused, short sentences get the Interview.
4. Focus on what you can do to the employer.
5. Choose words that show enthusiasm and passion.
6. Request one action to be taken by the employer.
7. End your application letter with enthusiasm.

### **Conclusion**

All in all, it can be said that writing application letter is a difficult skill to acquire, because it needs to be taught through formal instruction, also learners should take into consideration the subject, purpose, audience, organization and style. As well as to reach this level students must follow certain aspects of writing application letter such as: date, file number, Confidential, Salutation.....and so on. Without forgot to choose a format to our letter in order to produce effective application letter.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Analysis of Questionnaire**

#### 4.0. Introduction

##### 4.1. Method

##### 4.2. Sample

##### 4.3. Description of The Questionnaire

##### 4.4. Administration of The Questionnaire

##### 4.5. Analysis of the Result

#### Conclusion

## **4.0. Introduction**

The present chapter deals with student' s questionnaire which aims at exploring the role of discourse markers (connectives) and its importance as well as its problems in writing application letter ,to do so , a practical study is needed, and descriptive method is followed. The present chapter comprises the description and analysis of the questionnaire.

### **4.1. Method**

In this research, the descriptive analytic method is used as a tool to analyses the results of the questionnaire.

### **4.2. Sample**

The total number of the students who answered the questionnaire is 40 students of career center at Ouargla University.

### **4.3. Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire involves an introduction that help the students to get an idea about the subject, besides, 18 question (yes, no/multiple choice).It is divided into three parts: the first part of the questionnaire concerned with the writing skill to discover if the learners like to write in English or not, and what their goals are, as well as the business English and its purposes in teaching in general. The second part of the questionnaire is related to writing application letter which consists of questions about using discourse markers and their importance in writing a cohesive application letter, and the types of difficulties they face when writing application letter .The third part of the questionnaire deals with the causes of difficulties and the solution that can contribute in solving the writing difficulties.

### **4.4. Administration of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was distributed after the second holiday; it was given to the students of career center at Ouargla University.

The students were cooperative and have answered all the questions.

#### 4.5. Analysis of the Results

This analysis is quantitative one relying on percentages.

**Question (1):** Do you like to write in English?

	Number	Percentages
Yes	37	92,5%
No	03	7,5%
Total	40	100%

**Table (2):** Desire to Write

The table (2) shows that the majority of the students (92, 5%) that they are like to write in English; however the minority (7, 5%) did not like to write in English. This is understood of their inhabitanace and reluctance for fear of making mistakes or for their ignorance of rules principles of English writing.

**Question (2):** What do you think about teaching business English?

	Number	Percentages
Necessary	40	100%
Not Necessary	00	0%
Total	40	100%

**Table (3):** Teaching Business English

The table (3) displays that all the students answered that it is necessary about teaching business English, because business English is important to their daily life, the employment needs business English language under job conditions and it help them in making relations with professional world.

**Question (3):** In your opinion, why do we write application letter?

	Number	Percentages
To enjoy yourself	00	0%
To get the writing habit	07	17,5%
To improve your language	06	15%
To apply for a job	38	95%

**Table (4):** The Purpose of Writing

From the table (4) we notice that the majority of the students (95%) answered that they write application letter in order to apply for a job. (17, 5%) of the students write to get the writing habit and (15%) of the students write only for improve their language.

**Question (4):** Do you find writing application letter an easy task?

	Number	Percentages
Yes	16	40%
No	24	60%
Total	40	100%

**Table (5):** Finding Writing an Easy Task

In the table (5) we notice that the majority of the students (60%) answered that they find writing application letter is not an easy task, because they are beginners and application letter has a special structure, vocabulary, content, format and organization to be persuasive in order to convince the reader, but some of them they find it an easy task.

**Question (5):** How often do you write application letter?

	Number	Percentages
Always	00	0%
Often	09	22,5%
Rarely	31	77.5%
Total	40	100%

**Table (6):** Frequency of Writing Application Letter

From the table (6) the result reveal that the majority of the students (77, 5%) that they rarely write application letter, however (22, 5%) of them said that they often write an application letter.

**Question (6):** How good are you in writing an application letter?

	Number	Percentages
Good	04	10%
Average	20	50%
Weak	16	40%
Total	40	100%

**Table (7):** Level of Writing Application Letter

Through the table (7) we observe that (50%) of the students answered that they are on the average in their writing application letter. 40% they say that they are weak in their writing application letter. But the minority of them (10%) view that they are good.

**Question (07):** Do you need English in your work?

	Number	Percentages
Yes	33	82,5%
No	07	17,5%
Total	40	100%

**Table (08):** The Need of English at Work

In the table(08), the results shows that the majority of the students (82,5%) state that they need English in their work, but few of them say that they did not need English in their work, because they are students.

**Question (08):** Do you attend any business English sessions?

	Number	Percentages
Yes	36	90%
No	04	10%
Total	40	100%

**Table (09):** Sessions of Business English

In the question (09), the vast number of the students (90%) say that they are attend to business English sessions, however the minority of them argue that they did not attend to any business English sessions.

