

The Role of the ESP Teacher in Enhancing ESB Students' Writing Knowledge in Banking

Fouzia Bouchareb^{1*}, Hassina Bouchareb²

¹ University of Algiers 2 (Algeria), fouzia_bouchareb@yahoo.fr

² ENS Bouzareah (Algeria) hassinasamiha@gmail.com

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Abstract:

The study aims at investigating the role of the ESP teacher in enhancing students' writing knowledge in the banking field at the High School of Banking-Bouzareah. Through this study we wanted to know whether the ESP teacher can help ESB students acquire knowledge that allows them to write good formal letters. The number of participants was 88 who represent first year students from both BSB and DSEB cycles. In order to achieve the aims of the study, the researcher used a number of tools for data collection that included a questionnaire and an interview.

The results of the study have shown the following:

- The students' rating to their ESP teachers was relatively low.
- The ESB students showed dissatisfaction with the different aspects of the writing program presented by the ESP teachers.
- The students have a great deficiency in relation to their knowledge about writing formal letters.

In general, the results of the study have shown that the ESP teacher at the High School of Banking doesn't provide them with the necessary knowledge which allows them write good formal letters.

Keywords: ESP, ESP Practitioner, ESP Writing.

1. INTRODUCTION:

After the Second World War English became the global language, it developed to be the language most demanded and available to learners. Those learners of English were from different categories having different needs; every category of learners needed different kind of English. This situation gave birth to what is known today as Specific English or English for Specific Purpose (ESP).

This new trend in English Language Teaching started to gain more and more importance throughout the years to become the most important part of English language teaching, and the educational authorities made it compulsory to be taught in schools and universities as a second or a foreign language.

In this context of ESP training, writing is considered as the spinal column of the institutions and learners should acquire good knowledge about it. The role of ESP teacher comes to be very important to help them reach proficiency in ESP writing. This situation is even stressed when dealing with formal letters writing which is considered as part of ESP writing and different from the academic writing.

* The sender author.

In the light of the previous theoretical data the study attempts to answer the following research question:

- What is the role of ESP teacher in improving the students' ESP writing?

The aims and significance of the study:

The present study aims at investigating the role of the ESP teacher in improving the students' writing ability and knowledge in formal letters. This role is highlighted from the students' view at the High School of Banks- Bouzareah

Investigating the role of the ESP teacher, which is different from that of the EFL teachers, is important because the results of such an investigation can provide both researchers and teachers with valuable insights that can be used to improve ESP writing.

2. Theoretical consideration and study concepts:

2.1. Concepts and Definitions on ESP:

The definitions of ESP presented by the scholars in the field varied and developed over time. Mackay and Mountford (1978), defined ESP as a language that is generally used to refer to the teaching of English for a clearly utilitarian purpose. The latter is usually defined with reference to some occupational requirement or some academic or professional study. (Mackay and Mountford, 1978)

Stevens' (1977) definition to ESP is close to that of Mackay and Mountford in terms of the ultimate purpose, yet he presented ESP for being concerned by a number of activities, movements and subjects that are carried out predominantly not exclusively in English. (Stevens, 1988)

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) defined ESP as being an *approach* rather than a *product* by which they mean that ESP does not involve a particular kind of language, teaching materials or methodology. They differentiate ESP from General English by saying "*in theory nothing, in practice a great deal*" (Hutchinson and Waters ,1987: 53)

2.2. EFL Teacher Vs ESP Practitioners:

Teachers play a key role in improving the quality of education. Aggarwal (as cited in Afolabi et al., 2008) said that "*the destiny of a nation is shaped in its classroom and it is the teacher who is very important in molding that destiny.*" (Afolabi , 2010:p. 99). Many studies nowadays recognize the role of the teacher as the most significant factor in the achievement of the desired outcomes (Shulman, 1987). For example, McGettrick (1997) recognized the essential role of teachers in education by attributing the quality of education to the quality of teachers in the schools.(McGettrick ,1997)

Qualities of teacher and effective teaching practices are much interrelated. They can also be compared to poor teaching and ineffective practices in teaching. Adval (Panda and Mohanty, 2003)

ESP teachers are primarily the teachers of General English (Stevens, 1988; Ellis & Johnson, 1994). They find some difficulties when transferring from General English to ESP teaching such as the teachers' unfamiliarity with the subject and the difference of attitude difficulties.

