

Language Means of Formality in Business Correspondence

Jana Stankov

Bachelor Thesis
2013



Tomas Bata University in Zlín
Faculty of Humanities

Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně
Fakulta humanitních studií
Ústav anglistiky a amerikanistiky
akademický rok: 2012/2013

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

Jméno a příjmení: **Jana STANKOV**
Osobní číslo: **H10488**
Studijní program: **B7310 Filologie**
Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk pro manažerskou praxi**
Forma studia: **prezenční**

Téma práce: **Jazykové prvky formálnosti v obchodní korespondenci**

Zásady pro vypracování:

Stručně popište obchodní dopis a jeho stránky formálnosti.
Uvedte typy korespondence v praxi, zaměřte se na stránku formálnosti.
Na základě dopisů získaných z různých firem definujte rozdíly mezi teorií a praxí.
Analyzujte ustálené výrazy, které se v dopisech objevují.
Vyhodnoťte, zda obchodní korespondence v praxi splňuje stanovené jazykové prvky formálnosti.

Rozsah bakalářské práce:

Rozsah příloh:

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**

Seznam odborné literatury:


Babáková, Jiřina. 1999. Anglická obchodní korespondence. Plzeň: Fraus.
Brown, Gillian, and Yule George. 1983. Discourse Analysis. Cambridge University Press.
Miššíková, Gabriela. 2003. Linguistic Stylistics. Univerzita Konstantína Filozofa.
Urbanová, Ludmila. 2008. Stylistka anglického jazyka. Brno: Barrister & Principal.
Verdonk, Peter. 2008. Stylistics. Oxford University Press.

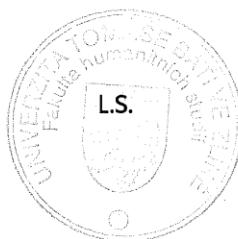
Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **prof. PhDr. Gabriela Miššíková, Ph.D.**
Ústav anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **30. listopadu 2012**

Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **3. května 2013**

Ve Zlíně dne 30. ledna 2013


doc. Ing. Anežka Lengalová, Ph.D.
děkanka




PhDr. Katarína Nemčoková, Ph.D.
ředitelka ústavu

PROHLÁŠENÍ AUTORA BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Beru na vědomí, že

- odevzdáním bakalářské práce souhlasím se zveřejněním své práce podle zákona č. 111/1998 Sb. o vysokých školách a o změně a doplnění dalších zákonů (zákon o vysokých školách), ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, bez ohledu na výsledek obhajoby ¹⁾;
- beru na vědomí, že bakalářská práce bude uložena v elektronické podobě v univerzitním informačním systému dostupná k nahlédnutí;
- na moji bakalářskou práci se plně vztahuje zákon č. 121/2000 Sb. o právu autorském, o právech souvisejících s právem autorským a o změně některých zákonů (autorský zákon) ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, zejm. § 35 odst. 3 ²⁾;
- podle § 60 ³⁾ odst. 1 autorského zákona má UTB ve Zlíně právo na uzavření licenční smlouvy o užití školního díla v rozsahu § 12 odst. 4 autorského zákona;
- podle § 60 ³⁾ odst. 2 a 3 mohu užít své dílo – bakalářskou práci - nebo poskytnout licenci k jejímu využití jen s předchozím písemným souhlasem Univerzity Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, která je oprávněna v takovém případě ode mne požadovat přiměřený příspěvek na úhradu nákladů, které byly Univerzitou Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně na vytvoření díla vynaloženy (až do jejich skutečné výše);
- pokud bylo k vypracování bakalářské práce využito softwaru poskytnutého Univerzitou Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně nebo jinými subjekty pouze ke studijním a výzkumným účelům (tj. k nekomerčnímu využití), nelze výsledky bakalářské práce využít ke komerčním účelům.

Prohlašuji, že

- elektronická a tištěná verze bakalářské práce jsou totožné;
- na bakalářské práci jsem pracoval samostatně a použitou literaturu jsem citoval. V případě publikace výsledků budu uveden jako spoluautor.

Ve Zlíně 24.04.2013

.....


1) zákon č. 111/1998 Sb. o vysokých školách a o změně a doplnění dalších zákonů (zákon o vysokých školách), ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, § 47b Zveřejňování závěrečných prací:

(1) Vysoká škola nevydělečně zveřejňuje disertační, diplomové, bakalářské a rigorózní práce, u kterých proběhla obhajoba, včetně posudků oponentů a výsledku obhajoby prostřednictvím databáze kvalifikačních prací, kterou spravuje. Způsob zveřejnění stanoví vnitřní předpis vysoké školy.

(2) *Disertační, diplomové, bakalářské a rigorózní práce odevzdané uchazečem k obhajobě musí být též nejméně pět pracovních dnů před konáním obhajoby zveřejněny k nahlížení veřejnosti v místě určeném vnitřním předpisem vysoké školy nebo není-li tak určeno, v místě pracoviště vysoké školy, kde se má konat obhajoba práce. Každý si může ze zveřejněné práce pořizovat na své náklady výpisy, opisy nebo rozmnoženiny.*

(3) *Platí, že odevzdáním práce autor souhlasí se zveřejněním své práce podle tohoto zákona, bez ohledu na výsledek obhajoby.*

2) *zákon č. 121/2000 Sb. o právu autorském, o právech souvisejících s právem autorským a o změně některých zákonů (autorský zákon) ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, § 35 odst. 3:*

(3) *Do práva autorského také nezasahuje škola nebo školské či vzdělávací zařízení, užije-li nikoli za účelem přímého nebo nepřímého hospodářského nebo obchodního prospěchu k výuce nebo k vlastní potřebě dílo vytvořené žákem nebo studentem ke splnění školních nebo studijních povinností vyplývajících z jeho právního vztahu ke škole nebo školskému či vzdělávacímu zařízení (školní dílo).*

3) *zákon č. 121/2000 Sb. o právu autorském, o právech souvisejících s právem autorským a o změně některých zákonů (autorský zákon) ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, § 60 Školní dílo:*

(1) *Škola nebo školské či vzdělávací zařízení mají za obvyklých podmínek právo na uzavření licenční smlouvy o užití školního díla (§ 35 odst.*

3). *Odpírá-li autor takového díla udělit svolení bez vážného důvodu, mohou se tyto osoby domáhat nahrazení chybějícího projevu jeho vůle u soudu. Ustanovení § 35 odst. 3 zůstává nedotčeno.*

(2) *Není-li sjednáno jinak, může autor školního díla své dílo užít či poskytnout jinému licenci, není-li to v rozporu s oprávněnými zájmy školy nebo školského či vzdělávacího zařízení.*

(3) *Škola nebo školské či vzdělávací zařízení jsou oprávněny požadovat, aby jim autor školního díla z výdělku jím dosaženého v souvislosti s užitím díla či poskytnutím licence podle odstavce 2 přiměřeně přispěl na úhradu nákladů, které na vytvoření díla vynaložily, a to podle okolností až do jejich skutečné výše; přitom se přihlédne k výši výdělku dosaženého školou nebo školským či vzdělávacím zařízením z užití školního díla podle odstavce 1.*

ABSTRAKT

Bakalářská práce se zabývá jazykovými prvky formálnosti v obchodní korespondenci. Bakalářská práce je rozdělena do dvou částí. V praktické části bakalářské práce je hlavním cílem uvést typy obchodní korespondence a zaměřit se na stránku formálnosti. Praktická část obsahuje analýzu zahraniční obchodní korespondence získané z různých obchodních firem a to z hlediska jazykových prvků formálnosti. Hlavním cílem této bakalářské práce je zjistit, zda obchodní korespondence v praxi splňuje stanovené jazykové prvky formálnosti.

Klíčová slova: Obchodní korespondence, ustálené zdvořilostní fráze, typy obchodní korespondence, stupeň formálnosti, nepřímá řeč.

ABSTRACT

This Bachelor thesis deals with the linguistic elements used as a medium for formality (further only “language means of formality”) in business correspondence. The thesis is divided into two parts. The theoretical part describes types of business correspondence with regard to their formality. The practical part contains an analysis of foreign business correspondence from different business companies with regard to the language means of formality. The aim of this Bachelor thesis is to determine if business correspondence today complies with the language means of formality in practice.

Keywords: Business correspondence, salutations, complimentary clauses, levels of formality, passive and active voice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my advisor Prof. PhDr. Gabriela Miššíková, Ph.D., who was really patient and supportive. I would also like to thank four companies, who were willing to provide me with sample business correspondence for my analysis and, last but not least, my family and friends who have supported me throughout my studies.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	11
1 THEORY	12
1 DIVISION OF BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE.....	13
1.1 The Business Letter	13
1.2 Business E-mail	13
1.3 Business Fax	14
1.4 Business Memorandum	14
2 LAYOUT OF BUSINESS LETTER.....	15
2.1 Complete Adjustment of Business Letter	16
3 TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS	19
3.1 Letters Applied to Social Situations	19
3.1.1 Letter of Enquiry.....	19
3.1.2 Letter of Order	19
3.1.3 Letter of Offer.....	19
3.2 Letter Applied to Business Situations.....	20
3.2.1 Letter of Complaint and Adjustment	20
3.2.2 Letter of Application.....	20
3.2.3 Letter of Invitation	20
4 GLOBAL BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE WRITING	21
4.1 Business Correspondence in France	21
4.2 Business Correspondence in Bulgaria	21
5 LANGUAGE MEANS OF FORMALITY.....	22
5.1 Description of Formality in Business Correspondence	22
5.1.1 Description of Formality in Salutation and Complimentary clauses	22
5.1.2 Formality in Salutation	23
5.1.3 Formality in Complimentary clauses	23
5.2 Levels of Formality in Business Correspondence	24
5.2.1 Style and Tone of Business Correspondence.....	24
5.2.2 Formal Style.....	24
5.2.3 Semi-Formal Style	25
5.2.4 Informal Style	25
5.3 Grammatical Means of Formality.....	25
5.3.1 Passive and Active Voice	25

5.3.2	Direct and Indirect Speech.....	26
5.3.3	Complex and Simple Sentences	26
5.3.4	Lexical Verbs.....	27
5.3.5	Modal Verbs	27
5.3.6	Usage of Modal verbs in Different Functions	28
5.3.7	Usage of Modal Verbs in Different Functions	29
5.3.8	Formal Language Expressions in Business Correspondence	30
II	ANALYSIS	31
6	PRACTICAL PART	32
6.1	Collection of Business Letters and E-mails.....	33
6.2	Description of Business Companies	33
7	USAGE OF BUSINESS LETTERS IN COMPARISON TO BUSINESS E-MAILS.....	34
7.1	Structure of Business Letters	35
7.2	Structure of Business E-mails.....	36
8	ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE MEANS OF FORMALITY IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE IN CZECH AND FOREIGN COMPANIES.....	37
8.1	Salutation in Business Letters.....	37
8.2	Salutation in Business E-mails	39
8.3	Complimentary Clauses in Business letters.....	41
8.4	Complimentary Clauses in Business E-mails	42
9	ANALYSIS OF LEVELS OF FORMALITY IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE	45
9.1	Levels of Formality in Business letters.....	45
9.2	Levels of Formality in Business E-mails	47
10	ANALYSIS OF PASSIVE AND ACTIVE VOICE IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE.....	50
10.1	Passive and Active Voice in Business Letters	50
10.2	Passive and Active Voice in Business E-mails.....	52
11	ANALYSIS OF COMPLEX AND SIMPLE SENTENCES IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE	54
11.1	Complex and Simple Sentences in Business Letters	54
11.2	Complex and Simple Sentences in Business E-mails.....	56
12	ANLYSIS OF LEXICAL AND MODA L VERBS IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE.....	58

12.1 Lexical and Modal Verbs in Business Letters	58
12.2 Lexical and Modal Verbs in Business E-mails	60
13 SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS	62
CONCLUSION	65
BIBLIOGRAPHY	66
LIST OF FIGURES	68
LIST OF CHARTS	69
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	70
APPENDICES	71

INTRODUCTION

This Bachelor thesis focuses on the language means of formality in business correspondence with the aim of finding out if today's business correspondence contains the language means of formality, or not.

The most important question I want to focus on is if the language means of formality are used correctly in compliance to the set norms. The main reason I chose this topic is that I want to work in the business field and I considered language means of formality in business correspondence and their knowledge important. The Bachelor thesis is divided into two parts, the theoretical and the analytical. In the theory part, I will briefly describe business correspondence from the formal point of view; e.g. Structure of business correspondence or Levels of Formality. Other aspects that I will pay attention to are language means of formality; i.e. formality in Salutation and Complimentary Clauses, the Passive and Active Voice, Complex and Simple Sentences, etc.

The analytical part will contain Charts which will prove if the formal side of business correspondence is correctly applied. I will analyze the most frequently used means of formality in business correspondence. I addressed many companies for their business correspondence for my analysis, but most of them declined. Fortunately, four business companies - two Czech and two foreign companies agreed to provide me with sample business correspondence for analysis but data from business correspondence I received cannot be disclosed, only few contents of business letters and business e-mails can be showed in appendices.

To summarize, the main aim of my Bachelor thesis is to find language means of formality in collected business correspondence from different companies and to come to a conclusion as to whether language means of formality are still used or omitted.

I. THEORY

1 DIVISION OF BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

According to Ashley (Ashley, 2003) business correspondence in whatever form is the most important feature of business and business communication itself. Functional correspondence is very important way how to build successful business partnerships in business field. Business correspondence could be sometimes vague or misleading which can cause many problems. That is the reason why rules of business correspondence are important in order to avoid such problems. There are different types of business correspondence, like business letters, emails, memos or faxes. Nowadays, in the age of the Internet, the most common means of communication are electronic.

1.1 The Business Letter

The Business Letter is one of the most effective ways of business communication. Good business letters should contain the “Five Cs”. A business letter is supposed to be clear, complete, concise, courteous and grammatically correct. This type of communication can be used inside a company between employees and their employer or outside the company with purchasers, suppliers or potential investors. Ashley (Ashley, 2003) claims when writing a business letter the writer has to consider who will be reading this letter, what does the reader already know about the company, or what does the reader need to know.

1.2 Business E-mail

Ashley (Ashley, 2003) summarizes the email as a mean of communication between computers. She mentioned that e-mail usage has many advantages. One of them is for simple and active worldwide communication. When travelling, e-mails can be used daily on a notebook, tablet or even mobile phone. Ashley (Ashley, 2003) stresses that business e-mail usage also has disadvantages. According to Ashley (Ashley 2003), one of the most common disadvantage is the connection problem that goes with modern technology. Another disadvantage that Ashley (Ashley, 2003) considers important is the lack of privacy and security. When using e-mails, there is no guarantee that no-one else can get to delicate information. Ashley (Ashley, 2003, 20) stresses: “It is sometimes said that an e-mail message is like a postcard - anyone can read what you have written.”

1.3 Business Fax

Ashley (Ashley, 2003) points out that business faxes are useful when it is necessary to deliver the message very quickly or when the person to whom you are sending a message is not an e-mail user. Ashley (Ashley, 2003, 16) summarizes: “It is especially useful for documents containing diagrams or drawings. Like e-mail, a fax can be sent quickly, and to many different recipients, all at the same time. However, again like e-mail, the fax is an open system, i.e. correspondence can easily be accessed by outsiders, so it should not be used for confidential information.” Further, Ashley (Ashley, 2003) goes on to state that the style of a fax is very much alike to the style of a business letter, but faxes tend to be shorter and more direct than business letters.

