

**BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG**



ISO 9001:2008

KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

NGÀNH: NGOẠI NGỮ

Sinh viên: Hoàng Thị Ràng

Giảng viên hướng dẫn: Đặng Thị Vân, M.A.

HẢI PHÒNG - 2016

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TÊN ĐỀ TÀI KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

**A STUDY ON FORMAL LETTERS AND INFORMAL
LETTERS IN ENGLISH**

**KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP ĐẠI HỌC HỆ CHÍNH QUY
NGÀNH: NGOẠI NGỮ**

Sinh viên: Hoàng Thị Ràng

Lớp: NA 1601

Giảng viên hướng dẫn: Đặng Thị Vân, M.A.

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NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Sinh viên:Mã

SV:.....

Lớp:

.Ngành:.....

Tên đề

tài:.....

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1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp (về lý luận, thực tiễn, các số liệu cần tính toán và các bản vẽ).

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2. Các số liệu cần thiết để thiết kế, tính toán.

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3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp.

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CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

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Họ và tên:.....

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Cơ quan công tác:.....

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Họ và tên:.....

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Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày 09 tháng 7 năm 2016

Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Sinh viên

Người hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày tháng.....năm 2016

Hiệu trưởng

GS.TS.NGƯT *Trần Hữu Nghị*

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1. Tinh thần thái độ của sinh viên trong quá trình làm đề tài tốt nghiệp:

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3. Cho điểm của cán bộ hướng dẫn (ghi bằng cả số và chữ):

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Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm 2016

Cán bộ hướng dẫn

(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

Acknowledgements

During the process of doing the graduation papers, I have received a lot of advice, suggestions and helps from many people. Without their support, the study would have been made impossible.

On this occasion, I am deeply indebted to my teacher, Ms Dang Thi Van, M.A, the supervisor, who has been giving my study her very warm welcome by guidance, materials and corrections during the preparation and development of this study.

I would like to express my very sincere thanks to all teachers of Foreign Language Department of Hai Phong Private University for their valuable lectures during my study and graduation time.

I also wish to extend my many thanks to my family and my friends for their day- to- day assistance and encouragement as ever before.

Hai Phong, June 2016

Hoang Thi Rang

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

Writing letter plays an important role in our life and it is used in all fields, for example, business, education, tourism, daily communication, etc. Letter is, first of all, the means used by people to keep in touch with their family, relatives or friends. In business, it is used by the company to contact and exchange information with its customers.

In the stage of modernization of the country, the cooperative and developed opportunities are available, exchanging letter has become more and more important especially the letter written in English.

There is a fact that not all people are able to write an English letter successfully due to the limitation of knowledge. Writing a good letter means you use a special language in appropriate format and clear content to persuade the receivers and make a good impression on them.

Writing a successful English letter is not really easy. It becomes a common problem not only to students but also to employees. There are some differences between formal and informal letter in term of format, style and language. People sometimes make mistakes in their letters without being aware about it.

Realizing the above issues, I decided to carry out “the study on formal letters and informal letters in English” to help learners deeply understand

about these types of letter with the hope that they can write an English letter better.

2. Aims of the study

The aims of the study are:

- Giving literature review of definition, writing process and classification of writing as well as classification of letters.
- Providing the basic and essential knowledge about the format, style and language used in formal letters and informal letters.
- Finding out some common errors in writing English letter to help learners avoid making those mistakes and have good skill in writing letter.

3.Scope of the study.

There are many different types of formal letters and informal letters that need to be analyzed. However, because of the limitation of time and knowledge, I can only focus on some typical types and finding out the most common errors made by Vietnamese learners when they write English letter.

I hope that students and readers will find my study useful in their study and communication in their life. I do expect and highly appreciate their comments, suggestion to make the study better.

4.Methods of the study

To finish this graduation paper, I search and collect the necessary knowledge from different reference books related to English writing and from the websites on the internet.

This paper provides readers with many model English letters. Besides, I carry out the qualitative method in which some typical letters are analyzed to help learners understand clearly about the format, content, style and language in each type as well as the possible mistakes in writing letter.

5.Design of the study

My graduation paper is divided into three parts, in which the second part is the most important part

The first part is the **introduction** which presents the rationale for choosing the topic and point out the aims of the study, the scope of the study, methods and design of the study.

The second part is **development** which consists of three chapters.

Chapter 1: Literature review which provides reader with definition of key terms including writing and letter as well as classification of letters.

Chapter 2: Focuses on some types of formal letters and informal letters. The format, content, style and language of complaint letters, congratulations letters and invitation letters are analyzed.

Chapter 3: Points out the possible errors in writing letter and give some suggestion to Vietnamese learners for improving writing English letter skill.

The last part is the **conclusion**. In this part, the content of previous parts is summarized

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 1 helps readers have a first look at definition of writing and writing process. This chapter also introduces an overview of letter as well as their classification.

I. Writing

1. Definition of writing

Writing plays an important role in our life. It is a skill that people in all parts of life use every day. A teacher, for example, has to write lectures, a chief accountant has to write reports to general director every month. As a student, I have a pile of writing tasks: essays, assignments, internship report, graduation study, etc. Therefore, a good writing skill is what I need to equip.

Here are some different definitions of writing.

- "Writing" is the process of using symbols (letters of the alphabet, punctuation and spaces) to communicate thoughts and ideas in a readable form.

(www.englishclub.com/writing)

- Another definition of Writing is “a medium of human communication that represents language and emotion through the inscription or recording of signs and symbols”.

(www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Writing)

During my study process at Hai Phong Private University, I find writing a hard-work skill. In other words, writing is a process that everybody has to practice regularly. In addition to good writing skill, learners should read more to find the different ways in organizing writings, and widen knowledge.