Hutchinson & Waters (1987) distinguished the difference in role between ESP teachers and General English teachers. Firstly, ESP teachers have to manage the needs analysis, syllabus design, materials writing, adaptation and evaluation,

in addition to the normal jobs of a classroom teacher. Secondly, most ESP teachers originate from General English teaching and lack of training for a “specific/special purpose”. Therefore, ESP teachers need to orient themselves to a new environment for which they are not well-prepared. Nevertheless, later, Hutchinson & Waters (1987) argued that ESP teachers do not need to learn specialist subject knowledge, but rather be interested in the subject matter.

Stevens (1988) therefore suggested three techniques for ESP teachers.

- Become familiar with ESP course materials.
- Become familiar with the language of the subject.
- Allow students to put you right.(Stevens ,1988)

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) use the term “practitioner” rather than “teacher” to emphasize that ESP work involves much more than teaching. ESP practitioner can have several roles. According to Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), the ESP (teacher) practitioner has five key roles: - a teacher, - a course designer and material provider, - a researcher, - collaborator and evaluator. (Dudley-Evans and St John ,1998)

3. Design of the study:

3.1. Population and Sample:

The population of the study concentrated on first year students including males and females from both DSEB (Diplome Superieur d’Etudes Bancaires) and BSB (Brevet Superieur de Banque) for the academic year 2018-2019; which represents the overall number of first year students studying in the school.

The number of students involved in this research is eighty eight. Who were males and females whose qualifications range are Baccalaureate and more Baccalaureate. The number of BSB students is 42 whereas the number of DSEB students is 46. The table bellow shows the details of the sample:

Table 1.Sample distribution according to sex and percentage

Variables	Sex	Number	%
BSB	Male	28	66.7%
	Female	14	33.3%
	Total	42	100%
DSEB	Male	22	47.8%
	Female	24	52.2%
	Total	46	100%

As mentioned the participants in this research are males and females, the number of males for BSB students is 28 representing 66.7% of the students, and the female is 14 which represents 33.3% of the sample. Concerning the DSEB, the number of males involved in this research is 22 representing 47.8%; and 24 females which represent 52.2 of the students. The table below shows in details the percentages of the students.

3.2. Instruments of the study:

In order to investigate the role of the ESP teacher in improving the ESP writing at the High School of Banks (ESB), the researcher implemented a questionnaire and an interview.

The questionnaire deals with the ESP teacher and how do ESB students see his role from different perspectives. It consists of seven opinions where students will answer them through choosing between ‘agree’, ‘not sure’ or ‘disagree’

As for the interview, the students are asked to answer two questions in relation to the formal letters.

4. Research Result and discussion:

4.1. Results obtained from the Questionnaire

N 01: The teachers in the English writing program talk to us in English most of the time in a simple and clear way.

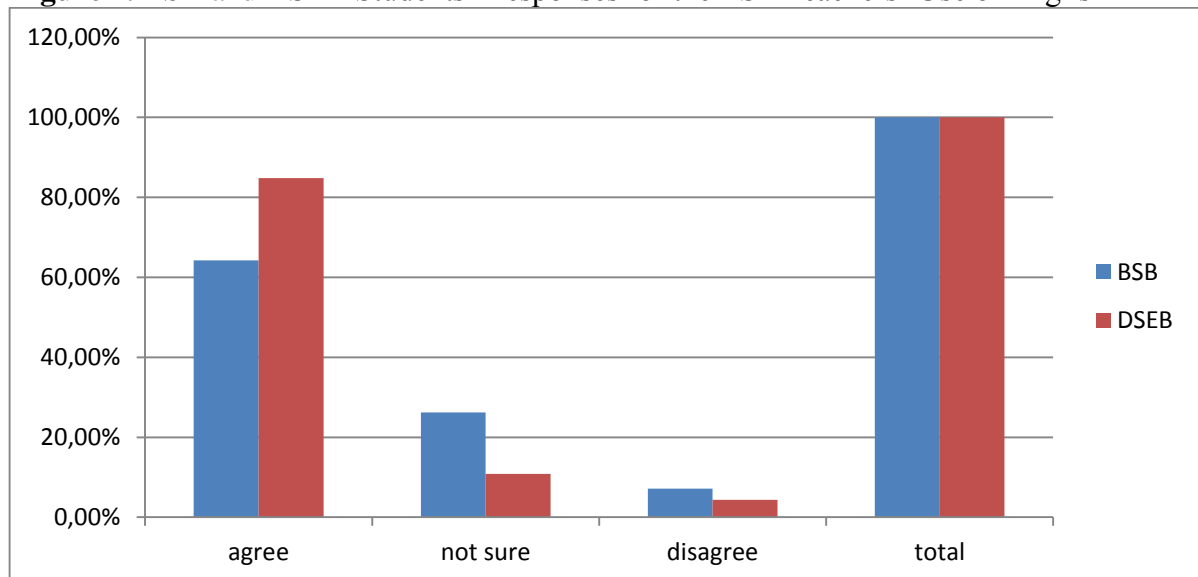
Table 2. BSB Students’ Responses to the ESP Teachers’ Use of English