1.4 Business Memorandum

According to *www.writeexpress.com* the memorandum, also known as a memo, is described as a communication between employees inside a company. There are many reasons why a business memo is used. They are used in fields which involve conveying information such as policy changes, promotions or other personnel changes, a project status update, or increasingly, offering products and services. Another way memoranda are utilized is for requests. As Ashley (Ashley, 2003) says, this type of communication is not as safe as face-to-face communication. There is the need to consider delicate information while using a memo. Like a business letter, a memo also has a formal style of writing. The main point of the memo is to be brief and clear about the message of the sender. Memoranda are not used as much as e-mail nowadays.

2 LAYOUT OF BUSINESS LETTER

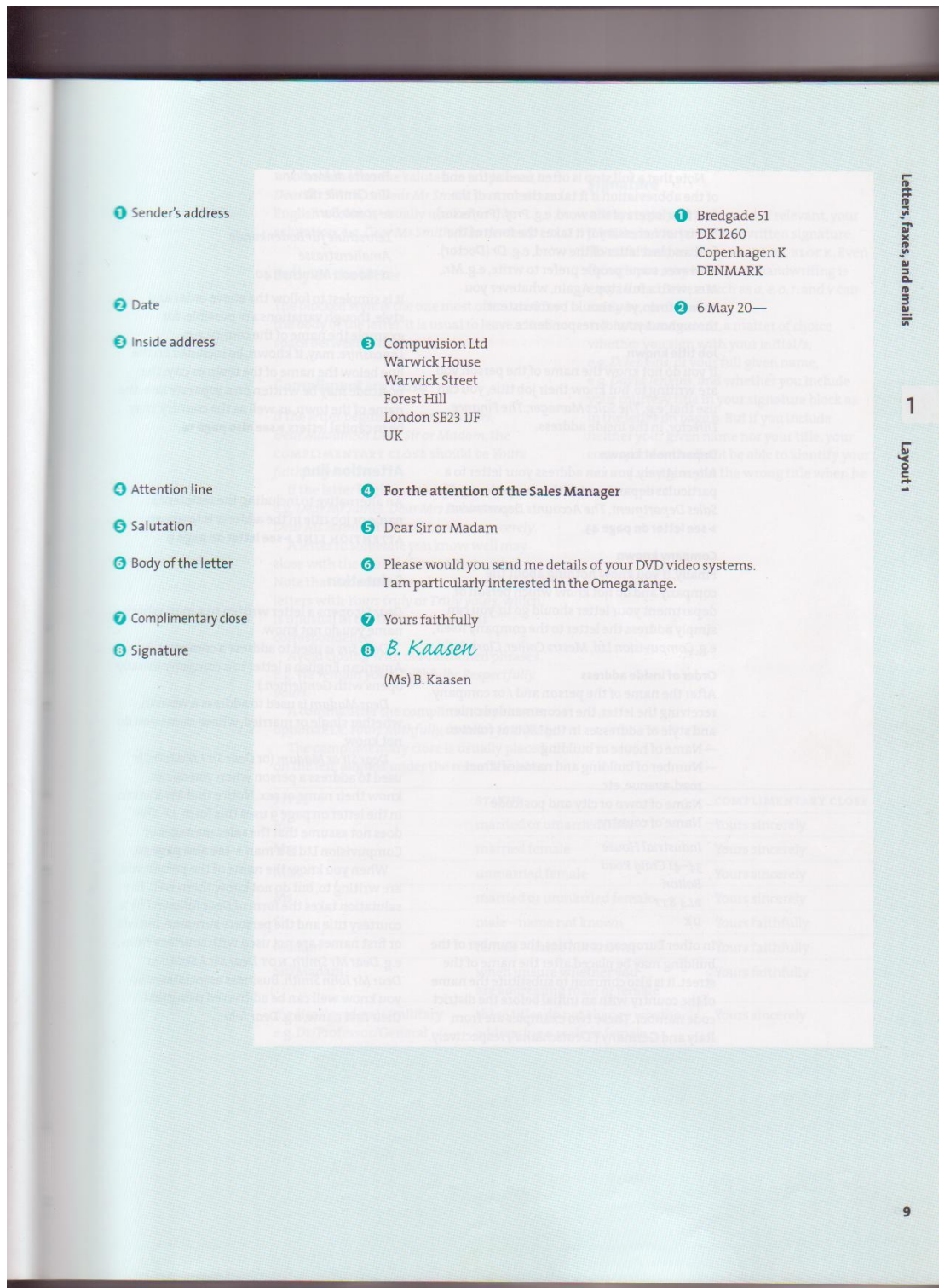


Figure 1: Layout of a business letter (Ashley, 2003)

2.1 Complete Adjustment of Business Letter

According to Klímová (Klímová, 2009), the typical formal adjustment of English business letter is full justification. The most typical features of business letters are their open punctuation which concerns date, address and salutation.

Address:

When writing a business letter to a natural person, abbreviations are used before proper names:

Mr. (addressing a man)

Mrs. (addressing a married woman)

Miss (addressing a single woman)

Ms. - The most common abbreviation used in business letters while addressing a woman, because we do not know if the woman we are writing to is married or single.

Messrs. - This type of abbreviation is used when the title of the company involves more than one surname.

If the business letter is addressed to a company itself, some of these abbreviations are used:

Bros. (Brothers)

Ltd. (Limited)

Inc. (Incorporated)

Business letters can also include transportation data:

Registered

Airmail

Urgent

Personal

If the surname of a certain employee is known, it can be written under the address:

Attention: Mr. P Smith

Attn.: Mr. P Smith or, **For the attention of Mr. P Smith**. Other information that can be written under the address is **Private of Confidential** if the letter is to be delivered into the own hands. If the person, whom the letter is concerned is not known, there is a necessary usage of titles **The Secretary** or **The Manager**.

Date:

There are many possibilities how to write the date on a business letter. For instance,

6 June 2012

6th June 2012

6. 6. 2012 or 6-6-2012

Salutation phrases:

Dear Sir,

Dear Madam,

Dear Mrs. Smith

Dear Mr. Green

Dear Sirs, (when addressing a company as a whole)

There is no coma after addressing the individual. The following text starts with a capital letter. Other things that can appear when addressing someone is their academic title such as *Ph.D.*, *Dr.* or *Prof.* These titles are used only with names such as *Dear Prof. Black*

Complimentary clauses:

Complimentary clauses are always written with a capital letter and are followed by a coma after it.

Yours faithfully,

Yours sincerely,

Yours truly,

Sincerely yours,

Truly yours

Sincerely,

Klímová (Klímová, 2009) stresses that a signature - needed for the authenticity of the document, is at the end of each business letter. First is the name of the person, written on a computer, and under this is the place for the handwritten signature. Another thing that can be a part of the business letter is an attachment. These attachments can be designated as *Enclosures* or we can use the abbreviations *Enclo*, *Ene* or *Enes*. Other abbreviations which

can appear in business letters are *P.S* (Postscript) or *N.B.* (Nota bene). Business letters can also contain copies which are indicated by the abbreviation *cc*.

EXECUTIVE TRAINING VIDEOS
•———— 1048 Wiltshire Avenue ———•
San Diego
California 92107

Your Ref: BE/HT
Our Ref: MS/IP

12 June 1999

Ms. E J Harding
Johnson Engineering
Offley Industrial Park
Birmingham B9 6HL

Dear Ms. Harding

TRAINING VIDEOS

Thank you for your letter of 3 June enquiring about our range of training videos.

Unfortunately the video you require is temporarily out of stock, but we are expecting some more in the near future. I will contact you again as soon as they arrive.

You may be interested in other items from our product range, and I am enclosing our latest brochure and price list.

Thank you for your interest in our training videos and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Robert Kapferer

Robert Kapferer
Sales Manager

Enc. Current brochure and price list.

Figure 2: Layout of Business Letter according to formal adjustment (Emmerson, 2009)

3 TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

There are many authors dealing with business letters. In my opinion, Naterop's (Naterop, 2002) description of business letters is very useful. There are letters that are applied to business situations but other types of business letters are also applied to social situations. There are many types of business letters but I have chosen those that I consider useful in the business field.

3.1 Letters Applied to Social Situations

Letters applied to social situations include Letter of Enquiry, Letter of Order and Letter of Offer.

3.1.1 Letter of Enquiry

Naterop (Naterop, 2002) explains that a letter of enquiry is a letter that has the aim of requesting information. She also points out that the tone in which the letter is written is also very important. If the tone is friendlier, it would be easier for the person that the letter is addressed to, to provide the information to the sender. There are different types of information that can be asked for, e.g. information about transport of goods or information about the availability of supply can appear in a letter of enquiry.

3.1.2 Letter of Order

Naterop (Naterop, 2002), stresses that an order letter has its own form, and is much easier to write than other types of letters. A letter of order is also the most useful letter in the business field. The most important thing considering letter of order is to avoid spelling errors and grammatical mistakes. When writing a letter of order, there is a need to impress suppliers and such errors may result in their loss.

3.1.3 Letter of Offer

According to Naterop (Naterop, 2002), letters of offer are sent when a company wants to introduce a new product on the market or to offer current products to new or potential customers. She also explains that letters of offer are often sent without preceding enquiry. Naterop (Naterop 2002) also stresses that a letter of offer should be written in an attractive way to make a good impression.

3.2 Letter Applied to Business Situations

Letters applied to business situations include Letter of Complaint and Adjustment, Letter of Application and Letter of Invitation.

3.2.1 Letter of Complaint and Adjustment

Naterop (Naterop, 2002), denotes the letter of complaint as the way to solve a problem or to deal with difficult situations. She also points out that, when writing a letter of complaint; there is a need to be very clear about what the sender is saying. Business companies always send a letter of complaint when other options have failed, (i.e. by e-mails or mobile phones). On the other hand, a letter of adjustment is sent when a mistake occurs on the side of the business company and the problem situation needs to be fixed. According to Naterop (Naterop, 2002), the letter of adjustment has to contain an apology and compensation for damage that has been caused. She also stresses that the letter of adjustment has to contain the main terms of how the problem that occurred will be solved.

3.2.2 Letter of Application

Naterop (Naterop, 2002) indicates that a letter of application is sent to a business company when the sender is applying for a job position. One of the things that Naterop (Naterop, 2002) points out is that writing a letter of application is like selling skills and abilities to the company. When writing a letter of application, the person should make an impression on the addressee. Naterop (Naterop, 2002) also claims that there are two types of letter of application. A solicited application, which is in reaction to an advertisement from the business company and an unsolicited application, that is send without the advertisement that the business company offers.

3.2.3 Letter of Invitation

According to Bond (Bond, 2010), a letter of invitation should be formal and written in the first person. Even though invitations are often made by telephone, there are occasions when writing a letter of invitation is necessary. He also claims when such an invitation is sent, it is very polite to respond. Bond (Bond, 2005) provides that every formal invitation should include the abbreviation ''RSVP'' which, in French, means (*Répondez vous s'ils vous plait*), or - Please Reply, in English.

4 GLOBAL BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE WRITING

In the practical part of my Bachelor thesis, I will analyze business letters from different companies. There are also letters taken from business companies with their seat in France and Bulgaria. There are slight differences in the formal view of this business correspondence that need to be mentioned.

4.1 Business Correspondence in France

French business letters are very formal. The French are known for following the rules in business etiquette and business correspondence. According to the website *www.french-linguistic.co.uk* writing a business letter depends on one's knowledge of formal formulae. Business writing in France emphasizes the high level of formality. The business letters are always direct and strictly go to the point. If the letters are written in English, like the letters I received from the French company, there are slight differences in the style of the letter. French businessmen use direct questions instead of indirect more often and modal verbs usage in French business correspondence is very frequent. Modern French business letters still retain the same level of formality.

4.2 Business Correspondence in Bulgaria

Bulgarian culture relating to business writing respects formality and abides by rules very strictly. Business letters always start with a salutation like *Dear Doctor*; Bulgarian businessmen always use a formal degree title in salutations. Businessmen in Bulgaria are very often influenced by personal affect, which means that the tone of the business letter always changes. The sender of the letter never goes strictly to the point but uses long and complex sentences to sound more formal - but this could lead to misunderstandings between the sender and recipient. A typical feature of a Bulgarian business letter is that it is always sent with appendixes such as business cards, but only if the letter is sent by post. In comparison to French business writing, businessmen in Bulgaria have the tendency to write business letters less formally after the first communication with business partners, clients or potential investors.

5 LANGUAGE MEANS OF FORMALITY

This part of Bachelor thesis includes description of language means of formality in business correspondence.

5.1 Description of Formality in Business Correspondence

Formality in business letters could be described in many ways. I have chosen a few authors dealing with formality in business letters. According to Urbanová (Urbanová, 2002), formality is described from the stylistics point of view. She describes differences between formality and informality in different situations. Halliday (Halliday, 2005), in comparison with Urbanová, deals with formality differently. He stresses that formality depends on relationships between people that take part in the business field. Usage of formality results from different situations. Leech and Svartvik (Leech and Svartvik, 2002), define formality as: "... the type of language we publicly use for some serious purpose."

Crystal and Davy (Crystal and Davy, 1969) associated formality with social status or different social situations. They described that one person (addresser or addressee) is always dominant and controls the level of formality. According to Holmes (Holmes, 1992), formality mainly depends on social distance. She stresses that the way you address someone is very important in terms of formality. Holmes (Holmes, 1992), stresses that when writing a business letter, it is very important to have special knowledge and practical skills. Formality in business letters can be different between cultures. I received business letters from France and Bulgaria as I mentioned above and the usage of formality in business letters is slightly different from those written by native speakers.

Formality in business letters is also described as an important part that cannot be omitted. In the analytical part of my Bachelor thesis, I will prove that this statement is not in accordance with the truth. Modern communication will substitute the old-fashioned one, concerning business letters because we live in a time of increasing informality.

5.1.1 Description of Formality in Salutation and Complimentary clauses

According to Brücknerová (Brücknerová, 2010), salutation in business letters is a very important part and the usage of *Dear Sir* or *Dear Madam*, is necessary. She also claims that the usage of such formulations depends on the relationship between both sides. People

who cooperate with each other for a long time use expressions like *My Dear Doctor John* or *My Dear Professor Emma*. Naterop (Naterop, 2002), says that the usage of salutation and complimentary clauses is a necessary part of business letters. She stresses that the only exception are sales letters, written in an advertising style.

5.1.2 Formality in Salutation

Many authors deal with business letters and all of them indicate that when writing a business letter, it is necessary to pay attention to the formal side of the letter. Emmerson (Emmerson, 2009), summarizes that *Dear Mr. Grey* is used when the recipient is known. When the recipient of the letter is not known there is a necessary usage of *Dear Sir/Madam*. *Dear Sir/Madam* is considered as the highest level of formality in business letters. He also stresses when the sender of the letter does not know if the person is married or single, the abbreviation *Dear Ms.* is used to avoid any misunderstanding. One of the things that Emmerson (Emmerson, 2009), stresses is that usage of formal salutations such as *Dear Gentleman* is probably old-fashioned but will make an impression on the recipient. *Dear Miss* or *Dear Mrs.* is used when the person writing a business letter is completely sure about the family status of the recipient. One of the most common mistakes people make is to write salutations like *Dear John*, or *Dearest Martha*, ... thinking that a salutation like that will make an impression. Salutations like that are used in informal letters only.

5.1.3 Formality in Complimentary clauses

As mentioned earlier, complimentary clauses should be used at the end of the letter. The position of the complimentary clause depends on the style of the letter but it is usually placed in the left corner of the page. The complimentary clause is a sign of formality - even it is just two words, but the usage of such a clause indicates that the sender knows about the rules of formality set for business letters. When using salutations like *Dear Sir* or *Dear Madam*, it is obvious that there is no connection between the sender and recipient. But with complimentary clauses like *Yours sincerely*, *Sincerely Yours*, *Yours faithfully* or *Truly yours*, it is evident that when using some of these complimentary clauses, the sender knows the business partner quite well and the business relationship is well built.

