



**AN ANALYSIS OF INTERCULTURAL BUSINESS EMAIL
COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THAI
AND JAPANESE WRITERS**

NUTTAPORN TAKHET

**MASTER OF ARTS
IN
ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS
MAE FAH LUANG UNIVERSITY**

2022

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to analyze the rhetorical structures of intercultural business email communication between Thai and Japanese writers and to investigate the communication strategies used by Thai and Japanese writers in writing business emails. 305 pairs of intercultural business emails consisting of inquiry and reply emails collected from 91 non- native English writers, Thai and Japanese writers. The data obtained from emails were analyzed through the intercultural rhetoric analysis based on two types of writing genres: inquiry and reply. Furthermore, both Thai and Japanese writers were asked to complete a self-report questionnaire regarding the employment of communication strategies in writing a business email across cultures. It was found that there was a distinctive difference between both groups of writers in composing each type of email. Thai writers composed business inquiry and reply emails using six move-pattern; whereas, Japanese writers employed four move-pattern in composing business inquiry and reply. Moreover, both groups of writers tend to employ the achievement strategies to help them communicate via email rather than the reduction strategies.

Keywords: Intercultural Business Email Communication, Email Writing Strategies, Rhetorical Structures, Non-native English Speakers

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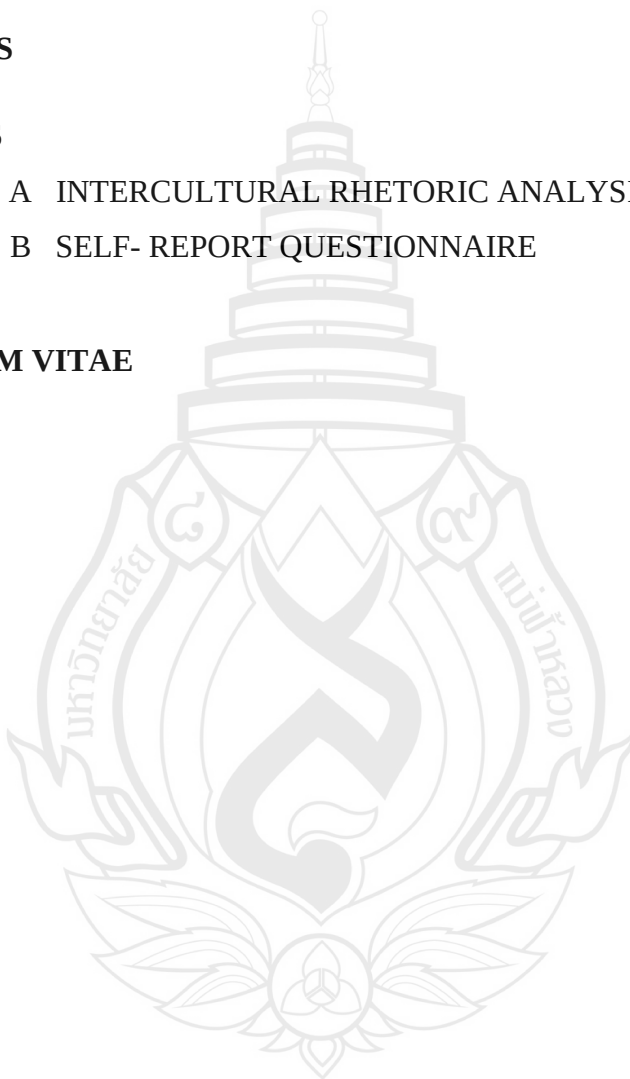
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

More people learning English today is to use English in an international context rather than in English-speaking ones' (Seidlhofer, 2011). Therefore, with the acceptance of English as an international language, the theoretical considerations about English as an international language (EIL) have shed light on the status of today's English, which is widely used in multilingual contexts for communication among the group of non-native speakers (NNS) rather than among the group of native speakers (NS) (Kirkpatrick, 2012; McKay, 2002; Modiano, 1999).

In the era of globalization, it has caused an increasing number of multinational companies and global companies. English language competence is an important requirement for the professional who works in an international setting (Guffey & Dubacock, 2010). Furthermore, knowledge and understanding of cultural factors should be acquired in order to successfully communicate across cultures because effective intercultural communication in a global setting could lead to accomplishing the goal. (Targowski & Metwalli, 2003). Regarding these two requirements, the ability to effectively and appropriately communicate in the business sector is a must, since people use these skills to transmit messages, ideas, and feelings so as to establish good relationships and understanding. In order to respond to the effects of globalization, in recent years many scholars have studied various studies involving people all around the world who have different attitudes, values, cultures, ethnicities, social practices, way

of life, beliefs, and religions (Fantini, 2005; Gannon, 2008; Gitimu, 2010). As a result of these studies, ICC is clearly important in intercultural interactions.

Intercultural communication competence (ICC) is the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in various cultural contexts (Gertsen, 1990; Clandfield, 2008). Intercultural communicative competence involves not only communicative competence in linguistic and pragmatic terms of the language used in an intercultural setting but more importantly; it needs awareness of the different factors of the culture and the ability to deal with the different cultural identities. Byram (1997) defines ICC in terms of five abilities: (a) attitudes: showing curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief and judgment with respect to others' values, beliefs, and behaviors, (b) knowledge: acquiring information about own culture and information about the culture of the people you are interacting with, (c) skills of interpreting and relating: the ability to interpret and relate the meaning of our own culture to the meaning of the target culture, (d) skills of discovery and interaction: the ability to acquire new knowledge of culture and cultural practices and the ability to use knowledge, attitudes, and skills in the real-time communication, and (e) critical cultural awareness: the ability to become aware of including to think critically regarding cultures, values, norms of behaviors of the target culture.

In business communication, English is used as a tool to communicate by different nations. The use of English is not simply used with native speakers but with non-native speakers as well. Currently, non-native speakers use English quite frequently with other non-native speakers. Using English in the global community has turned English into a lingua franca. English as a lingua franca is commonplace where English has been used as the language of communication between business people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This language variety can be called Business English as a Lingua Franca or English as Business Lingua Franca (BELF). The concept of BELF is used in global business in order to carry out business and work in multinational companies: it is a resource employed by business people to complete their tasks. It is not employed to imitate native-speaker discourse, but to complete the task (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2007). In BELF, lingua franca interactions

variation is caused by differences in terms of linguistic backgrounds. Different language backgrounds indicate different practice styles of the speakers. Therefore, there are no explicit norms governing the use of BELF; moreover, BELF cannot be owned or related to one particular cultural context.

This phenomenon has posed challenges to business people who are non-native English. In the context of business writing in intercultural settings, writers have to demonstrate that they are aware of communicative norms and writing conventions that are generally accepted in their profession to construct themselves as competent members of the discourse community (Swales, 1990; Bizzell, 1992). On the other hand, they have to consider that these conventions might differ from those in their own culture.

Email is one type of intercultural communication tool used by people who work internationally. Over the past two decades, email has gradually become a powerful tool of communication and gradually replaced traditional written forms of communication such as letter, fax, and call and becomes a medium of communication in all business environments (Guffey, 2010). Email plays an important role in establishing and maintaining business relationships, both internal and external organizations. An email is a basic form of asynchronous exchange that enables the sender to send messages or files to a specific address (Hine, 2000).

When comparing an email to other forms of communication, email breaks the limits of time and space as well as has the potential to extend traditional social interaction (Bloch, 2002). The absence of social presence in email communication provides privacy for the user. Email also provides email writers the freedom of creating impressions, which differ from other forms through the face-to-face mode of communication. As a result, email has become a tool for building and maintaining social relations (Lewandowski et al., 2011). However, the lack of social context cues may cause a barrier and problem in email communication (Garton & Wellman, 1994). Face-to-face communication allows people to give immediate feedback to the listeners through body language cues, word choice, and voice intonation of the speakers, in email communication, the email writers cannot adjust what they have written after sending.

Email writers may write inappropriately because of the lack of shared contexts of communication of the email receivers if the recipient has different cultures (Baron, 1998). In addition, the lack of cultural knowledge can create a barrier to business success. People who come from different cultures, different countries, and different backgrounds may express emotions and behave differently. Thus, cultural differences could lead to barriers between the communicators, when their different styles of approach are misunderstood, misinterpreted, or not accepted (Penn, 2019).

When people from different cultures work together in a business setting, their differences can cause confusion and misunderstandings. In face-to-face communication, these intercultural differences can be anything such as approaches to communication, etiquette, body language, etc. When looking at the intercultural issue of a business email, it can be looked from two sides. The first side is language. English is employed as a lingua franca in the modern business world. Most business emails are written in English, regardless of where the writers are. Although most people accept English as the international language, people who do not speak English as their first language can create communication problems and misunderstandings. Furthermore, reading an email is a kind of struggle if one word is incorrectly used, the whole meaning can be misunderstood (Payne, 2008). The second side is culture. An email has a lot of potential to get lost in translation across cultures. The form of an email may be used differently across cultures. In some formal cultures, it is expected that one begins by addressing the name, but in other cultures, writers may jump straight to the purpose of writing an email. As a result, one may perceive the email as too formal, while the other may perceive it as informal. The content and the meaning of an email are culturally dependent (Payne, 2008). It indicates that the meaning of an email is impacted by cultures. Meanings in one country may differ from what it signifies in another.

As aforementioned, email is a medium of communication in business. It is considered as a fast and convenient way to make first contact with people who live in different regions and time zones. When this occurs in an intercultural setting, there is a gap of misunderstanding due to linguistic and cultural differences. Therefore, email

writers should be well-organized to elicit the important point from a large amount of information (Bälter, 1998).

Intercultural Rhetoric (IR) becomes an interesting issue in genre analysis. The term was renamed from Kaplan's (1966) concept, "contrastive rhetoric" to "intercultural rhetoric" by Connor and Traversa in 2014. Intercultural rhetoric is the study of written discourse between and among individuals who have different cultural backgrounds. It includes the study of interactions: spoken and written, which are parts of text production. The basis of intercultural rhetoric is how language is used to organize the ideas to produce the text and the culture of the people who use a language. Moreover, the foundation of intercultural rhetoric is that person's first language and his or her culture influence the thought pattern of the person (Connor, 1996). Intercultural rhetoric enlightens successful strategies for business communication where the languages and cultures interact to conduct commerce. Intercultural rhetoric can help identify the differences in style and approach that can either facilitate or obstruct effective communication. There are studies on contrastive rhetoric in business email communication. For example, Giménez-Moreno and Skorczynska (2013) identified the difference in business email writing among three European cultures: British, Spanish, and Polish to study the structure and register feature. The findings on the use of structural moves in replies to requests show that the three writers from three cultures used similar patterns of moves and there are lots of differences in terms of register variation (VR). For example, the use of salutation of British writers was less frequent both in the formal and informal messages. The Polish and Spanish writers always started with a salutation in both informal and formal emails such as Dear Jane, Hi Jane, and Dear Madam.

Similarly, Kameda (2009) studied contrastive rhetoric in business email writing across cultures. The findings show the differences in persuasive communication found in a business email written by Singaporean and Japanese students. The major differences are the positions and contents of main messages, the number of words used in the emails, and references to a rival company. This study concludes that Singaporean students usually placed the main message at the beginning. They also wrote more

messages with an explicit style than Japanese students. It is because Singaporean students may have been influenced by both Chinese and English language styles.

Previous studies in move analysis have focused on business emails. For example, Kameda (2009), Giménez-Moreno and Skorczynska (2013), Mehrpour and Mehrzad (2013), and Du-Babcock and Feng (2018), all studied the rhetorical structure of business emails. Studies of business emails investigated the impact of writers' culture on the move structure and the move patterns between native and non-native English writers. However, the researcher found that studies in comparative rhetoric analysis in intercultural business email writing were limited, especially among non-native English writers; thus, it is necessary to investigate the move structure of other types of business emails: inquiry and reply emails that are written by non-native writers because most previous studies only investigated persuasive emails, especially between native and non-native English writers. Furthermore, most studies are focused on the position and the content of the main messages. Therefore, the analysis of business emails in this study will help the researcher differentiate how non-native and non-native English writers compose emails to communicate across cultures.

With the multilingualism and multiculturalism of global business, it has emphasized the need for business people to develop the awareness of pragmatic strategies such as sociocultural strategies: the understanding of sociocultural norms of behavior underlying the communication and language strategies: the understanding of the appropriate language behavior in communication that leads to success or failure in communication and interaction. It has aroused interest in the type of strategies or techniques used in business English as a lingua franca context. As a result, communication strategy is used in investigating business communication, with regard to both oral communication and written interaction.

A communication strategy (CS) was first defined in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) as how second language learners (L2) overcome the difficulties they meet during communication when they have inadequate linguistic resources (Selinker, 1972) or the strategies that people use to deal with problems to convey their intended meaning. These strategies include paraphrasing, substituting,

coining new words, switching to the first language, and asking for clarification (Ellis, 1997). Communication strategies have been analyzed from the perspective of the problem, which presented the strategic moves initiated by BELF interactants to handle problems of understanding.

The adoption of communication strategies to study in EFL and BELF contexts has helped clarify problems of understanding that occur in the interaction such as pronunciation, lexico-grammar, and the strategies the speaker or writer uses to deal and communicate with other people (Jenkins, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2011). Furthermore, it has shown the strategies the users use to deal and communicate with other people.

Research related to communication strategies has focused on how writers handle communication difficulties. Most studies exploring the use of communication strategies in BELF contexts have emphasized oral interactions (Haegeman, 2002; Rogerson-Revell & Louhiala-Salminen, 2010). Whereas a few studies on communication strategies in intercultural email writing; for instance, Biesenbach-Lucas (2007), Lindgren (2014), Pimthong et al. (2019), and Caleffi (2019), who analyzed the strategies employed by native and non-native writers through the languages they used in emails. The results reflected different strategies employed by the writers; for example, communication strategies in requesting, negotiating, reporting, and polite strategies. The researcher found a gap that the previous studies have never worked on communication strategies that are used in business email intercultural communication, especially achievement strategies and avoidance strategies. Therefore, the study of communication strategies in this study will help the researcher examine the communication strategies that are used by email writers.

It can be seen that there are not many studies on business email communication among non-native speakers. Most research was conducted in the area of native speakers and non-native speakers, which emphasized the compositions of email such as subject, salutation, purpose, closing, and ending. Moreover, most studies on communication strategies have emphasized oral communication strategies and there is no research conducted the written communication strategies such as email. Therefore, the present study attempts to study the intercultural rhetoric of business email communication

between non-native email writers including studying the communication strategies that are used in business email intercultural communication.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Thailand and Japan are both non-native English-speaking countries. They have been trading partners since the 1980s (Ichikawa et al., 1990; Suehiro & Wailardsak, 2014). Both languages are structurally, interpersonally, and psychologically far away from English. They are Asian societies with non-Western frames of reference and approaches to interaction. Thus, English is used as a foreign language and it is used as a medium of communication between these two countries particularly in a business context. Furthermore, email is also used as a communication tool between these two countries. Both cultures have different sets of values, business rules, communication styles, and different mother tongues; thus, the email of these two cultures have their own discourse style in terms of the purpose, structure, and writing process (Crystal, 2002). However, there are some communication problems when these two cultures work together. Wannawasu (2018) found one simple communication problem between Thai and Japanese. The problem is “Talking but not Understanding”. That kind of conversation means that when the conversation is finished, both Thai and Japanese seem to understand each other but they actually do not. The conversation ended with different stories in each one’s understanding. This inaccurate understanding between both Thai and Japanese includes language barriers and lack of cultural understanding. To avoid misunderstanding and miscommunication caused by cultural differences and linguistic knowledge, the underlying factors of different writing styles in emails of both Thai and Japanese cultures are worth studying.

Business writing is one type of communication that is used in all workplaces (Gale, 2014). However, there are various types of business writing such as email, letters, reports, memos, fax, presentation, etc. These types of business writing are usually written with standard structure and style. Many studies revealed that non-native English writers had difficulties in writing an intercultural business email. Siripraparat

(2011) indicated that composing an email is time-consuming because writers spent time reviewing their language, word choice, and structure. In addition, others claimed that they did not use proper grammar and tone in business emails.

