

promotion letters written by applicants from South Asia and America, and developed a seven-move structural model of cover letter writing (see Table 2) based on the Wales & Holmes model.

Table 2

Chhatia, 2007, p. 53

Move/Step Structures	Description
Move 2	Establishing credentials
Move 1	Introducing the candidature
Step 2	Offering the candidature
Step 3	Essential detailing of candidature
Step 4	Indicating value of the candidature
Move 5	Offering incentives
Move 6	Enclosing documents
Move 7	Eliciting response
Move 8	Using pressure tactics
Move 9	Ending politely

Chhatia's (2007) development of the seven-move structural model for interpreting cover letters, as shown in Table 2, has been used as a useful point of reference in several cross-cultural contrastive rhetorical analyses. Connor et al. (2005) studied the cover letter writing style of Chinese students and found similarities to the Indian group in Chhatia's research. Both groups showed a lack of using cover letters as means of self-promotion, which is in opposition to the American group studied by Chhatia (2007). Long and Li (2002) investigated the linguistic features of cover letters written by Taiwanese and Canadian students and found that there are significant differences in length, lexical density, descriptions of desire for the job, arguments in benefits for the company, and politeness expression between the two groups. Cover letters written by non-native speakers often lack certain key features. For instance, Ellis (2003) studied Arabic/English bilingual writers and found that they tend to overlook politeness strategies when writing cover letters due to a lack of awareness in sociocultural constraints, which can be detrimental for learners, since studies such as Upton and Connor (2001, 2002), who analyzed a corpus of cover letters written by American and European undergraduate students over a 2-year period, found that the style of cover letter writing has become increasingly homogenized between the two groups.

Even though Chatia (1993) developed a vital framework for cover letter writing, his research largely focused on the similarities in structure between cover letters and sales promotion letters. Chatia did not base his corpus on exemplary cover letter writing by native speakers in order to identify linguistic features for pedagogical purposes. The aforementioned findings based on Chatia's research mainly focused on the contrastive analysis between cover letter writing styles between students of different cultural groups. This led Benry and Roseberry (1992) to recognize the importance of having a detailed analysis of cover letters written by native speakers, and therefore take the initiative to develop a specialized corpus of texts from U.S. cover letters from different professional fields. Their research aimed to help language learners compete with native speakers for jobs with western multinational corporations. Their analysis found 22 moves of cover letter writing from native speakers, demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1:

Move	Description
1. Opening	The writer identifies the target and invites the target to read the letter
2. Referring to a Job Advertisement	The writer refers to the advertisement in which the position was named and described
3. Expressing Interest	The writer states an interest in applying for the position
4. Stating Reasons for Applying	The writer gives reasons for wanting the position
5. Stating Availability	The writer indicates when he or she would be able to take up the position
6. Promoting the Candidate	The writer presents selected information demonstrating qualifications and abilities relevant to the desired position
7. Stipulating Terms and Conditions of Employment	The writer indicates expectations regarding salary, working hours, and other relevant contractual matters
8. Naming Referees	The writer names referees who will support the candidature
9. Enclosing Documents	The writer lists documents enclosed with the letter
10. Polite Ending	The writer ends the letter in a conventional manner
11. Signing Off	The writer signs the letter

Among the 22 identified moves stated in the model, Berry and Roseberry 1972 found 10 moves that can be accomplished by a series of strategies. The 10 moves and their strategies found by Berry and Roseberry 1972 are demonstrated in Table 7.

Table 7

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In order to carry out the corpus analysis, a mini corpus of 75 sample cover letters in 17 professions were downloaded from the website [monster.com](http://www.monster.com). The specifics of the mini corpus are the following=

- Text type= cover letters for job applications
- Corpus size= 75 cover letters, for a total of 23,24 tokens
- Sample source= <https://www.monster.com/career/advice/article/cover/letters>
- Corpus organization= samples were organized in job categories, namely= administrative, Arts & Media, Business, Child Care, Education, Engineering, Finance/Accounting, Health Care, HR, Job Search, Law Enforcement, Marketing, Military, Nursing, Real Estate, Restaurant, Retail, Sales, Science, Student, Technology, Trades, Transportation
- Limitation= The source does not specify if the samples are authentic or not, which raises the question of how closely they reflect actual cover letters in use in society. On the other hand, getting hold of real cover letters (a rather private type of text) can be very challenging, and, for the purpose of helping learners mastering the type of language used in this type of discourse, the samples comprising the corpus were deemed relevant and thus usable.