5.2 Levels of Formality in Business Correspondence

According to Cleary (Cleary, 2004), the term style is a synonym for the way of writing. She stresses three main properties you should think of when writing. Style that is used when writing business letters should be convenient to the recipient; the message should be clear. Cleary (Cleary, 2004), points out that if the business letter is supposed to sound formal then the sender's writing skills should be acceptable. There are three main levels of formality in business writing, Formal, Semi-formal or Neutral, and Informal (Colloquial).

5.2.1 Style and Tone of Business Correspondence

According to Verdonk (Verdonk, 2005), style is defined as production. He also stresses that there is always purpose in every style and all is put into context. Style is defined in many ways but is understood as a construction that makes the business letter. Verdonk (Verdonk, 2005), summarizes: "... style is the same meaning in different words." Halliday (Halliday, 2005), points out that every style is connected with formality. The term style is described in many ways, but there is no complete definition of it. After defining the style of business correspondence there is the need to choose the right tone of the letter. It has been said that the tone of the letter depends on the relationship between the sender and the recipient. The tone of the letter should help the reader to understand the message.

5.2.2 Formal Style

The main difference between formal and informal styles is that usage of the formal style in business writing depends on the situation. The sender of the letter has to wisely choose the words that will be used; the syntax and also the whole tone of the letter should sound formal. Another sign of formality is the usage of modal verbs such as *can*, *could*, *should* or *shall*. What also sounds very formal in business letters are complex and long sentences. Business letters written in the third person are also very formal. What should be avoided are abbreviations used in informal style (i.e. *asap*, *lol*, or *np.*). Leech and Svartvik (Leech and Svartvik, 2002) claim, that usage of the personal pronoun *one* is more formal than the usage of the pronoun *you*. Leech and Svartvik (Leech and Svartvik, 2002) stress: "Formal written language often goes with an impersonal style, i.e. one in which the sender avoids personal references to the recipient by using passives or abstract nouns."

5.2.3 Semi-Formal Style

The Semi-formal or Neutral style is an inter-stage between the Formal and Informal styles. Writing in such a style sounds friendlier but the language means of formality are close to the formal style. Long (but not complex) sentences are used as are modal verbs. The tone of the letter is changed. It sounds more comfortable and when the recipient reads such a business letter it is obvious that there is a business relationship between the sender and the recipient. The sender and the recipient do not know each other but they have already communicated several times. The message of such a letter is clear and goes to the point directly.

5.2.4 Informal Style

Leech and Svartvik (Leech and Svartvik, 2002) summarize: “Informal language, also called Colloquial, is the language of ordinary conversation, of personal letters, and of private interaction in general.” In comparison with the formal style, there is an obvious difference in its written form. Business letters written in an informal style contain broken syntax or slang. What is also typical for the informal style is that the whole letter is written in the second person. It is always addressed to someone. The Informal style uses short sentences, the message is very clear and the tone is very amicable. Typical features for informal style are abbreviations (i.e. *Tv, Asap*).

5.3 Grammatical Means of Formality

In this part will be described grammatical means of formality including Passive and Active voice, Lexical and Modal verbs, Direct and Indirect speech, Complex and Simple sentences and Formal language expressions in business correspondence.

5.3.1 Passive and Active Voice

According to Leech and Svartvik (Leech and Svartvik, 2002), the passive voice is a sign of formality in business letters. Passives contain the construction “*be + past participle*”. Common features of passives are that the sentence starts with an introductory *it*, avoiding the agent from the sentence sounds more formal. The Passive voice is often used in business correspondence, i.e. *a mistake was made*; the sender says that there is some problem that occurred but does not show who is responsible for it. Usage of the Passive Voice also serves to emphasize someone or something more than the agent. The Active Voice differs from the Passive in the way that the sender of the letter takes responsibility as

the agent of the sentence; i.e. *I did this* or *I will take responsibility for these problems*. Sentences used in the Active Voice are direct and clear. It has been said that Active Voice usage is more polite because the sender of the letter sounds direct and self-confident but from the formality point of view, the Passive Voice is more appropriate.

5.3.2 Direct and Indirect Speech

Leech and Svartvik (Leech and Svartvik, 2002), say that Indirect Speech is considered to be more formal than Direct Speech; e.g. *It has been said that the contract needs to be rewritten*. The structure of Indirect Speech that sounds formal contains quotative frames; e.g. *It has been said, She said, He said*; conjunctions such as *that* or *if*. Yule (Yule, 2004), stresses that shifts that appear in Indirect Speech are formal and indicate politeness; e.g. tense shift *am/was, can/could*; change of personal pronouns *I/he, you/her*; change of demonstratives *this/that*; shift of adverbials of place from *here/there* and, the most important feature is change of word order, from *Have you/They have* or *Can we/They could*. Yule (Yule, 2004), also points out that the main function of Indirect Speech in business correspondence is to emphasize the main thought of the sender. He also stresses the main functions of Indirect and Direct Speech; i.e. narrative and dramatic function for Direct Speech. According to Yule (Yule, 2004), Direct Speech is considered to be less formal; e.g. *Lend me some money*.

5.3.3 Complex and Simple Sentences

According to the rules of formality, complex sentences are considered to be more formal than simple sentences. Ashley (Ashley, 2003), points out that short sentences are typical for e-mails or memorandum. She points out when using complex sentences there is no need to repeat the same words and also connection between words is necessary to state the main idea. On the other hand, Boros (Boros, 1998), points out that usage of complex sentences in business writing might be complicated. She stresses that usage of simple sentences is more understandable for the recipient and also there will be no misunderstanding. Boros (Boros, 1998), adds that when the sender of the business letter uses complex sentences, the letter has to be understandable for the recipient too. Boros (Boros, 1998) stresses: “Complex sentences often express complicated, interrelated ideas and nuances and readers do not grasp the full meaning of such sentences.”

5.3.4 Lexical Verbs

Lexical Verbs, also known as Full or Main Verbs, are considered to be very formal and understandable for the reader of a business letter; (*e.g. know, see, and learn.*) Lexical Verbs are very common in business writing. Considering the business letters that I received from foreign companies written by non-native speakers, it is necessary to avoid words belonging to the informal style. In the practical part of my Bachelor thesis, this will be analyzed in more detail. It has been said that whatever type of sentence is used in business writing, verbs play the crucial role in understanding the meaning.

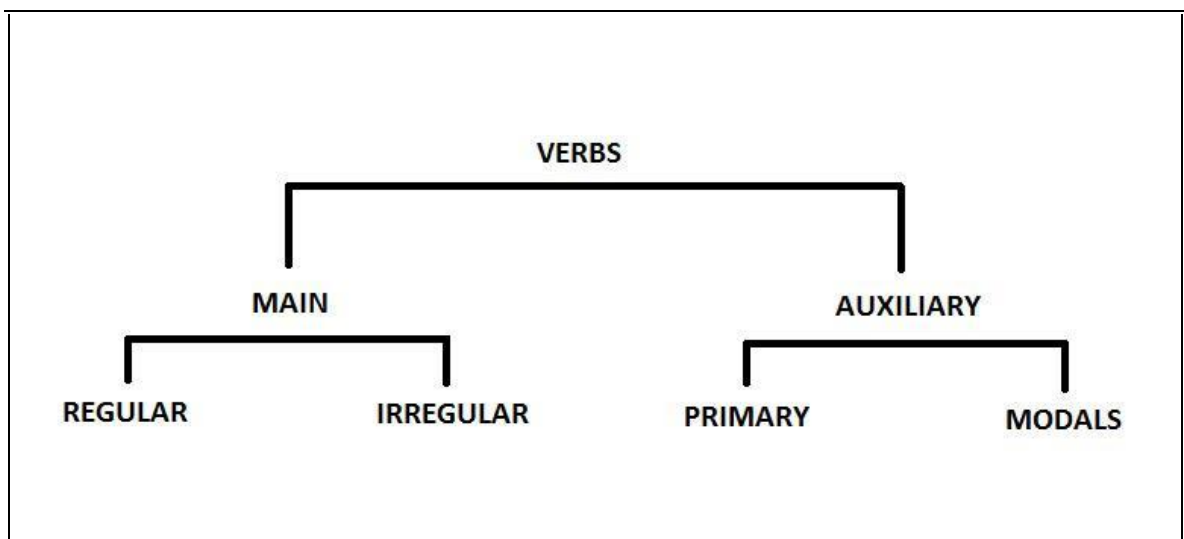


Figure 3: Classification of verbs (Thesis Author)

5.3.5 Modal Verbs

Modality is considered to be a tool for formality in business correspondence. As mentioned in the part “*Formal style*” the main modal verbs are *can, could, may, might, ought to, should* and many others. Every modal verb has a different function considering formality in business correspondence; *e.g. Can you lend me some money?* (Sounds more informal) *or Could you lend me some money?* (Sounds more formal). According to Leech and Svartvik (Leech and Svartvik, 2002), modal verbs can appear in different function and form. In figures below there is a practical example of this.

5.3.6 Usage of Modal verbs in Different Functions

Modal	Function	Form in the Present	Form in the Past
Can	To show ability	I can run 10 miles.	I could run 10 miles when I was young.
	To suggest a possibility or give an option	Students can pre-enroll in classes.	
	To ask for or to give permission	Can you call me? You can leave now.	
	To show impossibility	It cannot be Jim standing there. He went away for the weekend.	
Could	To show past ability		I could run 10 miles when I was young.
	To ask a polite question	Could I call you?	
	To show possibility	Why isn't Mary here? She could be busy.	Why wasn't Mary at the party last night? She could have been busy.
	To show impossibility	He could not be here at the party. He is out of town.	He could not have been at the party last night. He was out of town.
	To suggest a possibility/opportunity or give an option	You could try going this way.	You could have tried going that way.
May	To ask for or to give permission (formal)	May I call you?	
	To show possibility	The instructor may come to class late today.	The instructor may have come to class late yesterday.
Might	To show possibility	The instructor might come to class late today.	The instructor might have come to class late yesterday.
Should	To show advisability	You should try the new restaurant downtown.	You should have tried the new restaurant downtown.
	To show obligation	I should renew my driver's license.	I should have renewed my driver's license.
	To show expectation	You should receive my letter in two days.	You should have received my letter in two days.
Ought to	To show advisability	You ought to exercise regularly.	You ought to have exercised regularly.
	To show obligation	I ought to register to vote.	I ought to have registered to vote by October.
	To show expectation	You ought to receive my letter in two days.	You ought to have received my letter two days ago.

Figure 4: Overview of modal verbs, their function and form
(Lange Ellen, Lange Janet, 1999) taken from www.wordpress.com

5.3.7 Usage of Modal Verbs in Different Functions

Had better	To show advisability	We had better leave. It is getting late.	
Must	To show probability or to make a logical assumption	Janice must be out this evening. She does not answer the telephone.	Janice must have been out last evening. She did not answer her telephone.
	To show necessity	I must call my parent tonight.	I was late for the meeting because I had to call my parents last night.
	To show prohibition	You must not cross the street on red light.	
Have to	To show necessity	Mike has to make up the class he missed.	Mike had to make up the class he had missed.
	To show lack of necessity	I am glad that I do not have to cook tonight.	I did not have to cook last night.
Will	To indicate future time	He will leave for the plane at 7 a.m.	
	To make a promises or to show willingness	The federal government will provide assistance to the hurricane victims.	
	To state a general truth	The new car they have developed will run on either gasoline or ethanol.	
	To ask a polite question	Will you help me with these boxes?	
Would	To ask a polite question	Would you help me with these boxes?	
	To indicate a repeated action in the past		When I lived in LA, I would go to the beach every day.
	To indicate future time in the sentence that is in the past		Mark promised that he would help me with my math homework.
Would rather	To show a preference	I would rather go to summer school than graduate late.	
Would like	To express a desire	I would like to go to medical school.	I would have liked to go to medical school.

Figure 5: Overview of modal verbs, part two, their function and form
(Lange Ellen, Lange Janet, 1999) taken from www.wordpress.com

5.3.8 Formal Language Expressions in Business Correspondence

According to Emmerson (Emmerson, 2009), usage of formal language is necessary in opening and closing remarks in different types of letters; e.g.

Business letters asking for advice; Opening remarks: *I would appreciate if you could give me some advice/I would be grateful for your advice/Could you possibly offer your advice.*
Closing remarks: *I look forward to receiving your advice/ I would appreciate it if you could give me your advice as soon as possible.*

Business letter of Apology; Opening remarks: *I am writing to apologize for/How can I apologize enough for/I must apologize profusely for.*

Closing remarks: *Once again, sincerest apologies for/I hope my apologies will be accepted.*

Business letter of Invitation: Opening remarks; *We would be honored if you can come/You are invited to attend/I cordially invite you.*

Closing remarks: *We would be grateful if you could come/Please indicate whether you will be able to attend.*

Business letter including refusing; Opening remarks: *We thank you for your recent invitation/I regret to inform you.*

Closing remarks: *I am sorry to miss the opportunity/Thank you again for your invitation.*

Business letter requesting information: Opening remarks: *I am writing in connection with.*

Closing remarks: *I look forward to receiving/I would appreciate it if you could inform me as soon as possible.*

Business letter giving information; Opening remarks: *I am writing in reply to your letter asking for information about/In reply to your query.*

Closing remarks: *I hope I have been of some assistance to you/Please inform me if I can be of any further assistance/Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.*

II. ANALYSIS

6 PRACTICAL PART

The main objective of this Bachelor thesis is to pursue and present the results of an analysis focused on a range of language means used to express various levels of formality. Firstly, I want to investigate if the writing of business letters still preserves or is replaced by writing business e-mails. The main aim is to find out if businessmen follow the rules of formality. Secondly, I want to investigate if the rules of business letters layouts are followed in business correspondence as well as in the structure of emails. People do not want to complicate communication and try to be less formal in business correspondence. I assume that my analysis will prove that traditional letter writing is on the downslope; to be more specific, respectful terms of address which are described in the theoretical part. Another aspect I will focus on are language means of formality used in business correspondence. Analytical part will contain detail analysis of the most frequent language means of formality in analyzed letters and e-mails; e.g. Complex and Simple sentences, Lexical and Modal Verbs, Passive and Active voice, and last but not least Salutation and Complimentary Clause. In my analysis I will scrutinize each letter and email I collected from companies which do not wish to be named. I will concentrate on all information and analyze them in detail. The results will be processed and showed in Charts in percentages. Concretely, what percentage, i.e. how many companies are particular about the use of language means of formality in business correspondence and, on the other hand, how many companies are not.

Some of the contents of business letters and emails that I collected will be documented in the Appendices. All of these letters and emails will not include information about the companies in order to be discreet with respect to the owners of the company who provided me with those materials for analysis.

6.1 Collection of Business Letters and E-mails

The collection of the materials that I needed for my Bachelor thesis was the most difficult part. I collected business letters and e-mails from 4 companies that do not wish to be named. I wrote e-mails to many Czech companies with a plea for sample business letters and e-mails for my research but most of them rejected me due to the “leakage of delicate information” relating to the company. I realized that a big part of my family work in Bulgaria in a significant corporation. I was successful and I received business letters and e-mails from them. I have also collected business letters and e-mails from one French company, where I worked two years ago. I have to say that foreign companies were more willing to provide me with the materials than Czech ones. On the other hand, I am not allowed to publish all letters and e-mails in my Bachelor thesis, only some contents of letters and e-mails in appendices.