Pastor and Calderon (2015) studied the lexical variations in the email writing of non-native speakers who learned English as a Second Language (ESL) and non-native speakers who used English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The results indicated that the EFL writers had more problems than a group of ESL writers. This may be caused by cultural and sociolinguistic influences; for instance, complex noun phrases, compound sentences, creating new words through imitation of their L1, discourse variation, poor linguistic production, and direct and imperative writing styles.

Patterson (2015) studied the formality in Business English as a Lingua Franca email. The findings revealed that most non-native speakers are more likely to write emails in their own style in order to help readers comprehend what they are saying.

As aforementioned, it can be concluded that non-native English speakers experience difficulty with business email writing with regard to grammatical, a lack of appropriate vocabulary, cultural awareness, time-consumption, the use of slang, unclear message, run-on sentences, and writing style. The research above investigated problems in email writing. The researcher in the present study has realized the importance of intercultural business email writing and found a gap that the previous studies have never examined in terms of how non-native and non-native English writers compose business emails as well as what kind of communication strategies are used in business email intercultural communication.

In Thailand, there were a few pieces of research on intercultural rhetoric. Most research was conducted in academic writing and some business studies were conducted in the area of native English and non-native English writers. In this study, the business inquiry and reply emails will be analyzed by adopting the notion of intercultural rhetoric using move analysis. Move analysis is a tool for identifying how information is organized in a particular genre (Swales, 1990). The benefit of move analysis is that it reveals the type of information included in a text, as well as how it is arranged (Kanoksilapatham, 2007). Moreover, most studies on communication strategies have

emphasized oral communication strategies and there is no research conducted the written communication strategies such as email. The study of email communication strategies in this study will help understand how non-native communicate with each other.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

There are two main objectives of the present study:

1.3.1 To analyze the rhetorical structures of intercultural business email communication between Thai and Japanese writers.

1.3.2 To examine the email communication strategies that Thai and Japanese writers used in writing business emails across cultures.

1.4 Research Questions

The two research questions include the followings:

1.4.1 What are the rhetorical structures of business email of Thai and Japanese staff used in intercultural communication?

1.4.2 What are the email communication strategies that Thai and Japanese writers used in writing business emails across cultures?

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The study aims to analyze the rhetorical structures of business email communication written by non-native English speakers, Thai and Japanese as well as to study the strategies that email writers used in writing a business email across cultures. Thus, the results of this study may provide useful information to help both Thai and Japanese staff be aware of the different writing styles and improve their intercultural competence awareness.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the rhetorical structure and the strategies that staff uses in email writing. Thus, the current study focused on the data from Thai staff that have to contact with Japanese partners using email as a tool to communicate. Over 100 emails of business communication written in English by Thai and Japanese staff will be used to study email communication patterns and strategies.

1.7 Expected Outcomes

It is expected that this current study would yield the following outcomes:

1.7.1 The findings will benefit English language teaching and learning in terms of being aware of cultural differences.

1.7.2 The findings could provide useful insights for instructors in teaching intercultural business communication.

1.7.3 These findings will benefit Thai employees in both private and public organizations to concern about email communication across cultures.

1.8 Definitions of Key Terms

The definitions of key terms that are used in this study are provided as follows:

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) refers to the ability to use four language skills to effectively and accurately communicate or interact with people who have different backgrounds of cultures.

Intercultural rhetoric (IR) in this study refers to the study of written discourse between and among individuals with different cultural backgrounds.

Rhetorical structure in this study refers to type of rhetoric writing styles caused by the internal logic of a writer's culture; for example, English, Semitic, Oriental, Romance, and Russian rhetoric structure.

Genre analysis in this study refers to the analysis of moves in email compositions.

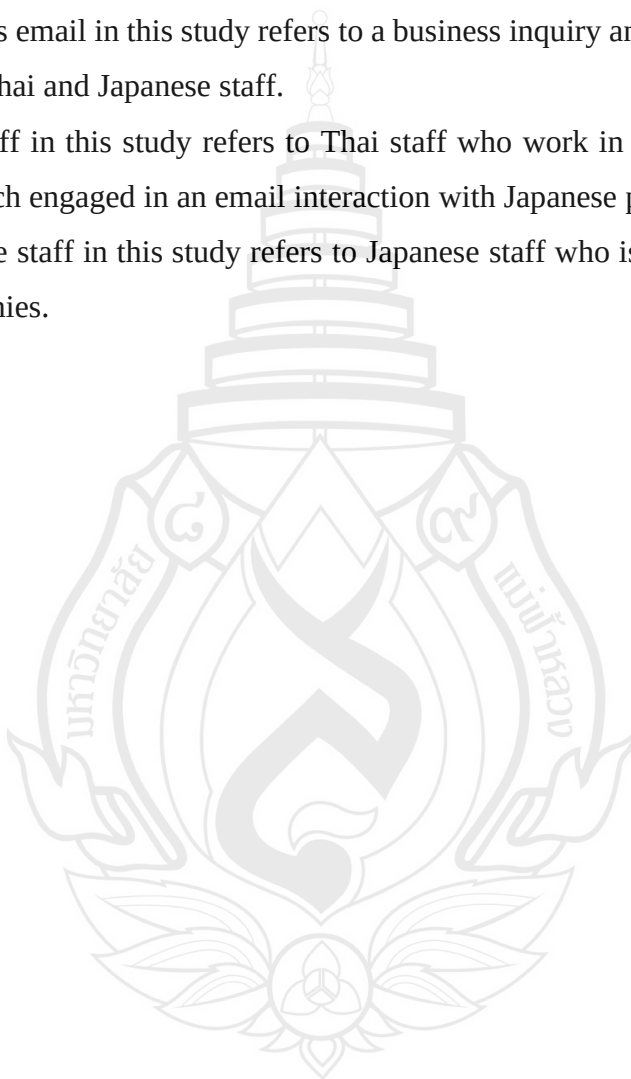
Move structure in this study refers to move patterns constructed by email writers.

Communication strategies in this study refer to a useful technique the writers use to deal with the difficulties of email writing.

Business email in this study refers to a business inquiry and reply email written in English by Thai and Japanese staff.

Thai staff in this study refers to Thai staff who work in three Thailand-based companies which engaged in an email interaction with Japanese partners.

Japanese staff in this study refers to Japanese staff who is the business partner of three companies.



1.9 Research Framework

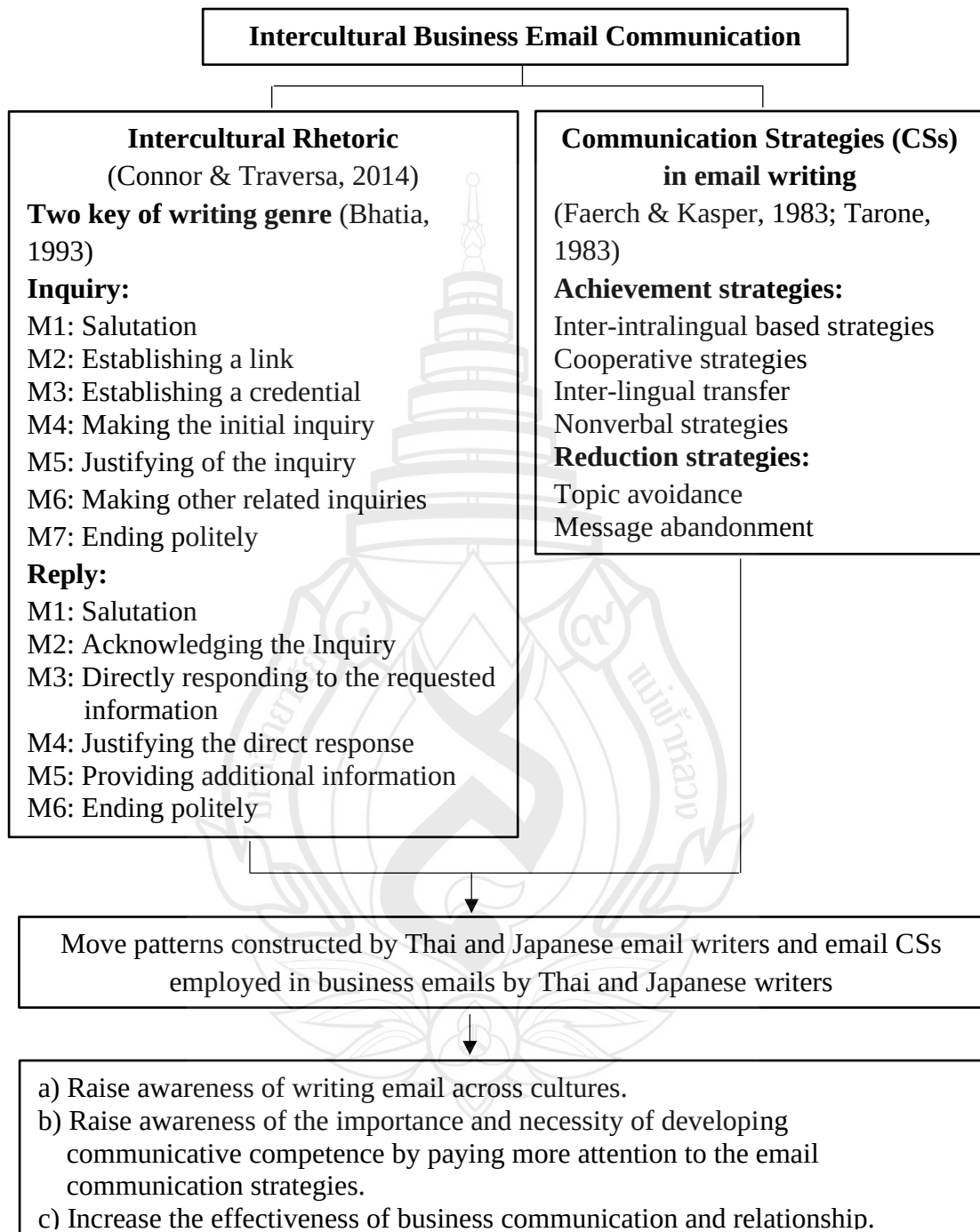


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides the literature related to the study on business email communication between Thai and Japanese writers. The literature consists of seven sections as follows: English as a lingua franca, intercultural rhetoric, genre analysis, English business email writing, communication strategies, cross cultural communication and related studies.

2.1 English as a Lingua Franca (EFL)

2.1.1 Definition of EFL

English as a lingua franca (EFL) is defined by Firth (1996) as a contact language used by speakers of English who have different cultures and linguistic backgrounds and who use English as a medium of communication. Similarly, Jenkin (2007) defines ELF as a common language choice used among speakers with different lingual and cultural backgrounds and as a world language used mainly among non-native speakers, often from different first language (L1) backgrounds.

ELF is understood as the use of English among speakers who do not share cultural backgrounds and native languages; therefore, English becomes the preferred language in their communication and has been used for different purposes. The reason is that ELF acts as the common language, it does not depend on the correctness of Standard English structure to produce effective communication.

Furthermore, EFL can be flexible, but the meaning must be understood by all parties and achieve the communicative purpose. Seidhofer (2011) explains, “ELF is not a variety of English with clearly demarcated formal linguistic properties to be set against some institutionalized norm of the so-called standard language, but as the variable exploitation of linguistic resources”.

The idea of EFL indicates that English as a lingua franca can be utilized effectively without adhering to the norms of Standard English because ELF speakers intuitively interpret their assumptions depending on their own linguistic behavior.

In linguistic studies, there is a misunderstanding between ELF and the idea of World English; in fact, there is a difference between these two ideas. World English mainly refers to the reflection of local culture and the expression of identity, but EFL focuses on mutual understanding among communicators. ELF focuses on how “people from different lingua-cultural backgrounds appropriate the resources of the language and exploit its virtual meaning potential as required in different contexts and purposes” (Seidhofer & Guido, 2014).

As English is not only used domestically but also internationally, Seidelhofer (2011) divides the function of English as a lingua franca into two levels: a local and a global one. At the local level, ELF refers to a common or official language that citizens use to communicate with one another. On the other hand, at the global level, is the use of ELF as a communication tool among people from different countries and different first languages. Additionally, the goal of EFL is to create effective communication without adhering to the use conventions of native speakers or Standard English (Seidhofer & Guido, 2014). EFL users come from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds; therefore, they naturally interpret and communicate by the norms of communicative behaviors and usages of their languages and cultures.

Nowadays, the role of English as a lingua franca has significantly expanded. It is used in global business, politics, and other international cooperation. The use of English in a business context is a good case study of the use of English as a lingua franca among people who have different cultures and mother tongues.

2.1.2 Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF)

To achieve business goals, English is adopted as a communicative tool in business contexts. English has been used in international acquisitions and mergers since 1980 and it has led to new types of cross-border businesses and intercultural communication (Kankaanranta, 2009).

Intercultural communication refers to communication among people with different cultural backgrounds. This means that the speakers share neither linguistic nor cultural traditions.

When one party is unable to switch to the mother tongue of another party during intercultural business communication, a lingua franca is a preferred choice for effective communication between business partners. In multicultural companies, English is normally used as a lingua franca for management, communication, finance, and accounting. In many cases, English plays the same role in multicultural organizations as a native language does as it is widely used to achieve various business goals (Kankaanranta, 2005). The role of ELF in global business has led to a new concept in business communication known as "Business English as a lingua franca", which refers to the use of English in international business to conduct business between people from different parts of the world.

Business English as a lingua franca (BELF) is regarded as a language that allows non-native speakers to communicate with one another. BELF, on the other hand, is not just for non-native speakers; it can be used as a medium of communication between native and non-native speakers. The main focus of English as a lingua franca (ELF) is Kachru's expanding circle. It means that ELF has primarily been used to communicate within the expanding circle, it rarely be used across all three circles (Seidhofer, 2009). On the other hand, BELF includes communication between the three circles of Kachru: inner circle, outer circle, and expanding circle. It is mainly used by non-native speakers. Besides, BELF is mainly employed to achieve fruitful and effective communication in order to accomplish the goal of communication regarding mutual intelligibility in a multicultural setting. Therefore, BELF is defined as "uses in communication between speakers with different first language in a business context" (Seidhofer, 2005), or the

use of English as the language of communication between business professionals whose first language is not English (Gajst, 2014). BELF refers to the use of English as a neutral and shared communication code (Kankaanranta, 2005). It is considered neutral because none of the speakers can claim it as it is their first language. BELF has three distinctive features:

1. BELF is a neutral and shared communication system for non-native English speakers. It is convenient for people to access because it focuses on the effectiveness and accuracy of the communication content and the knowledge of business context rather than on linguistic correctness and Standard English (Louhiala-Salminen, 1996).

2. BELF is extremely practical and uses English as its main way of communicating in the business world (Seidlhofer, 2011). It has not only contributed to the success of business communication for non-native speakers, but it also emphasizes comprehension rather than correct usage.

3. BELF has the characteristic of cultural diversity. Although BELF is influenced by cultural factors, communication patterns remain the same. The diversities of speakers' backgrounds contribute to communicative achievement since speakers acknowledge and adapt to the differences (Kankaanranta & Planken, 2010).

The three features of BELF discussed above show that BELF plays an important role in international business because it is used as a communicative tool to connect businesses across the world. One feature of BELF is that Standard English and linguistic correctness do not affect business communication purposes. Kankaanranta, and Planken (2010) argues that BELF is a useful language tool since it emphasizes successful business communication rather than the norms of Standard English. In this regard, BELF is seen as a simplified form of Standard English, which contains uncomplicated sentence structures (Louhiala-Salminen, 1996). Thus, BELF is a practical medium for speakers with different linguistic backgrounds and levels of English proficiency. These features of BELF facilitate effective communication among non-native speakers because they can conduct their business without worrying about grammatical correctness and linguistic accuracy.

2.2 Intercultural Rhetoric

The studies of cross-cultural writing in ESL, namely contrastive rhetoric (CR), began with the American linguist, Robert Kaplan (1966). Contrastive rhetoric is the study of the way written discourse is structured and used across languages and cultures. Kaplan (1966) says that language and writing are cultural phenomena. Every language and culture have its own rhetorical system. He uses the method of text analysis in his article, “Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education”, to analyze paragraph organization in English essays written by ESL students from different cultural backgrounds. The hypothesis of contrastive rhetoric is that written texts show discourse patterns of a specific culture. The written texts can reflect different patterns caused by the internal logic of a writer's culture and they can reflect different writing patterns learned and acquired from a particular culture (Kaplan, 1988). In another word, the writing of second language learners is caused by the interference of linguistic patterns and rhetorical conventions of their first language (Connor, 1996).