&

In order to analyze the texts from this mini corpus, we used the software called [AntConc](#), a concordance program developed by Laurence Anthony (1992). Texts can be input into this

writer would have to demonstrate places and things that the reader does not have the (knowledge of#

. figure 2

Rank	Freq	Word
1	942	and
2	595	i
3	562	to
4	488	a
5	384	of
6	371	the
7	359	in
8	323	for
9	311	my
10	222	is
11	189	with
12	169	your
13	164	at
14	147	ye
15	123	ar

In Benry and Roseberry's 1; ; 2< &over Letter Model in Tables 2 and : , the act of listing and object identifying seem to occur the most in promoting the candidate, including listing relevant s(ills and abilities, listing -uali*cations, listing publications, and demonstrating (nowledge of target position# This shows the signi*cance of the teaching of Move E, Promoting the &andidate, in cover letter writing#

Top Content Words and Function Words

Table 5 demonstrates the *ndings of the top content and function words followed by their fre-uency number, drawn from the top fre-uent word list found above#

! \$ *(+ %)

Context and Behavior of Some Content Words

The word *experience* appears in Henry and Roseberry's list of important words under the strategy (Table 7), which is proven to be a strategy of high significance from the above analysis. From this mini corpus, *experience* appears to be the top content word with the highest frequency count of 77. This prompted us to further investigate the content word *experience*. Another notable frequent content word in Table J that we choose to examine further is *experience*. The target terms were run on through the collocates, frequent clusters, and concordance lines functions.

Content word 2= Experience

collocates

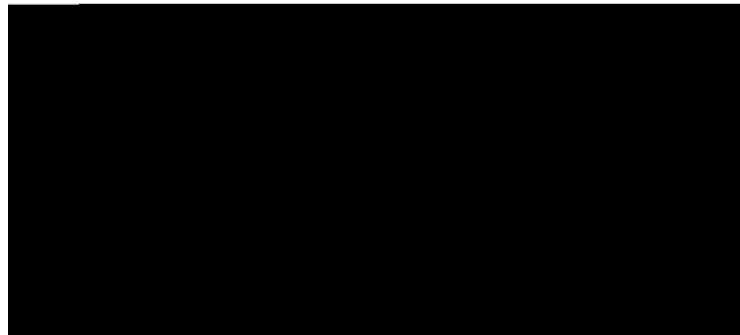
collocates

frequent clusters

concordance lines are given in figure :

figure :

experience



The above collocates suggest grammatical patterns of the word *experience* in the corpus. It is usually used in the form of a noun since the most frequent collocations to the left are *years* or nouns such as *years* or *years*. The collocations on the left suggest *experience* used as a noun because of the frequent noticeable use of gerunds after *experience* such as *experience* or *experience*, etc. The word *experience* is used as a noun to refer to the time that the writer spent in a particular professional field. Some notable grammatical patterns are:

noun

gerunds

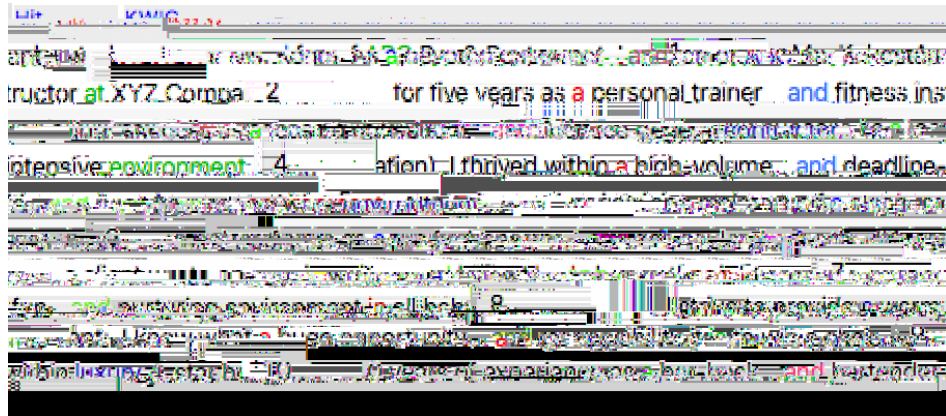
Context and Behavior of Relevant Function Words

Regarding function words, the top 10 function words and 10 are chosen for investigation, together with 10 and 10 as they can provide useful evidence of the traits the two parts involved in the interactions should have.