6.2 Description of Business Companies

It was mentioned earlier that the business companies I received the business correspondence from wish to remain anonymous. On the other hand, I can provide information about the business field that these companies work in. The business correspondence was received from two Czech and two foreign companies. One of the Czech companies works in the business field of transportation and the second in the business field of forklifts and cargo handling technology. One of the foreign companies has its seat in France. This company is a distinguished marketing company with an orientation on PR services. The other company has its seat in Bulgaria. This Bulgarian company is oriented on metallurgy and metalworking machinery and equipment. I received 25 letters and 60 e-mails from Czech companies and 40 letters and 50 e-mails from foreign companies. I should point out that the business letters and e-mails received from foreign and Czech business companies are written by non-native speakers.

7 USAGE OF BUSINESS LETTERS IN COMPARISON TO BUSINESS E-MAILS

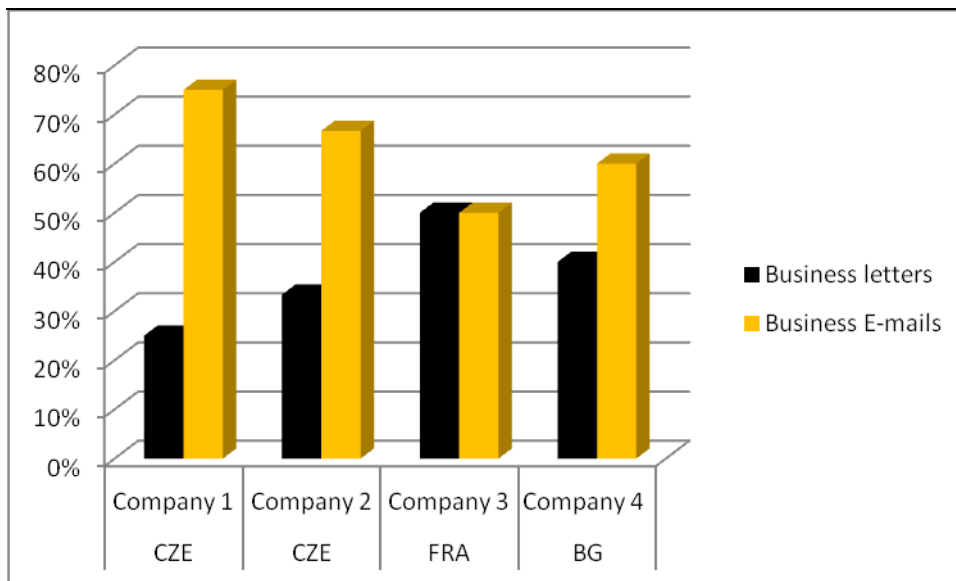


Chart 1: Usage of business letters in comparison to business e-mails (Thesis author)

Chart No.1 provides information about the usage of business letters in comparison to business e-mails in Czech and foreign companies. The findings show that e-mail usage dominates over business letters. In Czech companies, business e-mails dominates more than in foreign companies. The first Czech company deals in forklifts and handling technology. My research proves that business e-mails are used in a ratio of 75% to 25% usage of formality in business letters. The other Czech company is oriented on transportation and in this case, it is obvious that there is a superiority of business e-mails of 67%, with business letters taking only 33%. In comparison to the Czech companies, my analysis shows that there are differences in business correspondence usage. Analysis shows that the French business company oriented on the marketing field uses business correspondence equally. The Bulgarian business company oriented on metallurgy and metalworking machinery and equipment also uses business e-mails more than letters. Research shows that business e-mails are used in 60% and business letters in 40% of the time. Analysis proves that foreign companies use business letters more than Czech companies.

7.1 Structure of Business Letters

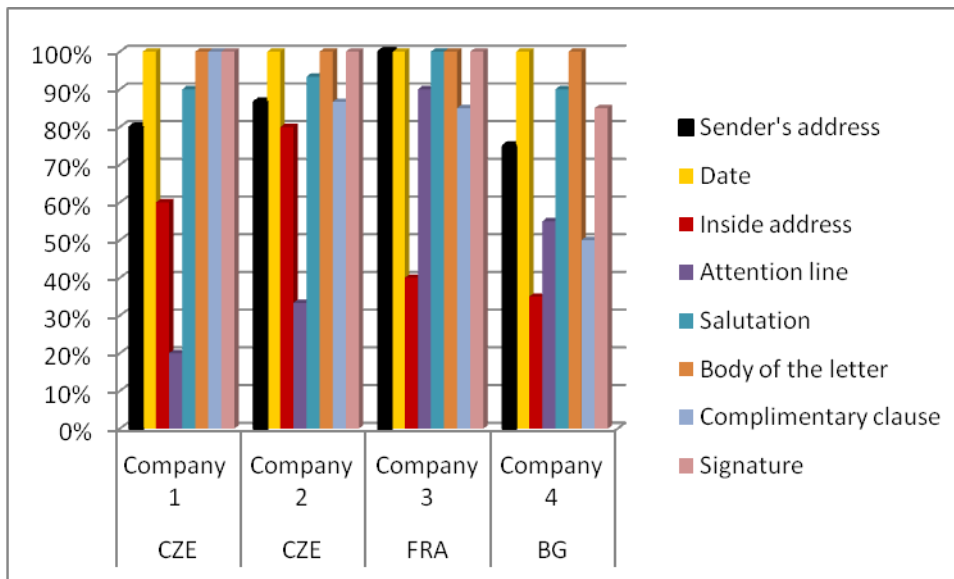


Chart 2: Structure of business letters according to Ashley's (Ashley, 2003) layout
(Thesis author)

Chart No.2 shows the analysis of structure of business letters according to Ashley's (Ashley, 2003) layout. As mentioned in the theoretical part, it is really important for the sender to keep all the information that is necessary for business letters. My analysis proves that all companies, Czech and foreign, omitted lots of information. The *Attention line* appeared in only 7 letters in both Czech companies; the *Senders address* appears in 21 letters out of 25; the *Inside address* appeared only in 18 letters out of 25. The *Complimentary clause* is omitted only in 2 letters from both Czech companies. Parts, like *Date*, *Salutation*, *Body of the letter* and *Signature* appeared in all letters from Czech companies. Business letters from the French company contain almost all parts according to Ashley's layout (Ashley, 2003). *Inside addresses* appeared only in 8 letters and the *Attention line* in 18 letters out of 20. On the other hand, business letters from the Bulgarian company lacked a lot of parts, such as *Inside address* that appeared only in 7 letters out of 20. The *Sender's address* occurred in 15 letters and the *Attention line* only in 11 cases. An interesting fact is that 2 business letters were completely without *Salutation* and only 10 letters contained a formal *Complimentary clause*. *Salutation* and *Complimentary clauses* will be analyzed later, in detail. The *Signature* was absent in only 3 business letters.

7.2 Structure of Business E-mails

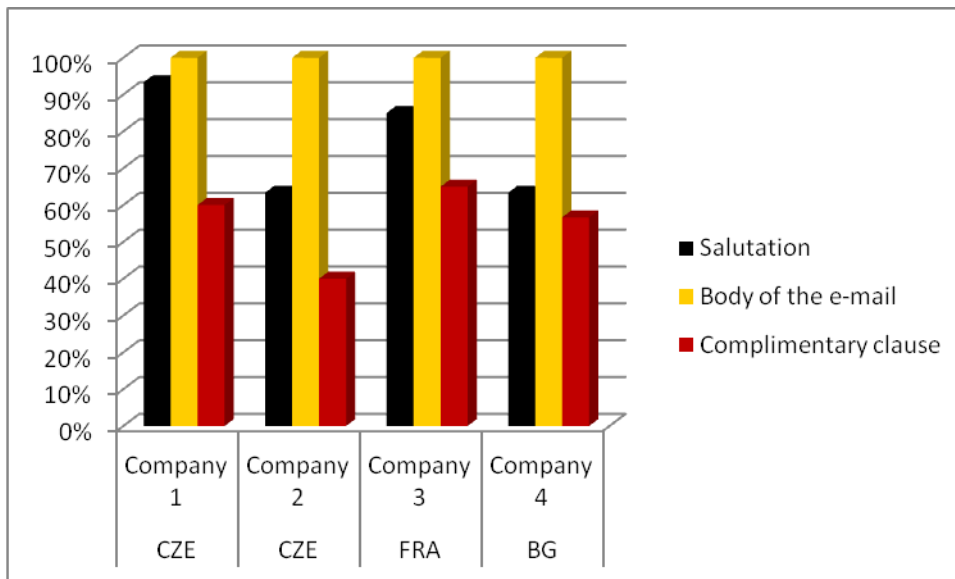


Chart 3: Structure of business e-mails (Thesis author)

The findings in Chart No.3 are oriented on the structure of business e-mails. I received 120 business e-mails from all companies. Both the Czech and foreign companies were more willing to provide me with e-mails than letters for analysis. Research proves that senders of business e-mails tend to follow the rules of formality more than senders of business letters. Both Czech companies contained a formal *Salutation* in 47 e-mails out of 60 which is a large majority. All business e-mails from Czech and foreign companies contained the *Body of the e-mails*. Formal *Complimentary clauses* in Czech companies occurred in 30 business e-mails out of 60; *Complimentary clauses* in business e-mails from foreign companies appeared in 30 business e-mails. Business e-mails from the French company did not contain formal *Complimentary clause* in 6 cases and formal *Salutation* appear in 17 e-mails out of 20. E-mails sent from the Bulgarian company mostly did not contain the formal *Salutation*. Czech companies, in comparison to foreign companies, had equal standard of business e-mails.

8 ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE MEANS OF FORMALITY IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE IN CZECH AND FOREIGN COMPANIES

The findings on language means of formality include an analysis of *Salutation* and *Complimentary clauses* in business letters and e-mails from four companies. Charts No.4, 5, 6 and 7 provide detailed analyses. The analysis shows if the language means of formality are correctly used in business letters and e-mails in accordance with theory.

8.1 Salutation in Business Letters

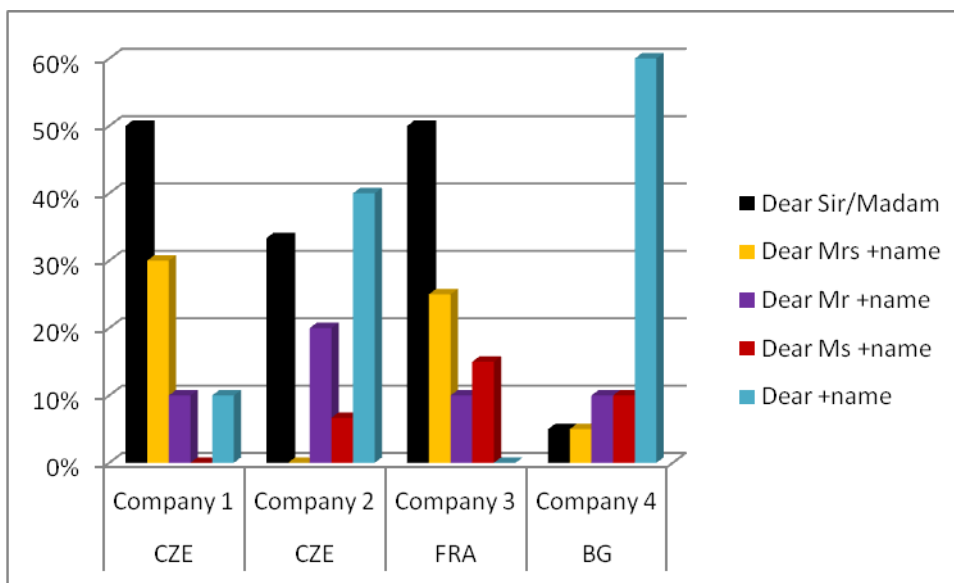


Chart 4: Salutations in business letters (Thesis author)

I collected 65 business letters from four companies. I made an analysis of *Salutation* as an indicator of formality in all letters I received. One of the Czech companies dealing with forklifts and handling technology provided me 10 letters which were mostly addressed to potential clients and foreign purchasers. *Dear Sir/ Madam* appeared in 5 letters addressed to an unknown recipient; *Dear Mrs. + name* appeared in only 3 letters out of 10. *Salutation* like *Dear Mrs. + name* were used with first names instead of surnames, e.g. *Dear Mrs. Marion* or *Dear Mrs. Emma*. Only 1 letter was addressed to a man *Dear Mr. + name* and also the first name was used; e.g. *Dear Mr. Dylan*. None of the business letters contained the *Salutation Dear Ms. + name* and only 1 letter included *Dear + name*. As the graph shows there is a visible difference between the letters from the first and second Czech company. The second Czech company is oriented on transportation. Business letters from

this company were mostly letters of complaint sent to suppliers. This company provided me with 15 letters and only 5 of them contained the *Salutation Dear Sir/Madam*. *Dear Mrs. + name* did not appear in any letter and it shows that the Foreign Department communicated predominantly with men. The salutation *Dear Mr. + name*, was applied in 3 letters. This salutation also contained the first name instead of the surname: e.g. *Dear Mr. Gunborg*, etc. *Dear Ms. + name* was used only in 1 letter and in this case it appeared with the surname; e.g. *Dear Ms. Brown*. The salutation *Dear + name* appeared in 6 business letters which shows that rules of formality set for writing business letters were not followed. To compare Czech companies from the point of view of formality, the rules of formality were not followed to the high degree they were supposed to.

The French company oriented on marketing provided with me 20 business letters. As I described in my theoretical part, French businessmen are strict about rules of formality. The *Salutation Dear Sir/Madam* appeared in 10 letters out of 20 which shows a high level of formality. *Dear Mrs. + name*, was applied in 5 business letters addressed to the same women from the Human Resources Department. All 5 letters contained the surname. *Dear Mr. + name* were used in 2 letters addressed to the CEO of the marketing company and *Dear Ms. + name* were used in 3 cases in which the sender of the letter wanted to show politeness about the marriage status of the women addressed. The salutation *Dear + name* did not appear in any business letter, which shows that French business letters kept to a high level of formality.

The 20 letters that I received from a Bulgarian company were written for customers all around the world. The theoretical part of my Bachelor thesis includes information about Bulgarian business correspondence and it has been said that when the academic title of the recipient is known, it is always used. None of the letters I was given contained the academic title of the addressed person. The salutation *Dear Sir/Madam* was applied in 3 letters out of 20. *Dear Mrs. + name* appeared in only 1 letter and also with the first name; e.g. '*Dear Mrs. Dragana*' (See Appendix P I). *Salutation Dear Mr. + name* appeared in 2 business letter as same as *Salutation Dear Ms. + name*. Analysis shows that 12 business letters out of 20 contained the *Salutation Dear + name*. Another interesting fact is that this Bulgarian company is a large company with a good position in the world and the business letters are still sent without using set rules of formality.