The term “contrastive rhetoric” is influenced by the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. As a result, Kaplan developed the framework of contrastive rhetoric emphasizing the relationship between rhetoric and culture (Vähäpassi, 1988). However, Kaplan (1988) believes that the linguistic structure of a language is defined by the culture of speakers.

In these contrasts, Kaplan presents English rhetoric structure to be linear because the sequence of thought in this type begins with a topic, followed by supporting information. It is commonly found in Western culture. Secondly, Semitic is utilized in Arab-Persian languages. In the Arabic language, the development of the paragraph is based on a complex series of parallel constructions. Thirdly, Oriental can be called indirection which is often used by Asian people. The development of the paragraph can be described as revolving and turning in an expanding circle because the topic is never addressed directly. The last two types of rhetoric are Romance and Russian. These two rhetorical structures are marked by digression and extraneous. As the model of these two rhetoric structures have a clear beginning and ending, but there are a lot of things that may not be relevant to the topic in the middle.

As previously stated, there are five types of rhetoric that describe different cultural thought patterns of different language groups. These rhetorical structures are not representative of all compositions in any particular language or culture; however, they can be used as a guideline for developing cultural competence in communication across cultures.

However, contrastive rhetoric was criticized by researchers and educators in L2 language writing. Therefore, Connor and Traversa (2014) introduced the concepts from theories of rhetoric and redefined meanings of culture for contrastive rhetoric, and renamed it as “intercultural rhetoric.”

Intercultural Rhetoric (IR) is defined by Connor (2011) as the study of written discourse among people who have different cultural backgrounds. So, it leads to giving more attention to the changing definitions of culture and their impact on IR research and practice and recognizes that IR should not be seen in its CR state (Connor & Traversa, 2014).

Atkinson et al. (2015) wrote about the contrastive rhetoric that it needs to change its view of culture from “a received view of culture” to “an alternative view.” A received view sees cultures as ethnic, national, and static. An alternative view considers the changing nature of global communication. However, the most useful concept in Atkinson’s discussion of new cultural concepts for intercultural rhetoric is the large cultures and small cultures distinction (Holliday, 1999). The Holliday model, as adopted by Atkinson, helps us see the complexity of culture and interlocking cultures in writing and communication. In IR research, isolating the national and cultural aspects of writing is insufficient. It needs to understand the social interaction and educational influences that could be overlapping with national cultural norms and bear on the writing process and products.

The new cultural definitions establish the foundation for the changing of contrastive rhetoric to intercultural rhetoric. Intercultural rhetoric also includes two other major shifts in the approach to texts. These two major shifts are studying texts in context and studying texts as part of intercultural interactions. Therefore, it is assumed

that intercultural rhetoric is the study of writing that is not just about texts, but it's essential to take into account the surrounding social contexts and practices.

Connor (2011) proposed a model of intercultural rhetoric. This model includes “three major tenets of intercultural rhetoric: (1) texts need to be seen in their contexts with meaningful contextual and purposeful descriptions, (2) culture needs to be complexified to include disciplinary cultures in addition to national/ethnic cultures, and (3) dynamic, interactive patterns of communication are important to consider, which leads to convergences among cultural differences” (Connor & Traversa, 2014). Thus, the redefined contrastive or intercultural rhetoric emphasizes the roles of rhetorical purposes for different genres and the audience's expectations within a specific cultural writing convention.

2.3 Genre Analysis

The recent definitions of genre focus on the role of social, cultural, and disciplinary factors in the production of writing. Indeed, genre is defined as communicative events created in accordance with the expectations and conventions of a certain discourse community (Hyland, 2006). According to Swales (1990), genre analysis is the study of how language is utilized in a specific setting, which emphasizes issues such as rhetorical styles and discourse types in order to examine the specific areas of language. The aim of genre analysis is to identify the moves and strategies of a genre such as the order of the moves and the key linguistic features (Henry & Roseberry, 2001).

The organization of texts consists of moves and each move contains one or more steps. Move analysis is the approach to discourse analysis used in the research and teaching of genres. This method, which is based on Swales' genre theory, focuses on communicative purposes referred to as moves and rhetorical strategies called steps. Move analysis is a tool for defining how the information is organized (Swales, 1990). A move may contain multiple steps (sub-units), which have their own communicative role. Sub-units of the move will be chosen by the writer to support the move's

communicative function (Jirapanakorn, 2013). The focus of move analysis is on the rhetorical composition or the structure of the texts (Nwogu, 1997). Another definition defined by Kanoksilapatham (2007) is that a move is a semantic and functional unit of text that has specific purposes. Yang and Allison (2003) view that a move enables the categorization of text chunks based on their communicative intentions. According to these definitions, it can be concluded that a move is a semantic unit that is related to the purpose of the writer.

Genre of Inquiry and Reply Email

The word “inquiry” means an act of asking for information. So, a business inquiry email is an email used to ask for information. While a “reply” is a verbal or written response to a proposed question. Thus, a business reply email is an email that allows members of the public to return mail to senders. Bhatia (1993) provided a checklist of moves in writing a business inquiry and reply email as shown in Table 2.1

Table 2.1 A Move of Business Inquiry and Reply Email

Business Inquiry Moves	Business Reply Moves
Move 1: Salutation	Move 1: Salutation
Move 2: Establishing a link	Move 2: Acknowledging the inquiry
Move 3: Establishing a credential	Move 3: Directly responding to the
Move 4: Making the initial inquiry	requested information
Move 5: Justify of the inquiry	Move 4: Justifying the direct response
Move 6: Making other related inquiries	Move 5: Providing additional
Move 7: Closing	information
	Move 6: Closing

2.4 English Business Email Writing

English writing proficiency is crucial for a company's success. Business English writing skill has become an important skill for business professionals (Ranaut, 2018). One of the important business writing skills that workers often use to communicate with others is email. Nutpoung (2013), stated that email has become an important international communication channel that is used for different purposes by many people.

Email

Guffey and Du-Babcock (2010) stated that email has been an alternative tool in communication. Communication through email is a process and continuous activity that the sender and recipient cannot edit or cancel the information and messages delivered. Email is the process of exchanging messages from one person to others via a network

Locker and Kaczmarek (2009) remarked that email has a lot of advantages in business communication; for example, business people can communicate with others both in internal and external organizations. Furthermore, it can decrease working time to communicate and convey information promptly.

Good business communications should be brief; moreover, the information should be easy to understand, the unnecessary words, sentences, and paragraphs should be omitted. Business email communication should contain a heading, bulleted listings, a side heading, and an introduction that explains what will come next. Cultural differences in an email should be considered in order to avoid confusion (Guffey & Du-Babcock, 2010).

Burgess et al. (2019) stated that emails are often used in the workplace and there are some limitations in email writing such as the quality of email content or excessive emails that are sent and received. The ability to write emails depends on workers' experience. Some employees may spend more time and find writing more difficult than others. Thus, they suggest that an email should have three main sections: a heading, a body, and a conclusion.

Guffey and Du-Babcock (2010) clarified the processes of writing in order to write emails systematically and effectively. The first process is pre-writing; the process to analyze, anticipate, and adapt tasks. Second is the writing process which is research, organization, and composing emails. The last process is post-writing for revision and proofreading the written email before sending it. Moreover, Guffey and Du-Babcock (2010) suggested developing a plan for well-organized emails as follows:

Subject line: Summarize email contents

Opening: State the main idea

Body: Provide background data and explain the main idea

Closing: Request, summarize the message, or present a closing thought

A writing plan helps organize email messages. To compose an email, the message in the subject line should be brief but meaningful. Most emails should make the key point clear to readers right away. Additionally, the body line of emails needs to explicitly state their objective. Finally, emails should include action information, a summarizing statement, or a closing remark for the reader.

2.5 Communication Strategies

Communication is defined as a process in which the message is delivered from senders to receivers (Thao, 2005). The term communication strategies were first introduced in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) by Selinker (1972); it refers to the way in which learners overcome the difficulties they meet when communicating with native speakers.

Although the beginning of CS research dates back to the 1970s, it remains difficult to provide a correct meaning of “communication strategy”. The best way to comprehend a “strategy” is to see it as “problem-solving”. The act of learners that try to communicate in English is not referred to as a strategy; however, when the learners experience problems using words in English, they may use indirect descriptions or use gestures as a tool to achieve communication goals. It can be said that the notion of

strategy emerges. Thereby, a strategy is a problem-solving technique that the user uses because it works effectively when they communicate with other speakers (Swan, 2008).

Normally, CSs can be seen as communication-enhancing tools that are used to handle difficulties and avoid communication breakdowns (Canale, 1983). Similar to Long (1983), CSs are used to deal with either problem-solving or avoiding failure in achieving communicative goals. CS definitions have been classified differently according to the aspects of different researchers; therefore, there is no complete agreement on the definition of CSs (Somsai & Intaraprasert, 2011). Different definitions have emphasized different aspects. For example, Tarone (1980) studied CS from the interactional perspective, Brown (1994) observed the CS from the perspective of error resources, and Faerch and Kasper (1983) examined CS from a psychological approach:

Tarone (1980) defines CS as two interlocutors attempting to reach an agreement on meaning for transmission of a message without necessarily considering the situation's appropriateness. It means that successful communication requires the cooperation of two interlocutors: the speaker and the listener. When interlocutors realize they do not understand each other, they will alternate a variety of strategies to deal with difficulties including paraphrasing, transfer, avoidance, and others.

Brown (1994) defines CS from the perspective of error resources that it is the process of interlingual transfer and the context of learning that learners try to receive a message through a hearer or reader. This implies that the speaker may determine some linguistic forms that are not available to interlocutors at that point of communication. So, communication strategies function as the conscious employment of verbal or nonverbal mechanisms for communicating an idea. Through the analysis of errors, it can help us reflect on what kind of communication strategies have been used by the speaker

From the psychological perspective, CS is defined as the plans in which the language users use to cope with communication breakdown and manipulate language in order to achieve a communicative goal (Faerch & Kasper, 1983). According to their

definitions, CSs have recently been divided into two categories: “achievement strategies” and “avoidance strategies.”

In conclusion, the main objective of CS is to deal with communication problems. To understand more clearly about communication strategies, it is essential to learn some more definitions of CS as provided in table 2.2

Table 2.2 Definition of Communication Strategies

Author(s)	Definition(s)
Corder (1978)	“CS is a systematic technique used by a speaker to express the idea when encountered during communication.”
Stern (1983)	“CSs are techniques of coping with difficulties in communicating in a second or foreign language.”
Poullisse (1989)	“CSs are strategies that a speaker uses to solve the communication problems that are caused by the lack of linguistic resources. The speaker compensates by trying out alternative linguistic formulation to solve the communication problems.”
Ellis (1994)	“CSs are the skills that learners employ to overcome the inadequacy of their interlanguage resources.”
Cohen (2004)	“CS is an attempt of the learner to express meaning by a target language, which the target language rules have not been made.”

The Class of Communication Strategies

Regarding the CS’s definitions, it can conclude that there are different concepts proposed by many researchers. However, the taxonomies of Faerch and Kasper (1983) and Tarone (1980) are more concise and reasonable than others. Therefore, this section will emphasize Faerch and Kasper’s and Tarone’s taxonomies.

2.5.1 Faerch and Kasper’s

Faerch and Kasper (1983) view communication strategy as a psychological process. They believe that communication strategy is the individual's problem of

processing the ways to respond to a communication breakdown. It is not a mutual problem between the speaker and the hearer. Faerch and Kasper categorized communication strategies into two main types: “achievement communicative strategies” and “reduction communicative strategies.” Faerch and Kasper indicate that achievement strategies can promote language acquisition. Using reduction strategies, on the other hand, may result in less language acquisition. The following sections are the sub-sections based on Faerch and Kasper which present two types of communication strategies in detail.

2.5.1.1 Achievement Strategies

Achievement Strategies are the way in which the users try to solve communication problems in the planning phase that are caused by insufficient linguistic resources. By using this strategy, the users try to use the existence of their first language to achieve the communication goal. Faerch and Kasper (1983) categorized the achievement of communicative strategies into five strategies: code-switching, inter-lingual strategies, L1-based strategies, cooperative strategies, and nonverbal strategies.

1. Code-switching

Code-switching is a strategy that a speaker switches from a second language to a first or a foreign language when communicating with others in foreign languages (Faerch & Kasper, 1983). The occurrence of switching relies on the interlocutor's analysis of the communication situation; moreover, the switching can be either a single word or a complete turn of each interlocutor. For example, foreign classroom students often share their first language (L1) with the teacher. Thus, this enables them to switch code extensively between L2 and L1.

2. Inter-lingual transfer

The inter-lingual transfer is the strategy of using the mother tongue and the second language together. For this reason, it results in a combination of linguistic features from the inter-lingual and L1. Inter-lingual transfer occurs on both phonological and pragmatic levels (Faerch & Kasper, 1983). For example:

NS: What does a dog eat?

D: He eats---erm greens----things.

According to the above example, a Danish student learning English as a second language uses the word "greens things" and pronounced it as "grøntsager", to describe an English term that means "vegetables".

3. Inter- intralingual based strategies

Inter- intralingual-based strategies are communication strategies used by users. The users may have several techniques for solving communication problems such as generalized, paraphrased, coining new words, or restructuring.

1) Generalization means that users solve problems using resemble words in L2 to convey the meaning, where the speaker knows that they would not use it, but they want to communicate by using the formal reduction. Thus, it results in the extension of an item to an inappropriate context. For example, we often use the word animal to refer to a type of animal, a rabbit.

2) Paraphrase is the users replace L2 words or phrases by describing or exemplifying the meaning. There are both descriptions and circumlocutions in giving the meaning by emphasizing the details in terms of physical, functional, or characteristic. For instance:

NS: How do you go to work?

NNS: erm----a cykel there is a motor.

NS: oh, a bicycle----with a motor.

3) Word coinage is the strategy that users replace an L2 word with the newly created L2 word. For instance, the user is talking about "the curve of the stadium". E.g., I am sitting in the rounding of the stadium.

4) Restructuring is applied when the user recognizes that he or she is unable to describe the intended information or finish his or her intended sentence. Therefore, the user may complete the sentence by rearranging the structure of the information; for example, the speaker wants to describe the word "He is hungry" by using a restructuring strategy:

NNS: my tommy-my tommy is---- I must eat something.

4. Cooperative strategy

Cooperative strategy is applied when an individual realizes that he or she is having a communication problem and needs assistance from the interlocutor; therefore, he or she may use of the cooperative strategy of "appealing" by sending a signal to the interlocutor. Appealing can be characterized as "self-initiated other-repairs". For example,

NS: What color is it?

NNS: er skimlet-- er-er --what's --color is this- (points to NS's sweater).

NS: Grey

5. Nonverbal Strategy

Nonverbal strategy means the strategy that the user uses mime, gesture, or sound imitation in communication. Although the nonverbal strategy is less systematic than verbal behavior, it plays a significant role in the interaction. Moreover, nonverbal language includes signs and other expressions which are possible to use by communicators, not only gestures, and facial expressions (Faerch & Kasper, 1983).

2.5.1.2 Reduction Strategies

A reduction strategy is applied to avoid communication problems. To prevent producing incorrect messages by using insufficiently acquired rules, language users may decide to communicate by "reduced" systems which concentrate on old rules. When L2 user interacts with a native, the native may use a simple version of their L1 system to match the level of the language user. Therefore, reduction strategies play a significant role in the user's process of language acquisition. Faerch and Kasper (1983) subcategorized "reduction strategies" into: "formal reduction strategies" and "functional reduction strategies."

1. Formal reduction strategies

Formal reduction strategies refer to a reduction in which the parts of a linguistic system are reduced. Formal reduction strategies are applied as communication strategies for two reasons. The first one is to avoid making mistakes. The avoidance of an error may be psychologically determined. Some language learners and users are afraid of communicating in another language. They have forbidden doing

this unless they can do without making handicaps; additionally, they believe that grammatical correctness is a requirement. The second is to increase fluency. Language learners and users may observe that the reduction of certain formal elements does not affect communication, particularly in the transmission of meaning.