2. Types of writing

According to Stephen Bailey (2006: p.3), most university and college students are assessed through the production of written assignments. Some of the terms used to describe different types of assignments can be confusing. In addition, students need to be obvious about the basic components of written texts. In other words, the types of writing can be made clear and the following table shows the main purpose of each and usual approximate length

Type	Purpose	Length
Letter	For formal and informal communication	Usually fewer than 500 words
Note	To record reading or lectures	Depends on each reading or lecture
Report	To describe something a student has conducted, e.g. an experiment/a survey	1,000-2,000
Project	Research conducted either individually or in group on subject chosen by student(s)	1,000-3,000
Essay	Piece of writing used to assess coursework/subject chosen by teacher	1,000-5,000
Thesis/dissertation	Long piece of writing on subject chosen by student for final assessment in Master's/PhD course	30,000-70,000

Article/paper	Writing published in academic journal	5,000-10,000
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(Bailey, 2006: p3)

3. Writing Process

As we know, writing is known as a method of communication. Good writing skills allow us to communicate our message clearly and obviously and also help learner write fluently.

Based on The Oxford Essential Guide To Writing, the author pointed out writing in its broad sense as distinct from simply putting words on paper has three steps: Thinking about it, doing it, and doing it again and again and again, as often as time will allow and patience will endure).(Thomas S. Kane, p.17)

*The first step, “thinking”, or is called “prewriting” includes:

Prewriting is the process of coming up with ideas for your essay

There are some prewriting techniques that we can discuss:

-Analyzing the assignment: You have to sure that you understand the assignment. You should take some questions what, where, when, why, how...

- Brainstorming: You should quickly generate ideas (examples, reasons, personal experiences and otherdetails) in the form of notes, a list, a diagram, a mind map, or columns.

- Outlining: You may find that different ideas in brainstorming can be written in different paragraphs. So you need to organize your ideas by making an outline and add relevant ideas.

*The second step, “doing,” is usually called “drafting”.

The author considered “a draft” is an early version of a piece of writing. Most of us cannot compose anything well at the first try. We must write and rewrite. As a rule, the more you draft, the better the result. You

create the complete sentences from the ideas in your outline and write the sentences in paragraph.

In the draft, mistakes can be made and your writing structure does not need to be perfect.

*The third step, “doing it again”.

After draft writing, we rework the writing so that the ideas are expressed in the best way possible.

At last we check the organization of your paragraph and ideas every misspelling in a dictionary, using verbs, pronouns, and modifiers correctly.

Writing process is very important. It goes through many stages such as understanding, collecting information, and writing. If you deeply understand about writing process and frequently practice writing following these above steps. You will improve your overall ability to communicate in English and you will be a good writer.

II. Letters

1. Definition of letter

In many years, writing letter is one of the ways to show your deep emotion and very meaningful. People still send the sincere letters to each other on special occasion or celebration even on any day that they like. So, what is a letter?

“Letter is a written or printed communication directed to a person or organization.”

(<http://education.yahoo.com/reference/dictionary/entry/letter>)

Letter is also defined a written message from one person to another, usually put in an envelope and sent by post

(<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/letter>)

Letters can be created and sent as:

E-mail or electronic transmissions

Hand-delivered transmissions

Regular mail transmissions

2. Letter writing basics

According to Robert W. Bly (2004: p. 3), the letter writing basics include:

- Prewriting Planning

In this part, we should focus on some simple steps for planning a letter or other communication of any significance:

- Do a SAP(subject, audience, and purpose) analysis as outlined in the sections that follow. The process requires you to ask and answer three questions:

- What is the subject (topic) of your letter?
- Who is your audience? (Who will be receiving your letter?)
- What is the purpose of your letter?

- Gather the information you need and do whatever additional research is required to complete the letter.
- Make a simple 1-2-3 outline of the points you need to cover, in the order you want to present them

- Twelve Rules for better letters writing

- Present your best self
- Write in a clear, conversational type
- Be concise
- Be consistent
- Use Jargon sparingly
- Avoid big words
- Prefer the specific to the general
- Break up your writing into short sections
- Use visuals
- Use the active voice
- Organization

➤ Length.

- Tone

There are four basic options for letter tone – forceful, passive, personal, and impersonal

- Forceful Tone

Forceful tone is used when addressing subordinates or other who, basically, have to do what you tell them to do. You are not asking them, you are ordering them in no uncertain terms.

- Passive Tone

Passive tone is used when addressing superiors and others who, basically, you have to listen to and please – bosses, customers, clients.

- Personal Tone

Personal tone is used when you want to give support or establish or improve a relationship. It is most appropriately used with people you know, rather than strangers, or at least with people whose situations you know about and empathize with.

- Impersonal Tone

Impersonal tone is used when you either want to keep a relationship on a strictly professional level, or when you want to distance yourself from the other person or the subject at hand.

II. Classification of letters

1. Formal letters

Formal letter is written in the formal language with a specific format. In simple terms, this is a letter written for professional communication.

Formal letters are divided into two main types: Business letters and social letters

1.1. Business letters

Business letters are used to exchange thoughts and ideas in connection with a monetary dealing of man and organization.

1.1.1. Complaint letters

A complaint letter is written to show one that an error has occurred and need to be corrected as soon as possible. It can be used for warning the reader.

Dear Mr Haynes,

I am writing *to complain about* your two dogs.

Although I have repeatedly asked you to prevent the dogs from leaving your garden, you have failed to do so. As a result, my front garden has been dug up twice over the past three days.

Furthermore, their barking is extremely annoying, both to local residents and myself.

Finally, I feel that these dogs have a tendency to be aggressive, as I have told you in the past. Nevertheless, they are allowed to roam the streets of our neighborhood, which I consider unacceptable.

I hope that this matter can be resolved.

Your sincerely
William Penton

(Malkoc, 1988, p19)

1.1.2. Inquiry letters

An enquiry letter is written to seek information from other organizations. It may be deal with a simple matter.

Tipton Travel,
Inc. Sept. 15, 1988
Fifth Avenue
Greenburg, VT 11111

Attention: World Travel Reservations

Please reserve on seat on your Around-the Word tour leaving Greenburg on March 30, returning May 30. I am enclosing a down payment of \$500.00 (five hundred dollars) by personal check. Please bill me for the remainder.

Alice Adam Harris

Mrs. J. H. Harris

Mrs. J. H Harris

Rockford Arms Hotel

Rockford, CO 33333

(Malkoc, 1988, p23)

1.1.3. Order letters

This letter is used for ordering the products or services.