8.2 Salutation in Business E-mails

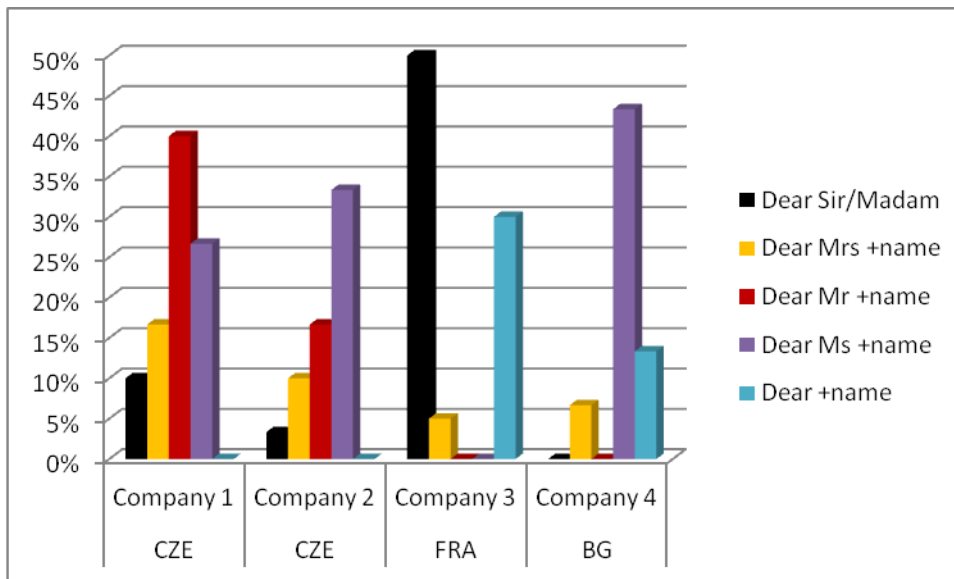


Chart 5: Salutations in business e-mails (Thesis author)

Business correspondence is used mostly in an electronic form nowadays. Business companies from the Czech Republic were willing to provide me with 60 business e-mails. Foreign companies provided me with 50 business e-mails. To compare the Czech companies, the first Czech company, oriented on the forklifts and handling technology field tend to have more formal business e-mails than the other company - oriented on the marketing field. Business e-mails from first Czech company included *Salutation* such as *Dear Sir/Madam* in only 3 cases. It was e-mails sent to the new potential investors. *Dear Mrs. + name*, was used in 5 e-mails including first name instead of surname. *Dear Mr. + name* appeared in 12 emails and in this cases appeared surname; e.g. *Dear Mr. Johnson*. *Salutation* such as *Dear Ms. + name* was applied in 8 e-mails addressed to women in the Accounts Department. Business e-mails not included in Chart No. 5 had different *Salutation* that should not appear in business e-mails. In 3 business e-mails appeared *Salutation* like: “*Hey buddy*” and “*Hello man*”. *Salutations* like that are inappropriate in business e-mails.

I received 30 e-mails from the second Czech company and the *Salutation Dear Sir/Madam* appeared in only 1 e-mail. *Dear Mrs. + name*, was applied in 3 e-mails and *Dear Mr. + name* in 5 e-mails. I found *Dear Ms. + name* in 10 e-mails but once again, these e-mails included the first name. The salutation *Dear + name* did not appear in any e-mail I received.

I analyzed the other 11 business e-mails that are not included in Chart No.5. In 2 cases, I found the *Salutation* “*Hi Deary*” and “*Hello buddy.*” Every business e-mail contained different *Salutations* but none of them were formal. In 2 business e-mails, *Salutations* like “*Hi Johnny*” or “*Hello my dear friend*” appeared. Business e-mails addressed to other business partners in the same business field included the *Salutation* “*Hello boy*”, “*Hi man*” or “*Ahoy friend*”. Another 4 business e-mails appeared simply without any *Salutation*. To compare usage of formal *Salutation* in Czech companies, there is only a slight difference. Usage of language means of formality is low in both companies.

The business e-mails I received from the French companies were noticeably more formal than the e-mails from Czech companies. The *Salutation Dear Sir/Madam* appeared in 10 e-mails out of 20. *Dear Mrs. + name* appeared only in 1 e-mail, including the surname of the recipient. *Salutation Dear Mr. + name, Dear Ms. + name* did not appear in any e-mail I received from a French company. *Dear + name* were applied in 6 e-mails addressed to regular business partners. Other business e-mails contained *Salutations* that are informal and are not provided in Chart No.5. I found informal salutations in 3 e-mails, e.g. “*Hello*”, “*Howdy man*” or “*Hi there*”. *Salutations* like these that are also very informal are not supposed to appear in formal business e-mails.

The Bulgarian company provided me with 30 business e-mails. The most surprising fact was that e-mails from this company contained language means of formality in small amounts. The salutation *Dear Sir/Madam* did not appear in any e-mail even in business e-mails addressed to the CEO of the company. *Dear Mrs. + name*, was in 2 e-mails, while *Dear Mr. + name* did not appear in any e-mail. *Dear Ms. + name*, was used in 13 e-mails addressed to women dealing with PR services. The salutation *Dear + name* appeared in only 4 e-mails. The remaining 11 e-mails contained different salutations that are described in the theoretical part and analyzed in Chart No.5. In many business e-mails, *Salutations* like “*Hi*”, “*Hy*”, “*G'day*” appeared and, also in the place of a *Salutation* the line: “*How r u doing*” (See Appendix P VI) appeared.

8.3 Complimentary Clauses in Business letters

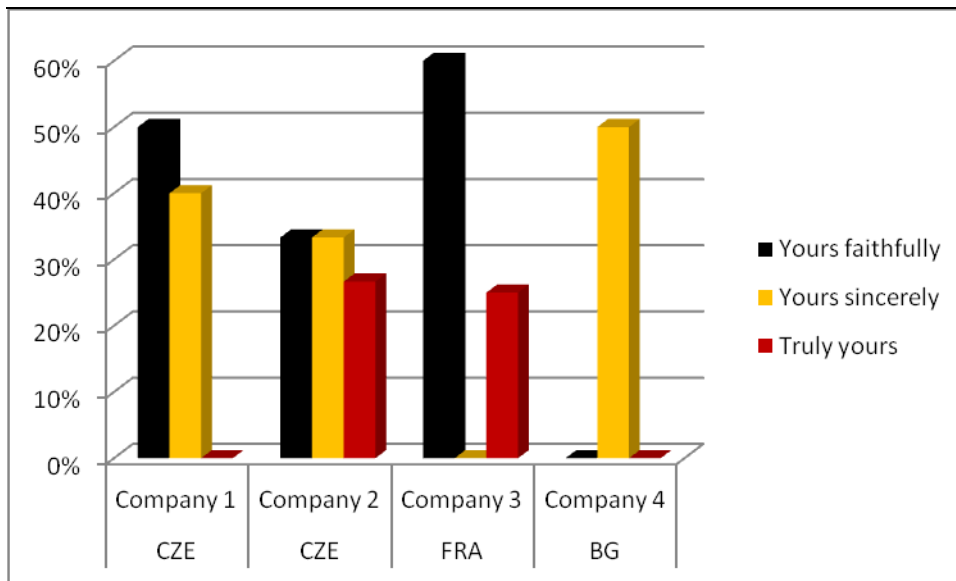


Chart 6: Complimentary clauses in business letters (Thesis author)

Another language means of formality is the *Complimentary clause* that is supposed to be placed at the end of each letter. I have chosen three most applied *Complimentary clauses* in business letters I received. *Complimentary clauses* in the first Czech company appeared very often in a formal way. The *Complimentary Clause Yours faithfully* appeared at the end of 5 letters. *Yours sincerely* was placed in 4 letters out of 10 and the *Complimentary Clause Truly yours* did not appear in any letter from this company. In one case I found the *Complimentary clause* “See you soon”.

The Business letters from the second Czech company contained formal *Complimentary clauses*. In 5 letters, *Yours faithfully* was applied, in another 5 letters out of 10 appeared *Your sincerely*, and *Truly yours* was in 4 letters. There was only one case of the usage of an informal *Complimentary clause*; e.g. *Can't wait for your answer*. Analysis of business letters from both Czech companies showed major use of formal *Complimentary clauses*.

Analysis of *Complimentary clauses* in business letters from French company shows that rules of formality are also used. The *Complimentary clause Yours faithfully* appeared in 12 letters out of 20. *Truly yours* was in 5 letters that were mostly addressed to the women because this *Complimentary clause* often appeared with the *Salutation Dear Ms*. There was no usage of the *Complimentary clause Yours sincerely*. A surprising fact was that 3 business letters appeared without any *Complimentary clause*.

The Business letters from the Bulgarian company did not follow the rules of formality as much as letters from the French company. I found 2 business letters without *Salutation*. *Yours sincerely* appeared in 10 letters out of 20. *Complimentary clause Truly yours* did not occur in any letter. As analysis has already shown, business letters received from Bulgarian company had the tendency to be less formal. *Yours sincerely* appeared in 10 letters out of 20. Another 8 letters contained different *Complimentary clauses*; e.g. “*Nice to communicate with you*”, “*Thank you that you wrote me*”, “*See you soon*”, “*Looking forward hearing from you*”, “*Thank you for your letter*”, “*I would appreciate if you reply*”, “*Write me as soon as possible please*” and “*I am very pleased that you wrote me*”. *Complimentary clauses* like that are not in accordance with the given rules of formality.

8.4 Complimentary Clauses in Business E-mails

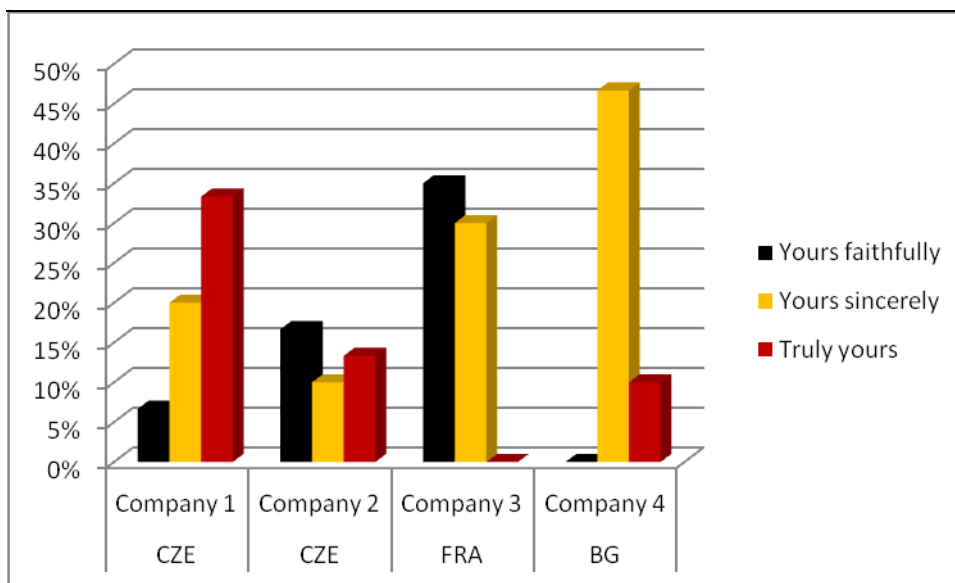


Chart 7: Complimentary clauses in business e-mails (Thesis author)

I have analyzed 120 business e-mails from all companies. Chart No. 7 provides information in percentages about the usage of *Complimentary clauses* in business e-mails. From the Chart No. 7, it is obvious that the most frequently used *Complimentary clauses* are *Yours faithfully* and *Yours sincerely*. Business e-mails from a Czech company contained a formal *Complimentary clause* in 18 e-mails. The remaining 12 e-mails had an informal *Complimentary clause*. The most applied *Complimentary clause* in this Czech company was *Truly yours*, which appeared in 10 business e-mails.

Another 6 business e-mails contained *Yours sincerely* and 2 e-mails included *Yours faithfully*. I analyzed another 12 e-mails that did not contain any formal *Complimentary clause*. In 2 cases, I found expressions such as “Bye” and “Cheers”. Other business e-mails included different *Complimentary clauses*; e.g. “See ya”, “Take care” or “With love”.

Next 4 e-mails incorporated very informal *Complimentary clauses*; e.g. “Unconditionally yours”, “Stay in peace”, “Call me when you read this” and “See ya next time man”. These e-mails were sent to different types of companies - but still between business partners, where rules of formality are set.

The Business e-mails from the second Czech company contained mostly *Yours faithfully* and *Yours sincerely* and *Truly yours* was almost at the same level. In 5 business e-mails the *Complimentary clause* *Yours faithfully* appeared, 3 e-mails contained *Yours sincerely* and 4 e-mails included *Truly yours*. I also analyzed the other 18 e-mails which contained different types of *Complimentary clauses*. In 2 cases “See you” and “See you later” appeared. Another 6 e-mails included similar expressions such as “Contact me as soon as possible” and “Call me please when you read this”. Other expressions included “Your friend”, “Do not hesitate to call me back” and “Laters man”. I would like to point out that the business e-mail that contained the expression “Laters man” was sent to a supplier that was not known. In other cases expressions such as “With love”, “Please reply asap”, “Wish you all the best” and “Thanks for your interest” appeared.

Analysis of the foreign companies was slightly different from the Czech companies.

Business e-mails received from a French company contained *Yours faithfully* in 7 cases out of 20. *Yours sincerely* was applied in 6 emails and *Truly yours* did not appear in any email; another 7 business e-mails contained different expressions. In 4 business e-mails, I found the same *Complimentary clause*; e.g. “Love from + name”. Other different expressions included “Thank you very much”, “Say hello to everybody” and “Hugs”.

Business e-mails from Bulgarian company mostly contained the *Complimentary clause* *Yours sincerely*. *Truly yours* appeared in only 3 cases, and no e-mail contained *Yours faithfully*. The remaining 13 business e-mails contained different types of expressions. None of them was formal; e.g. “Hope to get your answer soon”, “Contact me as soon as possible if you can”, “Hope that you will be satisfied with the offer”, “Hope our business will work under this conditions”. Another four e-mails contained expressions like “Call me

when you read this”, “Thanks for your reply”, “Contact me please”, “Hope that you will decide well” or “Can’t wait for your response”.

9 ANALYSIS OF LEVELS OF FORMALITY IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

CORRESPONDENCE

My analysis of levels of formality in business correspondence is defined in Chart No. 8 and Chart No. 9. As defined in theoretical part, there are three types of levels of formality - Formal, Semi-formal and Informal style. I analyzed if the levels of formality are applied to business letters and business e-mails as well.

9.1 Levels of Formality in Business letters

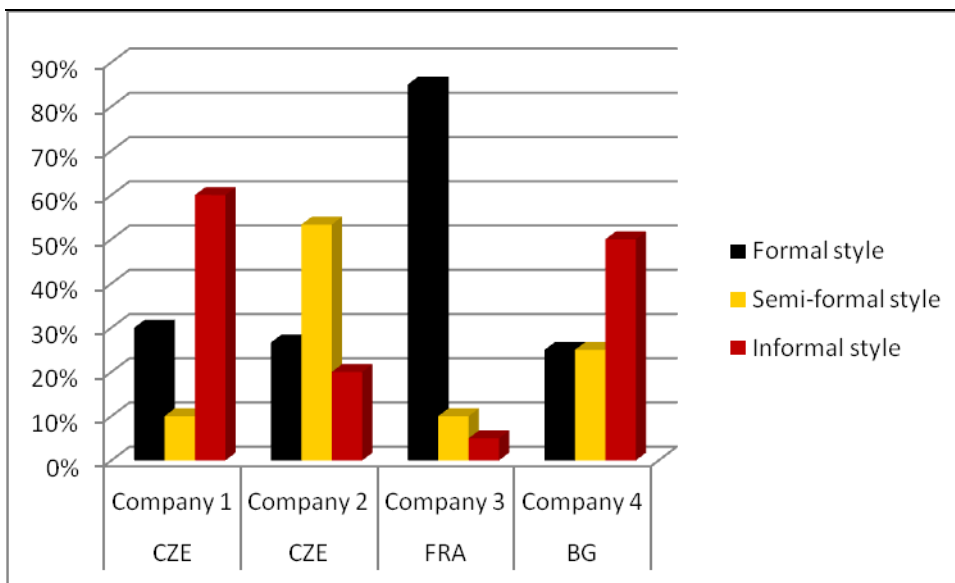


Chart 8: Levels of formality in business letters (Thesis author)

From Chart No. 8, it is obvious that the business letters from the first company were mostly written in the Informal style. Business letters received from the second company were written predominantly in semi-formal style. In comparison to foreign companies, the business letters from a French company were written largely in Formal style and letters from a Bulgarian company were written in the Informal style – the same as the letters from first Czech company were. I focused mainly on Complex and Simple sentences and Modal and Lexical verbs which are analyzed in detail in Charts No.12, 13, 14 and Chart No.15.