Varadi (1980) and Tarone (1980) point out that it promotes communication by increasing fluency. The formal reduction strategies can be divided into four different levels. As at the phonological level, it is the avoidance of a group of words or phonemes that are difficult to pronounce. At the morphological level, it is similar to the phonological level, but it is the avoidance of morphemes. It has often been replaced by the avoided morphological item with structures or words. For the case at the syntactical level, it is the avoidance of using the difficult structure of sentences such as to avoid talking about conditional sentences. At the lexical level, it is the avoidance of the topic. Some language learners and users tend to avoid the topic in communicating because they lack knowledge in terms of specific words to convey meaning on that topic.

2. Functional reduction strategies

Faerch and Kasper (1983) indicate that functional reduction can affect three types of elements of communication goals such as action, modal, and propositional.

Functional reduction of the action occurs when the speakers encounter difficulties in expressing specific speech acts. Functional reduction of the modal happens to the speakers who are not able to make their utterances or messages appropriate for politeness and social distance. For the functional reduction of the propositional, it is reduced when the speakers do not know much regarding the vocabulary and the specific vocabulary of the topic, e.g., political, economic, science, etc. However, the functional reduction of propositional includes three strategies. Firstly, topic avoidance is the way in which the speakers try to avoid the occurrence of the topic that leads to present difficulties. Topic avoidance is applied only in the planning phase; in contrast, message avoidance can be used in the execution phase by using a message to change the topic during the conversation such as "Let's talk about something else."

Lastly, meaning replacement refers to the ways that the speaker employs words, phrases, or sentences that are close to what the speaker intended.

2.5.2 Tarone's Social Strategies

As aforementioned that Faerch and Kasper (1983) suggest communicative strategies as a psychological process; however, Tarone (1980) studies communicative strategies from the perspective of social interaction. She explains the definition of CS by saying that it is the attempt of two interlocutors to negotiate meaning in situations where they do not understand each other. Tarone (1983) has summarized CSs under the following three main types as follows:

2.5.2.1 Paraphrase

Paraphrasing strategies are the strategies used by language users in order to compensate the linguistic insufficiency. It includes three categories:

1. Approximation is the use of a vocabulary or structure to elaborate on what the speaker intends to talk. Although the speaker realizes that it is incorrect, it shares semantic features.
2. Word coinage is the creation of a new word by the language user, e.g., "airball" for "balloon."
3. Circumlocution is the describing of the object instead of using the correct form of the target language, e.g., "She is, uh, drinking something. I don't know what it is. That's, uh, made of grapes."

2.5.2.2 Transfer

Transferring strategies refer to the user using the L1 words or phrases in communication. The transfer includes four elements:

1. Literal translation is the translation of words, compound words, or structures of language users from L1 to L2.
2. Language switch is the use of the native term without bothering to translate, e.g., "balon" for "balloon" or "tirtil" for "turtle."
3. Appeal for assistance is the language user turns to partners for assistance.

4. Mime: the use of nonverbal strategies such as action to convey the meaning in communication.

2.5.2.3 Avoidance

The avoidance includes two elements in it:

1. Topic avoidance: the speakers refrain from talking about topics that they are unable to talk for linguistic reasons.
2. Message abandonment: the speakers start their conversation, but fail to keep a conversation because of language difficulties. So, they may stop talking during the communication.

2.6 Cross-Cultural Communication

Communication that occurs especially among people who have different backgrounds is known as cross-cultural communication. This involves an understanding of how people from various cultures speak, communicate, and perceive the surrounding world (Lauring, 2011). There are various aspects of communication that differ from culture to culture; for instance, the directness, emotions, and verbal and non-verbal signals that are expressed in a conversation. These may be misconstrued in a different manner, depending upon the cultural variety. This reflects an existing phenomenon that regularly happens and its significance is increasing due to globalization tendencies in many kinds of activities such as international trade, diplomacy, science, arts, tourism, and sport. As a result, effective and clear intercultural communication is becoming increasingly important in the global workplace. The understanding of intercultural differences, etiquette, protocol, and communication could lead to achieving the goals.

Another important aspect of cross-cultural communication is the inter-culture of people from all over the world who have unique communication. It makes a big challenge in communication due to their diverse cultural nuances. One of the biggest challenges in cross-cultural communication is context.

Hall (1990) considered that problems in international communication are caused by context. Context includes many variables discussed in the other cultures' contexts. Context is a broad term that refers to the environment in which there is an interaction, and its interpretation or tone varies depending on the situation. The context also indicates a surrounding, link, environment, background, and situation which help us in behaving in an appropriate way in specific situations.

Hall (1990) classified communication into two styles: high-context and low-context. High and low context refers to the amount of information that a person can comfortably handle. Cultures that pay attention to words more than spoken are high-context cultures. They pay attention to interpersonal relationships, nonverbal expressions, physical settings, and social settings. People in high context have close connections over a long period of time; for example, Mexico, Brazil, India, China, and Japan. While a low context culture is one in which information is communicated directly and mostly through words. North America, Scandinavia, and Germany are a few countries that follow this type of culture. In conclusion, high-context culture relies on implicit messages and situational cues in communication; whereas, low-context culture takes a more direct and explicit approach.

2.7 Related Studies

Several studies on EFL and ESL writing try to examine the contrastive or intercultural rhetorical pattern of the written discourse. The objectives of those studies focused on how to improve L2 writing, and how L2 learners write.

Numerous studies regarding rhetorical patterns in general writing are presented in this section such as argumentative organizational patterns (Connor, 1987; Boonsiri, 2007), persuasive essays (Khartite & Zerhouni, 2018), and English writing (Alluhaydan, 2016).

Connor (1987) studied argumentative patterns in student writing across languages and cultures such as England, Finland, Germany, and United States. The participants were asked to write an assignment related to the problems in their young

lives. The written essays were evaluated according to the deep structure of rhetorical characteristics in argumentative compositions. According to her analysis, both the highly-rated and low-rated essays composition in the sample selected countries followed the argumentative organizational patterns: situation, problem development, solution, and evaluation.

Boonsiri (2007) investigated the rhetorical patterns of 16 argumentative compositions written by Thai students majoring in English. The samples were divided into three categories: three highly, three moderately, and three lowly-rated essays. The framework of the argumentative organization of Taeko and Kyoko (1996) was applied to analyze the essays. The findings of the analysis revealed that highly and moderately-ranking essay writers know and understand how to develop and organize argumentative composition. The essays were produced with similar rhetorical patterns. Their rhetorical characteristics consisted of a standpoint, thesis statement, controlling ideas, topic sentence, specific details, concluding point, and conclusion paragraph. In contrast, lowly-rated writers neither understand the key concept of the argumentative rhetorical organizational features nor understand specific supporting information.

Khartite and Zerhouni (2018) studied the rhetorical comparisons of persuasive essays of Moroccan students. This study provided Kaplan's (1966) contrastive rhetoric hypothesis that EFL students-writing problems are caused by the negative transfer of rhetorical strategies of their first language (L1). This hypothesis was proved by comparing 52 EFL and Arabic L1 persuasive essays. The analysis of the data indicated that there were more similarities than differences in EFL and Arabic L1 essays. Both groups seemed to suffer from inadequate use of rhetorical patterns. Moreover, it was difficult to conclude whether students' problems were a result of transfer from their L1.

Alluhaydan (2016) examined the impact of genre and culture on the ability of Saudis writing in a second language. The contrastive rhetoric theory was employed in this study. The findings indicated that there were grammatical and content problems in Saudi students' English writing. Further, it was concluded that thinking in Arabic while writing in English obstructed the writing of Saudi ESL writers in terms of the use of words, grammar, and parallel construction.

On the other hand, many scholars studied the rhetorical pattern in business writing such as email. The objectives of these studies emphasized how email writers communicate across cultures; for example, Mehrpour and Mehrzad (2013) conducted a comparative genre analysis of English business email at generic and lexicogrammatical levels written by Iranians compared with the English business email. The written emails were investigated according to Swales (1990), Bhatia (1993), and Santos (2002) notion of genre analysis. The findings demonstrated that the generic structures used in transmitting information between Iranian and native English business correspondents are closely the same. Furthermore, Iranians preferred lexicogrammatical expressions that helped them respect their interlocutors' negative faces whereas native English speakers attempted to encourage a friendly and intimate atmosphere.

Du-Babcock and Feng (2018) studied the impact of the writer's and receiver's cultures and the writer's professional identity on the move structures of persuasive email requests of Hong Kong and Japanese university students. This study also provided the genre analysis framework developed by Bhatia and Swales to identify email messages through eight structural moves: (a) Establishing credentials, (b) Introducing the product/offer, (c) Product details/offering incentives, (d) Providing reasons for collaboration, (e) Enclosing documents, (f) Soliciting response (g) Using pressure tactics, and (h) Ending politely as well as observe similarities and differences in the use of these moves across the two corpora. The findings reveal that culture and identity construction have a significant role in affecting the students' use of persuasive strategies. Moreover, the findings revealed the pattern of structural moves in two corpora, and the patterns were generally similar to the moves in English proposed by Bhatia (1993).

Another interesting study is studied by Giménez-Moreno and Skorczynska (2013), they examined the business emails from representative European cultures such as British (Northern Europe), Spanish (Southern Europe), and Polish (Eastern Europe) to investigate the main parameters of variation across these cultures, the existent variation regarding the prototypical move structure and how register variation

fluctuates depending on each culture. A corpus of 100 emails of response to business requests written in English by companies in these three cultures had been compiled and analyzed in accordance with moves in the genre of response to requests and register variation. The results showed that across these cultures the move structure of this genre is more complex. While there is a tendency to standardize email correspondence at a European level, the study also indicates that there are some characteristics of variance that can help language learners and users to conform their messages based on the recipient's culture.

In Thailand, Chakorn (2002) studied the contrastive analysis of persuasive business correspondence written in English by Thai speakers and native English speakers in the Thai business context. One of the objectives of this study is to compare and contrast Thai rhetorical structures. Three types of persuasive correspondence such as sales promotion, request, and invitation, were analyzed, using text and discourse analysis within the area of contrastive rhetoric and examined the structural, textual, and pragmatic features. The findings reported on cross-cultural variations that differentiate the patterns of writing and strategies of Thais and native English writers. Despite some shared writing conventions, the studies revealed a wide range of rhetorical strategies written by the writers.

However, previous studies in move analysis have focused on business emails. For example, Kameda (2009), Giménez-Moreno and Skorczynska (2013), Mehrpour and Mehrzad (2013), and Du-Babcock and Feng (2018), all studied the rhetoric structure of business emails. Studies of business emails investigated the impact of writers' culture on the move structure and the move patterns between native and non-native English writers. The researcher found that it is necessary to investigate the move structure of other types of business emails: inquiry and reply emails that are written by non-native writers because most previous studies only investigated persuasive emails, especially between native and non-native English writers. Furthermore, most studies are focused on the position and the content of the main messages. Therefore, the analysis of business emails in this study will help the researcher to differentiate how

non-native and non-native English writers compose emails to communicate across cultures.

Another level of investigation in this study consisted of email communication strategies used in BELF contexts. Most studies exploring the use of communication strategies in BELF contexts have emphasized oral interactions. For example, Haegeman (2002) studied business phone calls which emphasize the strategies of simplification of language used to communicate with partners who lack linguistic proficiency; Rogerson-Revell and Louhiala-Salminen (2010) analyzed the strategies adopted in a multicultural business meeting. Whereas, there are a few studies that worked on email communication strategies. Biesenbach-Lucas (2005) studied the email messages sent by American and international students to their professors. The study was conducted over the course of one semester. The 125 email messages were examined for communication topics and communication strategies. The analysis of communication strategies revealed that there were four main strategies used by the students such as explicit requesting of response, requesting other services, negotiating, and reporting.

Bou-Franch and Lorenzo-Dus (2008) examined the discursive email written by two different languages: Peninsular Spanish (PS) and British English (BE). The objective of this study was to investigate the role of the formality and directness of emails sent to their university lecturers. A corpus of 100 emails was coded and analyzed to study the stylistic formality and directness of the email senders including studying the internal structure of emails: opening, main body, and closing. Results revealed that PS students clearly favored the use of direct strategies while BE students preferred to use indirect strategies in writing emails to their lecturers.

Hermanova (2015) studied cultural differences in email communication of 108 undergraduate and postgraduate students using Edward T. Hall's concept of culture to explain communication styles. The findings showed that cultural background has a significant impact on communication styles such as directness, formality, and relationship-relatedness. Each cultural background has different preferences of communication styles according to Hall's concept of culture, e.g., low & high context, low & high space, monochronic & polychronic culture, and etc.

Lindgren (2014) studied the email communication of writers who have different first languages in a business setting. 46 emails sent to internal and external correspondence were analyzed in terms of politeness strategies and identified regarding formality in greeting and closing, and directness in requests. The results revealed that the email senders used more or less the same strategies, e.g., formal, informal, and direct to show politeness. The results also indicated that the level of politeness in terms of formality and directness did not rely on who the receiver is, but rather on the sender. Another study investigated the CSs in 240 business emails written by BELF users of different L1s: Italian, German, French, English, Danish, Swedish, and Chinese. This study aimed to examine the CSs that are used in BELF email exchanges with the aim of how business people establish a smooth working relationship and build a rapport with their business partners. The analysis of emails identified three CSs that were used in emails such as metalinguistic comments, code-switching, and small talk. However, previous studies in email communication strategies have focused on business emails; for instance, Biesenbach-Lucas (2007), Bou-Franch and Lorenzo-Dus (2008), Lindgren (2014), Hermanova (2015), Pimthong et al. (2019), and Caleffi (2019), who analyzed the strategies employed by native and non-native writers through the languages they used in emails. The results reflected different strategies employed by the writers; for example, communication strategies in requesting, negotiating, reporting, and polite strategies. The researcher found a gap that the previous studies have never worked on communication strategies that are used in business email intercultural communication, especially achievement strategies and avoidance strategies. Therefore, the study of communication strategies in this study will help the researcher examine the communication strategies that are used by non-native English writers when communicating across cultures.

As aforementioned, there are a few studies that work on intercultural rhetoric in the business setting in Thailand. Most of the research studies in Thailand emphasized rhetoric in academic writing such as essays; furthermore, there is no research that studies the rhetorical structure in business email as well as the email communication

strategies. Therefore, it is essential to study how email writers from different cultures approach business communication.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the design and procedures of the present study. It includes the following parts: research design, participants, research instrument, research procedure, data collection, and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The study attempts to investigate the rhetorical move structures of a business email written by Thai and Japanese staff as well as to investigate the communication strategies that are used in writing a business email. This study is a descriptive study. The email messages and the responded-questionnaires obtained from Thai and Japanese staff were analyzed quantitatively for finding the percentage and mean score of rhetoric move structures in composing inquiry and reply messages and communication strategies that Thai and Japanese writers used in writing business emails across cultures.

3.2 Data

To investigate the similarities and differences in business email communication between Thai and Japanese staff, the data that were used for the present study consisted of business emails, and the responded-questionnaires collected from non-native English speakers. The business email messages were written in English by non-native English speakers, Thai and Japanese staff. The email message and the responded questionnaire were obtained from three Thailand-based companies which engaged in an email interaction with Japanese partners.

3.2.1 Company Profiles

There are three companies that participated in this study. The first-two companies are located in Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand, which is the economic center of Thailand. The first company is the global container shipping company offering an extensive liner network service covering over 120 countries around the world. The second company is a leading company in resin sealing technologies for semiconductors and other electronic components, which supplied a large amount of equipment and molds to the market. The last company is the manufacturer of Japanese soy sauce and Japanese seasoning sauce located in Chiang Rai, Thailand.

3.2.2 Participants

Investigating the rhetorical move structures of business email written by Thai and Japanese staff including the communication strategies used by Thai and Japanese staff were the key subject of this research. Therefore, a purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants from the population who work in three Thailand-based companies. The data used in the present study consisted of business emails and self-report questionnaires collected from companies in Thailand.

The criterion for selecting the participant is the participant's role. The participants who have to contact the overseas partner, especially Japanese, were selected to be the participants in this study. There were 91 participants, including 91 non-native English speakers. This selected number is from Yamane's sample size formula (Yamane, 1973) with a 95% confidence level and 5% of possible error. As a result, 91 non-native English speakers in this study consisted of 50 Thai staff and 41 Japanese staff.