Blackstone Book Agency

September 15, 1988

Sixth and Riverside Avenue

Olympia, WA 99999

Attention: Ms. R. Smith

Dear Ms. Smith:

Would you please send me a copy of Word Wide Dictionary, unabridged second edition, 1982. I am enclosing a money order for 37.50 to cover cost and handling.

If this amount is not correct, please let me know.

Thanking you in advance,

Yours truly

Josephine Black Principal

Dr. Josephine Black, Principal

City College
Mountainview, WA 99999

(Malkoc, 1988, p22)

1.1.4. Acknowledgement letters

This type of letter is written to acknowledge someone for his/her help or support. It can be used to say thanks for something you have received from someone.

9/15/88ABC
Corporation
123 Long street
Bigtown, CA 88888

Dear Director:

This is to acknowledge receipt of the housing contract that I requested.

Thank you for your promptness.

Yours truly

Thomas R Hood
Thomas R. Hood Associates

Fourth and Pine Streets
Los Angeles, CA 88888

(Malkoc, 1988, p16)

1.1.5. Application letters

Sept. 15, 1988
Registrar's Office
State University

Littleton, SD 55555

Dear Registrar:

I am a student of microbiology in Geneva, Switzerland. *I would like to apply for* entrance to your university. Would you please send me an application form and information on your university.

Thank you

Yours truly

Renee Martin

BlancApt. 406

Geneva, Switzerland

(Malkoc, 1988, p17)

Depending on different purposes, application letters are created different such as Leave application letters, loan application letters or job application letters

1.2 Social letters

1.2.1. Congratulations letters

A Congratulations letter is used to acknowledge the good news sends wishes and blessings for the receiptent.

West 12 Main Street

Howard, CA 8888

September 15,1988

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Miller,

Congratulations on the birth of your daughter Melissa. May you enjoy all the blessings of parenthood.

With very best wishes,

Sincerely,

David R. Johnson

David R Johnson

(Malkoc, 1988, p10)

1.2.2. Condolence letters

Condolence letter is a letter in which writer shows his/her sympathy for recipient because one of their friends or relatives has passed away.

211 Oak Aidge Park
Youngtown, OH 33333
September 15, 1988

Dear Ms. Rogers,

We were sorry to hear about your illness and hope that you recover soon.

With best wishes for a speedy recovery,

Your English class,
(by) Henry Moore
(by Henry Moore)

(Malkoc, 1988, p8)

1.2.3. Apology letters

An apology letter is a way of expressing regret towards a past action

555 Rosamond Street
Greenville, MA 22222
September 15, 1988

Dear Mr. Smith,

I want to apologize for not having answered your very kind letter sooner, but I have been away on a trip and just returned today.

The photographs you sent are beautiful. My family and I appreciate them very much. They are the best kind of remembrance, and we are very grateful.

Again, *please accept my apologies for* the delay. And please give my best regards to your family.

Sincerely

Alfred Chace

Your student,
Alfred Chace

(Malkoc, 1988, p7)

1.2.4. Invitation letters

All invitation letters are used to invite a person or a group of people to attend an event or some sort of visit.

P.O Box 7

Golden Sands, FL 44444

June 1, 1988

Dear Prof. and Mrs. Miller,

My family and *I would like to invite you to* spend the Fourth of July holiday at our summer house on the ocean. Our house is near the beach and you will be free to swim and walk along the shore to your heart's content.

We will meet you at the airport and take care of all your transportation. *We are looking forward to seeing you and do hope that you can come.*

Cordially,

Mary Margaret Nelson

(Malkoc, 1988, p13)

1.2.5. Thanks letters

A thanks letter is written to express appreciation to other people or organizations.

Broad Branch Road 12 A

Littleton, NJ 33333

Dear Dr. Malone,

My sister and *I want to thank you for* the wonderful books which just arrived. They will be extremely useful in our courses this next semester. We deeply appreciate your thoughtfulness.

With very best regards,

Sincerely,

Agnes Howe

Irene Howe

Agnes and Irene Howe

(Malkoc, 1988, p14)

2. Informal letters

These types of letter are usually addressed to family, friends or relatives with close language and simple format. Such types of letter are also considered Personal letters. These types can include the same five categories as Social letters. However, the format and language are very simple

2.1. Congratulations letters

4246 38th Street, N.E.

St. Louis, MO, 44444

September 15, 1988

Dear Martha and Tom,

What wonderful news! *I was Delighted to hear about the* baby and that you all are doing well. *I want to congratulate* both of you on the arrival of Melissa and wish you many years of happy parenting!

Love,

Catherine

(Malkoc, 1988, p10)

2.2. Condolence letters

June 1, 1988

Dear Rick,

We were sorry to hear about your illness, and hope that you'll be up and around soon. We miss you!

Get well soon,

Jenny and Paul

Jenny and Paul

(Malkoc, 1988, p8)

2.3. Apology letters

September 15, 1988

Dear George,

I'm writing to tell you that I've lost your copy of "Gone with the Wind". I left it in the lounge, and someone must have picked it up. *I'm really very sorry*, and will try to replace it as soon as I can.

Regards,
Cel

(Malkoc, 1988, p7)

2.4. Invitation letters

September 15, 1988

Dear Paul,

We're having a Fourth of July get-together at our summer house. *Bring your beach clothes and a good appetite and plan to spend the weekend!*

Doug

P.S We'll pick you up at the airport, of course!

(Malkoc, 1988, p13)

2.5. Thanks letters

9/15/88

Dear Ruth,

Thanks so much for the birthday book. It's just what I need!

Love,
Agnei

(Malkoc, 1988, p14)

CHAPTER 2: THE STUDY ON FORMAL LETTERS AND INFORMAL LETTERS IN ENGLISH

Chapter 2 will introduce about formal and informal letters. In this chapter, the writer will focus on complaint, invitation and congratulations letters. The format, style and language in different types will be presented.

I. Formal letters

1. Complaint letters in business

Complaint letter is one kind of business letter and most people write a complaint letter to the customer service department or head office if there is no customer service. In some cases, the suppliers have provided the service or goods, however, errors and other unpleasant circumstances may sometimes happen in the course of transaction, and these often lead to tedious disputes.