The Business letters received from the first Czech company were mostly Informal. I analyzed 6 letters written in the Informal style. These letters did not contain complex sentences, passive voice or modal verbs. I found expressions like “*As a company we ask you for a favor*” or “*The situation is complicated you know*” (See Appendix P III). These expressions are mostly short sentences and do not include any sign of formality.

Only one letter out of 10 was written in the Semi-formal style. This business letter was written to a regular business partner in a corresponding tone. I found only a minimum of modal verbs, like “*could*” or “*would*”. These business letters predominantly contained short sentences; e.g. “*Do not hesitate to contact me*” or “*Would this offer suit better*”. The Formal style was applied in 3 business letters sent to potential clients. These letters included expressions like “*Could you please inform me about the problem that occurred in detail and I would be pleased to offer you any solution*” or “*We would be very pleased to cooperate with you*”.

The Semi-formal style was dominant in business letters received from the second Czech company. I analyzed 8 letters out of 15 written in the Semi-formal style. These letters included expressions like “*We would be pleased if you respond*” or “*Do not hesitate to contact us anytime*”. There were a lot of similar expressions in these letters. Only 3 letters addressed to investors were written in the Formal style. In all 3 cases, formal expressions appeared; e.g. “*We would be grateful if you could send any further information about your offer*”, “*We look forward to doing business with highly regarded company as yours*” or “*We would be pleased to offer you any product from our offer*”.

Most business letters received from French company kept to a high level of formality from the style point of view. I found 17 letters written in the Formal style. There were a lot of expressions that indicate formality; e.g. *Modal verbs*; “*could*”, “*would*”, “*may*” or “*might*”. These were the most frequent ones. Other signs of formality were complex sentences; e.g. “*We would be very pleased if you could give us more information and we can provide you 20% discount on selected goods*”. Also, the tone in all 17 letters was very formal. Another 2 business letters were written in the Semi-formal style addressed to long – term clients and only 1 letter was written in the Informal style.

Findings from Bulgarian business letters show that the Informal style dominates. I found 10 business letters out of 20 written in the Informal style. The fact is that all these letters were sent to important business partners. The most frequent expressions in Bulgarian letters were informal; e.g. “*Do you mind sending me some more information*” or “*Just call me when it is necessary*”. Other informal expressions I found were “*Our business needs to be more specific if you know what I mean*” or “*How do you imagine to do this, just tell me*”. The tone of all 10 letters was more like a letter sent to a friend – but not to a business partner. Another 5 letters were written in the Semi-formal style and the Formal style

appeared in only 5 letters out of 20. Formal letters from a Bulgarian company were mostly sent to new potential clients to make an impression.

9.2 Levels of Formality in Business E-mails

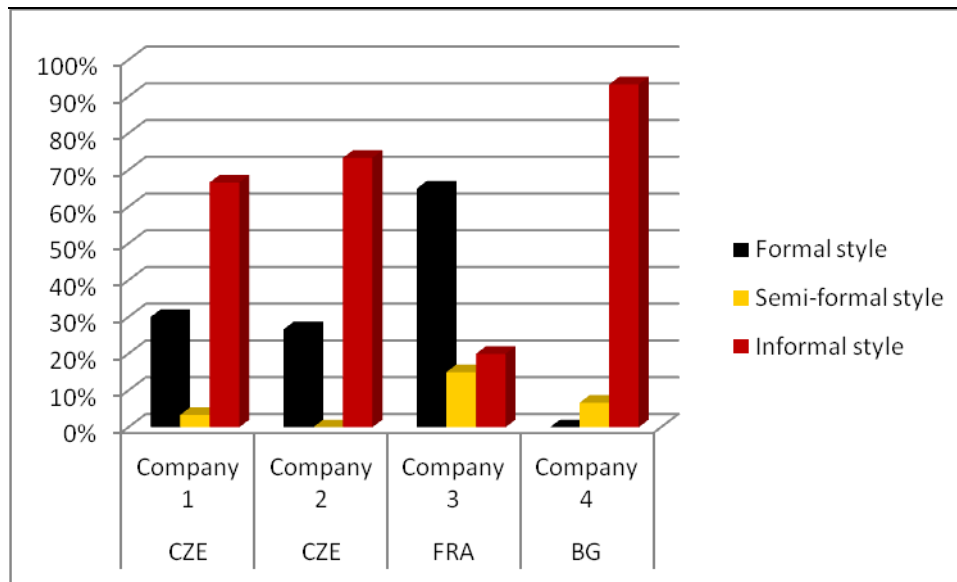


Chart 9: Levels of formality in business e-mails (Thesis author)

It is obvious from Chart No. 9 that the Informal style once again dominates. The Business e-mails I received from the first Czech company were mostly informal. I analyzed 20 e-mails out of 30 to be informal. I found out many informal expressions through these 20 e-mails; e.g. *“I haven’t got any reply from you”*, *“I think I haven’t told you yet, but the order was quite damaged”*, *“These days I will send you some more information”*, *“Why didn’t you reply my sooner”*, *“I was trying to write you sooner but I didn’t have time really”*, *“What are we gonna do”*, etc. The Semi-formal style was applied only in 1 letter I received, containing phrases like *“We would be pleased to hear from you”* or *“Do not hesitate to ask any questions”*. Only 9 e-mails out of 30 were written in the Formal style. I discovered signs of formality from *Salutation to Complimentary clauses* that can be seen in Charts No.4, 5, 6 and 7. In these e-mails formal expressions such as *“We would be very pleased to cooperate with you”* or *“I am looking forward to hearing from you”* appeared. I also found expressions repeated in all formal letters; e.g. *“Would you be able to deliver”*, *“Could you please let me know”*, *“We might have mentioned”*, *“It would be pleasure”* or *“Would you mind”*.

Business e-mails received from the second Czech company were also written mostly in an informal style. I analyzed 22 e-mails out of 30 as informal. The expressions that were found were similar to the e-mails from the first Czech company; e.g. *“Write me soon and tell me your decision”*, *“Our company is quite big you know”* or *“We’re really busy right now”*. I also found abbreviations in these e-mails, like *“asap”*, *“np”* or even, *“ur”*. As mentioned in the theoretical part, usage of abbreviations should not appear in formal business e-mails or letters. The Semi-formal style was not applied in any e-mails I received and 8 letters were written in the Formal style. Formal indicators were expressions like modal and lexical verbs; e.g. *“could”*, *“would”*, etc. Other indicators of formality in these business e-mails were expressions in the body of the e-mail like *“We are pleased that you contact us”* or *“In the meantime, we suggest different option”*.

The business e-mails from both Czech companies in comparison with e-mails from the French ones were written in the Informal style. The Formal style appeared in 65% of the letters I received from the French companies, which means 13 letters out of 20. These letters were mainly addressed to customers, clients but also to investors. I found expressions of formality in the body of the e-mails such as *“I would like to apologize for misunderstanding”* or *“Please let me know”*. Other indicators of formality were modal and lexical verbs; e.g. *“might”* or *“have to”*; lexical verbs were used in the correct way from the point of view of understanding the context of the letter; e.g. *“I would like to apologize”* or *“We could provide you some more information”*. Even though the business letters were written by non-native speakers, the formal style standard was preserved. The Semi-formal style was applied in only 3 letters addressed to well-known business partners. The tone sounded friendlier and the phrases that were used were more close to the Informal style, but not completely; e.g. *“We’re happy that we could help”*. The Informal style was applied in 4 letters addressed to business partners with the request for promotion. These 4 letters contained phrases like *“Find me some different solution I really don’t know what to do. I am lost.”* or *“Just for the record, what date you want me to be prepared.”*

Chart No.9 shows that the Informal style also prevails in business e-mails received from a Bulgarian company. A surprising fact was that 28 business e-mails out of 30 were written in the Informal style. These e-mails were addressed to clients and business partners with no long-term relationship. I found a lot of informal expressions that were used; e.g. *“Come on man, we were already decided”*, *“No way, I am absolutely against it”*, *“This can’t be truth”*, *“You gotta be kiddin’ me”*, *“Well, I am impressed”*, *“Just tell me what you want*

from me”, etc. These letters also contained abbreviations like “*asap*”, “*omg*”, or “*np*”. The Semi-formal style appeared in only 2 e-mails addressed to well-known business partners. Other interesting expressions were: “*Call me my friend whenever you want*” or “*I would like to discuss the options man*”. A Formal style that would contain every sign of formality did not appear in any letter received from a Bulgarian company.

10 ANALYSIS OF PASSIVE AND ACTIVE VOICE IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

Charts No.10 and Chart.No.11 show usage of the Passive and Active Voice in business correspondence. The theoretical part of my Bachelor's thesis contains information about the formal usage of the Passive and Active Voice. Analysis will show (in percentages) how many formal indicators were used.

10.1 Passive and Active Voice in Business Letters

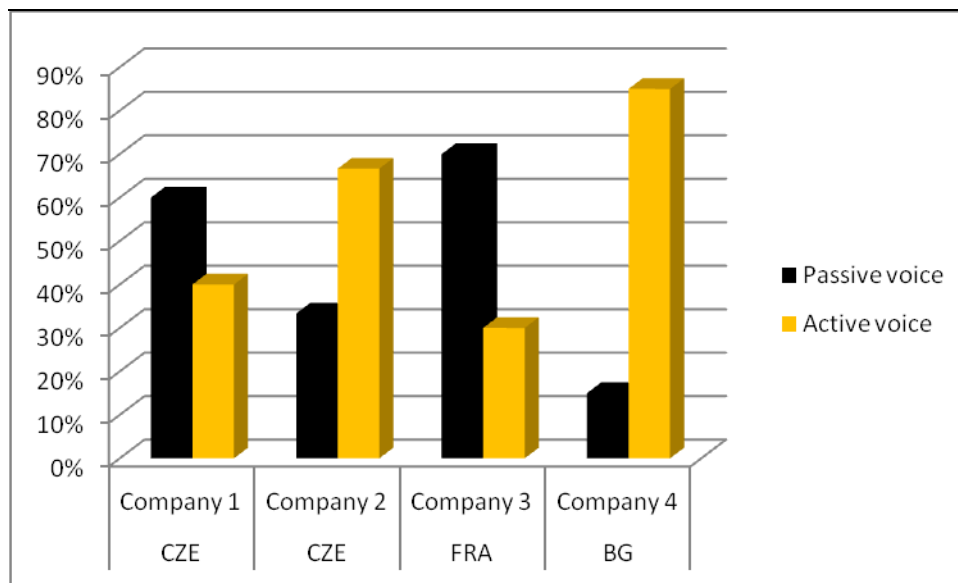


Chart 10: Passive and Active Voice in business letters (Thesis author)

From Chart No.10, it is obvious that letters from the first Czech company mostly contained the passive voice, which is the indicator of formality. I found the Passive Voice in 6 business letters out of 10. In each letter, a sentence written in the Passive Voice appeared; e.g. *“The problem were already solved”*, *“The contract was signed”*, *“We were asked to contact you”*, *“We were given”*, *“Mistake happened”* and, *“The decision has been made”*. Another 4 letters appeared without the Passive Voice but contained the Active Voice; e.g. *“Could you please inform me”*, *“I will send you”*, *“I am going to send you”* or *“I agree with this”*.

The business letters from the second Czech company that have been analyzed mostly contained the Active Voice rather than the Passive Voice. The Passive Voice appeared in only 5 letters out of 15; e.g. *“Our track has been removed”*, *“Headlight was fixed”*, *“We were contacted”*, *“The speed limit has been exceeded”* and *“Reparation were given by our*

technicians". The Active Voice appeared in the remaining 10 letters; e.g. "*I am going to fix it*" or "*We take responsibility for the problems*".

Business letters from a French company tend to be more formal by using the Passive Voice in 70% which means that the Passive Voice appeared in 14 letters out of 20. I found expressions like: "*The promotion will be held*", "*We were asked to write you*" or "*The meeting will happened*". I found other similar phrases written in the Passive Voice like, "*The offer will be discussed*" or "*Your objections will be considered*". In another 6 letters, the Passive Voice did not appear. The Active Voice was applied in an understandable way; e.g. "*I am convinced*" or "*I can assure you*".

Chart No.10 shows that usage of the Passive Voice in Bulgarian business correspondence is very low. The Active Voice was used in 85%, which means that the Passive Voice was applied in only 3 letters out of 20. Expressions containing the Passive Voice included "*Goods will be delivered*", "*Our company were charged*" and "*Chainsaw were damaged*". The theoretical part of my Bachelor's thesis mentioned that Bulgarian businessmen have a tendency to write more informal business letters after the first communication. These 3 letters were sent to new purchasers while the remaining 17 letters were written for well-known businessmen. Expressions written in the Active Voice were confusing and I also found wrong syntax in some of them; e.g. "**I will be inform you*" or "**We are go to contact you*". The research shows that usage of Passive voice is low. The reason why the senders of Business letters did not use so many passives could mean that the company wanted to take responsibility for every written expression; e.g. not "*Mistake happened*" but "*We made a mistake*". Another reason for low usage of Passive voice might be the fact, that Active voice is considered to be more polite in Business Correspondence. Business letters taken from Bulgarian company contained mostly Active voice to show directness. The tone of the letters was due to the usage of Passive voice more self-confident.

10.2 Passive and Active Voice in Business E-mails

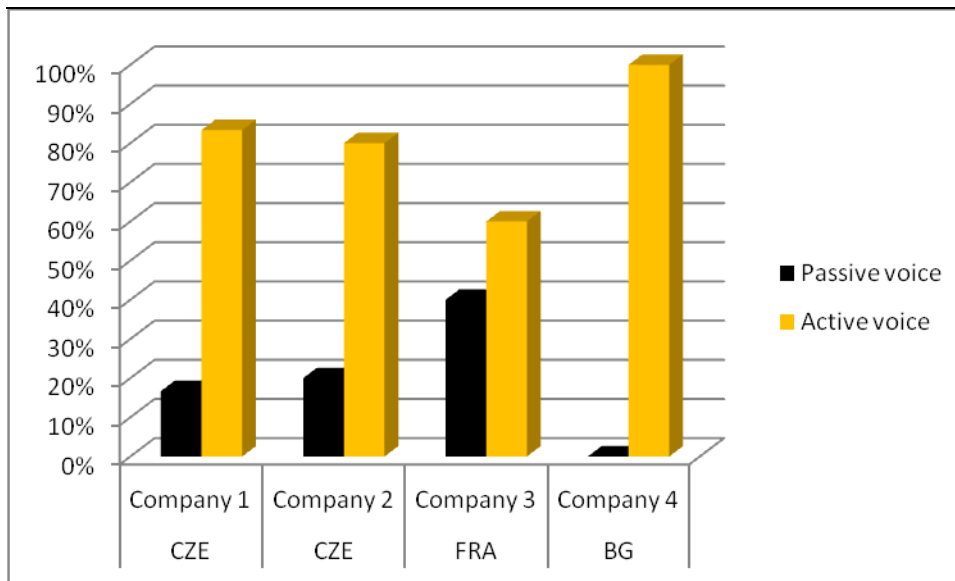


Chart 11: Passive and active voice in business e-mails (Thesis author)

Chart No. 11 provides information about the usage of the Passive and Active Voice in business e-mails. The results are slightly different from the business letters. It is noticeable that business e-mails tend to be less formal in each company. The Passive Voice appeared in a small percentage in all of the e-mails I analyzed.