- Function word 2= And
 - Collocates 121<
 - Collocates 129<
 - Relevant clusters=

Concordance lines for usage of 'and' in the mini corpus are provided in Figure 5.

Figure 5
and

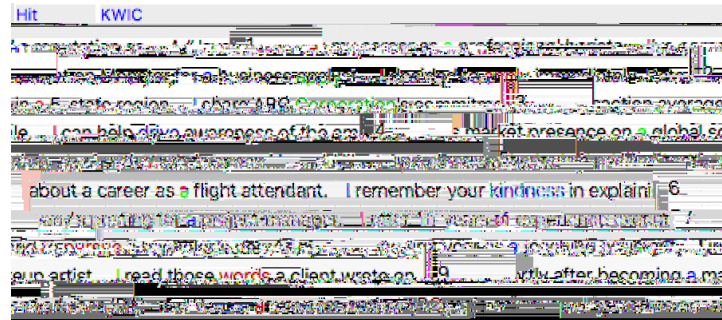


The most frequent collocations on the left of 'and' are all nouns, while the most frequent collocations on the right of 'and' vary, including both function words and content words. This signifies that 'and' is used as a conjunction for both words and sentences in the texts.

- Function word 3= I
 - Collocates 129<
 - Relevant clusters=

notice the frequent use of active voice with the pronoun *I* in the concordance lines presented in Figure E#

Figure E



Function word 7= M
& allocates to the that

Figure 7
Content

Function word = /our

collocates to the right up to J= the content collocates to the right of show the characteristics of the letter addressee as a match for my expertise, the recipient of the writer's self/promoting= b< a target of a transactional communication= 5 c< a respected interlocutor to whom I'm making a special request (to the formulaic nature of these letters<

! \$, (- . - . /

The analysis of the n/grams involved clusters containing from : 1: /grams< to E 1E/grams< words#

"/\$rams

The E/grams show the formulaic nature of cover letters# The most fre-uent are listed in Table E# ! ince the letters are ta(en from the same website and they are samples, there is not much variety in the types of formulaic e)pressions used as openings and closings# . urther, all the proper nouns of companies are absent, or there are no actual phone numbers# ?evertheless, it is clear that cover letters have a highly structured order# The *rst 2J entries in the list are found in the closing stage, and they show what should be mentioned at the end of an effective cover letter= a< the re-uest for a meeting, with verbs such as as e)empli*ed by the sentences M

F M F b< a default, formal salutation, such as shown by The last entry, M

F is found at the beginning of the letters, and it provides suggestions on how to appropriately commence the written interaction, such as in

Loo(ing at 8enry and 9oseberryfs 1: ; ; 2< &over Letter

Model in Table 2 and : , the top E/grams las well as the 5/grams in the following section< re, ect Move := " ffering candidature, and : steps from Move 2;= Than(ing and offering candidature# The high fre-uecy of these n/grams shows the particular patterns of wording in Move : and 2; in &over Letter Briting, which students should learn and use if they want to sound natural in cover letters#

Table E



"/\$rams

! imilarly to the E/grams, the top fre-uent 5/grams shown in table 7 reveal three main functions= to e)press politeness and gratitude towards the reader by than(ing them for their time ldirectionality and formulacity<, to e)press that the writer is interested in the position ltrans r' ITAE i s v n i e c t i o n p a g e

Table 7

Table 3

7grams
Similarly to the *Jgrams*, the more frequent *7grams* (some of which are included in Table 2; < are still contained in the longer *ngrams* and, as such, still fall into the *formulaic* or *self/promotion* categories. As far as less frequent *7grams* are concerned, many contain the phrase *Ability to Overb* or *Hable to Overb*, followed by different verbs according to the field pertaining to the cover letter in sentences such as _____