Following are kinds of complaint often made by the buyer:

- Letter Complaint of wrong deliver
- Letter Complaint of damage
- Letter Complaint of bad workmanship
- Letter Complaint of non-delivery
- Letter Complaint of accounting errors

1.1. Format of Complaint letters

<i>1. Letter head</i>	It is only used for first page of a letter. It often contains name, address, telephone number of the sender. It sometimes includes trade-mark, fax, telex, etc.
<i>2. Reference</i>	This consists of the signer's initials in capital, this item serve as a reminder of who prepare the letter.

<p>3. <i>Dateline</i></p>	<p>The date on which the letter is being prepared. The month may be written by abbreviations Jan, Feb, Sept, Oct, Dec but do not present in figures</p>
<p>4. <i>Attention line</i></p>	<p>The address and name of recipient are written as it will appear on the envelope This is not always required. It should be used when the letter is addressed to a company or organization as a whole, but you want to be handled by a specific individual at the company or within the organization. It should be underlined or typed in capitals.</p>
<p>5. <i>Salutation</i></p>	<p>It is usually followed by a comma.</p>
<p>6. <i>Development</i></p>	<p>It is the body of the letter that present what the letter is about.</p>
<p>7. <i>Complimentary close</i></p>	<p>This is polite, formal way to end a letter: standard forms are “Yours faithfully”, “Yours truly”, etc. Only the first word of the complimentary close is capitalized and the ex-precision is followed by a comma.</p>
<p>8. <i>Signature</i></p>	<p>The sender should sign his/her name in</p>

<p>9. <i>Enclosure</i></p>	<p>the space between the complimentary and their typed name.</p> <p>(if any) Consisting of the word “enclosure” followed by a list of the enclosed items, this is practical courtesy to prevent your reader from discarding important matter with the envelope.</p>
----------------------------	---

F. Lynch &Co. Ltd.

(Head office), Nesson House, Newell Street, Birmingham B3 3EL

Telephone No.: 0212366571 Fax: 0212368592 Telex: 341641

Satex S.p.A Your Ref:

Via di Pietra Papa Our Ref:

00146 Roma Date: 15 August 19

ITALY

Attn.MrD.Causio

Dear Mr Causio,

Our Order No. 14478

I am writing to you to complain about the shipment of sweaters we received yesterday against the above order.

The boxes in which the sweaters were packed were damaged, and looked as if they had been broken open in transit. From your invoice No. 18871 we estimate that thirty garments have been stolen to the value of £150.00. And because of the rummaging in the boxes, quite a few other garments were crushed or stained and cannot be sold as new

articles in our shops.

As the sale was on a c.i.f. basic and forwarding company your agents, we suggest you contact them with regard to compensation.

You will find a list of damaged and missing articles attached, and the consignment will be put to one side until we receive your instructions.

Your sincerely,

L. Crane

L. Crane

ChiefBuyer

Letter complaint of damage

(Can, 2006, p230)

1.1.1. Opening

A letter is always opened by Salutation which used for greeting.

If you are writing for the first time to the secretary of a company, you should begin the letter with “Dear Sir”. You just use their first name when you know them well.

A woman may be addressed as:

Dear Miss: with the woman who is unmarried or single

Dear Mrs: with the woman who is married.

Dear Ms or if you are not sure about the marital status of the lady.

Below the salutation, include a subject line to indicate the product or service that you are addressing in your complaint.

You start the letter with a sentence that immediately draws the reader’s attention to the matter

Here are some useful expressions for starting a complaint letter.

We would like to inform you that

I am writing to complaint about

I am writing with reference to Order No....which we have received

I am writing to express my strong dissatisfaction with...

We were extremely disappointed with...

1.1.2. Body of letter

This part is also called development of the letter. Follow the opening with a summary of the events that cause your complaint, give all the relevant information in clear and logical sequence. These following terms should be presented:

- Mentioning the problem enclosing the number, the date of order, date of delivery

On 19 May 2016 we placed an order with your firm for 12,000 ultra super long-life batteries. The consignment arrived yesterday but contained only 1,200 batteries.

Firstly, I had difficulty in registering to attend the event. You set up an on-line registration facility, but I found the facility totally unworkable.

- Referring to the inconvenience caused.

This error put our firm in a difficult position, as we had to make some emergency purchases to fulfill our commitments to all our customers. This caused us considerable inconvenience.

Even after spending several wasted hours trying to register in this way, the computer would not accept my application.

I am therefore returning the invoice to you for correction.

This large number of errors is unacceptable to our customers, and we are therefore unable to sell these books.

- Suggesting the solution

I am writing to ask you to please make up the shortfall immediately and to ensure that such errors do not happen again.

Could I please ask you to look into these matters

Please send us a corrected invoice for \$9,479

I enclose a copy of the book with the errors highlighted. Please re-print the book and send it to us by next Friday.

In some cases, you can give warnings (optional)

Otherwise, we may have to look elsewhere for our supplies.

I'm afraid that if these conditions are not met, we may be forced to take legal action.

If the outstanding fees are not paid by Monday, 6 June 2016, you will incur a 10% late payment fee.

1.1.3 Closing

In closing of complaint letters, you should express what you expect from the company or suppliers, or in other words, you say what you want or ask for something to be done, including specific actions and deadlines.

Here are some useful expressions of suggesting solution:

Please let me know as soon as possible what action you propose to take.

I look forward to receiving your explanation of these matters

I look forward to hearing from you shortly.

At last, finish the letter respectfully by the complimentary closure

The complimentary closure used will again depend on the relationship with the person to whom you are writing.

The rule to follow is simple

If the letter begins with “Dear Sir”, or “Dear Madam”, it should end with “Yours faithfully” (you don’t know the recipient)

If the letter begins with the person’s name, e.g.”Dear Mr. Ryan”, it should end with “Yours sincerely” (you know the recipient)

The initial of “Yours faithfully” and the s of “sincerely” should not be capitalized.

Looking at the sample Letter complaint of damage above, you can see:

Salutation	Dear Mr. Causio,
Number of order	14478
Number of invoice	18871

The problem	The sweaters which they ordered were damaged
Inconvenience caused	Nearly thirty garments have been stolen to the value of £150.00 and few other garments were crushed or stained and cannot be sold as new articles.
Solution	Mr Crane suggested Mr Cassio contacting company that Mr Cassio's company agents with regard to compensation
Complimentary close	Yours sincerely

1.2.Content, style and language

Content and Style

Style is very essential and plays an important role in writing. A good letter of complaint should be sure about these following aspects:

Length

When writing a complaint letter you keep it short to help ensure that your letter will be read in its entirety, if you write a too long complaint letter, it's hard for recipient to sit down and read all pages.