Business e-mails from the first Czech company did not contain a lot of sentences written in the Passive Voice. I analyzed 30 e-mails received from this company and I found only 5 of them with sentences written in the Passive Voice; e.g. *“Forklift will be fixed as soon as possible”*, *“Spare parts will be delivered”*, *“Our meeting will be accompanied by interpreter”*, *“Guarantee is exposed”* and *“Goods were damaged”*. Another 25 e-mails appeared without the Passive Voice and the Active Voice was used properly without any misunderstanding or grammatical mistakes; e.g. *“We are writing you”* or *“The problem is not in our device”*.

The Active Voice prevails even in business e-mails from the second Czech company oriented on transportation. The Passive Voice was applied in only 20% of business e-mails, which indicates that only 6 e-mails out of 20 contained the Passive Voice; e.g. *“The contract were signed”*, *“Our company were given”*, *“Conditions were discussed”*, *“The truck was crashed”*, *“Steering wheel was blocked”*, *“Driver was given”* and *“Compensation for damage was paid”*. The Active Voice was applied correctly but in some cases I found grammatical mistakes in the spelling. Grammatical mistakes in business

e-mails are not exactly a sign of formality and do not make a positive impression on the recipient; e.g. “**We are able to provide*” or “**Our company will be able*”.

To compare e-mails from both Czech companies, the usage of the Passive Voice was very low.

Usage of the Passive and Active Voice in business e-mails from the French company was almost equal. The Passive Voice appeared in 8 cases while the Active Voice was applied in 12 e-mails. Sentences contained the Passive Voice; e.g. “*Our department was decided*” were applied in 2 e-mails, “*The business cards were damaged*”, “*Assistant was given*”, “*Our company was provided*”, “*New advertisement was made*”, “*The problem were discussed*” and “*Documents were signed*”. The Active Voice was used in 12 e-mails and I did not find any grammatical mistakes or wrong syntax that would lead to misunderstanding; e.g. “*Our company will be able to*” or “*I as a deliver manager will communicate with you*”.

Analysis of business e-mails from a Bulgarian company shows that the Passive Voice did not appear in any e-mail I received. The Active Voice was applied in all 30 e-mails and I found a grammatical mistake in only 1 e-mail; e.g. “**I am contact you*”. Analysis proves that no Passive voice was used in business e-mails taken from Bulgarian company. As mentioned earlier, Active voice is used when the sender of the letter or e-mail tries to be polite and takes responsibility for the actions of the company.

11 ANALYSIS OF COMPLEX AND SIMPLE SENTENCES IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

Charts No. 12 and 13 show my analysis of complex and simple sentences in business correspondence. Complex sentences are considered to be more formal and the analysis will show if the business correspondence contained more complex or simple sentences.

11.1 Complex and Simple Sentences in Business Letters

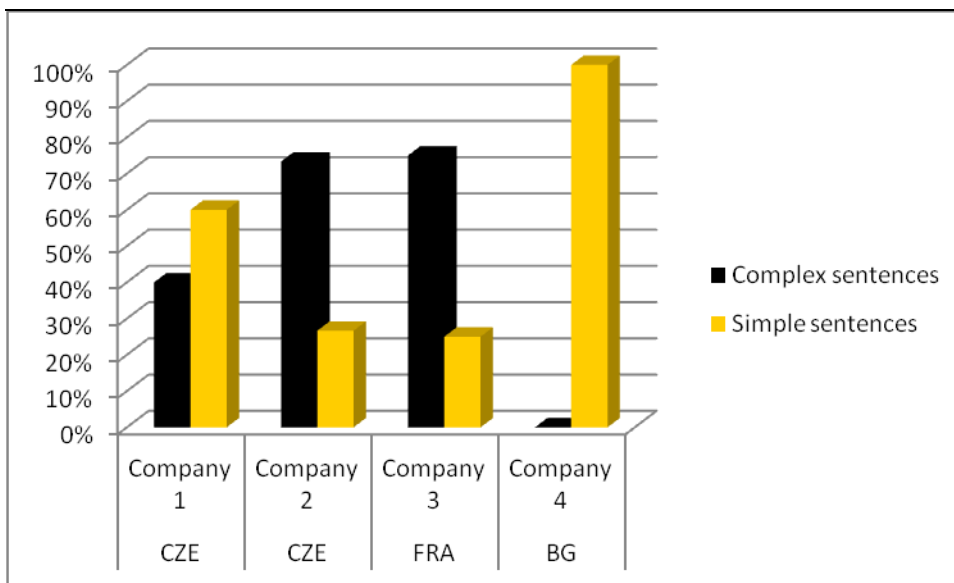


Chart 12: Complex and simple sentences in business letters (Thesis author)

Chart No. 12 shows the usage of complex and simple sentences in business letters. The business letters from the first Czech company contained complex sentences in 40%, which means 4 letters out of 10. The remaining 6 letters were written only in simple sentences, which is 60% of received letters. The business letters received from the second Czech company mostly contained complex sentences in 11 cases, which indicates 73% in Chart No.12. Another 27% of the letters analyzed were written in simple sentences. To compare it with foreign companies, business letters from a French company contained complex sentences in 75% of the analyzed letters. The remaining 25% were written in simple sentences too. An interesting fact is that all 20 analyzed letters from a Bulgarian company were written only in simple sentences. This finding will be analyzed later.

Business letters received from the first Czech company contained complex sentences in 4 cases; e.g. *''Determining that forklift you provided me was defective, I would like to return*

it back”, “*We would like to inform you that there is no change in our delivery system and we will be providing the same products and services as we offer on our webpage*” or “*The new type of forklift we have ordered from your company is not in correlation with the description on your webpage and we would like to send this type of forklift back to your store and ordered another one if it is possible*”. Another 4 letters contained short sentences; e.g. “*We have a request*” or “*Our company comes with an offer*”.

Business letters from the second Czech company mostly contained complex sentences. I found 11 letters written that way; e.g. “*The invoice we received from your department contained items that we had to pay for but the technicians checked on defects and they found out that none of these items were fixed*” or “*Our company really appreciate the offer that was given by you, but we would like to discuss your conditions more in detail because there are some misunderstandings in contract we received*”. Only 4 business letters did not contain complex sentences at all; e.g. “*Please contact us*”, “*We write you with an request*” or “*Problem will be solved*”.

Chart No.12 shows that business letters received from a French company mostly contained complex sentences. In 15 cases, complex sentences appeared; e.g. “*As a worldwide marketing company with the seat in Paris, we provide the best PR services as you can check by yourselves on our website*”(See Appendix P II) or “*The place that you offered for the meeting is appropriate, but we prefer to make meeting in our building*”. Another 5 letters appeared only with simple sentences.

Analysis of business letters from a Bulgarian company shows that from 20 letters that I received, none of them contained complex sentences. All 20 letters were written in short sentences. Founding like that is not in accordance with the theoretical part. The reason why the Business letters were written in this way might be that the senders of the letters tried to make the letters more understandable and clear. Another reason could be the level the International communication. The letters were sent to different business partners around the world. It is generally known, that Bulgarian people do not have a good relationship with Turkish people. There were 3 letters addressed to the Turkish businessmen and the tone of the letter did not seem professionally and not on the high level of formality. Those 3 analyzed letters seemed like the sender of the letter tried to be more super ordinate over the recipient. Another reason of this low usage of formality might result from a lack of stuff training about writing Business correspondence. All analyzed business letters and business e-mails were mostly written in Informal way which also refers to the company itself.

Complex sentences itself are the tool to make business letter or e-mail more effective and impressive. When the reader reads the letter or e-mail the message should be clear. That might be also another reason for using short sentences to make business letters and e-mails more understandable.

11.2 Complex and Simple Sentences in Business E-mails

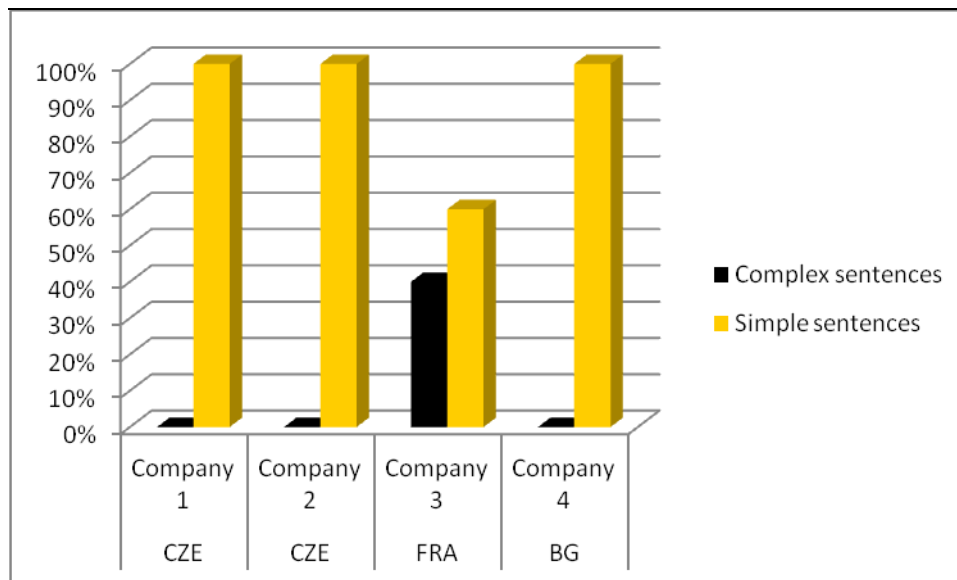


Chart 13: Complex and simple sentences in business e-mails (Thesis author)

From Chart No.13, it is obvious that the analyzed business e-mails contained a minimum of complex sentences. Business e-mails received from the first Czech company did not contain any complex sentences and business e-mails from the second Czech company were the same. Slight differences were in the business e-mails from a French company. Complex sentences appeared in 12 e-mails out of 20; e.g. *“First of all I want to thank you that you wrote me about the problem you had with your previous PR organizations but I have to apologize that we are not oriented only on PR services you need”*, *“Catering supplier did not deliver food for our big promotion action and I am asking you, if you will be able to deliver the food we need until tomorrow afternoon”* or *“In the name of our company we would like to apologize for the mistake that occurred on our side and we would like to offer you discount for other next services you will need”*. Another 12 e-mails were written in simple sentences like *“Everything will be prepared in time”* or *“We do not need your services anymore”*.

As the Chart No. 13 shows, there are no complex sentences used in e-mails received from a Bulgarian company. All 30 emails were written in simple sentences; e.g. *“Give me the proper information”* or *“Send me the rest of documents”*. It is the same result that was founded in business letters. This founding is actually not in accordance with theoretical part of Bachelor’s thesis. E-mails, generally, should be written in simple sentences but considering Business e-mails on the International Business field, the structure should be different. Hypothetically, Business e-mails taken from Bulgarian company were written in this way to go directly to the point and avoid misunderstanding that might occurred. Other point, why Business e-mails were written in this way, is that the level of English of non-native speakers is low even in significant corporation like the one I received the e-mails from. As was mentioned in theoretical part, Bulgarian businessmen have a tendency to be less formal in business writing. There is a possibility that the senders of these e-mails tried to be less formal to take precedence over the conversation.

12 ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL AND MODAL VERBS IN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

Charts No. 14 and 15 show the analysis of lexical and modal verbs used in business correspondence. I analyzed lexical and modal verbs that indicate formality in sentences used in business correspondence.

12.1 Lexical and Modal Verbs in Business Letters

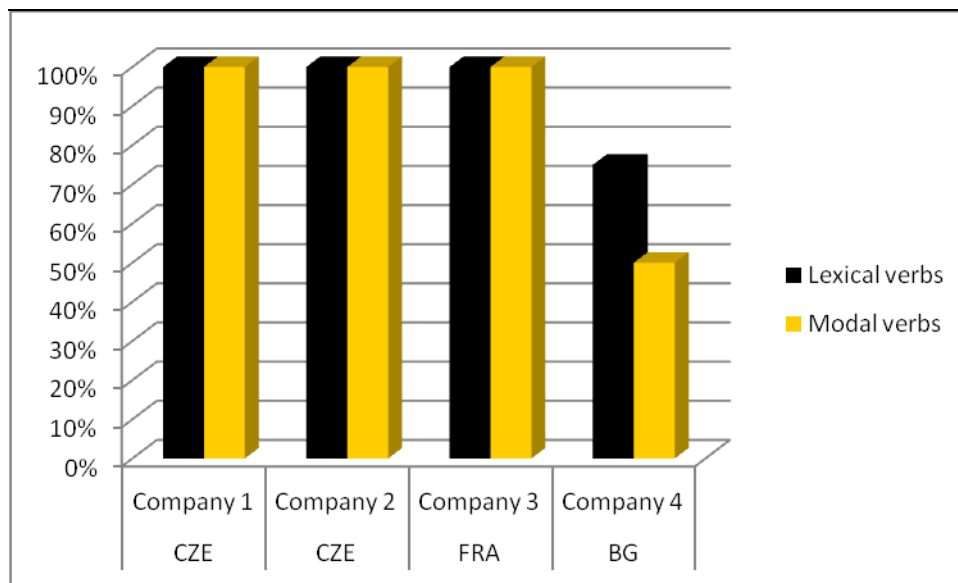


Chart 14: Lexical and modal verbs in business letters (Thesis author)

Chart No. 14 shows my analysis of lexical and modal verbs in business letters. From the graph, it is obvious that lexical and modal verbs were used in all letters from all companies but letters from a Bulgarian company did not contain as many modal and lexical verbs as the remaining companies.

I received 10 business letters from the first Czech company. Analysis proves that all letters contained lexical and modal verbs; e.g. “We would be very pleased”, “Could you be more specific”, “We have to discuss it in detail”, “We do understand”, “The forklift might be broken” or “Would you mind”. Other letters contained lexical and modal verbs applied in sentences like “Determining that forklift you provided me was defective, I would like to return it back”, “The new type of forklift we have ordered from your company is not in correlation with the description on your webpage and we would like to send this type of forklift back to your store and ordered another one if it is possible”. Underlined modal

verbs indicate formality in each sentence as the lexical verbs; e.g. usage of the lexical verb “*understand*” instead of “*we know what you wanted to say*” or the lexical verb that sounds more formal is “*ordered*” instead of “*buy*” or “*return*” instead of “*give back*”.

Business letters received from the second Czech company contained formal lexical and modal verbs in all cases; e.g. “*Our company really appreciate the offer that was given by you, but we would like to discuss your conditions more in detail because there are some misunderstandings in contract we received”, “*You ought to receive our letter as soon as possible*” or “*This should not be organised*”. All lexical and modal verbs are used formally in these sentences; e.g. the lexical verbs “*received*” instead of “*got*” or “*appreciate*” instead of “*enjoy*”.*

To compare business letters received from foreign business companies, the usage of formal lexical and modal verbs in letters from a Bulgarian company were lower than in business letters from a French company. Business letters from a French company contained lexical and modal verbs equally; i.e. in all 20 letters appeared formal expressions; e.g. “*We would like to accept your offer*”, “*It would be pleasure*”, “*Our company provides*”, etc. A Lexical verb used in a formal way was “*provides*” instead of the lexical verb “*accommodate*” that does not correlate with the noun “*company*”.

Usage of formal lexical verbs and modal verbs in business letters from a Bulgarian company was low in comparison to business letters from a French company. Modal verbs were applied in only 10 letters out of 20. Lexical verbs that were used in an appropriate way occurred in 15 letters out of 20. I found expressions like “*Would it be necessary*”, “*Could you please*” or “*Your company should give us*”. Lexical verbs used in a formal way appeared in sentences like “*We will solve the problem*” instead of “*figure out*” or “*We will contact you*” instead of “*call*”.