Thai writers:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} = n = \frac{57}{1 + 57(0.05)^2} = 49.89$$

≈ 50 of Thai writers

Japanese writers:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} = n = \frac{45}{1 + 45(0.05)^2} = 40.44$$

≈ 41 of Japanese writers

n = sample size, N = population size, e = level of precision

Table 3.1 shows the personal information of the participants, such as the fact that there were 91 non-native English speakers, consisting of 50 Thai (54.9%) and 41 Japanese (45.1%). The participants included 44 males (48.4%) compared to 47 females (51.6%).

The majority of the participants were 25-29 years old (47.3%). The second-largest group was 35 or more than 35 years old (30.8%). The other groups had the same number of participants ages such as a group of 0-24 years old and 30-34 years old (11.0%).

The educational backgrounds of the participants revealed that there were 58 (63.7%) who graduated from university with a Bachelor's degree and others 30 (33.0%) who were either postgraduate students or had completed a Master's degree. There were only 3 (3.3%) participants who graduated from high school.

In terms of the working experiences, the majority of the participants had more than two years of experience and most of the participants had direct experiences working with foreigners because their boss is a foreigner and some of the participants had studied abroad; for example, Australia, Singapore, U.K., and etc. Furthermore, all participants had experiences in writing emails across cultures such as British, American, Indian, Japanese, Thai, etc.

Table 3.1 Background Information (N = 91)

Background Information	<i>f</i>	%
Nationalities		
Thai	50	54.9
Japanese	41	45.1
Gender		
Male	44	48.4
Female	47	51.6
Age		
0-24	10	11.0
25-29	43	47.3
30-34	10	11.0
35 or more than 35	28	30.8
Educational background		
Junior / High school	3	3.3
Bachelor	58	63.7
Others (please specify)	30	33.0

The working position of the participants revealed that there were 23 participants (25.3%) who worked as supply officers. There were 14 participants (15.4%) positioned in the quality executive and there were 14 participants (15.4%) who worked as demand & supply specialists. There were 7 participants (7.7%) who worked as the import & export staff and executive sales & marketing. The other positions, such as route logistics, sales & support, assistant buyer, and planning & control manager consisted of 6 (6.6%), 6 (6.6%), 5 (5.5%), and 3 (3.3%) respectively. Moreover, there were 2 participants (2.2%) for each position such as sales coordinator, sales officer, and secretary.

Table 3.2 Working Position of Thai and Japanese Writers

Working Position	Percent
Demand & Supply Specialist	15.4
Supply Chain Officer	25.3
Quality Executive	15.4
Planning & Control Manager	3.3
Sale & Support	6.6
Secretary	2.2
Executive Sale & Marketing	7.7
Sale Officer	2.2
Sale Coordinator	2.2
Route Logistics	6.6
Assistant Buyer	5.5
Import & Export Staff	7.7

3.2.3 Emails

Business inquiry and reply emails were collected from three companies from May 2020 to July 2020. The email messages analyzed in the study consisted of 305 pairs of inquiry and reply emails collected from 91 participants during three months. This selected number is from Yamane's sample size formula (Yamane, 1973) with a 95% confidence level and 5% of possible error.

Thai business inquiry emails and Japanese reply emails:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} = n = \frac{386}{1 + 386(0.05)^2} = 196.43 \text{ pairs of emails}$$

However, 30 pairs of emails were excluded because the email length is less than 50 words. Therefore, the total numbers of Thai business inquiry emails were 167 emails and the number of Japanese reply emails was 167 emails.

Japanese business inquiry emails and Thai reply emails:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} = n = \frac{235}{1 + 235(0.05)^2} = 148.03 \text{ pairs of emails}$$

n = sample size, N = population size, e = level of precision

Moreover, 10 pairs of emails were deleted because the email length is less than 50 words. Therefore, the total numbers of Japanese business inquiry emails were 138 emails and the number of Thai reply emails was 138 emails.

3.3 Research Instruments

There were two types of research instruments used in this study: intercultural rhetoric analysis and a self-report questionnaire.

3.3.1 Intercultural Rhetoric Analysis

In this study, an intercultural rhetoric analysis was used in this study. An intercultural rhetoric analysis used in this study is based on Connor and Traversa's (2014) elaboration of Bhatia's (1993) genre analysis. There are two key writing genres in this study: inquiry and reply emails, which are adopted from Chih (2015). The scheme for inquiry email consists of seven moves and the scheme for reply email consists of six moves as shown below:

3.3.1.1 Coding Scheme for Inquiry Email

Move 1: Salutation

Move 2: Establishing a link

Step1: Intent of the inquiry

Step2: Source of reference

Move3: Establishing a credential

Move 4: Making the initial inquiry

Step1: Asking for sample/catalogue

Step2: Asking for product detail

Step3: Asking for transaction detail

Step4: Asking for action

Move 5: Justifying of the inquiry

Move 6: Making other related inquiries

Step1: Stating condition/term

Step2: Making special requirement

Move 7: Ending politely

Step1: Anticipating of Replies

Step2: Expressing Appreciation

Step3: Signing-off

3.3.1.2 Coding Scheme for Reply Email

Move 1: Salutation

Move 2: Acknowledging the Inquiry

Step1: Gratitude about the inquiry

Step2: Willingness to help customers with their inquiry

Step3: Apology

Move 3: Directly responding to the requested information/materials

Step1: Providing requested information

Step2: Stating special detail/condition

Step3: Offering alternatives

Move 4: Justifying the direct response

Move 5: Providing additional information

Step1: Stating condition/term

Step2: Stating incentive

Step3: Applying pressure tactics

Move 6: Ending politely

Step1: Anticipating further contact

Step2: Expressing Appreciation

Step3: Signing-off

3.3.2 Self-Report Questionnaire

The objective of the self-report questionnaire was to elicit information from participants about the employment of communication strategies in writing a business email. The questionnaire was adapted from Faerch and Kasper (1983) and Tarone (1983). A self-report questionnaire is about the reported frequency at which participants use different communication strategies in email communication. A self-report questionnaire includes two main parts. The first part aims to gather general information from the participants such as gender, age, nationality, work experience and etc. The second part aims to obtain detailed information on the employment of communication strategies of the participants. There are 17 statements describing some strategies, aim to obtain detailed information on the employment of communication strategies of the participants, which are divided into five parts. Part I focuses on L2-based communication strategies. It has five statements that cover six minor groups: substituting, generalizing, exemplifying, word coinage, restructuring, and describing. Part II is about cooperative strategies. It has four statements. Part III focuses on L1-based strategies. It has four statements. Part IV has three statements, representing nonverbal communication strategies such as signs and emoticons. Part V includes one statement, representing reduction strategies that cover two kinds of reduction strategies: formal and functional reduction strategies.

A self-report questionnaire employs a five-point scale, “1” stands for “never”; “2” stands for “rarely”; “3” stands for “sometimes”; “4” stands for “often”; “5” stands for “always”. Each category is assigned a value of one to five. Therefore, a higher score indicates more frequent use of a particular strategy as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Five-point Likert Scale

Rating Score	Interpretation of the score
5	Always use
4	Often use
3	Sometimes use
2	Rarely use
1	Never use

The measurement criteria of five-point rating scales can be calculated by the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Interval} &= \frac{\text{Range}}{\text{The width of interval}} \\
 &= \frac{\text{The highest width} - \text{The lowest width}}{\text{The width of interval}} \\
 &= \frac{5 - 1}{5} \\
 &= 0.80
 \end{aligned}$$

According to the width of each level of participants' frequency, the length of the mean is shown in table 3.4

Table 3.4 The Mean Level of Interpretation Score

Mean	Interpretation level
4.21 – 5.00	Always used / highly used
3.41 – 4.20	Often used / mostly used
2.61 – 3.40	Sometimes used / moderately used
1.81 – 2.60	Rarely used / fairly used
1.00 – 1.80	Never used / not at all

3.4 Validity of the Instrument

To ascertain the validity of the research instruments, an intercultural rhetoric analysis and a self-report questionnaire were developed to be used as an instrument for analyzing a business email and assessing the communication strategies of Thai and Japanese writers. Two types of research instruments were assessed by three experts from the School of Liberal Arts in MFU. The experts were asked to indicate their opinion using a three-point rating scale for each statement. The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was used to summarize the expert's opinions.

The Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was used to evaluate the items of intercultural rhetoric analysis and a self-report questionnaire based on the score range from -1 to +1.

Congruent = + 1

Questionable = 0

Incongruent = -1

The items that gain a score lower than 0.5 was revised and the items that gain a score higher than or equal to 0.5 were reserved. The validity of an intercultural rhetoric analysis and a self-report questionnaire was found to be 1.00 and 0.74. They were acceptable to be used as the research instruments of this study.

Pilot Study

To validate the research instruments, an intercultural rhetoric analysis and a self-report questionnaire were piloted to identify the weakness of the instrument, check for clarify of language and content, and establish an appropriate time for completion. An intercultural rhetoric analysis was piloted in analyzing other business emails written by Thai, Chinese, Indian, and Vietnamese. Moreover, a self-report questionnaire was piloted with a small group of staff who shared similar characteristics to the participants and who were not part of the actual participant.

3.5 Research Procedure

This study consisted of four stages of research procedures:

The first stage deals with designing the study. To study the present research topic, the researcher designed the area of study by reviewing the previous studies. Then, the researcher identified the scope of the study, selected the sample, and setting. Then, the researcher started writing the first three chapters.

The second stage deals with collecting the data. A letter of consent was sent to the Managing Director and General Manager of three Thai firms in order to ask for permission in collecting the data from May to July 2020. All participants were given two to three months to send a thread of emails to the researcher. Furthermore, the questionnaire was given to all participants and they were given two weeks to complete the questionnaire.

The third stage deals with studying and analyzing. After collecting the data from three companies, the researcher analyzed the data from all instruments. Microsoft Word was used to separate email messages into sentences. Email messages were coded and the sentences were labeled according to the type of moves. Then, they were interpreted, categorized, and tabulated on a computer sheet. The results were also calculated into statistical values; for example, mean, frequency, and percentage. Another procedure was peer review. Finally, the researcher summarized all the data.

The last stage deals with concluding the study. After studying and analyzing the obtained data, the researcher wrote the results, the discussion, and the discussion of this study.

Table 3.5 Summary of Research Procedure

Stages	Research Procedures
1. Designing the study	1) Studied and reviewed previous studies; 2) Selected sample and setting; 3) Wrote chapters 1-3; 4) Piloted the instruments; 5) Revised all instruments.
2. Collecting data	1) Distributed the letter of consent to the firms; 2) Distributed the Google form of questionnaire to the participants; 3) Collected the data; 4) Read and classified the data;
3. Analyzing	1) Analyzed the data gained from business inquiry and reply emails; 2) Analyzed the data obtained from questionnaire; 3) Peer review; 4) Summarized data.
4. Writing a report	1) Wrote the report.

3.6 Data Collection

The data were collected through two instruments: intercultural rhetoric analysis and a self-report questionnaire. A letter of consent was sent to the managing director and general manager of three companies in order to ask for permission in collecting the data from May to July 2020.

In the beginning, the participants were asked to send a thread of emails to the researcher. The emails were classified based on the objective of the study. The written emails were arranged according to the written date and year. As email messages are quite confidential and sensitive; thus, the confidential messages were preserved at any stage of the research. Then, the obtained emails were analyzed through the intercultural

rhetoric analysis according to two types of key moves: inquiry and reply, in order to investigate the moves structures found in business emails written by Thai and Japanese writers. The results were compared to find the differences.

A self-report questionnaire was employed to elicit information from participants about the employment of communication strategies in writing a business email across cultures. A Google form of a self-report questionnaire was sent to all participants. Both Thai and Japanese writers were asked to complete five parts of the questionnaire. The responses from the participants were analyzed based on two strategies: achievement and reduction strategies. The results were calculated and compared to find the differences in communication strategies that they used.

3.7 Analytical Framework

With the aim of investigating the move structure and communication strategies used in the business email, two cultures, Thai and Japanese have been selected to study. The data obtained from two cultures were analyzed based on two analytical frameworks: the intercultural rhetoric of Connor and Traversa (2014) and the communication strategies of Faerch and Kasper (1983) and Tarone (1980).

3.7.1 Intercultural Rhetoric Analysis

More obviously, intercultural rhetoric has suggested a great interest in the interplay among communication, business, and technology. Therefore, the business emails were analyzed through the intercultural rhetoric of Connor and Traversa's (2014) framework in order to see the cultural patterns of Thai and Japanese staff. Furthermore, this study also provides the genre analysis developed by Bhatia (1993) to investigate the cultural pattern of two cultures by examining the moves structures of the business emails. Moreover, the subunits of steps are adopted from Chih (2015).

Table 3.6 Example of Coding Scheme for Inquiry and Reply Emails

Coding Scheme for Inquiry Email	Coding Scheme for Reply Email
Move 1: Salutation	Move 1: Salutation
Move 2: Establishing a link	Move 2: Acknowledging the Inquiry
Step1: Intent of the inquiry	Step1: Gratitude about the inquiry
Step2: Source of reference	Step2: Willingness to help customers
Move3: Establishing a credential	with their inquiry
Move 4: Making the initial inquiry	Step3: Apology
Step1: Asking for sample/catalogue	Move 3: Directly responding to the
Step2: Asking for product detail	requested information/materials
Step3: Asking for transaction detail	Step1: Providing requested
Step4: Asking for action	information
Move 5: Justifying of the inquiry	Step2: Stating special detail/condition
Move 6: Making other related inquiries	Step3: Offering alternatives
Step1: Stating condition/term	Move 4: Justifying the direct response
Step2: Making special requirement	Move 5: Providing additional
Move 7: Ending politely	information
Step1: Anticipating of Replies	Step1: Stating condition/term
Step2: Expressing Appreciation	Step2: Stating incentive
Step3: Signing-off	Step3: Applying pressure tactics
	Move 6: Ending politely
	Step1: Anticipating further contact
	Step2: Expressing Appreciation
	Step3: Signing-off

The data obtained from the intercultural rhetoric analysis were used to address the first research question. Email messages were coded and the sentences were labeled according to the type of moves; for example, M1 as (Move1), M2 as (Move2), and M3 as (Move3) and etc. Two raters were invited to validate the reliability of the data before computing. Then, the collected move step structures and the number of occurrences of the 305 pairs of business emails were calculated using IBM SPSS Statistics 23 and presented as frequencies and percentages. They were interpreted, categorized, and tabulated on a computer sheet in order to compare the differences in terms of their move structures and combination move patterns. The tables and figures were used to present the findings, together with a description of the descriptive analysis.

However, the numbers of moves' occurrences were counted to determine its status or the necessity of move as being obligatory, conventional, or optional. According to Kanoksilapatham (2005, 2015), a move was considered to be obligatory, conventional, or optional if located in 100%, between 60% and 99%, and lower than 60% of the data, respectively.

3.7.2 Communication Strategies

A communication strategy has been used to study communication in EFL, ESL, and BELF contexts. Therefore, a self-report questionnaire was analyzed through the communication strategies of Faerch and Kasper's (1983) and Tarone's (1980) taxonomies to see the strategies that were used by Thai and Japanese writers: achievement strategies and reductive strategies.

3.7.2.1 Achievement strategies

1. Inter-lingual transfer: the use of mother tongue and L2 together.
2. Inter-intralingual-based strategies: the use of generalization, paraphrase, word coinage, and restructuring as a way to solve communication problems.
3. Cooperative strategy: the users turn to partners for assistance.
4. Nonverbal strategies: the use of nonverbal language in communication such as mime, sign, emoticon and etc.

3.7.2.2 Reduction strategies

1. Topic avoidance: the users refrain from talking about topics that they are not able to talk for linguistic reasons.

2. Message abandonment: the users stop talking during communication due to language difficulties.

The data obtained from the self-report questionnaire addressed the second research question. The results obtained from descriptive analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics 23. It also reported on the frequency of using communicative strategies through mean and percentage; moreover, the results were interpreted, categorized, and tabulated on a computer sheet in order to compare the differences according to communication strategies employed by each group of writers. The tables were used to present the findings, together with a description of the descriptive analysis.