Tone

The tone of complaint letters should not be aggressive or insulting. It is very important to write the letter when emotions have calmed down. Although you may feel angry but you must not show this in the letter, because the supplier may not be to blame and it would annoy the reader and not encourage them to solve the problem.

Content

The content should contain enough details so that the receiver does not have to write back requesting more

Legal action is not normally threatened in the first letter of complaint.

Language

Letter of complaint in business are formal letters, therefore, the language used in this type of letter should be polite and formal. Everyone should use complex sentences, non-colloquial English and useful phrases to make your letter leave a good impression on reader and help you writing more persuadable.

You also avoid using slang

Here are some useful phrases in formal complaint letters

Opening	I am writing in order to complain about I am writing to express my strong dissatisfaction with...
Useful phrases	My first complaint is The first problem is The first thing I would like to draw your attention to is My first concern is In addition to this Supplementary to thiswas also unacceptable
Linking words	Even though/ although However/ nevertheless Furthermore, moreover Firstly, finally not onlybut also, but If I may, unless,
Closing	I look forward to hearing from you I look forward to receiving a full refund

	I look forward to receiving a replacement I look forward to receiving your explanation
--	---

2. Congratulations letters

Congratulations letter is usually written to send your wishes and express your feeling to your friends, your relatives, colleagues or to other people whom you want to send your wish. This type of letter is taken in some occasions, events or special days. From my view of point, different occasions need different way and language to write congratulations letter. Giving congratulations wishes to someone means sharing happiness with each other. We should send our congratulation letter as soon as we know about the great news that has been shared.

2.1 Types of the congratulations letter

A letter of congratulations builds goodwill by striking the reader's ego: everyone likes to have accomplishments acknowledged.

The occasions for congratulatory messages are numerous: promotion, getting a new job, achievements, marriage and births, etc.

A letter of congratulations should contain three essential ingredients. It should:

- 1) Begin with the expression of congratulation
- 2) Mention the reason for congratulation with a formal tone
- 3) End with an expression of goodwill.

The following are some sample letter of congratulations

West 12 Main Street Howard, CA 88888 September 15, 1988

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Miller,
Congratulations on the birth of your daughter Melissa. May you enjoy all the blessing of parenthood?
With very best wishes,

Sincerely,
David R. Johnson

Sample of Congratulations letters on birth of baby

(<http://readwritelistspeak.com/congratulation-letter/>)

Dear Mr. Roberts,
I am writing to convey my warm congratulations on your appointment as Managing Director of your firm.
My fellow directors and I are delighted that the many years of service you have given to your firm should at last have been rewarded in this way and, we therefore, joint in sending you our best wishes for the future.

Yours
sincerely,

Sample of Congratulations letters on Promotion

(Dan, 2003, p28)

25 First Avenue West Norfolk, VA 66666
September 15, 1988

Dear Dr. Harrison,
Congratulations on the completion of your doctoral degree.

May I wish you every success in your new career.

Sincerely,

Edmund J, Hill

Director, Language Center

Sample of Congratulations letters on graduation

(<http://readwritelistspeak.com/congratulation-letter/>)

Route 4, Box 200 Blackthorn, KY 5555S

September 15, 1988

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Brock,

Congratulations on your golden wedding anniversary! Although we can't be with you to help you celebrate this very special occasion, please know that we are with you in spirit on this happy and auspicious day.

With warmest best wishes.

Sincerely,

Mary and John Smith

Sample of Congratulations letters on wedding anniversary

(<http://readwritelistspeak.com/congratulation-letter/>)

2.3. Content, style and language in congratulation letters

Content and style

When you write a congratulation to someone, it means you find yourself please and happy for them and you are given a chance to express your wishes. It is very essential to congratulate other people formally. If those

are your partners, your colleagues or your boss, it is very nice to send sincere congratulations.

A good congratulation letter should consist of these aspects.

Content

The content of the congratulations letter need be clear and obviously and make recipient feel happy and create a good connection.

Because everybody also want to be noticed and organized for their accomplishments, so that, sending a congratulations letter is considered a nice gesture. Sending a congratulatory note can strengthen your relationship and it can give you more opportunities in the future.

We should avoid extensively lengthy writing because it can cause the impression of exaggeration.

Your letter should not include unnecessary details that do not serve the purpose of the letter.

Tone

Your letter should be concise and positive and to the point

Express your congratulation in an honest manner.

Be genuine, and sincerely show that you are happy without any exaggeration.

Language

The language that used in your letter should be formal, polite and simple instead of complicated, because the receiver should be able to easily understand what you are expressing, or else the purpose of the letter will lost

A formal congratulation letter is usually open with “Dear + name/ title”. It should end with “yours sincerely”

It can be finished by:

Please accept my best wishes for your continued success

I wish you all the best in this important career advancement

Good luck and give an update once you get settled

Best wishes for success and keep in touch.

Following are common sentences in congratulation

Congratulation on promotion	Congratulations on your promotion to general manager I want to congratulate you on your new position Please accept my hearty congratulations on your promotion
Congratulation on new job	I just heard the news about your new job We were all to hear the news Congratulations on your new job I was delighted to hear that you had landed the position
Congratulation on achievement	Congratulations on receiving the Springfield Art Award

II. Informal letter

1. Congratulation letters

Informal Congratulation letters are usually written to people who are very close to us like friends, relatives. These letters should not be written to the people whom we or to the people whom we don't know or we don't have close relationship. It sounds quite odd if we write congratulations letters to such kind of people.

1.1. Types of Congratulations letter different types:

An informal letter of congratulations should contain three essential ingredients. It should:

- 1) Begin with the expression of congratulation

- 2) Mention the reason for congratulation with a personal or informal tone
- 3) End with an expression of goodwill.