**Question (09):** How many sessions are scheduled?

The results of the question (09) display that the all of the student's state that 14 sessions are scheduled.

**Question (10):** Is the time sufficient to promote your level?

	Number	Percentages
Yes	19	47,5%
No	21	52,5%
Total	40	100%

**Table (10):** The Sufficiency of Writing Application Letter

In the question (11) the majority of the students (52, 5%) find that the time is not sufficient to promote their level, but (47, 5%) find it sufficient.

**Question (11):** Do you think it would be beneficial to use different connectives in writing application letter?

	Number	Percentages
Yes	35	87,5%
No	05	12,5%
Total	40	100%

**Table (11):** The Connectives of Application Letter

The majority of the students (87, 5%) argue that it is a beneficial to them to use different connectives in writing application letter, however the minority of the students (12, 5%) do not think it is beneficial to them to use connectives in their writing application letter.

**Question (12):** What is their importance in your writing application letter?

All the students state that the importance of discourse markers (connectives) in their writing is to help them in organizing their letter, to get a good piece of writing, also they say that the connectives help them in create cohesion in their writing in order to convince the reader in addition for get a professional tools or improving their language.

**Question (13):** According to you, is it easy to apply them in your writing application letter?

	Number	Percentages
Yes	19	47,5%
No	21	52,5%
Total	40	100%

**Table (12):** The Application of Discourse Markers

According to the data in the table (12) the majority of the students (52, 5%) find that using discourse markers in their writing application letter is not easy to apply them, however (47,5%) find it easy.

**Question (14):** Which formats do you prefer in writing application letter?

	Number	Percentages
Block	04	10%
Modified block	09	22,5%
Modified semi-block	08	20%
Simplified	20	50%

**Table (13):** Format of Application Letter

According to the results of the table (13) the majority of the students (50%) prefer to use a simplified format in their writing application letter. (22, 5%) of the students prefer to use modified block and (20%) of the students prefer to use modified semi-block; however the minority of them (10%) prefer to use the block format.

**Question (15):** Do this format serve your style?

	Number	Percentages
Yes	40	100%
No	00	0%
Total	40	100%

**Table (14):** The Style of the Format

The table (14) shows that all the students answered that this format serves their style.

**Question (16):** What difficulties do you face, when you write application letter?

	Number	Percentages
In Vocabulary	15	37,5%
In Grammar	18	45%
In Spelling	11	27,5%
In Organization of ideas	19	47,5%

**Table (15):** Types of Difficulties in Writing Application Letter

Through the table (15) we notice that (47, 5%) of the students have a problem in organization of ideas, (45%) of the students have a problem in grammar , also the results of table (16) displays that (37,5%) of the students have difficulty in vocabulary, but (27,5%) of the students have not a huge problem in spelling.

**Question (17):** In your opinion, what are the causes of difficulties in writing application letter?

	Number	Percentages
Lack of using connectives	03	7,5%
Lack of specialized teachers in business English	08	20%
Learners have no previous knowledge about business English	32	80%

**Table (16):** Causes of Difficulties in Writing

From the table (16) we see that most of the answers (80%) of students face difficulties in their writing application letter, because Learners have no previous knowledge about business English.

(20%) of the students face difficulties, because Lack of specialized teachers in business English, however the minority of them find it that relate to the reason of Lack of using connectives.

**Question (18):** In your opinion, how could overcome them?

	Number	Percentages
Reading extensively	23	57,5%
Extra classes	34	85%
Increase the number of writing tasks	32	80%

**Table (17):** Solution of Writing Difficulties

The results in the table (17) show that the most of students (85%) said that it is better to add extra classes. (80%) of students agree that the best way to solve this problem is by increasing the number of writing tasks, however (57, 5%) of them view that the appropriate way is to read a lot and extensively.

## Conclusion

Throughout the present study of the role of discourse markers (connectives) and its importance as well as its problems in writing application letter. The questionnaire is given to students of career center at Ouargla University.

The results shown that the majority of students in questions (01-03) like to write in English and for one purpose which is applying for a job. In questions (04-05) it is noticed that the majority of students find writing application letter an easy task and (77, 5%) of the students that they are rarely to write application letter.

In questions (06-07) dealt with their level application letter and their needs to the language of English in their work, (82, 5%) of the students argue that they need English in their work.

The analysis of the question (08-10) shows that the majority of the students (90%) that they are attend to business English sessions, and (52, 5%) of the students that the time is not sufficient to improve and enhance their level application letter.

Also The analysis of the question (11-13) displays that the majority of the students (87, 5%) argue that it is beneficial to them to use different discourse markers in their application letter, and the most of the students state that the importance of discourse markers is to help them in organizing their letter, to get a good a piece of writing and discourse markers improve and develop to create cohesion in their writing, and (52, 5%) find that using discourse markers in their writing application letter is not easy to apply.

In questions (14-15) we observed that the majority of the students (50%) prefer to use a simplified format in their writing application letter, and all the students answered that the formats serve their style.