BSB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	20	7	1	28
Female	8	4	2	14
Total	27	11	3	42

Table 3. DSEB Students’ Responses to the ESP Teachers’ Use of English

DSEB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	19	2	1	22
Female	20	3	1	24
Total	39	5	2	46

Figure 1. BSB and DSEB Students’ Responses for the ESP Teachers’ Use of English



The results of “the ESP teachers’ use of a clear and simple English most of the time” show that the majority of the participants hold a positive attitude towards it. 64.28 percent of BSB students and 84.78 percent of DSEB students agreed with it, 26.19 percent and 10.86 % of BSB and DSEB students

respectively were undecided or not sure and only 7.14 percent of BSB students and 4.34% of DSEB students disagreed.

N 02: The teachers in the English writing program provide us good knowledge of the subject we study in English such as that related to banking, finance,...etc.

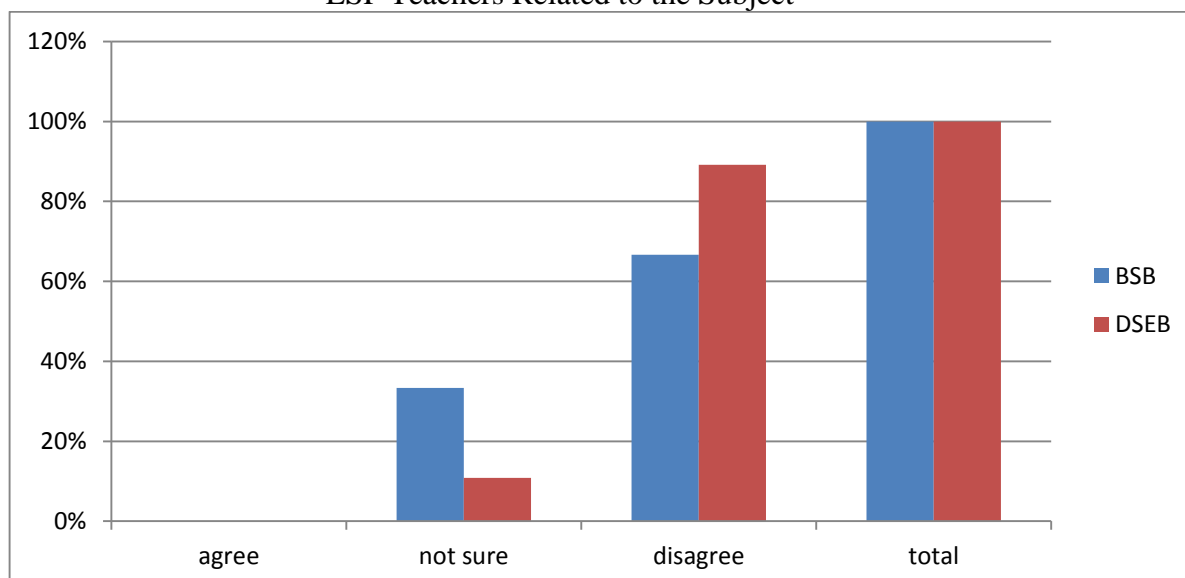
Table 4. BSB Students' Responses about the Knowledge Provided by the ESP Teachers Related to the Subject

BSB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	0	10	18	28
Female	0	4	10	14
Total	0	14	28	42

Table 5. DSEB Students' Responses about the Knowledge Provided by the ESP Teachers Related to the Subject

DSEB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	0	2	20	22
Female	0	3	21	24
Total	0	5	41	46

Figure 2. BSB and DSEB Students' Responses about the Knowledge provided by the ESP Teachers Related to the Subject



The above tables and figure show that the majority of the participants have a negative opinion about 'the knowledge of subject provided by the ESP teachers'. 66.66% of BSB students and 89.13% of DSEB students disagreed with it, and 33.33% of BSB students and 10.86% of DSEB students were not sure. As for 'agree' no student responded for both BSB and DSEB.