Table 3.7 Data Analysis

RO	RQ	Data Collection	Data Analysis
1. To analyze the rhetorical structures of intercultural business email communication between Thai and Japanese writers.	1. What are the rhetorical structures of business email of Thai and Japanese staff used in intercultural communication?	1. IR analysis	a) Necessity of move b) Move Pattern

Table 3.7 (continued)

RO	RQ	Data Collection	Data Analysis
2. To examine the email communication strategies that Thai and Japanese writers used in writing business emails across cultures.	2. What are the communication strategies that Thai and Japanese writers use in writing business emails across cultures?	2. Self-report questionnaire	a) Frequency b) Mean c) Std. Deviation

In conclusion, the data were analyzed quantitatively to find out the percentage and mean score in order to explain the similarities and differences of move types and move at each step level as well as to explain the similarities and differences of communication strategies used in email by Thai and Japanese. Furthermore, the tables were also used to illustrate the responses of Thai and Japanese staff.

3.8 Inter-Rater Reliability

In this study, two raters were invited to participate to ensure the reliability of the findings. The two raters hold a Master's degree in an international program. These raters were trained to analyze business emails using intercultural rhetoric analysis. The analyzed data from two raters and the researcher were computed for inter-rater reliability using Fleiss's (1971), the reliability of agreement, yielding results of 0.66 to 0.72 for business inquiry and 0.70 to 0.77 for business reply emails. These Kappa values indicated that the analyzed data were in the range of good agreement to excellent agreement.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

This study aims to analyze the business email intercultural communication between Thai and Japanese writers. The results are presented in two sections including (a) the move structures of business email communication used by Thai and Japanese writers and (b) the communication strategies employed by Thai and Japanese writers. These two sections attempt to answer the following research' questions:

1. What are the rhetoric structures of business email of Thai and Japanese staff used in intercultural communication?
2. What are the communication strategies that Thai and Japanese writers use in writing business emails across cultures?

4.1 Rhetorical Structure of Business Inquiry and Reply Email

To answer the first research question, the researcher conducted a move analysis of 305 pairs of business emails using a coding scheme for inquiry and reply email presented in the previous chapter. The collected move step structures and the number of occurrences of the 305 pairs of business emails were calculated using IBM SPSS Statistics 23 and presented as frequencies and percentages. The rhetorical structures of inquiry and reply to business emails reveal the differences in terms of their move structures and combination move patterns of the emails. The results are divided according to the rhetorical structures of moves in inquiry and reply email communication; furthermore, the frequency of moves, necessity of moves, and combination of moves are elaborated in two sections.

4.1.1 A Comparison of Necessity of Move

This part aims to present the differences of business inquiry and reply email written by Thai and Japanese writers. Table 4.1 shows a comparison of business reply email written by Thai and Japanese writers. The percentage of occurrences of both writers were compared to see how two groups of writers compose a business inquiry and reply email. The deep details of seven moves are explained in the following part.

4.1.1.1 Inquiry email

The following table shows the frequency distribution of the seven moves, which indicates the necessity of moves found in the business inquiry emails written by Thai and Japanese writers. The table reveals that all seven moves were used by both groups of writers, but some moves could be omitted according to Kanoksilapatham's (2005, 2015) necessity of moves, obligatory (100%), conventional (60% to 99%), and optional (less than 60%). The observed rhetorical move structure of the inquiry email written by Thai writers can be formulated into the sequence: Salutation, Establishing a link, Making the initial inquiry, Justifying the inquiry, and Ending politely (or M1+M2+M4+M5+M7). On the other hand, the obligatory and conventional moves found in inquiry emails written by Japanese writers can be formed the structure shown as Salutation, Making the initial inquiry, and Ending politely (or M1+M4+M7). However, the most noticeable difference was the use of M2 (Establishing a link) and M5 (Justifying the inquiry). They were considered a conventional move and were used by Thai writers, but they were an optional move for Japanese writers, which were deleted when composing emails.

Table 4.1 Move Distribution in Business Inquiry Written by Thai and Japanese Writers

Move(s)	Thai (n=167)			Japanese (n=138)		
	<i>f</i>	%	Necessity	<i>f</i>	%	Necessity
Move 1: Salutation	167	100	***	138	100	***
Move 2: Establishing a link	144	86.2	**	48	34.8	*
S1: Intent of the inquiry	144	86.2	**	33	23.9	*
S2: Source of reference	28	16.8	*	47	34.1	*
Move 3: Establishing a credential	39	23.4	*	46	33.3	*
Move 4: Making the initial inquiry	167	100	***	138	100	***
S1: Asking for sample/catalogue	77	46.1	*	116	84.1	**
S2: Asking for product detail	101	60.5	*	129	93.5	**
S3: Asking for transaction detail	98	58.7	*	21	15.2	*
S4: Asking for action	34	20.4	*	8	5.8	*
Move 5: Justifying of the inquiry	149	89.2	**	54	39.1	*
Move 6: Making other related inquiries	98	58.7	*	78	56.5	*
S1: Stating condition/term	76	45.5	*	9	6.5	*
S2: Making special requirement	68	40.7	*	70	50.7	*
Move 7: Ending politely	167	100	***	138	100	***
S1: Anticipating of Replies	79	47.3	*	138	100	***
S2: Expressing Appreciation	143	85.6	**	138	100	***
S3: Signing-off	152	91.0	***	138	100	***

Note *** = Obligatory 100 %, ** = Conventional 60 % - 99 %, * = Optional < 60 %

4.1.1.2 Reply email

Table 4.2 shows the frequency distribution of the six moves, which indicates the necessity of moves found in the business reply emails written by Thai and Japanese writers. The table reveals that six moves were also used by both groups of writers. The necessity moves of the overall reply email written by Thai writers can be patterned into the sequence: Salutation, Acknowledging the inquiry, Directly responding to the requested information, Justifying the direct response, Providing additional information, and Ending politely (or M1+M2+M3+M4+M5+M6). In contrast, the obligatory and conventional moves found in reply emails written by Japanese writers can be formulated into Salutation, Directly responding to the requested information, and Ending politely (or M1+M3+M6). The difference between these two groups of writers was in the use of M2 (Acknowledging the inquiry), M3 (Directly responding to the requested information), M4 (Justifying the direct response), and M5 (Providing additional information). They seem to be obligatory moves and conventional moves used by Thai writers, but they are optional moves among Japanese writers except for M3, which is a conventional move.

Table 4.2 Move Distribution in Business Reply Written by Thai and Japanese Writers

Move(s)	Thai (n=138)			Japanese (n=167)		
	<i>f</i>	%	Necessity	<i>f</i>	%	Necessity
Move 1: Salutation	138	100	***	167	100	***
Move 2: Acknowledging the Inquiry	138	100	***	98	58.7	*
S1: Gratitude about the inquiry	86	62.3	*	63	37.7	*
S2: Willingness to help	133	96.4	**	53	31.7	*
S3: Apology	5	3.6	*	20	12.0	*

Table 4.2 (continued)

Move(s)	Thai (n=138)			Japanese (n=167)		
	<i>f</i>	%	Necessity	<i>f</i>	%	Necessity
Move 3: Directly responding to the requested information/material	138	100	***	160	95.8	**
S1: Providing requested information	115	83.3	**	98	58.7	*
S2: Stating special details	107	77.5	**	152	91.0	**
S3: Offering alternatives	31	22.5	*	37	22.2	*
Move 4: Justifying the direct response	96	69.6	**	37	22.2	*
Move 5: Providing additional information	115	83.3	**	61	36.5	*
S1: Stating condition/term	83	60.1	*	51	30.5	*
S2: Stating incentives	71	51.4	*	10	6.0	*
S3: Applying pressure tactics	1	.7	*	5	3.0	*
Move 6: Ending politely	138	100	***	167	100	***
S1: Anticipating further contact	55	39.9	*	163	97.6	**
S2: Expressing Appreciation	138	100	***	167	100	***
S3: Signing-off	131	94.9	**	167	100	***

Note *** = Obligatory 100 %, ** = Conventional 60 % - 99 %, * = Optional < 60 %

4.1.2 Move Pattern

This part provides the information about the move patterns in business inquiry and reply emails written by Thai and Japanese writers. It presents how each group of the writer constructs the move patterns; moreover, it also presents the common move patterns used by these two groups.

4.1.2.1 Move patterns in business inquiry

Table 4.3 shows the inquiry move patterns in generic combinations constructed by Thai and Japanese writers. The results showed that there are five move

patterns found in emails constructed by Thai; for example, 7 moves, 6 move, 5 move, 4 move, and 3 move patterns. The most frequently used pattern was the 6-move pattern (34.1%). In this pattern, Thai writers employed almost all moves except move 3, which include Salutation, Establishing a link, Making the initial inquiry, Justify of the inquiry, Making other related inquiries, and Ending. In contrast, the inquiry move patterns used by Japanese writers can be classified into four-move patterns: 6 move, 5 move, 4 move, and 3 move patterns as indicated in table 4. The most frequently used pattern was 4-move pattern (27.5%). In composing inquiry email, Japanese writers employed some moves except move 2, move 3, and move 5. The 4-move pattern includes Salutation, Making the initial inquiry, Making other related inquiries, and Ending.

Table 4.3 Inquiry Move Patterns Constructed by Thai and Japanese Writers

Inquiry Move Pattern written by Thai		Frequency	Percentage
7 Move	M1+M2+M3+M4+M5+M6+M7	32	19.16
6 Move	M1+M2+M4+M5+M6+M7	57	34.13
	M1+M2+M3+M4+M5+M7	7	4.19
5 Move	M1+M2+M4+M5+M7	48	28.74
4 Move	M1+M4+M5+M7	5	2.99
	M1+M4+M6+M7	9	5.39
3 Move	M1+M4+M7	9	5.39
Inquiry Move Pattern written by Japanese		Frequency	Percentage
6 Move	M1+M3+M4+M5+M6+M7	22	15.94
	M1+M2+M4+M5+M6+M7	1	0.72
5 Move	M1+M2+M3+M4+M7	15	10.87
	M1+M2+M4+M5+M7	23	16.67
	M1+M4+M5+M6+M7	8	5.8
	M1+M3+M4+M6+M7	9	6.52
4 Move	M1+M2+M4+M7	9	6.52
	M1+M4+M6+M7	38	27.54
3 Move	M1+M4+M7	13	9.42

Table 4.4 is an excerpt that is derived from emails constructed by Thai. It shows how Thai writers take advantage of a 6-move pattern. Thai writers typically begin business inquiry emails with Move 1, a salutation to greet the recipient. After that Move 2 is used to state the intent of the inquiry followed by Move 4, which is employed for seeking information. Move 5 is used to justify the inquiry. Then Move 6, is used to state the special requirement, and Move 7 is used to close the email.

Table 4.4 The Example of Inquiry Email Constructed by Thai

Move	Email message
M1	Dear Sir, My name is AK, a sales support from [confidential message].
M2	I am writing to ask about your product information.
M4	Could you please give me specific information about [confidential message].
M5	So, I am writing to inquire about height, length, weight of [confidential message] in order to calculate the exact number of containers.
M6	Could you please send me a file of your product info?
M7	Thank you, AK

In contrast, Japanese writers employ a few moves to write emails as shown in example 2. Table 4.5 shows how Japanese writers make use of a 4-move pattern. The example reveals that Move 1 is used to salute the others. The main point is then communicated directly using Move 4, followed by the addition of a special requirement using Move 6. Lastly, they used Move 7 to end the email communication.

Table 4.5 The Example of Inquiry Email Constructed by Japanese

Move	Email message
M1	Hello
M4	I would appreciate if you could send me the current catalog about the [confidential message] model, especially the [confidential message] and [confidential message] models. I'd like to have an idea about the different features of these two models including prices, colors, and availability.
M6	Please get back to me with all required information. Thank you very much.
M7	Best Regards, ST

4.1.2.2 Move patterns in business reply

For the move patterns in reply emails written by Thai writers. There are three major types of patterns that were composed in emails; for instance, 6 move, 5 move, and 4 move patterns. 6-move pattern was the most frequently used pattern (60.1%) which Thai writers employed all moves in composing emails. On the contrary, there are four different types of move patterns constructed by Japanese writers: 6 move, 5 move, 4 move, and 3 move patterns. 4-move pattern was the most frequently used pattern (34.1%). The writers employed some moves in replying emails, except move 4 and move 5. The 4-move pattern includes Salutation, Acknowledging the inquiry, Directly responding to the requested information, and Ending.

Table 4.6 Reply Move Patterns Constructed by Thai and Japanese Writers

Reply Move Pattern written by Thai		Frequency	Percentage
6 Move	M1+M2+M3+M4+M5+M6	83	60.14
5 Move	M1+M2+M3+M5+M6	32	23.19
	M1+M2+M3+M4+M6	13	9.42
4 Move	M1+M2+M3+M6	10	7.25

Table 4.6 (continued)

	Reply Move Pattern written by Japanese	Frequency	Percentage
6 Move	M1+M2+M3+M4+M5+M6	1	0.6
5 Move	M1+M2+M3+M5+M6	31	18.56
	M1+M2+M3+M4+M6	2	1.2
	M1+M3+M4+M5+M6	11	6.59
4 Move	M1+M2+M3+M6	57	34.13
	M1+M2+M5+M6	4	2.4
	M1+M3+M5+M6	14	8.38
	M1+M3+M4+M6	23	13.77
3 Move	M1+M2+M6	3	1.8
	M1+M3+M6	21	12.57

A 6-move pattern is often constructed by Thai writers when composing business reply emails. Table 4.7 reveals that Thai writers had included all moves. They started greeting others using Move 1. Move 2 was used to acknowledge the inquiry before responding to the requested information using Move 3. Next, they justified the direct response and stated more information using Move 4 and Move 5. Lastly, Move 6 was used to close the email.

Table 4.7 The Example of Reply Email Constructed by Thai

Move	Email message
M1	Hello Khun MS
M2	It pleasure to receive your inquiry about the service of our company.
M3	I've attached [confidential message] as you requested.
M4	And I want to tell some detail more about the [confidential message].

Table 4.7 (continued)

Move	Email message
M5	And I pleased to tell you that our company is offering [confidential message] and [confidential message] within May 16, 2020.
M6	If you want some more detail, let me know Thank you kha, KK

Next, table 4.8 shows how Japanese writers take advantage of a 4-move pattern. The example reveals that Move 1 is used to salute the others, followed by expressing gratitude about the inquiry using Move 2. After that Move 3 is employed to directly respond to the requested information. They then proceed to Move 6, which is used to close an email communication.

Table 4.8 The Example of Reply Email Constructed by Japanese

Move	Email message
M1	Dear Ms. PT,
M2	Thank you for your recent request for more information concerning our products.
M3	We'd like to inform you that [confidential message].
M6	If you require any further information, please let me know. Best regards, HM

In conclusion, the results from the analysis of business inquiry and reply emails demonstrate that both Thai and Japanese writers compose business emails differently. Thai writers composed business inquiry and reply emails using 6 move patterns; whereas, Japanese writers used 4 move patterns in composing business inquiry and

reply emails. In addition, the constructed patterns of both groups have included the essential key moves in the patterns.

4.2 Email Communication Strategies Employed by Writers

To answer the second research question, the researcher distributed a communicative strategy questionnaire to 91 non-native English speakers. The results are obtained via descriptive analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics 23. Moreover, the results also report on the frequency of using communicative strategies through mean, standard deviation, and percentage.

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics of The Email Communication Strategies

4.2.1.1 Email communication strategies employed by Thai writers

The following tables show the descriptive statistics of the email communication strategies employed by Thai and Japanese email writers. They are divided by the class of communication strategies: achievement strategy and reduction strategy. Table 4.9 shows the inter-intralingual-based strategies or L2-based strategies under the achievement strategy used by Thai email writers. It was found that the highly used technique in email writing were describing the concept in an indirect way ($\bar{x} = 4.24$). Moreover, using simple English words to replace some specific words ($\bar{x} = 4.06$), and giving the example for unknown words ($\bar{x} = 3.94$) were in the range of mostly used. The other minor techniques were making up new words to express the meaning ($\bar{x} = 2.94$) and paraphrasing sentences to deliver the information ($\bar{x} = 2.74$), which indicated that they were in the range of sometimes use.

Table 4.9 The Inter-intralingual Based Strategies Used by Thai Email Writers.