_____ This structure is yet again a useful linguistic point to teach learners to ensure they successfully perform Move E#
&ross/referencing the *7grams* with one of the most common content word in the corpus, we also found an often/used construction= _____ followed by more specific words according to the job offer= M _____
M_____ 1bullet point# They are all connected to the writing the letter, and are classifiable as being part of the *self/promotion* function#

Table 2;

7grams
Many entries corroborate the point of the transactional nature of cover letters, and the specific direction of the message (from applicant to employer), combined with the *self/promotion* and

E#a

: I have **experience** in all areas covered in your job ad#

7 Highlights of my credentials include **experiences** in both retail and hospital pharmacy

& (

! entences=

& (

! entences=

& (

! entences=

% *
 Description
 Goals= reflect on the general structure of cover letters; identify participants and their roles; explore self/promoting language; locate and use formal language and formulaic expressions; practice writing a real cover letter#
 Target students= higher/intermediate/early/advanced level; adults; immigrants; ESL content#
 Target skills= reading (summarizing); writing (short answers, chart writing @ letter writing); speaking (discussion)#

2. Save a look at the following three letters from [monster.com](https://www.monster.com/career/advice/article/business/analyst/cover/letter). You don't have to read them carefully#
- Letter 1= <https://www.monster.com/career/advice/article/business/analyst/cover/letter>
 Letter 2= <https://www.monster.com/career/advice/article/journalism/cover/letter>
 Letter 3= <https://www.monster.com/career/advice/article/event/coordinator/cover/letter>

Can you see common parts in their structure?

1. Complete the chart

Section	What is being talked about?
Beginning	
Body (you can divide it into smaller parts)	
End	

2. Compare your chart in groups of three and discuss. What topics did you find in each part?
3. In groups, discuss where you would mention these points in a cover letter:
 a# Reason for writing b# Past experience c# Greetings d# Reason for further contact e# Skills f# Personal info g# Mention of &V

4. In the cover letters you checked earlier, who is the MF that writes? and who is the Myof? Can you think of what type of characteristics they should have?

I gained experience as a I have served as a I hope to hear from I offer hands/on experience I produced short/form videos I supervise a team of I take pride in delighting I take pride in providing I was commended for my I was intrigued when i I would be a valuable I would be able to I would like to discuss I would very much like I wrote news and feature	I am very interested in I have worked as a I look forward to speaking I look forward to hearing I am writing to apply I am confident in my I am confident that i I bring to the table I have earned a reputation I am confident i can I am confident that my I am eager to launch I look forward to learning I look forward to your I was very interested to	I will follow up with I would like to be I would ultimately become a I would welcome the chance I am confident i would I am intimately familiar with I am seeing to transition I am writing to express I can be reached at I can contribute to the I co/launched and grew I currently serve as an I earned a reputation as I earned commendations for my I offer strong qualifications that
Past experience list	Personal skills/abilities list	Professionally address the addressee list

5. Think about yourself and what type of job you would like to apply for. Which adjectives and useful expressions do you think are best to use in your case? You can add more.
6. Discuss in groups about everyone's choices for doing some self/promotion.

2. What ways do you (now) say the following things in a conversation?
- cheduling to hang out again or see each other in the future
 - breaking the ice
 - changing contact information
 - increasing/decreasing?

- 7 Save a look at the three cover letters from activity 2 (appendix) and examples of how the writer expresses the four functions from before, I, &, and ' . Write them down here=

I	I	&	'

- 8 Do you notice differences between the spoken conversation and the cover letters? Which ones are more formal?

9 (" 6' 7 4 " ; 8

- 10 Do a Google search for a job opening you might be interested in. You can use a local newspaper and websites like monster.com, LinkedIn, craigslist or Facebook (insertions etc).
- 11 Make a list of the skills you have that can be helpful in getting you the job. Think of all the past experiences you have had that can make you a good candidate (hint= What verb do we use to talk about experiences in the past, in general).
- 12 Think about the reader of the letter. Who is the audience? Do some research about the company/business.
- 13 Using everything we have learned about cover letters, write the points you want your letter to cover.
- 14 Somewhere Write the first draft at home.