N 03: The teachers in the English writing program use effective teaching techniques that help us understand the lessons more easily.

Table 6.

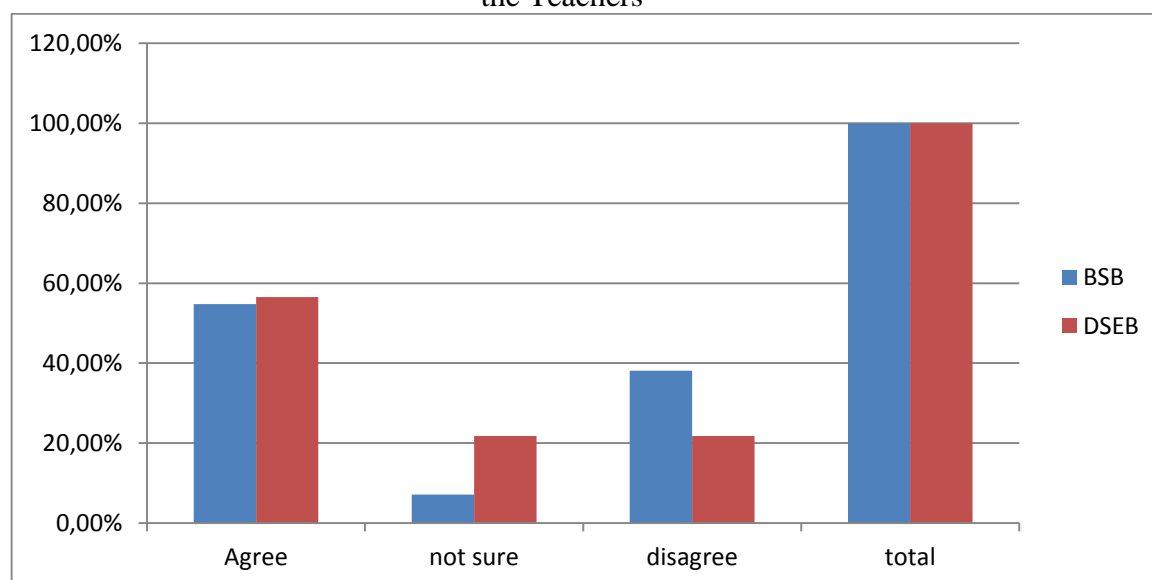
BSB Students' Responses for the Teaching Techniques Used by the Teachers

BSB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	14	1	13	28
Female	9	2	3	14
Total	23	3	16	42

Table 7. DSEB Students' Responses for the Teaching Techniques Used by the Teachers

DSEB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	12	1	9	22
Female	14	9	1	24
Total	26	10	10	46

Figure 3. BSB and DSEB Students' Responses for the Teaching Techniques Used by the Teachers



It is clear from the tables (6, 7) and figure (3) that there are some discrepancies in the students' responses about the use of teaching technique by the teachers. For BSB students, 54.76 percent agreed, 7.14 percent were neutral and 38.09 percent disagreed. As for DSEB students, 21.73% agreed, 67.39% weren't sure and 10.86% disagreed.

N 04: The teachers in the English writing program are clear about their objectives and the steps of their lessons, and deal with any teaching problem successfully.