12.2 Lexical and Modal Verbs in Business E-mails

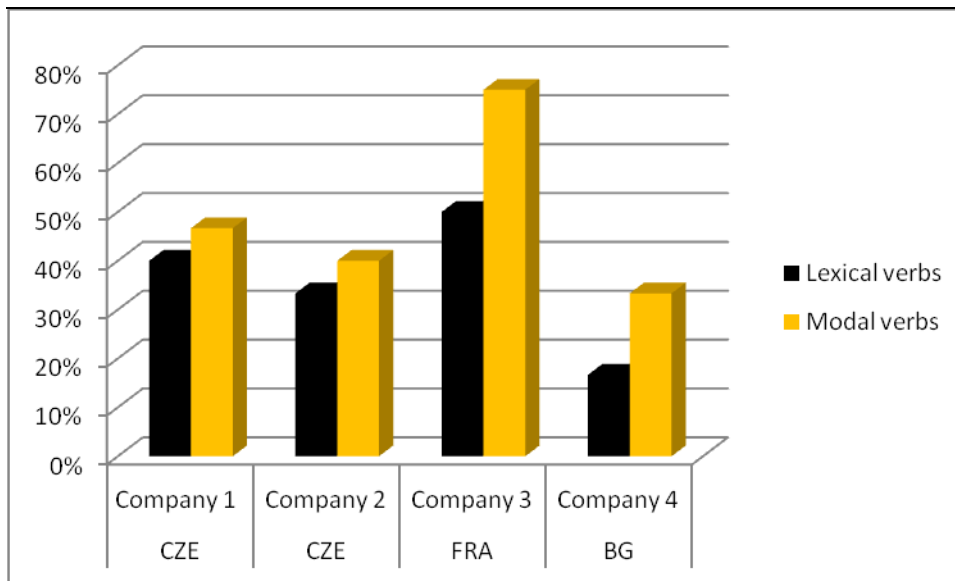


Chart 15: Lexical and modal verbs in business e-mails (Thesis author)

From Chart No. 15, it is obvious that the usage of lexical and modal verbs in business e-mails is lower than in business letters. Usage of lexical and modal verbs in business e-mails from the first Czech company was equal.

Lexical verbs used in the proper way were applied in 12 letters and 14 letters contained sentences including modal verbs; e.g. “We would be pleased”, “We could load you goods”, “I would also need”, “May I ask you”, “Could you please give” or lexical verbs like “We are familiar with the problem” instead of “know” or “We want to offer you” instead of “give”.

The business e-mails received from the second Czech company did contain Lexical verbs in 10 cases out of 20 and modal verbs appeared in 12 analyzed e-mails. I found lexical and modal verbs like “It would be pleasure”, “We would be happy to send you”, “we would not have money” or “It would be a subject of interest” or lexical verbs used in a formal way like “We want to explain” instead of “clear up”.

Chart No.15 shows that usage of modal and lexical verbs was higher in French companies than in both Czech companies. Modal verbs occurred in 15 e-mails out of 20; e.g. “I would like to ask you”, “It would be great”, “I would be happy to meet you”, “Could you do this”, “Would it be any problem”, “I might contact other company”, “I am glad I don’t have to”, “Could you kindly send me”, “Could you please also send”, “Could you sell the goods”, “What would it take to”, “We would have to pay”, “It would be a pleasure for

us”, “We could sent the goods” and “Our company would be pleased to offer you”. Lexical verbs were used in a proper way in 10 cases out of 20; e.g. “Is it possible to manage it” instead of “boss” or “The discount will enable you” instead of “empower”. Analysis proves that e-mails received from a Bulgarian company did not contain as many lexical and modal verbs as other companies. Most of them were confusing and also the expressing of the sender was not in correlation with the given rules of formality. I analyzed that modal verbs appeared in 10 business e-mails out of 30 and lexical verbs were used in the correct form in only 5 cases; e.g. “What would it take”, “Would you mind”, “Could you offer me”, “I would not be able”, “Why would you do that”, “Would it be necessary”, “Could you call me”, “You might have been”, “I would be happy” and “You could have said it earlier”. Proper lexical verbs were applied in only 5 e-mails; e.g. “We cannot sustain” instead of “carry”, “Our company cannot caters you” instead of “indulge”.

13 SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS

In first part of my analysis, I analyzed the usage of business letters in comparison to business e-mails. To sum up, business e-mails are nowadays more frequented than business letters as a mean of communication. Usage of business letters still perseveres but only in a small percentage of cases. Analysis shows that business letters are more used in foreign companies than in Czech companies.

The next part of the analysis contained information about the structure of business letters and business e-mails. Concerning business letters, analysis proves that a lot of information was omitted in Czech and also in foreign companies. The most omitted parts of business letters were the *Sender's address* and *Inside address* in both companies. In this case, business letters from Czech companies contained more needed information than letters from foreign companies. In comparison to business e-mails, the most omitted thing in all companies was the *Salutation* and foreign companies had the highest percentage of all information than Czech companies.

Analysis of the *Salutation* in business letters and business e-mails provided a lot of interesting information. In most cases, salutations like *Dear + first name* were used instead of a surname; another type of *Salutation* was *Dear + name* - that shows informality, but mainly in Czech companies. The most formal *Salutation*, *Dear Sir/Madam* was applied equally in both Czech companies but on the other hand, *Salutation Dear + name* appeared in 7 cases out of 25. Salutations used in business e-mails were mostly informal. The most informal *Salutation* used in business e-mails from Czech companies were "*Hey buddy*" (See Appendix P IV), "*Hi my friend*", "*Ahoy friend*" or "*Hello boy*". Business e-mails from foreign companies also contained informal *Salutations* like "*How r u doing*" or "*Howdy man*".

As concerns *Complimentary clauses* in business correspondence, business letters mostly contained the *Complimentary clause* "*Yours faithfully*". Foreign companies used more informal complimentary clauses than Czech companies; e.g. "*Nice to communicate with you*", "*Thank you that you wrote me*", "*See you soon*" or "*Looking forward hearing from you*". Another aspect that my analysis shows is that formal *Complimentary clauses* disappear. In this case, Czech companies used more formal *Complimentary clauses* than foreign companies, but I also found expressions like "*See ya*", "*Take care*" or "*With love*" or "*Please reply asap*". Business e-mails from foreign companies mainly contained

informal *Complimentary clauses*; e.g. “*Hope that you will decide well*” or “*Can’t wait for your respond*” or “*Say hello to everybody*”.

Usage of formality levels in business correspondence is low, as my analysis shows. The Formal style appeared in only 29 letters out of 65 received from all companies. The French companies were the only ones who kept the high level of formality in 17 letters out of 20. Analysis of business e-mails also proved that a high level of informality predominated with only the exception of business letters from the French companies. The majority of business e-mails contained abbreviations like “*asap*”, “*omg*”, or “*np*” - signs of informality. Colloquial language was used in cases like “*You gotta be kiddin’ me*”.

The Passive Voice in business correspondence is also considered to be very formal. Analysis shows that usage of the passive voice was low in comparison to the active voice. The active voice is considered to be more polite but usage of the passive voice is formal. Most sentences that contained the passive voice appeared in business letters from a French company; e.g. “*The promotion will be held*”, “*We were asked to write you*” or “*The meeting will happen*”. The passive voice appeared only sporadically in business e-mails. The majority of passive voice was contained in e-mails from a French company; e.g. “*Our department was decided*” were applied in 2 e-mails, “*The business cards were damaged*”, etc.

Analysis of complex and simple sentences can be seen in Charts No.12 and 13. The results of my analysis show that usage of complex sentences, which are a sign of formality, is very low. Complex sentences appeared in both Czech companies and in foreign companies equally. 15 letters from both Czech companies contained as many complex sentences as 15 letters from French company; e.g. “*As a worldwide marketing company with the seat in Paris, we provide the best PR services as you can check by yourselves on our website*” or “*The place that you offered for the meeting is appropriate, but we prefer to make meeting in our building*”. Business letters from Bulgarian companies did not contain any passive voice. Complex sentences in business e-mails appeared in only 8 cases, again in e-mails from a French company.

The last part of my analysis concerns lexical and modal verbs in business correspondence. Lexical and modal verbs appeared in business letters from all four companies equally, but business letters from a French company contained a majority of formal lexical and modal verbs; e.g. “*We would like to accept your offer*”, “*It would be pleasure*”, “*Your services should be*”. Usage of lexical and modal verbs in business e-mails was equal in all cases

from all companies. The most formal were e-mails from a French company and the least formal were e-mails from a Bulgarian company.

CONCLUSION

The main aim of my Bachelor thesis was to find out if the language means of formality are used in accordance with the set rules for business correspondence. To sum up, language means of formality are used to a very small extent. Colloquial language dominates - mainly in correspondence from Czech companies and Bulgarian company too. The only exception was business correspondence taken from a French company, which was mainly written in formal style.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Ashley, A. 2003. *A Handbook of Commercial Correspondence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bond, Alan. 2005. *300 + Successful Business Letters for All Occasions*. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's Educational Series.
- Boros, Claudine L. 1998. *The Essentials of Business Writing*. Piscataway, N.J.: Research & Education Association.
- Brücknerová, Hana. 2010. *Formality in Business Correspondence: (in)appropriate use of non-native speakers*. publication place: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing.
- Cleary, Sandra. 2004. *The Communication Handbook: a student guide to effective communication*. Lansdowne: Juta Academic.
- Davy, David and Crystal Derek. 1969. *Investigating English Style*. Harlow: Prentice Hall Press.
- Emmerson, Paul. 2009. *Business Vocabulary Builder: intermediate to upper-intermediate : the words and phrases you need to succeed*. Oxford: Macmillan.
- Halliday, M.A.K. 2005. *On Language and Linguistics*. London: Continuum.
- Holmes, Janet. 2008. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Harlow, England.: Pearson Education ESL.
- Klímová, Blanka. 2009. *Business English Basics*. Hradec Králové: Gaudeamus.
- Leech, Geoffrey Neil, Svartvik Jan. 2002. *A Communicative Grammar of English*. London: Longman.
- Naterop, B. 2002. *Business Letters for All*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Urbanová, Ludmila. 2002. *Stylistika Anglického Jazyka*. Brno: Barrister and Principal.
- Verdonk, Peter. 2005. *Stylistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Yule, George. 2004. *The Study of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Web sites

Coffey, Neil. How to write a letter or e-mail in French: closing formulae. French Phrases:

How to write a letter or e-mail in French: closing formulae. http://www.french-linguistics.co.uk/phrase_book/en/letters_closures.html (accessed April 23, 2013).

Heaps, Stacie. How to Write a Business Memo. WriteExpress.

<http://www.writeexpress.com/business-memo.html> (accessed April 23, 2013).

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Layout of a business letter (Ashley, 2003)	15
Figure 2:Layout of Business Letter according to formal adjustment (Emmerson, 2009).....	18
Figure 3: Classification of verbs (Thesis Author).....	27
Figure 4: Overview of modal verbs, their function and form	28
Figure 5: Overview of modal verbs, part two, their function and form	29

LIST OF CHARTS

Chart 1: Usage of business letters in comparison to business e-mails (Thesis author)	34
Chart 2: Structure of business letters according to Ashley's (Ashley, 2003) layout (Thesis author).....	35
Chart 3: Structure of business e-mails (Thesis author).....	36
Chart 4: Salutations in business letters (Thesis author).....	37
Chart 5: Salutations in business e-mails (Thesis author).....	39
Chart 6: Complimentary clauses in business letters (Thesis author)	41
Chart 7: Complimentary clauses in business e-mails (Thesis author)	42
Chart 8: Levels of formality in business letters (Thesis author).....	45
Chart 9: Levels of formality in business e-mails (Thesis author).....	47
Chart 10: Passive and Active Voice in business letters (Thesis author).....	50
Chart 11: Passive and active voice in business e-mails (Thesis author).....	52
Chart 12: Complex and simple sentences in business letters (Thesis author)	54
Chart 13: Complex and simple sentences in business e-mails (Thesis author)	56
Chart 14: Lexical and modal verbs in business letters (Thesis author)	58
Chart 15: Lexical and modal verbs in business e-mails (Thesis author)	60

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

i.e	That is
e.g.	For example
Tv	Television
Asap	As soon as possible
Omg	Oh my God
Np	No problem
Ur	You are
Lol	Laugh out loud
RSVP	Répondez vous s'ils vous plait - Please Reply, in English.
Enclo, Ene, Enes	Enclosures (attachment)
Mrs	Mistress
Mr	Mister
Ms	Miss or Mistress
Prof	Professor
Ph.D	Doctor of Philosophy
Dr.	Doctor
Bros.	Brothers
Ltd.	Limited
Inc.	Incorporated
P.S.	Post Script
N.B.	Nota Bene
Etc.	Etcetera
Cc	Copies

APPENDICES

- P I The content of business letter taken from Bulgarian company
- P II The content of business letter taken from French company
- P III The content of business letter taken from Czech company oriented in forklifts and handling technology
- P IV The content from business e-mail taken from Czech company oriented in transportation
- P V The content from business e-mail taken from French company
- P VI The content from business e-mail taken from Bulgarian company

**APPENDIX P I: THE CONTENT OF BUSINESS LETTER TAKEN
FROM BULGARIAN COMPANY**

Dear Mrs. Dragana,

I am writing you about the problem with the saws.

How do you imagine to do this, just tell me and I will be inform you,

I would appreciate if you reply,

Momchil E.

**APPENDIX P II: THE CONTENT OF BUSINESS LETTER TAKEN
FROM FRENCH COMPANY**

Dear Sir/Madam,

We would like to thank you for your interest. We are very pleased you have contacted us and you are looking for our PR services.

As a worldwide marketing company with the seat in Paris, we provide the best PR services as you can check by yourselves on our website. We would be able to offer you services you have asked for.

We would be also able to provide you different kinds of discounts on different services. We will send you the brochure with the list of prices and also photographs from social occasions we promoted.

If you need some more information, do not hesitate to contact us.

Truly yours

Vesselina V.

PR manager

**APPENDIX P III: THE CONTENT OF BUSINESS LETTER TAKEN
FROM CZECH COMPANY ORIENTED ON FORKLIFTS AND
HANDLING TECHNOLOGY**

Dear Mr. Dylan,

The situation is complicated, you know.

The new type of forklift we have ordered from your company is not in correlation with the description on your webpage and we would like to send this type of forklift back to your store and ordered another one if it is possible.

We hope, that problem will be solved as soon as possible.

I am going to send you the rewritten contract we signed. Would you mind send me the copy of the old one?

See you soon,

Martin K.

Product manager

**APPENDIX P IV: THE CONTENT OF BUSINESS E-MAIL TAKEN
FROM CZECH COMPANY ORIENTED ON TRANSPORTATION**

Hey buddy,

I was trying to write you sooner but I didn't have time really. Could you be please more specific about the spare parts you need?

I assure you that it will be delivered asap.

Take care

Tom

**APPENDIX P V: THE CONTENT OF BUSINESS E-MAIL TAKEN
FROM FRENCH COMPANY**

Dear Madam,

I would like to apologize for misunderstanding that occurred. The meeting were supposed to be held at 3rd of July but my secretary sent you different information.

Please, accept my apology. I would be very pleased to compensate it for you and arrange another meeting.

Truly yours

Christophe V.

**APPENDIX P VI: THE CONTENT OF BUSINESS E-MAIL TAKEN
FROM BULGARIAN COMPANY**

How r u doing?

Well, I am really impressed by your offer about new saw blades. Could you be so nice and provide me some more information?

Contact me as soon as possible if you can.

Rosi