The analysis of the question (16) displays that the majority of the students (47, 5 %) face difficulties application letter especially in organization of ideas, as well as grammar.

In question (17) shows that the majority of the students (80%) face difficulties application letter this due to that Learners have no previous knowledge about business English, and Lack of specialized teachers in business English, however the minority of them find it that relate to the reason of Lack of using connectives.

The majority of the students (85%) in question (18) view that the best the best way to overcome the writing problems is by extra classes and increasing the number of writing tasks.

From the questionnaire, we deduced that students like to write in English. They state that discourse markers play a cohesive role in their writing application letter, however they face difficulties applying them in their writing also they find difficulties in organization of ideas and grammar. They claim that to solve their problems is to add extra classes.

# **General Conclusion**

## **General Conclusion**

The main purpose of the present study was to investigate the role of discourse markers and its importance as well as the problems in writing application letter in order to achieving cohesion and to enhance the students in their future career.

The case study for the present research is the students of careers center at Ouargla University. We have chosen them as a sample, results reached from the questionnaire analysis displayed that the majority of the students write application letter in order to get a job and the most of them state that the importance of discourse markers is to help them in organizing their letter, to create cohesion in their writing and the application of them is not easy, because needs to be taught through informal structure, however they suffer from different difficulties such as : organization of ideas, and grammar.

In addition, through the present work we have deduced that cohesion is not only important in application letter; however it is very prominent in the other business documents such as Resume, CV in order to convince the reader, also teachers of English have to urge their students to use cohesive devices logically and efficiently so as to bind their discourses and texts.

We have concluded that discourse markers play a cohesive role in writing application letter.

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# Appendice

## Appendix 1

**The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria**

**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**

**Kasdi Merbah University -Ouargla**

**Faculty of Letter and Languages**

**Department of Foreign Languages**

**English Section**

**Student's Questionnaire**

**Dear students,**

The aim of this questionnaire is to explore the role of discourse markers (connectives) and its importance as well as the problems in writing application letter. You are kindly invited to answer the following questions, please put (X) in the appropriate box. Your truthful answers will be of great help to us.

More than one choice is possible.

1-Do you like to write in English?

Yes

No

2-What do you think about teaching business English?

Necessary

Not Necessary

Why?

.....  
.....  
.....

3-In your opinion, why do we write application letter?

**a.** To enjoy yourself

**b.** To get the writing habit

**c.** To improve your language

**d.** To apply for a job

4-Do you find writing application letter an easy task?

Yes

No

Why

.....  
.....?

5- How often do you write application letter?

**a.** Always



16-What difficulties do you face, when you write application letter?

- a. In Vocabulary
- b. In Grammar
- c. In Spelling
- d. In Organization Of Ideas

17-In your opinion, what are the causes of difficulties in writing application letter?

- a. Lack of using connectives
- b. Lack of specialized teachers in business English
- c. Learners have no previous knowledge about business English

Others?

.....  
.....

18-In your opinion how could we overcome them?

- a. Reading extensively
- b. Extra classes
- c. Increase the number of writing tasks

Others?

.....  
.....

## Appendix 2

Sample of writing of application letter

Mr. John Blackwood  
ComName Company  
PO Box 270, *London*  
20 555-5555  
john.blackwood@companyemail.com

Date

Dear Mr. Blackwood,

I am writing to apply **for** the software developer position advertised in the *NewspaperName*. **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 past work experience.

I can be reached anytime via email at mark.grass@myemail.com or my cell phone, 20-666-6666.

Thank you **for** your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking **with** you about this employment opportunity.

Sincerely,

FirstName LastName

Model from "career center" at Ouargla University

## Abstract

The aim of the present study is to examine the role of discourse markers in achieving cohesion in writing application letters. Thus our study is descriptive analytical trying to gather data from student's questionnaire to check the efficiency of discourse markers in writing a convincing application letters as a major writing skill in EBP. Also, it provides background information about ESP. Besides, it deals with the writing skill in English for business purposes. We concluded that discourse markers play a cohesive role in writing skill, they enhance learners writing skill, notably the application letter.

## ملخص البحث

إن الهدف من هذه البحث هو دراسة دور علامات الخطاب في تحقيق التماسك في كتابة رسائل طلب العمل ، وبالتالي دراستنا إتبعنا التحليل الوصفي بجمع نتائج الاستبيان من الطلبة ، وذلك للتحقق من كفاءة علامات الخطاب في كتابة رسائل طلب العمل والإقناع بتطبيق مهارة اللغة الإنجليزية في سياق الأعمال.

و كما تتوفر هذه الدراسة على معلومات أساسية حول لغة الاختصاص (الإنجليزية)، حيث تتعامل مع مهارة الكتابة في اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض الأعمال.

وفي الاخير لقد توصلنا الى أن علامات الخطاب تؤدي دورا متماسكا في مهارة الكتابة، و تجعل الطلاب قادرين على كتابة رسائل طلب العمل بمهارة واحتراف.