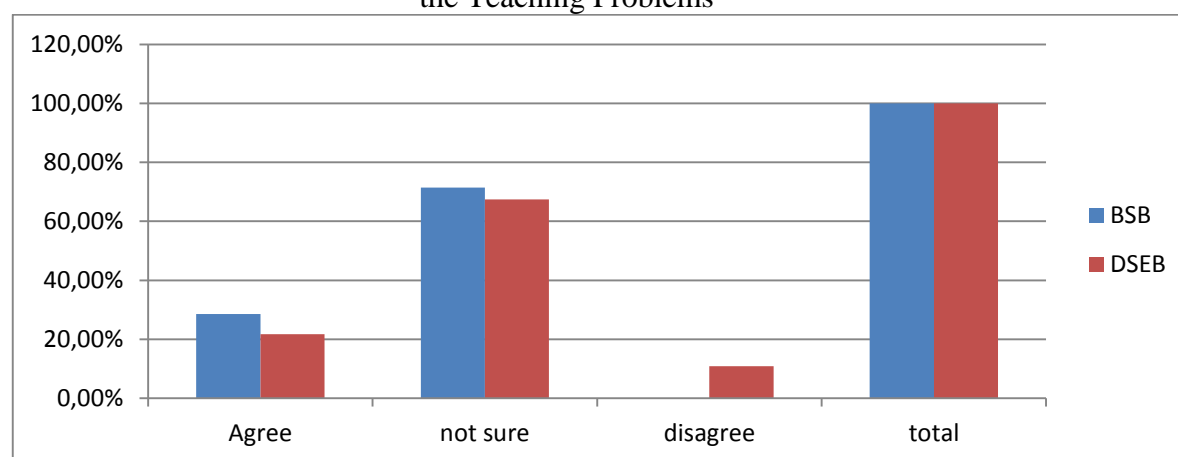
Table 8. BSB Students' Opinion about the Teachers' Objectives and the Teaching Problems

BSB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	7	21	0	28
Female	5	9	0	14
Total	12	30	0	42

Table 9. DSEB Students' Opinion about the Teachers' Objectives and the Teaching Problems

DSEB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	3	19	0	22
Female	7	12	5	24
Total	10	31	5	46

Figure 4. BSB and DSEB Students' Responses about the Teachers' Objectives and the Teaching Problems



As can be seen from the above tables and figure concerning the teachers' objectives and the teaching problems, the answers varied between 'agree' and 'not sure' and a very small number of 5 students representing 10.86% only disagreed. Indeed, for BSB students we have 28.57% agreed, 71.42% not sure and no student disagreed. As for DSEB students: 21.73% agreed, 67.39% were neutral and 10.86% disagreed.

N 05: The teachers are aware of the students' individual differences and needs and adapt their teaching accordingly

Table 10. BSB Students' Responses for the Teachers' Awareness of the Students' Individual Differences

BSB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	0	25	3	28
Female	0	13	1	14
Total	0	38	4	42

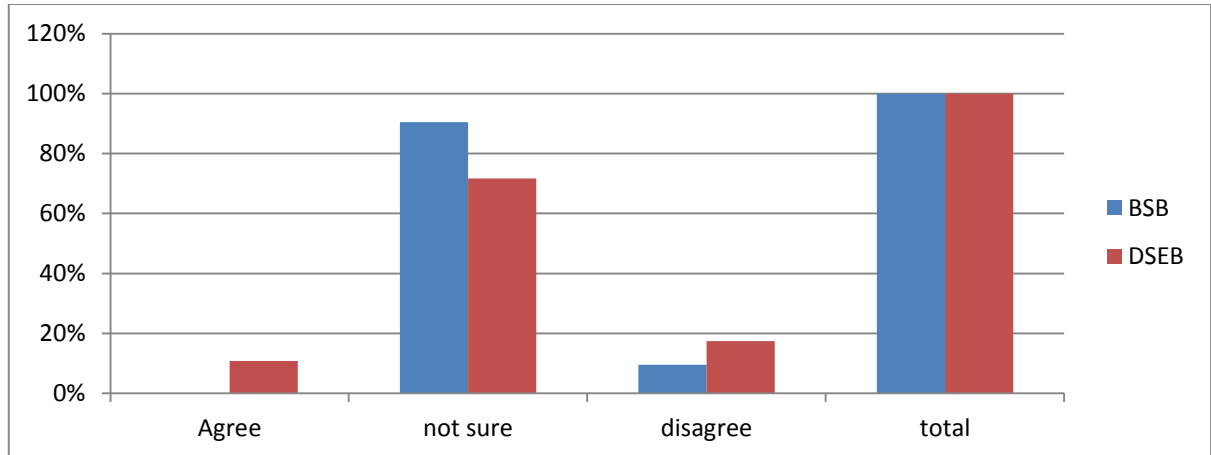
Table 11. DSEB Students' Responses for the Teachers' Awareness of the Students' Individual Differences

DSEB				
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	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	2	19	1	22
Female	3	14	7	24
Total	5	33	8	46

Figure 5.