Informal Congratulation letters can also be divided into

September 15, 1988	Dear Kathleen, Happy Birthday! And many happy returns of the day.
Love, Mary	

Sample of Congratulations letters on birthday

[\(http://readwritelistspeak.com/congratulation-letter/\)](http://readwritelistspeak.com/congratulation-letter/)

4246 38 th Street, N.E. St. Louis, MO, 44444 September 15, 1988	Dear Martha and Tom, What wonderful news! I was delighted to hear about the baby and that you all are doing well. I want to congratulate both of you on the arrival of Melissa and wish you many years of happy parenting!
	Love, Catherine

Sample of Congratulations letters on the birth of baby

[\(http://readwritelistspeak.com/congratulation-letter/\)](http://readwritelistspeak.com/congratulation-letter/)

Dear Mr. Hopkins, It was real please to know of your promotion to the position of Sales manager From what we know of the qualifications required, the Board
--

of Director of your firm could not have chosen a better man.

Congratulations on a-well deserved advancement.

Sincerely yours,

Sample of Congratulations letters on promotion

(Dan, 2003, p28)

Fairwoods apartments 42, 100 Broad Avenue S.E

Tulsa, OK 77777 September IB, 1988

Dear Joe,

Congratulations on your new job! We were all really happy to hear the good news and wish you the best of luck.

Let us know how you're getting along-and when you're coming through Tulsa again.

Soon, we hope!

As ever, *fd*

Sample of Congratulations letters on new job

(<http://readwritelistspeak.com/congratulation-letter/>)

1.2. Content, style and language

Content and style

The style of informal congratulation letter is also as same as in formal congratulations letter. It needs to be written clearly and obviously.

Length

Informal congratulations letter has personal feature because it is often sent to people who close to us and we know them well like friends, relatives, family...Therefore, the length of the letter should not be long. Most of the informal congratulations letters are short.

Tone

The tone in informal congratulation letter should be concise and positive and to the point like formal letter

You also express your congratulation in an honest and sincere manner

Depending on people who are received, your letter will dictate the tone. For example, you wouldn't use the same tone and voice if you're writing a birthday letter to your friend and your director. If the person is someone older, the tone of the letter should be more formal in nature.

Language

People use the simple and close words to congratulate their close-knit person directly.

An informal letter of congratulations can start with "Dear". People use it when we write to someone older than us. Sometimes, when people write to friends, relatives or family members who younger than them, they use the receiver's name directly.

There are some differences in using language between formal congratulations letter and informal congratulations letter

	Formal	Informal
opening	Dear John Dear Mr.Jane	Dear Aunt, Uncle, Dear mom Mommy, daddy Jennifer Hi/ hello,how are you My son, my daughter

closing	Yours Sincerely Sincerely	Your best friend I love you so much Love Regards As ever
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2. Invitation letter

Writing invitation letter or card is one of the common ways of inviting the people you know such as friends, relatives, colleagues, partners to important events

An invitation letter can be formal or informal. Formal invitations look like professional letter while informal invitations are considered personal letter or note.

Informal invitation is letter is normally used for a birthday party, or for lunch or dinner, etc.

2.1 Format of informal invitation letter

An invitation letter consists of these following parts

Opening

-It usually starts with “Dear + receiver’s name” e.g “Dear Maria”

Body of the letter

Title of event: Birthday party, wedding party, dinner meal.

Cover the details:+) location

+) time

+) date

+) dress,

Closing

An informal letter is to someone you know very well. So, your closing is also informal and close.

Opening

Closing

Dear John,

Best wishes

Dear Mary

Best regards

Hi there, John

Hope all's well in your world!

I am going to have a party at my place on next Tuesday, 23rd September. I am inviting you too and I am sure you would be there and have great fun with us. I guess you know that I have moved into a new address, which is 155, Fitz Boy Ave, Birmingham. It's not very difficult to find. Take M41 Motorway and you have to be careful because the Motorway is really busy on Tuesdays and you may get delayed. I would like to recommend that you start your journey one hour earlier .You don't need to worry about a parking place because i am going to hire my neighbor's parking place. For the party night please wear (Fancy dress costumes) so make sure that you bring extra clothes to enjoy the party and spend a great time together.

Cheers

Mark

Sample of Invitation letter to party

(<https://essayforum.com/letters/friend-inviting-party-home-52848/>)

Dear Patricia,

I hope you are well. Are you looking forward to the summer holiday? Thank you for your previous letter, it's always great to hear the news from back home.

I'm writing to you because I want invite you to visit me during the holiday season. We could visit the art and history museums or spend

days at the park or wander around the shopping centre if the weather is bad. My friends would love to spend more time with you too, we could hang out with them in that cafe you like or go on a day trip to the beach. What do you think?

I think it would be amazing to spend a couple of weeks with you here in the city! We would have so much fun! I know how much you love the city and it wouldn't be expensive as you can stay with me in the apartment.

Let me know what you think. If you decide to come, we can start planning what we will do while you're here.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you and hopefully I'll see you soon!

Kind regards,

Kevin.

Sample of Invitation letter for holiday

(<http://www.myenglishteacher.eu/question/how-to-write-a-letter-to-ask-your-friend-to-visit-you-during-the-holiday/>)

September 15, 1988

Dear Paul,

We're having a Fourth of July get-together at our summer house. Bring your beach clothes and a good appetite and plan to spend the weekend!

Doug

P.S. We'll pick you pick up at the airport, of course!

Sample of Invitation letter for visiting house

(Malkoc, 1988, p12)

October 4, 1988

Dear Jerry and Carol,

You are cordially invited to our annual! Halloween costume party on Monday, October 31, 1988 at our home. We promise surprise, fun costumes, and good food.

Bring a friend!

Looking forward to seeing you!

The Thompsons

RSVP regrets only

Sample of Invitation letter for holiday

(Malkoc, 1988, p12)

2.2. Content, style and language

Depending on your reason for sending your invitation letter, the language and style you use will be affected.

An informal invitation letter should be written to brief and include enough details and avoid writing verbose sentences that contain unnecessary information.

Language using in this type of letter should be close and polite.

Abbreviations sometimes can be used:

I am - *I'm*

I will - *I'll*

I have seen - *I've been*

Idioms and colloquial language are also appeared in informal letter:
wanna, kid,

Following is language using in informal letter

Will you come?

