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| Dissertation Title | Exploring Communication Strategies and Their Effectiveness in Business English as a Lingua Franca in Myanmar Economic Organization |
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ABSTRACT

As English increasingly functions as a shared working language in international business and public-sector institutions, understanding how communication is managed beyond linguistic accuracy has become essential. This study investigates communication strategies in Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF)–mediated workplace interaction within a Myanmar economic organization, focusing on how professionals strategically manage meaning, accountability, hierarchy, and intercultural relations under institutional constraints.

Adopting an embedded mixed-methods research design, the study draws on multiple data sources, including semi-structured interviews with 15 officials, a corpus of 74 professional emails, recordings of real-time workplace meetings, and a structured questionnaire. Guided by a conceptual framework that views BELF communication strategies as interactional resources rather than compensatory linguistic tools, the analysis integrates functional content analysis of written communication with conversation analysis of spoken interaction.

The findings reveal that BELF communication strategies in this context function as situated interactional practices shaped by institutional roles, procedural accountability, and intercultural sensitivity. In written communication, politeness and indirectness are systematically deployed to establish institutional alignment, assign responsibility, and maintain professional relations without undermining authority. In real-time meetings, strategies such as repetition, reformulation, clarification requests, and multimodal resources emerge sequentially in response to interactional trouble,

enabling participants to negotiate understanding and sustain interactional flow in high-stakes decision-making contexts. Rather than compensating for limited proficiency, these strategies reflect a high degree of interactional competence tailored to institutional demands.

The study further demonstrates that the effectiveness of BELF communication strategies lies not in fluency or native-like accuracy, but in their capacity to support task accomplishment and intercultural collaboration despite linguistic asymmetries and organizational constraints. Drawing on these findings, the study argues for a reconceptualization of BELF-oriented English for Specific Purposes (ESP) training. It suggests that professional communication training should move beyond language correctness to emphasize interactional awareness, institutional accountability, and strategic meaning-making in real workplace contexts.

By examining BELF communication in an underexplored public-sector economic organization in Myanmar, this study contributes to BELF scholarship by extending its empirical and theoretical scope to Global South institutional settings. It advances an interactional understanding of professional communication and provides a principled foundation for context-sensitive ESP training grounded in authentic workplace practices.

Keywords: Business English as a Lingua Franca, BELF Communication, Communication Strategies, Language Proficiency, Intercultural Competence