In conclusion, the corpus analysis above demonstrates many benefits of but also some challenges to the teaching of cover letter writing for second language learners. In terms of benefits, the analysis from the mini corpus above provides teachers with a variety of language points and patterns of cover letter writing that can be introduced to students. It also points out the level of importance of each language point by providing data of frequency numbers. This helps teachers navigate which linguistic features they should focus on more intensively, and which ones they should give less attention to. Regarding challenges, the above analysis only shows a general look at the language features provided in the mini corpus, and does not provide a step-by-step framework on how to write a cover letter.

In combating these challenges, when teaching cover letter writing, teachers should develop their syllabi using Benry and Roseberry's Letter Model 1; ; 2 (see Table 2 and : as guidelines and the above corpus analysis for specific language feature lessons. A combination of having a structural framework and specific language points and samples will help teachers create a thorough and well-rounded curriculum.

! +

" @ + ,

% 0

2 %answer these -uestions=

2#a Bhat is the most fre-uent content word of the minicorpusG

)perience

2#b List the different possible meanings of the word you found#

)perience is used to refer to the past events, (nowledge, and feelings that ma(e up someone's life or character#

%n e)perience is something that you do or that happens to you, especially something important that affects you#

)perience is (nowledge or s(ill in a particular +ob or activity that you have gained because you have done that +ob or activity for a long time#

If you e)perience a particular situation, you are in that situation or it happens to you#

If you e)perience a feeling, you feel it or are affected by it#

2#c &lic(on that word and e)amine the concordance lines# &ircle the type of word it mostly appears in= ?oun A Verb A %d+ective A %dverb

2#d Bwhich meaning of the word is used in the conte)t of cover letter writingG

)perience is (nowledge or s(ill in a particular +ob or activity that you have gained because you have done that +ob or activity for a long time#

2#e Ko to the Menu 6ar, clic(on H&ollocates!# Type in the word you found#

Ko to H!ort by! on the bottom left and select H!ort by .re-!# Under HBindow !pan! on the bottom right, set H.rom! to H2L1, and HTol to H; !# &lic(H!tart!# Bhat verbs do you see on this list of words that collocate with the wordG

Kain, offer

2#f Ko to the Menu 6ar, clic(on H&oncordance!# Type in the collocations you +ust found !Verb O e)perience<, e)amine their use in conte)t, and come up with your own e)ample sentence for each#

%nswers vary

2#g Bhat are your other *ndings from this investigationG Kive e)amples if any#

%nswers vary

: Oresent the group's results to the class#

*

& ' (1 - 4 2 3

! entences= 5, E, 3, 2: , : ;

5# I strive to make the entire client **experience** extraordinary in every way, but nothing beats the mood/boosting confidence that clients display as they walk out of the salon#

E# I bring to the table substantive intellectual property **experience** and expertise that would benefit your firm#

3# I offer seven years of salon management **experience** and proven success generating revenue growth for management and other salon services#

2: # My 25 years of event management **experience** are well matched to the qualifications outlined in your event coordinator job announcement#

: ; # My background includes three years of professional research **experience**, P#

& < (1 2 4 3

! entences= 4, 22, 25, 2E, 27, 23

4# I am confident that my experience publishing and promoting content on social media and delivering on multiple platforms would benefit your newspaper as you move to digital delivery#

22# My experience providing guidance, assessment and treatment for diverse patient populations combined with an ability to manage programs and build alliances would be valuable to your social work program#

25# My experience developing user/friendly solutions on time and on budget would enable me to step into a software engineering role at STU & company and hit the ground running#

2E# I gained experience working with students with a range of disabilities and learning differences within an inclusive classroom setting, and engaged young learners in activities to optimize their understanding of lessons presented#

27# I am a dedicated sales professional with experience propelling my assigned regions to record/setting revenue results#

23# I offer hands/on

- record of patient/care excellence that you are seeing for your pediatric nurse opening# answers may vary<
- E Highlights of my credentials include **experiences in** both retail and hospital pharmacy operations#
Your sentence= Highlights of my credentials include _____
_____ 2 _____ 0 answers may vary<
- 7 I am a dedicated sales professional with **experience propelling** my assigned regions to record/setting revenue results#
Your sentence= I am a dedicated sales professional with 2 _____
my assigned regions to record/setting revenue results# answers may vary<

" @ + % * 2 =
 '(+ 5 6*7 8

2 Save a look at the following three letters (appendix 6). You don't have to read them carefully, but you see common parts in their structure. Answers may vary, such as: beginning and endings are similar; sharing of address, phone number, etc.; listing applicant's skills; listing past experiences.