Achievement Strategies			
Inter-intralingual based strategies / L2-based strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. I use simple English words to replace some specific words which are unfamiliar to me.	4.06	1.058	Mostly used
2. I paraphrase sentences to deliver information.	2.74	1.482	Moderately used
3. I describe a concept in an indirect way when I cannot find an appropriate target language item (English) to talk about.	4.24	0.744	Highly used
4. I make up new words to express the meaning of the concept.	2.94	0.998	Moderately used
5. I give an example of something for which I do not know the word.	3.94	1.038	Mostly used

The following example is shown a business email written by Thai writer who employed L2-based strategies such as the use of the simple words, generalization, and paraphrasing in email writing:

Hello Khun AY,

*Thank you for interest. **You say you need to know price for [confidential messages] and spec bottle last time.** The **current price** is [confidential messages] and spec bottle is [confidential messages]. We discount [confidential messages] for [confidential messages] order or more. Tell me when want to order.*

Thank you for interest

The example above shows that there has been used a simple word in email such as the word “price” and “current price.” The word price in this context means the estimated price of the goods. Moreover, the writer has created the word such as “spec

bottle” to use in email communication. The word spec bottle means the specification of the bottle.

For the cooperative strategies, it was found that asking the email sender to clarify what he or she is talking about was highly used by Thai email writers ($\bar{x} = 4.32$). Providing a response for anticipated question ($\bar{x} = 3.98$) and asking the explanation from the email sender ($\bar{x} = 3.68$) were also used by the majority of the writers. They were in the range of mostly used. While the less frequently used was asking the email sender to correct the terms or structures ($\bar{x} = 1.84$), which reflected that it was in the level of fairly used it.

Table 4.10 The Cooperative Strategies Used by Thai Email Writers

Achievement Strategies			
Cooperative strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. If I don't understand something in English, I usually ask the email sender to explain it again.	3.68	1.203	Mostly used
2. I ask the email sender to clarify what he or she is talking about.	4.32	0.819	Highly used
3. I ask the email sender to correct terms or structures.	1.84	1.113	Fairly used
4. I provide a response for an anticipated question by guessing from a communicative context.	3.98	1.02	Mostly used

The following example is shown a business email written by Thai writer who employed cooperative strategies as a technique to ask the email sender to clarify what is talking:

Hello NS,

Could you give me some more details about [confidential messages]? I not sure what you want me to do? Please tell me again.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Thanks,

CT

The underlined sentences show that the writer has asked the email sender more information about the products or goods because the writer (recipient) has a question what he or she should do.

Table 4.11 illustrates the inter-lingual transfer strategies. The results show that the writers highly used the translation of word for word from the native language strategy ($\bar{x} = 4.28$). Inserting some Thai to achieve a particular communicative goal ($\bar{x} = 4.00$) and thinking of the form of the item in Thai language and translate it into English ($\bar{x} = 3.48$) were mostly used in email communication. On the other hand, another technique such as using the first language to communicate with foreign senders ($\bar{x} = 3.36$) was moderately used by Thai writers.

Table 4.11 The Inter-lingual Transfer Strategies Used by Thai Email Writers

Achievement Strategies			
Inter-lingual transfer / L1-based strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. I insert some of my first language (Thai / Japanese) when I cannot find an accurate English word to achieve a particular communicative goal.	4.00	1.414	Mostly used
2. I often use my first language (Thai / Japanese) to communicate with foreign senders.	3.36	1.723	Moderately used

Table 4.11 (continued)

Achievement Strategies			
Inter-lingual transfer / L1-based strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. I translate word for word from the native language.	4.28	1.386	Highly used
2. I think of the form of the item in my first language (Thai / Japanese) and then translate it into English.	3.48	1.632	Mostly used

The following example is shown a business email written by Thai writer who employed L1-based strategies such as the use of L1 structure and Thai particle in email writing:

Hi Khun HS,

*I received your request about the cost service. Thank you for think of us. I will look at the primary cost and breakdown. I will calculate the cost service for you and **I will send cost to you in Friday kha.***

Have a nice day kha,

PC

The underlined sentence shows that there is the use of L1 structure in email writing such as *in Friday* (in Thai context) instead of on Friday; furthermore, Thai particle has been used at the end of the sentence.

In terms of the nonverbal strategies, table 4.12 reveals that the major technique was using punctuation to express the emotion in communication ($\bar{x} = 3.86$). It indicates that it was mostly used among Thai email writers. The following techniques as using signs to help their communication ($\bar{x} = 3.22$) and using emoticons to express the emotion in communication ($\bar{x} = 2.7$), indicated that they were moderately employed in email communication. The emails written by Thai writers show that the punctuation such as exclamation mark was used after the statement which is a command or which implies need for immediate action; for instance, “*Can you reply me soon!!!*” Moreover,

the emoticon is also used to express writers' emotion such as "Have a nice day :)", "Good day :D."

Table 4.12 The Nonverbal Strategies Used by Thai Email Writers

Achievement Strategies			
Nonverbal strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. I use signs to help my communication.	3.22	1.25	Moderately used
2. I use emoticons (such as laughing, yelling, moaning) to express my emotion in communication.	2.7	1.165	Moderately used
3. I use punctuation (such as exclamation mark, question mark) to express my emotion in communication.	3.86	1.01	Mostly used

Table 4.13 shows the topic avoidance strategy under the reduction strategy employed by Thai email writers. It was found that trying not to talk about concepts for which the target language item (English) or structure is not known to the writers was employed by a small number of Thai email writers ($\bar{x} = 1.88$). It indicated that it was fairly used by Thai writers.

Table 4.13 Topic Avoidance Strategy Used by Thai Email Writers

Reduction Strategy			
Topic avoidance and Message abandonment	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. I try not to talk about concepts for which the target language item (English) or structure is not known to me.	1.88	0.895	Fairly used

4.2.1.2 Email communication strategies employed by Japanese writers

Table 4.14 provides information about the inter-intralingual based strategies used by Japanese email writers. It was found that describing a concept in an indirect way was used by a large number of Japanese email writers ($\bar{x} = 4.88$). The use of simple English words to replace the specific words or unfamiliar words was the second most employed technique ($\bar{x} = 4.76$). The third strategy was giving the example for the unknown words ($\bar{x} = 4.46$). The three strategies indicated that they belonged to the level of highly used among a group of Japanese writers. Furthermore, paraphrasing sentences to deliver the information and making up new words to express the meaning of the concept were employed by a small number of Japanese email writers ($\bar{x} = 3.00$) and ($\bar{x} = 2.15$), which indicated that they were moderately used and fairly used in email respectively.

Table 4.14 The Inter-intralingual Based Strategies Used by Japanese Email Writers

Achievement Strategies			
Inter-intralingual based strategies / L2-based strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. I use simple English words to replace some specific words which are unfamiliar to me.	4.76	0.435	Highly used
2. I paraphrase sentences to deliver information.	3.00	1.817	Moderately used
3. I describe a concept in an indirect way when I cannot find an appropriate target language item (English) to talk about.	4.88	0.4	Highly used
4. I make up new words to express the meaning of the concept.	2.15	1.493	Fairly used
5. I give an example of something for which I do not know the word.	4.46	0.84	Highly used

The following example is shown a business email written by a Japanese writer who employed L2-based strategies such as the use of the simple words in email writing:

Dear Sir/Madam,

We'd like to arrange for the shipping of a container from [confidential message]. We want more shipping detail. We need to ship them as soon as possible and let me know what the cost would be.

Best regards,

YK

The example above shows that there has been used a simple word in email, which could make the reader easy to understand the message.

Table 4.15 shows the finding of the cooperative strategies of Japanese email writers. It was found that providing a response for an anticipated question from the email senders ($\bar{x} = 4.15$) was mostly provided by the majority of Japanese writers. While asking email senders to clarify the topic ($\bar{x} = 3.37$) and asking for an explanation from the email sender ($\bar{x} = 2.93$) were also used in email communication ($\bar{x} = 3.37$). Both techniques belonged to the level of moderately used in email communication in a group of Japanese writers. Moreover, the least strategy used in email communication among Japanese writers was asking the sender to correct terms or structures ($\bar{x} = 1.32$), which indicated that it was never utilized by Japanese writers.

Table 4.15 The Cooperative Strategies Used by Japanese Email Writers

Achievement Strategies			
Cooperative strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. If I don't understand something in English, I usually ask the email sender to explain it again.	2.93	1.367	Moderately used
2. I ask the email sender to clarify what he or she is talking about.	3.37	1.374	Moderately used

Table 4.15 (continued)

Achievement Strategies			
Cooperative strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. I ask the email sender to correct terms or structures.	1.32	0.986	Never
2. I provide a response for an anticipated question by guessing from a communicative context.	4.15	1.236	Mostly used

The following example is shown a business email written by Japanese writer who employed cooperative strategies as a technique to ask the email sender to clarify what is talking:

Hi WW,

I am sorry to bother you again. I'm not quite clear on a few things and I want to make sure we're on the same page. To clarify, you want to [confidential messages] and [confidential messages], correct?

Apologies again for the inconvenience,

AK

The underlined sentence shows that the writer wrote the email back to the sender in order to ask the email sender to clarify what he or she (writer) needs to do. In terms of the inter-lingual transfer, the use of the first language or Japanese to communicate with foreign senders was the majority technique used in email communication ($\bar{x} = 4.37$). The mean score indicated that it ranged at the level of highly used. Next, the mean score of the insertion of some Japanese words to achieve the communication goal ($\bar{x} = 3.44$) indicated that it was mostly employed by Japanese writers. Whereas the mean score of translation of the word for word from the native language ($\bar{x} = 2.34$) and thinking of the form of the item in Japanese before translating it into English ($\bar{x} = 1.9$) indicated that they were fairly used in email communication.

Table 4.16 The Inter-lingual Transfer Strategies Used by Japanese Email Writers

Achievement Strategies			
Inter-lingual transfer / L1-based strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. I insert some of my first language (Thai / Japanese) when I cannot find an accurate English word to achieve a particular communicative goal.	3.44	1.79	Mostly used
2. I often use my first language (Thai / Japanese) to communicate with foreign senders.	4.37	1.374	Highly used
3. I translate word for word from the native language.	2.34	1.196	Fairly used
4. I think of the form of the item in my first language (Thai / Japanese) and then translate it into English.	1.9	1.091	Fairly used

The following example is shown a business email written by Japanese writer who employed L1-based strategies such as the use of L1 structure and word in email writing:

Hello PT,
Urgent!! Could you send me a description of しょうゆ last time talk? I see it listed from the enclosed, but need more information about quantity of ingredient and the size of IBC tank.
Please reply me by 9th June
Regards,
SH

The underlined sentence shows that there is the use of L1 word in email writing such as “しょうゆ”, which means one type of soy sauce; furthermore, and L1 structure has been used in emailing as well such as “...last time talk?” In Japanese, people don't supply subjects in conversation if they are obvious. The sample sentence

shows that the email writer deleted the subject: ...*last time [we] talk?* So, it can be indicated that there is the employment of Japanese structure in email communication.

According to table 4.17, the results show that most Japanese employed punctuation to express emotion in email communication ($\bar{x} = 2.9$). The mean score implied that it was sometimes used in email writing. However, the following strategies: the use of emoticons ($\bar{x} = 1.68$) and the use of signs ($\bar{x} = 1.56$), were never used in email communication among Japanese writers. The emails written by Japanese writers show that the punctuation. An exclamation mark is used to inform the immediate action such as “*Urgent!!!!*”

Table 4.17 The Nonverbal Strategies Used by Japanese Email Writers

Achievement Strategies			
Nonverbal strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. I use signs to help my communication.	1.56	0.838	Never
2. I use emoticons (such as laughing, yelling, moaning) to express my emotion in communication.	1.68	1.059	Never
3. I use punctuation (such as exclamation mark, question mark) to express my emotion in communication.	2.9	1.625	Moderately used

Table 4.18 illustrates the topic avoidance strategy under the reduction strategy employed by Japanese email writers. It was found that trying not to talk about concepts for which the target language item (English) or structure is not known to the writer was employed by a small number of Japanese email writers ($\bar{x} = 1.22$). It belonged to the level of never use.

Table 4.18 The Topic Avoidance Strategies Used by Japanese Email Writers

Reduction Strategy			
Topic avoidance and Message abandonment	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. I try not to talk about concepts for which the target language item (English) or structure is not known to me.	1.22	0.69	Never

4.2.2 A Comparison of The Email Communication Strategies Employed by Thai and Japanese Writers

This part aims to compare the differences of email communication strategies employed by Thai and Japanese email writers. Thus, the results from table 4.9 to 4.18 are computed to see the similarities and differences of email communication strategies classified by two main strategies: achievement strategy and reduction strategy.

Table 4.19 illustrates that Thai email writers' reported frequency of using achievement strategies ranging from $\bar{x} = 3.26$ to $\bar{x} = 3.78$, which means that Thai email writers used achievement strategies reach the level of moderately used to the level of mostly used. While the Japanese email writers' reported frequency of using achievement strategies ranging from $\bar{x} = 2.05$ to $\bar{x} = 3.85$, which reflects that Japanese email writers employed the achievement strategies on the level of fairly used to the level of mostly used. However, it was found that there were both similarities and differences among the two groups of email writers.

The results reported that both Thai and Japanese email writers had the similarity regarding the employment of intralingua-based strategies or L2-based strategies. The mean of both group of writers: $\bar{x} = 3.58$ and $\bar{x} = 3.85$, reflect that they often utilized L2-based strategies when communicating with others via email.

On the other hand, there are some differences when looking at the employment strategies under the achievement strategy. Although three most often used strategies of both groups are similar, the reported frequencies of both groups are different. According to table 4.19, it shows that there is a slight difference in using cooperative

strategies. The results of these two groups indicated that Thai writers mostly used cooperative strategies ($\bar{x}=3.46$), but it was moderately used among a group of Japanese writers ($\bar{x}=2.94$). Furthermore, it also has a slight difference in the results of L1-based strategies. Thai writers often mostly employed their mother tongue in email communication ($\bar{x}=3.78$) while Japanese writers moderately used their mother tongue ($\bar{x}=3.01$). Conversely, there is a great difference in the employment of nonverbal strategies. Thai writers sometimes added signs, emoticons, and punctuations in expressing their emotions in email ($\bar{x}=3.26$), but the results of Japanese writers indicated that they fairly employed signs, emoticons, and punctuation in email communication ($\bar{x}=2.05$).

For the reduction strategy, the result from the reports that there is a slight difference in using this strategy. A few Thai email writers and Japanese email writers used the topic avoidance in email communication. It means that Thai email writers fairly utilized the topic avoidance strategy or reduction strategy when communicating with others via email ($\bar{x}=1.88$) while it was never used among a group of Japanese email writers ($\bar{x}=1.22$).

In conclusion, the results of the employment of communicative strategies in emailing revealed that both groups of email writers tend to use the achievement strategies to help them communicate via email rather than the reduction strategy. In comparing the strategies, it was found that a group of Thai writers has a higher level of using the achievement strategies than Japanese writers. This strategy was employed at the level of mostly used by a group of Thai writers while it was moderately used by a group of Japanese writers. For the use of the reduction strategy, it was found that both Thai and Japanese writers indicated a low level regarding avoiding an unknown topic. The mean of Thai writers indicates that it was fairly used by Thai writers, but it was never used by Japanese writers. Moreover, the study shows that the majority of email writers use some effective strategies such as L2-based strategies, Cooperative strategies, and L1-based strategies when they compose a business email communication. Only a few writers sometimes avoid the topic whenever they encounter the communication problem in email communication.

Table 4.19 A Comparison of Communication Strategies Used by Thai and Japanese

Communication Strategies	Thai			Japanese		
	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation
Achievement Strategy	3.54	.485	Mostly used	3.07	.399	Moderately
L2-based strategies	3.58	.598	Mostly used	3.85	.567	Mostly used
Cooperative strategies	3.46	.454	Mostly used	2.94	.538	Moderately
L1-based strategies	3.78	1.115	Mostly used	3.01	.666	Moderately
Nonverbal strategies	3.26	.717	Moderately	2.05	.652	Fairly
Reduction Strategy	1.88	.895	Fairly	1.22	.690	Never
Topic avoidance	1.88	.895	Fairly	1.22	.690	Never

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter aims to conclude and discuss the findings with respect to the research questions. It also presents implications and recommendations for further study.