BSB and DSEB Students' Responses for the Teachers' Awareness of the Students' Individual Differences



The tables and figure above reveal the students' answers for the teachers' awareness of the students' individual differences. For BSB students: no student agreed with it, 90.47% weren't sure and 9.52% disagreed. For DSEB students: 10.86% agreed, 71.73% not sure and 17.39% were dissatisfied.

N 06: English teachers have good knowledge of how to motivate students

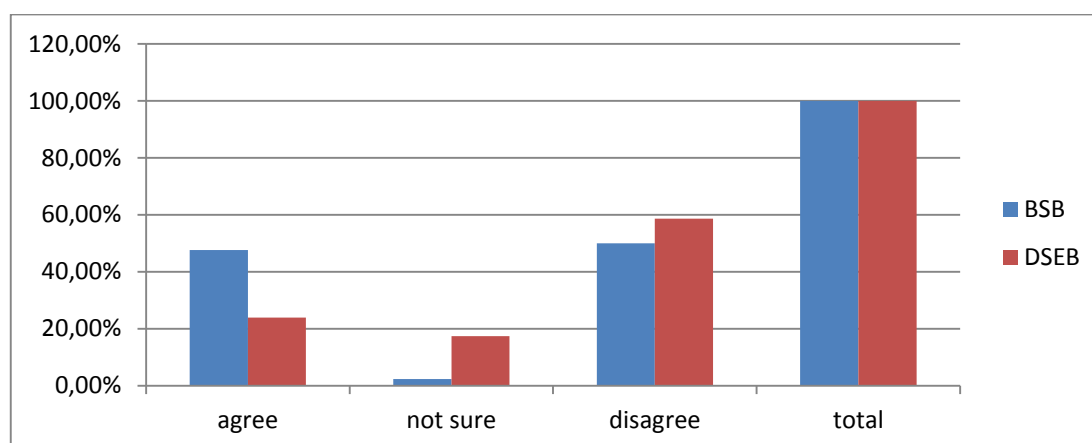
Table 12. BSB Students' Responses for the Teacher' Knowledge on How to Motivate students

BSB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	14	1	13	28
Female	6	0	8	14
Total	20	1	21	42

Table 13. DSEB Students' Responses for the Teacher' Knowledge on How to Motivate students

DSEB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	6	2	14	22
Female	5	6	13	24
Total	11	8	27	46

Figure 6. BSB and DSEB Students' Responses for the Teachers' Knowledge on How to Motivate Students



As can be seen from the results displayed in the above tables and figure, 47.61% of BSB students agreed with the teachers' knowledge in motivating students, 2.38% were not sure and 50.00% disagreed. Concerning DSEB students 23.91% agreed, 17.39% weren't sure and 58.69% disagreed.

N 07: English teachers know well how to teach writing activities

Table 14. Responses of BSB Students for the Teachers' Knowledge about the Teaching of Writing Activities

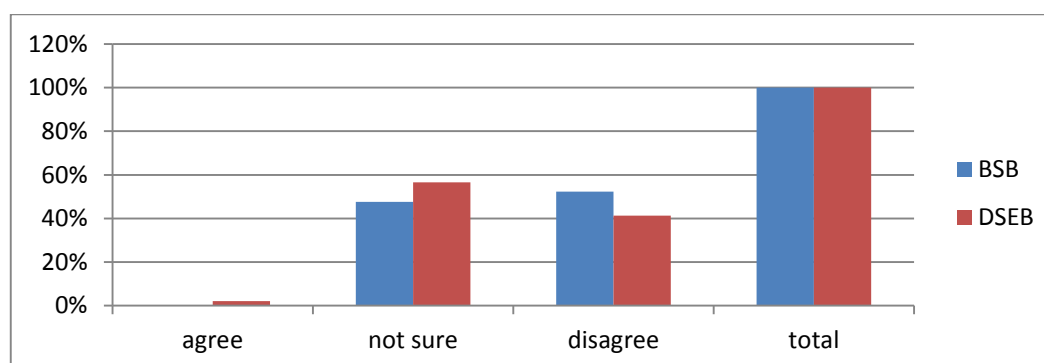
BSB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	0	15	13	28
Female	0	5	9	14
Total	0	20	22	42

Table 15. Responses of DSEB Students for the Teachers' Knowledge about the Teaching of Writing Activities

DSEB				
	Agree	Not sure	disagree	total
Male	0	12	10	22
Female	1	14	9	24
Total	1	26	19	46

Figure 7.