: Complete the chart

pride	ability	review	review
hope	years	delivery	advertisement
e)cited	e)perience	contact	ob
strong	bac(ground		
eager	resume		
dedicated	commitment		
committed	goal		
commendation	strengths		

Based on the words, can you identify the features that a good candidate (the writer) should have? What are they about? And what about the job offerer (the reader and letter addressee)?

Writer= positive attitude, self confidence, initiative

Reader= respectable, worthy of respect, professionalism

7. Compare your answer in groups. Decide on 7 characteristics that the writer and the reader should have in the cover letter, and report to the class. Answers vary

8. (5 9 ; +: 6*7

2. Do you think it is important to self/promote yourself in a cover letter? How important is it from 2 to 5? Discuss in groups. Answers vary

: Look again at the list of words that usually go with MF from activity 1. Underline all the adjectives: confident, interested, e)cited, strong, eager, dedicated, committed

7. What type of adjectives are? Decide if they are positive (O) or negative (N). Positive

- J. Now, look at these clusters (groups) of words that go together with MF. Can you put them in the right categories? Write I#, II#, or III# next to the phrase

I gained e)perience as a 0	I am very interested in 0	I will follow up with 0
I have served as a 0	I have wor(ed as a 0	I would li(e to be 0
I hope to hear from 0	I loo(forward to spea(ing 0	I would -uic(ly become a 0
I offer hands/on e)perience 0	I loo(forward to hearing 0	I would welcome the chance 0
I produced short/form videos 0	I am writing to apply 0	I am con*dent I would 0
I supervise a team of 0	I am con*dent in my 0	I am intimately familiar with 0
I ta(e pride in delighting 0	I am con*dent that i 0	I am see(ing to transition 0
I ta(e pride in providing 0	I bring to the table 0	I am writing to e)press 0
I was commended for my 0	I have earned a reputation 0	I can be reached at 0
I was intrigued when i 0	I am con*dent I can 0	I can contribute to the 0
I would be a valuable 0	I am con*dent that my 0	I co/launched and grew 0

I would be able to 0 I would like to discuss 0 I would very much like 0 I wrote news and feature 0	I am eager to launch 0 I look forward to learning 0 I look forward to your 0 I was very interested to 0	I currently serve as an 0 I earned a reputation as 0 I earned commendations for my 0 I offer strong qualifications that 0
Past experience 11#<	Personal skills/abilities 111#<	Professionally address the addressee 1111#<

5 Think about yourself and what type of job you would like to apply for. Which adjectives and useful expressions do you think are best to use in your case? You can add more! # %nswers vary

E Discuss in groups about everyone's choices for doing some self/promotion. # %nswers vary

< (= > 6*7 8

2 What ways do you (now to say the following things in a conversation? Possible answers= %< ! scheduling to hang out again or see each other in the future= 1e)# <

Let's talk soon! talk soon! can we talk about this another time?

! see you soon! I'll see you next week then! let's meet again

%re you free to hang out this >>>? we should hang out soon! let's plan a date!

6< 6rea(ing the ice=

Hey there, you don't (now me, but P! Si, can I talk to you for a second?

Hey I was texting to P! Si, did you get my message?

I wanted to ask you something##

&<)changing contact information=

This is my number! add me on insta! What's your email address?

! do you have Line? You can call me at this number##

' < %ddressing someone! saying hello/Goodbye=

? nice to meet you! I am P! How's it going?

)cuse me!

bye! Take care! ! on't be a stranger!

: When would you do these in conversation? %t the beginning? %t the end? Discuss in group! # %nswers vary

7 Save a look at the three cover letters from activity 2 (appendix) %# &an you *nd examples of how the writer expresses the four functions from before N%, 6, &, and ' ? Write them down here= %nswers vary

J ! do you notice differences between the spoken conversation and the cover letters? Which ones are more formal? &over letters are more formal