5.1 Conclusion

This study was a descriptive study, which aimed to analyze the rhetoric structures of business email communication of Thai and Japanese writers and examine the communication strategies that Thai and Japanese writers use in writing business emails across cultures. The participant of this study were 91 email writers, 50 Thai writers who worked in three Thailand based companies, and 41 Japanese writers- who were the business partners of three companies. The research instruments were the intercultural rhetoric analysis and the self-report questionnaire. The data were 305 pairs of inquiry and reply emails collected from 91 participants and they were analyzed to study the rhetorical structures of inquiry and reply emails according to a group of writers. Moreover, the participants were asked to complete the self-report questionnaire in order to examine the employment of communication strategies in writing business emails across cultures. The data obtained from the participants were analyzed based on two analytical frameworks: intercultural rhetoric analysis and communication strategies. The results were presented into mean and percentage to compare the similarities and differences of rhetoric structures in email and the communication strategies employed by Thai and Japanese writers.

Moreover, the results reveal some differences in rhetoric structures in email and the communication strategies between two groups of email writers. The findings of the research can be summarized according to research questions.

To answer the first research question regarding the rhetoric structures of business email communication of Thai and Japanese writers, the intercultural rhetoric analysis was investigated. As the results showed, the mean and percentage from the intercultural rhetoric analysis revealed that both groups of writers' combined move patterns for business email communication exhibit a considerable difference in terms of writing inquiry and reply emails.

To respond to the second research question concerning the communication strategies employed in writing business emails across cultures of Thai and Japanese writers, the self-report questionnaire was used to study what types of communication strategies were used by the participants. The findings showed that both groups of writers demonstrate some distinctions in terms of the employment of communication strategies.

5.2 Discussion

This part aims to discuss the study's findings in relation to two research questions. The scope of the discussion covers two topics: (a) rhetoric structures of intercultural business email communication, and (b) communication strategies employed in business emails across cultures.

5.2.1 The Differences in Rhetoric Structures of Intercultural Business Email Communication

Regarding the research objective, the business inquiry and reply emails constructed by Thai and Japanese writers reveal the difference in email writing between the two cultures. Thai writers use more moves when composing emails while Japanese writers employ a few moves. The use of more moves reflects the indirect approach employed by Thai writers.

In terms of the rhetoric structure, Thailand and Japan are Asian countries. They are close in geography and have been influenced by each other culturally for a long time. So, they have their distinctive rhetoric conventions. However, they are both classified to be oriental language groups. Oriental languages are represented as a spiral, which reflects in the paragraph development. Kaplan (1966) stated that the organization of oriental writing is “indirection”. A topic is not explained in a straightforward as westerners and it frequently revolves around the main point. Moreover, both Thai and Japanese belong to high-context communication culture, which communication style is influenced by relationships, social hierarchy, and strong behavioural norms. Communication is often indirect and implicit; therefore, the written emails tend to be non-explicit and descriptive (Hall, 1976). However, the findings of this study revealed that the email rhetoric structure of Thai writers is consistent with the study of the cultural patterns of Kaplan (1966) and Hall (1976). In this study, Thai email writers seem to use an indirect approach to convey the message, as evidenced by the use of more moves than a direct-approach message. On the other hand, the results of the rhetorical structure of Japanese writers are opposed to the study of Kaplan and Hall. In this study, Japanese paragraph development is direct and linear as written by the English language group. Japanese writers in this study tend to compose the messages in a succinct manner. They directly addressed the point of emailing, as observed by the use of a few moves in composing emails; moreover, some of the moves have been omitted.

The difference discovered in this study may be influenced by two important factors. First, the education reform, Thailand and Japan have a long history regarding English education, and both have implemented the educational reforms that are designed for developing the learners’ communicative English abilities. Japan's education reforms were influenced by globalization. Kubota and McKay (2009) stated that the Japanese had been encouraged the adoption of the communication mode of the West, especially English, including encouraged logical thinking. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been cultivated in teaching English; furthermore, Japanese students need to learn to think according to English logic. Compared with the educational reforms in Thailand, EFL has changed to English for communication

purposes rather than academic study as Japan does. English was set to be taught using a communicative approach, and it was used as the medium of instruction in other subjects (Sermsongsward & Tantipongsanuruk, 2015). However, Thailand's education system seems to be struggling in achieving English capability. For example, teaching styles that fossilize into rote memorization and passive learning styles that focus on teaching and testing. This is opposed to the ministry-mandated aims of English for communication (Kenan Foundation Asia, 2019 & Gregory, 2016). As a result, this could be one reason why Thai people indirectly addressed the message while Japanese people directly communicate either by speaking or writing.

Another factor might be the influence of culture in communication. The social hierarchy has remained as one of its distinctive traits in Thailand. Cultural norms in Thai society influence a communication that values respect for hierarchy, saving face, avoiding risks, and maintaining a sense of status. Nguyen (2015) indicates that in Thai culture, out of respect, Thai people may not feel comfortable speaking to others, asking questions, expressing their opinions, and responding to questions directly. When Thai people need to say, write and request something, they usually show respect to the older and unknown people.

To conclude, the difference in business email writing of Thai and Japanese writers can be reflected from the text analysis in this study. According to the analysis of business inquiry and reply email, Thai writers composed business inquiry and reply emails using six move-patterns. This reflects the culture in communication in Thai society, which concerns about maintaining either the hierarchy or social status while communication. On the other hand, Japanese writers used four move-patterns in composing both types of business emails. It reflects the development of communication in Japan which is shaped by the adoption of the communication mode of the West. Thus, the communication in Japan has changed to be more direct and clear communication.

5.2.2 The Lowest Use of a Reduction Strategy in Email Communication among Thai and Japanese Writers

Communication strategies are techniques used by both native and non-native English to solve problems encountered during the course of communication due to a

lack of knowledge. There are two types of communication strategies that are commonly used by both native and non-native English: achievement and reduction strategies. Achievement strategies are used to achieve the purpose of communication despite difficulties in conveying one's message due to the lack of linguistic resources. Achievement strategies such as appeal, literal translation, code-switching, restructuring, word coinage, paraphrasing, and nonlinguistic strategies are used to maintain the original goal of the language user. Compared to the reduction strategies, these are used when speakers or writers are willing to take risks in order to communicate their ideas and accomplish their goals for communicating. Reduction strategies such as meaning replacement, message abandonment, and topic avoidance are used for the purpose of giving up a fragment of the original communication goal.

In this study, the results of the employment of communicative strategies in emailing revealed that both Thai and Japanese email writers tend to use achievement strategies to help them communicate via email rather than the reduction strategy. The finding of this study is consistent with the study by Pimthong et al. (2019) that Thai employees applied almost all of the strategies in email communication such as using an online tool, employing a mother tongue, asking the colleague, and using a simple word in emailing with non-native English speakers. Another study also reported in a similar way how Thai executives compose their emails; for example, Thai executives used simple words and informal words in emails. This study also noted that there was the use of punctuation and electronic symbols in expressing their emotion such as Smile :), Beam :-D, Twinkle ;-) and etc.

There are two reasons why there is the lowest use of the reduction strategy in this study. Firstly, they want to keep the conversation flowing and maintain their interaction with the interlocutor. As a result, both groups of writers solved communication problems by appealing to their email partners for help, paraphrasing messages, and using general words or terms to enhance understanding. This indicates that they had strong intentions to achieve communication goals rather than abandon their attempts to communicate. Thu and Thu (2016) found that the people who tried to solve the communication difficulties by themselves, without looking for help from

others. It indicated that he or she attempted to have a smooth conversation by keeping their interaction with their interlocutors.

Another reason might be the high proficiency in English of the writers. In this study, both groups of email writers employed a variety of strategies to communicate and deal with business partners during communication. This could be explained that email writers were familiar with the English language as they had two or more years of experience working with foreigners. Chuanchaisit and Prapphal (2009) indicated that achievement strategies are usually employed by high-ability users. The high-ability users preferred risk-taking strategies because of their proficiency in English. In contrast, the lower English proficiency of low-ability users may lead them to employ risk-avoidance strategies or reduction strategies. Elyildirim (2017) and Tanong (2017) mentioned that a reduction strategy is widely used among L2 users with their limited knowledge of grammatical rules. Thus, the use of the reduction strategy may not be beneficial for communication. The users could get nothing when they try to skip the problem either by changing the communication purpose or avoiding the communication.

To conclude, communication strategies are considered as an important element in the process of communication. Foreign language users can use communication strategies to cope with their communication difficulties by applying either an achievement strategy or a reduction strategy. Achievement strategies raise the level of communication and help to keep on the conversation; whereas, reduction strategies may obstruct and sometimes block the process of communication. However, the use of communication strategies is affected by the users' language proficiency level (Yahya, 2019). In this study, the results revealed that there was the lowest use of the reduction strategy among email writers. Thus, this implies that the email writers in this study have a high proficiency in the English language.

5.3 Implications of the Study

These findings, then can be utilized as a guideline for people who need to write a business email in English because the present study demonstrates what information

should be included through the analysis of business inquiry and reply emails. In addition, the finding of this study can be the implications for two distinct fields to take into consideration when emailing across cultures. Thus, this first suggests to business field to raise their awareness using a variety of patterns in emailing across cultures. Lastly, it is recommended to the educational field that it is beneficial to include formal instruction on email writing structure along with raising awareness when communication across cultures in the curriculum. The rhetorical structure of a text in a particular genre must be explicitly taught.

5.4 Limitations

5.4.1 This study focuses on how non-native writers compose business email; other skills will not be included.

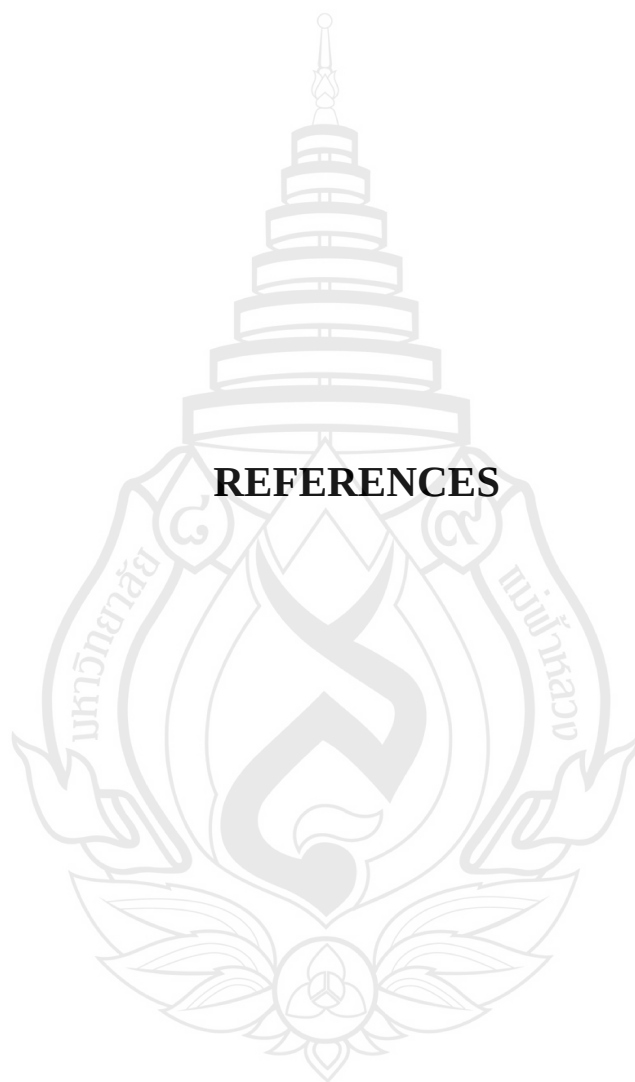
5.4.2 The lexical and grammatical differences in the email messages are beyond the scope of this study.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Study

This study has examined the business email intercultural communication of Thai and Japanese email writers. Further study would be beneficial for the following reasons:

5.5.1 This study focused on three different companies. Multiple companies or other organization could be selected in further studies. This could help to see a clear picture of the similarities and differences of email writing.

5.5.2 Data gathered from a larger number of emails could shed the light on the rhetorical structure of English emails written by non-native English speakers.



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APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

INTERCULTURAL RHETORIC ANALYSIS

(.....)

Coding Scheme for Inquiry Email

Move Types	Analysis	Email Message
Move 1: Salutation		
Move 2: Establishing a link		
S1: Intent of the inquiry		
S2: Source of reference		
Move 3: Establishing a credentials		
Move 4: Making the initial inquiry		
S1: Asking for samples/catalogues		
S2: Asking for product/service details		
S3: Asking for transaction details		
S4: Asking for action		
Move 5: Justifying of the inquiry		
Move 6: Making other related inquiries		
S1: Stating conditions/terms		
S2: Making special requirements		
Move 7: Ending politely		
S1: Anticipating of Replies		
S2: Expressing Appreciation		
S3: Signing-off		

Coding Scheme for Reply Email

Move Types	Analysis	Email Message
Move 1: Salutation		
Move 2: Acknowledging the Inquiry		
S1: Gratitude about the inquiry		
S2: Willingness to help customers with their inquiry		
S3: Apology		
Move 3: Directly responding to the requested information/materials		
S1: Providing requested information/materials		
S2: Stating special details/conditions		
S3: Offering alternatives		
Move 4: Justifying the direct response		
Move 5: Providing additional information		
S1: Stating conditions/terms		
S2: Stating incentives		
S3: Applying pressure tactics		
Move 6: Ending politely		
S1: Anticipating further contact		
S2: Expressing Appreciation		
S3: Signing-off		

APPENDIX B

SELF- REPORT QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is a part of the research. The present research aims to examine the communication strategies used in email by non-native English speakers.

Part I: Personal Information

Part II: The employment of communication strategies

However, the researcher affirms that your information will be kept confidential. The received data will be used for educational purposes only. Hopefully, I will get help from you to complete this questionnaire. Moreover, I sincerely thank you for taking the time to be a part of this research.

PART I: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Company: ☐ Thai firm ☐ Japanese firm
2. Working position:
3. Working experience: ☐ Less than 2 years ☐ 2 – 5 years ☐ More than 5 years
4. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
5. Age: ☐ 20-24 ☐ 25-29 ☐ 30-34 ☐ 35 or more
6. Nationality: ☐ Thai ☐ Japanese
7. Educational background: ☐ Junior / High school
☐ Diploma holder
☐ Bachelor
☐ Others (please specify)

8. Do you have any direct experiences with foreigner?

☐ No ☐ Yes (please specify)

9. Do you have any experiences in writing email across cultures?

☐ No ☐ Yes (please specify)

PART II: THE EMPLOYMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Please insert / in the number from the statements that are closest to your personal opinion or experience. Please do not mark over the borders of the boxes.

Evaluate scale: 1 means I never use this strategy,

2 means I hardly ever use this strategy,

3 means I sometimes use this strategy,

4 means I often use this strategy, and

5 means I always use this strategy

Please give us your opinion on the following items:

No.	Communication strategies used in writing a business email	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Always
		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I use simple English words to replace some specific words which are unfamiliar to me.					
2.	I paraphrase sentences to deliver information.					
3.	I describe a concept in an indirect way when I cannot find an appropriate target language item (English) to talk about.					

No.	Communication strategies used in writing a business email	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Always
		1	2	3	4	5
4.	I make up new words to express a meaning of concept.					
5.	I give an example of something for which I do not know the word.					
6.	If I don't understand something in English, I usually ask the email sender to explain it again.					
7.	I ask the email sender to clarify what he or she is talking about.					
8.	I ask the email sender for correct term or structure.					
9.	I provide a response for an anticipated question by guessing from communicative context.					
10.	I insert some of my first language (Thai / Japanese) when I cannot find an accurate English word to achieve a particular communicative goal.					
11.	I often use my first language (Thai / Japanese) to communicate with foreign senders.					

No.	Communication strategies used in writing a business email	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Always
		1	2	3	4	5
12.	I translate word for word from the native language.					
13.	I think of the form of the item in my first language (Thai / Japanese) and then translate it into the English.					
14.	I use iconic signs to help my communication.					
15.	I use emoticon (such as laughing, yelling, moaning) to express my emotion in communication.					
16.	I use punctuation (such as exclamation mark, question mark) to express my emotion in communication.					
17.	I try not to talk about concepts for which the target language item (English) or structure is not known to me.					