BSB and DSEB Students' Responses for the Teachers' Knowledge about the Teaching of Writing Activities



Students' opinion about teachers' knowledge of writing activities was expressed through the above tables and figure. The results varied between those

who were not sure and the students who disagreed. For BSB students: no student agreed with the teachers' knowledge of the writing activities, 47.61% were not sure and 52.38% disagreed. As for DSEB students only 2.17% agreed, 56.52% were neutral and 41.30% disagreed with the teachers' knowledge of the writing activities.

4.2. Results Obtained from the Interview:

The interview in this study was used to explore students' attitudes towards certain points related to formal letters.

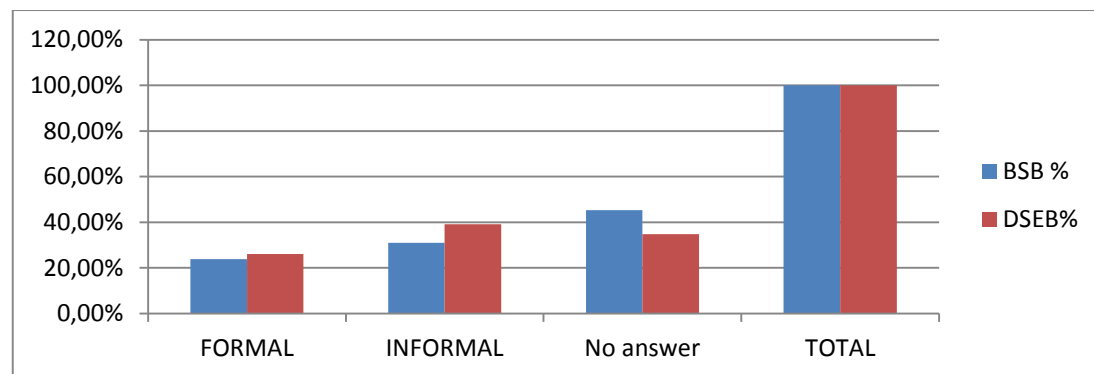
4.2.1. The results obtained from Q 01: (What are the different kinds of letters do you know?)

This question aims at knowing whether participants have an idea about the different letters. It reveals whether the participants are able to distinguish the formal letters from the informal ones. The following table reveals the students results.

Table 16. The Responses of BSB and DSEB Students in Relation to their Knowledge about the different Kinds of Letters

	BSB	%	DSEB	%
FORMAL	10	23.80%	12	26.08%
INFORMAL	13	30.95%	18	39.13%
No answer	19	45.23%	16	34.78%
TOTAL	42	100%	46	100%

Figure 8. Percentages of BSB and DSEB Students' Responses in Relation to their Knowledge about the Different Kinds of Letters



The above table (16) and figure (8) show that the students knowledge about the different kinds of letters varied. We find 10 BSB students representing 23.80% suggested some formal letter, 13 students selected the informal letters with 30.95% and 19 students representing 45.23% who didn't answer. As for the DSEB students we have 26.08% mentioned the formal letters, 39.13% answered to the informal letters and 34.78 as the biggest portion of students didn't have any answer to this question.

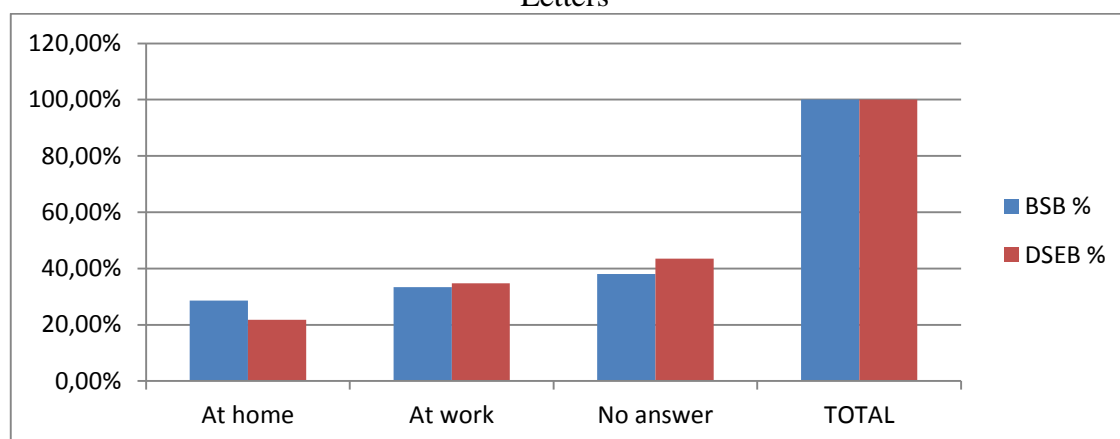
4.2.2. Q 02: Make a list of different types of formal letters you need to write?