Why don't you ... ?

Come...

How about coming with us to... ?

An invitation letter should, in addition, include the R.S.V.P notation.

This abbreviation stands for *répondez s'il vous plait*, it asks the reader to please respond, i.e. Please let us know if you plan to attend.

This chapter presents different types of formal letters and informal letters. In the next chapter, the writer would like to point out some possible errors in style and content and language by Vietnamese learners and give some solutions to overcome these problems.

CHAPTER 3. ERRORS MADE BY VIETNAMESE LEARNERS IN WRITING FORMAL LETTERS AND INFORMAL LETTERS IN ENGLISH.

Correspondence is an important part of life. It is used in the exchange of business and in daily communication. A letter written properly, clearly and coherent always well received and left a good impression on the reader. A letter in English is quite simple. However, there are a few differences in the way English and Vietnamese speak and write and that lead to some mistakes in the process of writing a letter. The common errors created in writing letter include error in content, style and language.

I. Errors in content

Normally, different types of letter contain different contents, for example, a congratulations letter used to express our wishes, in contrast, a condolence letters used to express the sympathy of the writer. The content presented in all types of letters should be clear, coherent and includes enough essential information.

There is a fact that the writers often give too much information, in that case the letter will be long. In contrast, a letter is too little information will make very short letter. Information and expressions will affect the length of the letter.

These following letters used to reply the same enquiry letter for information of Mr Arand. (Too long)

Dear Mr Arrand,

Thank you very much for your enquiry of 5 November which we received today. We often receive enquiries from large stores and always welcome them, particularly at this time of the year when we know that you will be stocking for Christmas.

We have enclosed our winter catalogue and are sure you will be extremely impressed by the wide range of watches that we stock. You will see that they arrange from the traditional to the latest in quartz movements and include ranges for men, women, and children, with prices that should suit all your customers, from models costing only a few pounds to those in the upper-market bracket priced at several hundred pounds. But whether you buy a cheaper or more expensive model we guarantee all merchandise for two years with a full service.

Enclosed you will also find our price-list giving full details on c.i.f prices to London and explaining our discounts which we you will find very generous and which we hope you will take full advantage of.

We always available to offer you further information about our products and can promise you personal attention whenever you require it. This service is given to all our customers throughout the world, and as you probably know, we deal with countries from the Far East to Europe and Latin America, and this fact alone bears out our reputation which has been established for more than a hundred years and has made our motto a household world- Time for Everyone.

Once again may we thank you for your enquiry and say that we look forward to hearing from you in the near future?

Yours sincerely,

(Can, 2006, p32)

Some things are not suitable in the above letter:

- Do not need to explain about the stores and stock for Christmas because the customer knows about it already.
- The catalogue that the writer mentioned includes so many markets.
- Moreover, writer gives unnecessary information about the companies as well as the history of companies that unnecessary.

Here is another letter to reply the enquiry letter of Mr Arrand. (Too short)

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your enquiry, We gave a wide selection of watches which we sure you will like. We will be sending a catalogue soon.

Yours faithfully,

(Can, 2006, p34)

There are also some problems in this letter:

- The letter does not include essential references about the date and time and required information
- The catalogue should be enclosed with letter that replies the customer.

The suitable letter should be

Dear Mr Arrand,

Thank you for your enquiry of 5 November.

We have enclosed our winter catalogue and price-list giving details of c.i.f London prices, discounts and delivery dates.

Though you will see we offer a wide selection of watches, may we draw your attention to pp. 23-28, and pp. 31-36 in our catalogue which we think might suit the market you are dealing with? And on page 25 you will notice our latest designs in pendant watches which are becoming fashionable for both men and women.

As you are probably aware, all our products are fully guaranteed and backed by our world-wide reputation.

If there is any further information you require, please contact us. Meanwhile, we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

(Can, 2006, p35)

II. Errors in style

A persuasive or impressive letter not only has concise and clear content but also needs an elegant and simple style. One of the most common errors in writing formal letters and informal letters is the issue of the salutation. Most mistakes about salutation happen in formal letters.

The second reply letter to Mr Arrand above is an example

In this letter the writer used inappropriate salutation “Dear Sir” and ended with “Yours faithfully”. Because Mr Arrand had written an inquiry letter for the writer before, therefore, the writer knew the name of the sender and he would have started by “ Dear Mr Arrand” and ended with “ Yours sincerely”.

In English, to address someone whose name you do not know you can write:

Dear Sir

Dear Madam

Dear Sir/ Madam

To address someone that you know their name already, use their title and their surname

Dear Dr Smith

Dear PhD. Smith

To end formal letters, you can use:

American English	British English
Sincerely Sincerely Yours Your Truly	Yours sincerely (if you addressed the person by name) Yours faithfully (if you start by Dear Sir/ Madam)

There are some mistakes about the tone in formal letters and informal letters also usually occur

Letter of inquiry often use modal verbs to make the requirement more polite. “Would”/ “Could” and “Please” are usually used.

Impolite: I **want** you to come to our office tomorrow

Polite: **Would** you be able to come to our office tomorrow.

Impolite: **Call** me later.

Polite: *Could* you *please* call me later?

In the complaint letters, some expressions lose the value of the words

We *regret to inform* you that....

I am *sorry to have to write* to you about

These expressions lack of persuading

→ Going directly to the point:

I am *writing to complaint about*.....

Although you are very angry, you should not express negative attitude.

I really angry because your staff...

It is your fault....

Instead: This is the third time this mistake has occurred....

We are really dissatisfied.....

III. Errors in language

There are some mistakes the use of language that writers often make when writing formal letters and informal letters.

Slang, idioms and colloquial language can be used in a letter in case you write an informal letter for your friends, family or relative. It is considered impolite in formal letters.

Here are some errors in using language

Slang

A couple of hundred quid

Bucks

→ Use: I need a loan.

Idioms and colloquial language

Avoid using	Instead of
Rocket	go up
Go through the roof	Raise
Plummet	Go down

Crash	decrease
Go through the floor	drop
Don't worry, I'll get your money back	Your loan will be repaired
To go into property	To invest in property
Prices are at rock bottom	Process are very low

Besides these two main types of mistake, which common found in Vietnamese learners' work, there are also, some other errors that happen during the process of writing English letter such as mistakes of spelling or grammar.