This question deals more with the formal letters and it reveals whether the participants have specific knowledge of formal letters. Here the subjects needed to mention the different formal letters they know to be written at home or at the work/college. The answers are shown in the following table:

Table17.Responses of BSB and DSEB Students' About their Knowledge of the Formal Letters

	BSB	%	DSEB	%
At home	12	28.57%	10	21.73%
At work	14	33.33%	16	34.78%
No answer	16	38.09%	20	43.47%
TOTAL	42	100%	46	100%

Figure 9. Percentages of Students' Responses about their Knowledge of the Formal Letters



The results shown in the above table (17) and figure (9) reveal that the participant could suggest some types of letters they know which can be written at home and those that can be written at work or college but other students couldn't answer or decide. In fact, we calculated 28.57% of BSB students, who put the letter to be written at home forward, 33.33% of BSB students suggested the letters at work and 38.09% had no answer which represents quite important portion. Concerning the DSEB students, we have 21.73% listed some formal letters to be written at home, 34.78% listed other letters they need to write at work or at college but 43.47% of the participants couldn't decide about the formal letters writing.

5.1. Discussion of the Findings:

From this research we reached a number of results. The answers gathered from the questionnaire representing the students' perception of the role of the ESP teacher showed that the majority of the participants were unsure about their teachers except for the first question related to the teachers' use of English for which all the participants agreed. This is explained by the fact that the English teachers at the ESB are university teachers whose qualifications ranged between Magistere and PhD with quite long experience which explains the fluency of the teachers in English. As for the knowledge of the subject the majority of students

disagreed. This emphasize the fact that the English teachers are trained as general English teacher not as ESP teachers; which consequent that teachers need help in this part. For the rest of the questions the students were most of the time undecided. A possible interpretation of this can be that the students feel themselves not qualified enough to assess or judge their teachers.

The interview was used in this research to provide either supportive or supplementary information regarding students' knowledge and perception of the formal letter. When we started asking the questions the students found a great difficulty in using the language and expressing themselves in English, this confirms that ESB students have a serious problem with English not only in writing but in speaking as well. This was confirmed when listening to them they used the English commonly used in everyday language and the social media. As for their knowledge of the formal letter we have noticed that they do not know a great deal about formal letters, in order to answer the interview questions the researcher was obliged to explain the questions in Arabic and try to help them to elicit answers

6. Recommendations:

- Conduct more studies on the students' ability of ESP writing in other areas of the country.
- conduct more studies on ESP taking the different aspects of the program into consideration (such as: material, goals, the different aid and technologic material, teacher training)
- Conduct more studies on ESP that include more disciplines and specializations in other schools, universities and institutions.
- The ESP teachers should increase their knowledge of vocational and specific language in general
- They need to inform the people concerned about their actual needs to be considered in the future plans of English language teacher training programs.
- They try to collaborate with other teachers from different institutions to exchange knowledge and experience.
- Try to improve their knowledge in different skills like Listening and Speaking and Reading.
- The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research should try to improve the quality of ESP teachers' training and provide an advanced training programs for teachers so that they can satisfy the needs of their learners.

7.Conclusion

The aim of this study was to emphasize the role of the ESP teacher in improving the students' writing ability to allow them write good formal letter in their field (banking).

The results of the study showed that the students' rating to their ESP teachers was relatively low which suggests that the ESP teacher didn't have the necessary knowledge about the subject and must be trained in that field to become more efficient as well. It also showed that the students have a great deficiency in relation to their knowledge about writing formal letters.

The present study can be considered as important from different perspectives. It provides a basis for other researchers and a deep insight into the perceptions and

attitudes of ESP students regarding the ESP teacher; it also provides other researchers with useful and true information about the ESP students' needs that can be used in further research in different fields. The study suggested a number of recommendations to the people concerned namely as well.

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