IV. Some suggestions to Vietnamese learners for writing English letters

Content

In order to write a letter in English effectively and successfully, the content should be brief, clear and divided into standard, separate sections. A letter should not too long, except for the contents to be exchanged particularly long.

The important thing required is a letter of the layout should be clear. The letter should present the essential points in a clear order, and between paragraphs, there should be a clear sequence or connection. Do not mention unrelated things.

The salutation and complimentary close need to be appropriate depending on type of the letter and the recipient. For example, you can open your letter with "Hello/ Hi" and end the letter with "Love/ best wishes" when you write an informal letter to your friends. However, when you write a formal letter to your manager you should start with "Dear....," instead of using "Hi/How are you?" The best way to handle this is to make sure you know who will receive the letter.

Style

The features about style for good letter writing may be summarized as follows:

Write effectively by using simple language, by being consistent and precise

Avoid wordiness and meaningless forms of expression

Write clearly and to the point

Write courteously and make your letter sound friendly and sincere

Adopt a tone suited to the occasion and to the purpose of the letter.

Language

Avoid using the slang in formal letters.

You can only use it in informal letter to your friends who are very close to you.

It is considered impolite if slang happen in a formal letter.

Avoid using idioms or language that too colloquial in formal letters

Do not invent abbreviations and acronyms.

All the words should be spelled out on the letters, for example, "Road" instead of "Rd."

Exception honorifics may be abbreviated: Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr, etc.

Numerical time should use the abbreviations "a.m." and "p.m."

Some common and standard abbreviations are also used in business letters.

"Junior" or "Senior", when used in a name, are correctly abbreviated "Jr." or "Sr.". They should be separated from the last name by a comma.

The difference between writing formal and informal letters lies mainly in language. The closely words are often used in daily communication while the formal words are used in books, contracts, business letters and essays. In formal writing, you should avoid using the

intimate words. In contrast, if it only requires writing letter to a friend, you should not use excessive formal words.

The following table shows some words used in formal and informal style.

Formal	Informal
Inform me	Let me know
Cancel	Drop
Contract	Get in touch
Obtain	Get
Apologize	Say sorry
Postpone	Delay
Request	Ask for
Compensate	Make up
Establish	Set up
Discover	Find out
Handle	Deal with
Investigate	Check up on
Tolerate	Put up
Increase	Go up
children	Kids

PART THREE: CONCLUSION

There are many differences between formal letters and informal letters. Style and language are the most different factors. With the knowledge and experience that I learned throughout the study process at Hai Phong Private University, I give learners the most basic and essential information about formal letters and informal letters.

In my study, the rationale, aims, methods, scope and design of the study are mentioned in the part one with the hope that the reader will have an overview on my study. Part two consists of three chapters. They are chapter 2, chapter 3 and chapters 4 in which I presented literature review including an overview on writing, writing process and letter. I also analyze some typical letters and point out the common errors in writing formal letters and informal letters. Part three is the conclusion of the study.

I am aware that errors are unavoidable. I am willing to receive any comments, suggestion from reader to make the study better. I also wish my graduation paper would be useful for English majors in Hai Phong Private University as well as English learners.

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APPENDIX1

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS IN BUSINESS LETTERS

PLC	Public limited company	INST	Instant of this month
COD	Cash on delivery	CV	Curriculum vitae
CWO	Cash with order	Ref	Reference
VAT	Value added tax	Attn	Attention
CIF	Cost, insurance, freight	ASAP	As soon as possible
DCP	Delivered carriage paid	CC	Carbon copy
CIP	Carriage insurance paid	Co	Company
P.T.O	Please turn over	Cr	Credit

P.O.B	Post office box	Dis	District
C & F	Cost & freight	FYI	For your information
Inc	Incorporated	Esq	Esquire
Mfg	Manufacturing	Lt	Lieutenant
Mdse	Merchandise	Pvt	Private
P.S	Postscript	M.A	Master of Arts
i.e	That is	Ph.D	Doctor of Philosophy

APPENDIX 2

SALUTATION AND COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE IN BRITISH AND AMERICAN STYLE

		BRITISH	AMERICAN
Salutation	Formal or Routine	Dear Sir, Dear Sirs, Dear Madam, Meadames	Dear Sir / Gentlemen Dear Mr. Brown: Dear Miss Smith:

			Dear Miss Brown:
	Informal	Dear Mr. Brown, Dear Miss Smith,	Dear Miss Brown: Dear Miss Roberts:
	Personal	Dear Mr. Brown, My dear Brown, Dear Jim,	Dear Mr. Brown, My dear Mr. Brown, Dear George
Complimentary Close	Formal or Routine	Your faithfully	Very truly yours
	Informal	Yours sincerely Yours truly	Sincerely yours, Cordially yours,
	Personal	Yours sincerely, Sincerely, With best wishes, Yours,	Sincerely yours, With kind regards, Sincerely, Yours,

APPENDIX 3: Exercises

The following are some exercises and they help learner deeply understand about formal letters and informal letters.

Practise 1: Answer these questions.

1. When do people write complaint letter in Business?
2. What details will be mentioned in the body of complaint letter?
3. What do people say in congratulations letter?

Practise 2:

Write a letter to your friends Marry inviting her to your friend following these details

Title of event: Birthday party

Date of birth: 20th September.

Time: 7.30 p.m

Location: At home, flat 52, Nguyen Duc Canh Street.

Key to exercises

Practise 1:

1. In business, people write complaint letter because of some reasons:

There is no customer service

The suppliers provide wrong goods or damaged products, etc.

2. The body of complaint letter includes:

- The problem encloses the number, the date of order, date of delivery.
- Inconvenience caused.
- Solution

3. A letter of congratulations should contain three essential ingredients.

It should:

- 1) Begin with the expression of congratulation
- 2) Mention the reason for congratulation
- 3) End with an expression of goodwill.

Practise 2. Your letter could be written as following sample

6 September

Dear Marry

I'm having a birthday party on Saturday, 20 September at 7.30 p.m.

The party is at my home, Flat 52, Nguyen Duc Canh Street.

I hope you can come

Mai

